



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts:

Ross Goldberg
818-597-8453, x-1
ross@kevinross.net

Tania Llavaneras
213-503-9285
tllavaneras@onelegacy.org

**Four Young Lives Changed Thanks to Tissue and Organ Donation:
Recipients to be Featured on Donate Life’s 2018 Rose Parade Float**

*Youth stories highlight the life-changing power of bone and musculoskeletal tissue grafts,
as well as the lifesaving power of organ donation*

Los Angeles, CA – November 28, 2017 -- Four youths whose lives were changed forever thanks to the generosity of others through tissue and organ donation will be among the participants on the Donate Life Rose Parade® float on January 1, 2018 in Pasadena.

“The theme for this year’s parade is ‘Making a Difference’ and young recipients like Macy Alexander-Childs, Dylan Harvey, Kelsea McKinley and Peter “P.J.” Williams, are living examples of how the generous acts of people throughout the world are making a positive difference in the lives of others,” said Donate Life Rose Parade Manager Kathleen Hostert. “Perhaps no act is more emblematic of this than becoming an organ, eye or tissue donor.”

Three of these youths received a life changing tissue donation that allowed them to regain mobility, heal and maintain normal growth of their body. Thanks to tissue donors, millions of people are healed every year and thousands of lives are saved. Tissue from one single donor can touch the lives of more than 75 people. Some of the tissues that can be donated include life-saving tissues such as heart valves and skin grafts for burn survivors. Other tissues that are crucial to help heal and restore mobility include bone, ligament and nerve grafts, among others.

“Having the opportunity to spend time with this group of young people who are now able to live full and active lives thanks to their donors’ selfless gifts is a wonderful reminder of why our work at American Association of Tissue Banks is so important,” said AATB President and CEO

Frank Wilton. “Our accredited banks are ‘Making a Difference’ every day by working to ensure that there is an adequate supply of safe, high-quality tissue available for recipients like P.J., Dylan, and Kelsea.”

P.J. Williams, 17, was diagnosed with bone cancer in his tibia at just 12 years of age. Even though treatments and chemotherapy at the Cleveland Clinic were able to eliminate 97% of the tumor, P.J.’s lower leg was still going to have to be amputated. However, P.J.’s medical team decided to use donated bone to rebuild and save P.J.’s leg. Thanks to his treatment and donated musculoskeletal tissue, P.J. is living life like a normal teenager. P.J. recently registered as an organ, eye and tissue donor and thinks about the donor that changes his life all the time. His presence in the parade is sponsored by American Association of Tissue Banks in partnership with Lifebanc.

Dylan Harvey, 19, was a sophomore in high school when he was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident and spent several weeks in the ICU undergoing multiple surgeries to repair injuries to his left arm and right leg. Once stabilized, however, Dylan was unable to move most of his left arm due to significant nerve damage. Physicians suggested his arm may need to be amputated. In 2015 his damaged nerve tissue was replaced with donated tissue. Dylan’s nerves regenerated, restoring function and sensation to his arm. Today, Dylan helps his father run an electronics business and is currently pursuing acting and filmmaking classes. His participation in the parade is sponsored by AxoGen Corporation.

Kelsea McKinley, 15, was an active eight-year-old when she was diagnosed with scoliosis. To slow its progression, she wore a back brace 24 hours a day for two years until the disease progressed to the point where the curvature of her spine was affecting her organs and overall health. She had surgery two years later to straighten her back with rods and screws as well as donated tissue (by Medtronic who is sponsoring her Rose Parade participation) to aid in her recovery. After nearly a year, she made a full recovery and is currently a sophomore in High School in Las Vegas.

Macy Alexander-Childs, 10, received a small intestine transplant in 2008, just six days short of her first birthday. She and her family have devoted their time since she was five years old, to raise awareness of the need for donation across Western New York. Working with Unyts, who is sponsoring her Rose Parade participation, she has engaged the Girl Scouts in getting involved in the Gift of Life mission, and she has shared her story in public service announcements. Macy

attended her first Transplant Games in 2016 as a member of Team Buffalo, and recently ran her first 5k with Girls on the Run.

Celebrating its 15th year of participating in the parade, the Donate Life Tournament of Roses Parade® float is the centerpiece of a national effort to reach a broad audience with the simple, life-giving message that organ, eye and tissue donation saves and heals lives.

The Donate Life Rose Parade® float is produced by OneLegacy and is made possible thanks to over 50 sponsoring donation, transplant, healthcare, and family care organizations and individuals who help make donation and transplant possible across the country.

About Donate Life America

Donate Life America is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit alliance of national organizations and state teams across the United States committed to increasing organ, eye and tissue donation. Donate Life America manages and promotes the national brand for donation, Donate Life, and assists Donate Life State Teams and national partners in facilitating high-performing donor registries; developing and executing effective multi-media donor education programs; and motivating the American public to register now as organ, eye and tissue donors. Register today by visiting DonateLife.net.

About American Association of Tissue Banks (AATB)

The American Association of Tissue Banks (AATB) is a professional, non-profit, scientific and educational organization. It is one of the only national tissue banking organizations in the United States, and its membership totals more than 125 accredited tissue banks and 2,000 individual members. These banks recover tissue from more than 30,000 donors and distribute in excess of two million allografts for more than 1.75 million tissue transplants performed annually in the U.S.

About AxoGen Corporation

AxoGen (AXGN) is the leading company focused specifically on the science, development and commercialization of technologies for peripheral nerve regeneration and repair. AxoGen is passionate about helping to restore nerve function and quality of life to patients with peripheral nerve injuries by providing innovative, clinically proven and economically effective repair solutions for surgeons and health care providers. Peripheral nerves provide the pathways for both motor and sensory signals throughout the body. Every day, people suffer traumatic injuries or

undergo surgical procedures that impact the function of their peripheral nerves. Damage to a peripheral nerve can result in the loss of muscle or organ function, the loss of sensory feeling, or the initiation of pain.

AxoGen's platform for nerve repair features a comprehensive portfolio of products, including Avance[®] Nerve Graft, an off-the-shelf processed human nerve allograft for bridging severed nerves without the comorbidities associated with a second surgical site, AxoGuard[®] Nerve Connector, a porcine submucosa extracellular matrix (ECM) coaptation aid for tensionless repair of severed nerves, AxoGuard[®] Nerve Protector, a porcine submucosa ECM product used to wrap and protect injured peripheral nerves and reinforce the nerve reconstruction while preventing soft tissue attachments, and Avive[®] Soft Tissue Membrane, a minimally processed human umbilical cord membrane that may be used as a resorbable soft tissue covering to separate tissue layers and modulate inflammation in the surgical bed. Along with these core surgical products, AxoGen also offers AcroVal[®] Neurosensory & Motor Testing System and AxoTouch[®] Two-Point Discriminator. These evaluation and measurement tools assist health care professionals in detecting changes in sensation, assessing return of sensory, grip, and pinch function, evaluating effective treatment interventions, and providing feedback to patients on nerve function. The AxoGen portfolio of products is available in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and several other European and international countries.

About Medtronic

As a global leader in medical technology, services and solutions, Medtronic improves the health and lives of millions of people each year. We believe our deep clinical, therapeutic and economic expertise can help address the complex challenges — such as rising costs, aging populations and the burden of chronic disease — faced by families and healthcare systems today. But no one can do it alone. That's why we're committed to partnering in new ways and developing powerful solutions that deliver better patient outcomes. Founded in 1949 as a medical repair company, we're now among the world's largest medical technology, services and solutions companies, employing more than 85,000 people worldwide, serving physicians, hospitals and patients in more than 155 countries. Join us in our commitment to take healthcare Further, Together. Learn more at [Medtronic.com](https://www.medtronic.com).

About Unyts

Unyts is among the leading procurement organizations in the United States, and is one of the only eight centers nationwide to house organ, tissue and eye procurement in one location. With the addition of Community Blood Service in 2007, Unyts became the first organization of its kind nationwide. Unyts operates as a non-profit serving the eight counties of Western New York and works to assist donor families, coordinate the donation process and increase knowledge and awareness within the community regarding transplantation.

###