

THE LIFELINK LINE

A Publication of the LifeLink HealthCare Institute

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Providing comprehensive medical, surgical and transplant care under one roof.

LIFELINK MEDICAL STAFF WELCOMES TRANSPLANT SURGEON

Thanh K. Nguyen, M.D., joins the LifeLink HealthCare Institute staff from the University of Minnesota, where she completed a fellowship in transplant surgery and immunology. Originally from Vietnam, Dr. Nguyen grew up in California and is fluent in English and Vietnamese.



THANH K. NGUYEN, M.D.

“I have several family members in the medical field,” says Dr. Nguyen, who received her medical degree from the University of California School of Medicine in Davis, California. “I was particularly drawn to transplant medicine due to the ability to create long-term relationships with patients.”

The motivation, she explains, for joining LifeLink HealthCare Institute includes the ability to treat both renal and liver patients. “I find that very exciting,”

Dr. Nguyen says. “The large size and scope of the Institute provides many benefits to patients, and becoming part of this strong group of clinicians will allow me to make an excellent contribution to the Tampa Bay community.”

“Dr. Nguyen’s interest in patient relationships

lends itself to the intense nature of transplant medicine,” says Danny Hawke, Administrator for LifeLink HealthCare Institute. “We’re pleased to have her on board.”

Having participated in numerous studies, Dr. Nguyen was the recipient of the Condon Research Award during her residency and the Lillian Rapp Scholarship for a research enrichment project while in medical school. She has published in several journals on the topic of heart transplantation and joins the 5-member LifeLink surgical team, consisting of Dr. Angel Alsina, Director of Liver Transplantation, Dr. Victor Bowers, Medical Director, Dr. David Bruce, Dr. James Huang and Dr. John Leone.

Since joining LifeLink in August, Dr. Nguyen began meeting physicians in Hillsborough county and looks forward to establishing collegial associations with nephrologists and gastroenterologists throughout West Central Florida.

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NATIONAL DONOR SABBATH

Each year, the second weekend in November marks the National Donor Sabbath, a time for faith-based communities throughout the country to focus on the life-saving gifts of organ donation.

Religious leaders play a significant role in educating others to consider organ and tissue donation. Their positions as role models create a unique opportunity to introduce a topic that saves and enhances the lives of thousands of people each year. Last year, faith leaders educated a total of 2,505 individuals on the importance of organ and tissue donation.

All major religions in the United States support organ and tissue donation as an honored and compassionate expression of generosity and love. A number of activities are implemented to celebrate the miracle of transplantation during National Donor Sabbath, including the sharing of a donor quilt, made of squares submitted by donor families to commemorate their loved ones. Each activity is intended to encourage congregation members to designate their wishes to become an organ and tissue donor.



QUILT SQUARES SUCH AS THIS ARE SUBMITTED BY DONOR FAMILIES IN MEMORY OF THEIR LOVED ONE.

LifeLink has prepared free materials for individuals to share with their faith leaders, to assist in framing discussions on organ and tissue donation. Volunteers are also available to share their experiences as transplant recipients with congregations. For more information about National Donor Sabbath, or to arrange to have information sent

to your religious leader, please contact LifeLink Public Relations at 813-253-2640.

MANY BENEFIT FROM A STRONG FISCAL YEAR

LifeLink Foundation measures its successes in terms of how many lives were saved, and the last fiscal year (June 2006 - July 2007) proved record-breaking across all divisions. We are pleased to report the following achievements, none of which would have been possible without the generosity of donor families.

LifeLink HealthCare Institute: Over 450 life-saving transplants were performed during our last fiscal year. More than 90 of these were liver transplants, representing the highest number of liver recipients in the Institute's history. The Institute also welcomed a fifth cardiologist and expanded the Liver Disease Treatment Program to include dedicated care for patients with Hepatitis, and the clinical research coordinators focused on at least 10 different nephrology-based clinical trials.

LifeLink of Florida: The organ procurement organization (OPO) based in Tampa recovered an astonishing 632 organs over the last twelve months. OPO Senior Vice President Jean Davis credits LifeLink's dedication to pinpointing the most appropriate staff member to deal with each unique donor family, as well as strong relationships with hospitals, as vital to making so many donations possible. The ability to turn a family's most devastating hour into a selfless act of giving results in recipients waiting a shorter amount of time for their transplant; the chart below demonstrates the significance of LifeLink of Florida's efforts.

	<i>Average Waiting Times in Months</i>	
	<i>Nationally</i>	<i>Locally</i>
Kidney	38.3	16
Heart	6.7	3.6
Lung	26.8	3
Liver	24.2	7

LIVING DONOR CORNER

Over the last several months, paired kidney donation has made news throughout the country, most notably through the efforts of congressmen and senators interested in reforming transplant legislation.

In other states, families are finding renewed hope in the system. The Alliance for Paired Donation in Ohio calls their program an “expansion” of life-saving transplant services, and many individuals -- such as Ron Bunnell of Pheonix, Arizona, whose wife received a kidney -- call it a chance to “pay it forward.” In an interview with the Global Times Online, Mr. Bunnell explained he was unable to donate directly to his wife, but paired donation allowed a man from Michigan to donate an organ in his stead.

In May, two months before the Bunnell’s lives were changed forever, Congressmen Charlie Norwood of Georgia and Jay Inslee of Washington introduced legislation “providing absolute clarity that paired (kidney) donations in no way conflict with the 1984

National Organ Transplant Act. We wil see lives saved by overall increased supply of donated organs,” said Norwood, who received a lung transplant in 2004. He went on to say the program “benefits all patients on the waiting list.”

Sentors Carl Levin of Michigan and Kit Bond of Missouri introduced matching legislation, which the Senate passed in July.

At the time of this writing, 6 hospitals in Florida were identified as alliance partners within the paired donation program, while over 2,700 individuals throughout the state were on the waiting list for a kidney transplant.

The concept of paired donation originated in Korea, and the Associated Press reported the first 5-way paired donation at Johns Hopkins Medical Facility on November 20, 2006.

FLORIDA RESTAURANT OFFERS CHANCE TO SUPPORT LIFELINK

Throughout the month of September, the Columbia Restaurant will honor a number of Florida non-profit organizations through their tenth Annual “Community Harvest.” This event allows Columbia patrons to enjoy a meal as well as contribute 5% of their bill to their choice of several non-profits, one of which is LifeLink Foundation. Ballots provided to diners will inform restaurant management as to which organization should receive the donation, and the restaurant will send funds directly; guests will not spend additional money for meals.

LifeLink Legacy Fund, which develops philanthropic resources to support the ongoing organ recovery and transplantation activities of LifeLink Foundation, has earmarked donations received through the Columbia

Restaurant for the Good Samaritan Patient Care Fund. “This program assists unfunded or under-funded patients,” explains Linda D’Aquila, Director of the Legacy Fund. “We are extremely grateful to the Columbia for recognizing the importance of supporting organ and tissue donation, and for helping to make life-saving transplant surgeries a reality through their donations.”

The Columbia website reports more than \$698,000 in donations to 100 non-profit organizations throughout Florida over the last nine years. The event will be in effect throughout all of their locations; restaurants are open 7 days a week, serving both lunch and dinner. Locations for Columbia Restaurant include:

- 2117 East Seventh Avenue, Tampa
- 411 St. Armands Cittle, Sarasota
- 98 St. George Street, St. Augustine
- 800 2nd Avenue NE, St. Petersburg
- 1241 Gulf Boulevard, Clearwarer
- 649 Front Street, Celebration
- 651 Okeechobee Boulevard, West Palm Beach.

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