

GIFT of LIFE Family House www.GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org

Welcome Them Home

- Your Kind Words -

Can Help a Family Feel Cared for and Welcomed

"You can say the number of people that have stayed at the Family House, the number of rooms they have or the number of nights that they've offered to people," says Tibor Baksy, "but I don't know how you put a number on the support that we've gotten here, and the strength."

Tibor and his wife, Bridget, came to Gift of Life Family House when their 9-month-old son John Paul needed a life-saving liver transplant due to Alagille syndrome, a rare genetic disorder. "At the hospital," Tibor explains, "all day you're dealing with major life decisions. The tests that are coming back could change your life or even determine if your child's life is going to go on. At the end of the day you just want to come home and just have people that understand."

Since the surgery, the Family House has also become a "home away from home" for John Paul's follow-up visits. "John Paul knows he's loved here," Bridget says. "John Paul can smile, and when he smiles and laughs, he makes others laugh, that's because of the financial contributors and volunteers who created a place that he could get through his medical situation."

continued on Family House page 2 For the Baksy family, Gift of Life Family House provides a place to relax and recharge after difficult days at the hospital.

Welcome Them Home

with your words of encouragement!

Help us reach our goal of 1,000 notes for our welcome banner by November 10th! Visit www.SupportFamilyHouse.org/Welcome to fill out your note today!

wishing you peace and comfort in these hard days. -Anne



Our fall Welcome Them Home campaign

is an opportunity for you to help families like the Baksys in

a new and special way. Every \$40 you give provides a night of shelter and caring community to a transplant family. When you give to our Welcome Them Home campaign, you can also send an encouraging note that will become part of a beautiful banner in our family dining room. Your words will welcome every family to the Family House!

Visit www.SupportFamilyHouse.org/Welcome to send your note today and help us reach 1,000 notes by November 10th.

..........

The next time John Paul walks through the doors at the Family House, he can be greeted by your personal message telling him, "You can do this!" or "I believe in vou!"

RIGHT: Tibor and Bridget with their 6 children John Paul, Tibor Jr., Ann Marie, Matthew, Isabel and Mark.



HOUSE HAPPENINGS



June 5 The Heller family and Hennion & Walsh, Inc. host the 13th Annual Jackson's Mulligan on Life Golf Outing in Florham Park, NJ. Gift of Life Family House is grateful for their partnership, commitment, and investment in supporting transplant families in honor of Jackson Heller a liver transplant recipient.

Jackson's Mulligan



July 3 Kate Leong and family host a "Magical Monday" fundraising event in honor of Gavin Leong at Gillian's Wonderland Pier in Ocean City, NJ, \$3,237,50 was raised and all proceeds benefit transplant families at Gift of Life Family House.



Bensalem Charity Challenge

July 17 The Bensalem Economic Development Corporation presents a check for \$5,300 after hosting their 11th Annual Bensalem Township Charity Challenge in July. Several charities, including Gift of Life Family House, were supported through



no Shower Happy Hour

July 25 The Livechhi and Nelson families present a check for \$13,390, the proceeds from this year's annual No Shower Happy Hour, an event to remember their loved ones David Nelson Jr. and Chuck Livechhi and support Gift of Life Family House.



Family House Celebrates its 6th Birthday

July 29 Volunteers, staff and guests gather for a special BBQ & Miniature Golf Celebration in honor of the 6th anniversary of Gift of Life Family House.



13th Annual Kidney Open Golf Outing

August 28 Howard M. Nathan, President & CEO, Gift of Life Donor Program and Dan Sinnott, Family House **Advisory Board Member, host the 13th Annual Kidney** Open Golf Outing in Wilmington, DE. More than 130 golfers, 40 event sponsors, lots of volunteers and staff helped make the event a huge success! More than \$93,000 net was raised to support the Adopt-A-Family Program at Gift of Life Family House.



Home Cook HEROES

The Home Cook Heroes program invites volunteer groups to the Family House to prepare healthy, home-cooked dinners each night along with brunch on weekends. Participating groups include families, schools, businesses, service clubs, sports teams and more. Volunteers are needed this fall!

Sign up today at www.GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org.



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BOLD = Home Cook Hero All Star

All-Stars are committed volunteer

Thank you to our generous community

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groups who provide a meal to Family House guests through the Home Cook Heroes program at least 12 times in a calendar year.



Caregiver *Life*line Spotlight

by Jacquelyn Kates, LSW, CT
Family Support Counselor, Gift of Life Donor Program

FAQs for Communicating with Your Donor Family

Gift of Life Donor Program encourages transplant recipients to write to their donor families. Our Family Support Services Counselors review all correspondence and facilitate the exchange of letters between recipients and donor families.

The hospital did not give me much information about my donor. How can I find out more information about my donor and donor family?

For confidentiality purposes, recipients are not given personal information about their donor or donor family. However, recipients are encouraged to write to their donor family should they wish to learn more.

I do not want to upset my donor family by writing them a letter. When is a good time to write and send the letter?

The best time to write and send a letter is when the recipient is ready. Acknowledging the gift of transplant and thanking the donor family can be an important step in the recipient's own healing process. If the donor family is not ready to receive a letter, they have the choice to keep it unopened.

Who in my family can write?

Anyone is invited to write to the donor family.

What should I write in my donor letter?

There is no perfect letter. We recommend saying thank you to the donor family for their compassionate decision or honoring their loved one's wishes. A recipient could share how their life has changed since transplant and what they hope to accomplish with a second lease on life.

Is there anything I should not write?

Identifying information such as last names, addresses, phone numbers, email, and social media accounts may not be shared. If this information is included, it will be removed prior to forwarding to the family. However, make sure recipient includes full name, address, date of transplant, transplant center, and organ received on a separate piece of paper. This information is needed to identify the donor family and forward the letter.

Where should I send my letter?

Gift of Life Donor Program Attn: Family Support Services 401 N. 3rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123

Is it normal to feel guilty after receiving a transplant?

It is very common for recipients to feel guilty after transplant, which is sometimes known as survivor guilt. Speaking to other recipients in a transplant center support group setting or talking with a donor family can be helpful in relieving these uncomfortable feelings. Gift of Life Donor Program and Family House have many donor family volunteers that are open to talk with recipients about their experience.

Can the donor family write to me/my family?

The donor family is able to write to recipients following the same guidelines and process.

When will I hear from my donor family?

Unfortunately, a recipient may not hear from their donor family. Grief is a unique experience and some families may not be ready to write or may not want to.

How can I meet my donor family?

Donor family and recipient meetings are shown in the media, but many recipients do not have the opportunity to meet their donor family. Before a meeting can take place, it is important that there be an understanding of what might occur at a meeting. That's why *Gift of Life Donor Program* requires that the donor family and recipient write several letters to build a relationship through correspondence before meeting. Both must express an interest in sharing contact information and meeting. At that point, Family Support Services will send Consent and Release forms. Once the signed forms are received, personal information will be shared to facilitate direct communication.

SAVE #GIINGTUESDAY THE DATE NOVEMBER 28, 2017

Gear up for #GivingTuesday, a global day of caring when people like you give back to the causes that are close to your heart.

40 Hours for the Family House is a fast-paced & FUN online fundraising challenge that starts at 8am on Giving Tuesday and only lasts 40 hours. Make it your personal mission or create a team! **Sign up today at www.GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org** and help raise crucial funds to provide lodging and supportive services to transplant patients and their families. #40hrs2017

"My twin brother, Javier, and I were first responders on 9/11 and we have had complications with our lungs ever since, due to the air quality [at that time]. Javier received a lung transplant two months ago."

Omar and his wife, Moncy, have been the primary caregivers for Javier since he was diagnosed. They reside in New York and have been staying at the Family House since Javier's lung transplant in June. Other family members come on the weekends to help care for Javier so Omar and Moncy are able to go home for a day or two.

"People in the Family House, we all cross paths for a reason. The dining room is like musical chairs – I want to talk to everyone and exchange stories. The House is my sanctuary, a place where I can feel at peace. There is comradery in knowing that you are not the only ones going through this. Other people [outside of the Family House] don't really know about organ donation. There's a lack of awareness in the minority community. Everyone needs to know this is a good thing. That you're saving lives. I can't find the words in my heart to say how much I appreciate [organ donors] - for someone to open their heart, to check the box, and to say yes." — Omar

Omar (left) pictured with his wife, Moncy, and his brother, Javier, Family House quests.



"I have Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis – same as my father. I had stayed at the Family House with my mom when my dad was in the hospital for his transplant.

The Family House offers so much to its patrons that stay there. We have met and continue to meet so many amazing people waiting for transplants or recovering from their transplants. And it's not just the patients, it is their family and loved ones as well. The Family House allows all these people to come together and create a great support system for patients and caregivers. I have been on both ends and I truly believe the caregivers have a way harder job than the patient in my eyes. The Family House offers an environment that is safe for people going through extremely rough times in their lives." —Alicia

Alicia and her father both received lung transplants, making her intimately acquainted with both sides of the transplant journey – as a caregiver and a patient.

Alicia and her husband, Dave, pictured with their children, Family House Guests.





OF THE Family House



"At dinner, we'd push our tables together and socialize with other couples and individuals that we met. It was very helpful to have this outlet, considering what we were all going through. The Family House was such a benefit to us and we're very grateful. The service that the Family House provides is desperately needed by so many people at what is often the most difficult time in their lives. That's the most important reason that we decided to make this bequest...naming the Gift of Life Family House as our beneficiary was really easy. It was a lot easier than doing our taxes!" —Pat and Jay

Pat, pictured with her husband, Jay, past guests and Family House Legacy Society Members.



"In the last three months, I've had three major surgeries and was on dialysis. It was horrible. We've been through so much. She is always there for me and taking care of me. Before the surgery, she's telling me all the time, 'Don't drink anymore fluids. Don't drink!' Now after the surgery, she's telling me 'Drink, drink! You need your fluids!' I can't win! But seriously, she really stepped up to the plate for me this time. She took on a lot and I'm real proud of her. We are going home on Friday." —Ron, from Colonia, New Jersey

On May 10, 2017, Ron's wife, Carmella, gave him the gift of life by donating her kidney, a selfless act that saved his life. They both recovered here at Gift of Life Family House. Ron and Carmella have three sons, Sal, Ron, and Joey, and five grandchildren.

Ron and Carmella pictured showing a photo taken moments after they woke up from their respective surgeries.



"Right now I am drawing lines on the measuring cup so my mom has an easier time taking the correct amount of medications. I am leaving soon to go home and need to make sure she's all set.

After transplant it's sort of like having a newborn baby, you have so many things to learn and get used to, and lots of new regimes. Having the Family House allows us to get organized, focus on my mom and help her get better. We would never be able to do this at home with all the distractions. Plus, I love sitting here in the garden listening to the fountain, it's so peaceful. I am heading back to North Carolina soon and very happy knowing my parents are in good hands at the Family House." — Robyn

After a 19 year battle with LAM, a rare lung disease, Linda received her life-saving transplant this summer. Her daughter Robyn has been traveling back and forth from Charlotte, N.C. to care for her mom and support her father.

Robyn, pictured with her parents, Linda and Eddie



Help Support

Gift of Life Family House This Fall!



Support the Adopt-A-Family Program

Consider making a monthly or annual tax-deductible gift to the Adopt-A-Family Program – each \$40 contribution helps support one night of lodging for a family staying at the Family House who cannot afford the nightly fee. You can contribute to sponsor one night, two nights, a weekend or more. Gifts of any level are meaningful.



Host an Event!

From golf outings to intimate dinners in your home, there are countless ways you, your family, and friends can fundraise for the Family House. Fundraising events are also a great way to reconnect with family and friends and remember or celebrate a loved one while supporting our important mission.



Become a Home Cook Hero Volunteer!

Groups of up to 10 people can provide, prepare (on or off site) and serve a meal to guests staying at the Family House. Enjoy cooking in our fully equipped kitchen as well as seeing the impact of your service on our families first-hand.



Host a Wish List Drive!

Keeping the Family House stocked with basic home necessities – such as food, toiletries, and pantry items - requires a lot of donated items. This is an excellent activity to involve your family, company, religious group, or friends. You can also collect grocery store gift cards to keep our refrigerators stocked with the things we run out of most – milk, eggs and butter! The Family House is also in need of gas cards to keep our free shuttle service operational – transporting patients and families to and from local hospitals each day.



Join the Legacy Society for Planned Giving

By making a "planned gift" – a gift through your estate – you can ensure the future success of Gift of Life Family House and have the satisfaction of knowing that your values will live on through the loving care we provide.



Corporate Partnerships

Through volunteerism, sponsorships, grants and program support, hundreds of corporations have partnered with Gift of Life Family House to support transplant patients and their families. In return, corporations receive unique recognition, brand visibility through our various communications tools and social media platforms as well opportunities for employee team building events and ways to engage and reconnect with clients. If your business or corporation is interested in supporting programs or other initiatives at Gift of Life Family House, we would be happy to help build an impactful partnership.

For questions, please contact a member of the Family House Development Team: 267-546-9800 or info@giftoflifefamilyhouse.org

To our most gracious contributors:

for your loyal support and continued generosity in helping us care for transplant patients and families at Gift of Life Family House.

for your loyal support and continued

Ralph V. Barndt

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Mariposa Health Center LLC Thank you to those who dedicated an engraved paver Robert Nichols and Katherine Masseroni The Patients & Caregivers HUP

> We apologize for any errors or omissions and ask that you contact Samantha Oliphant at solinhant@aiftoflifefamilyhouse ora to report any corrections.

Lung Transplant Support Group

Thank You to our volunteers in the community for coordinating fundraising events, Wish List Drives and CrowdRise fundraisers to support the mission of Gift of Life Family House.

Fundraising Events

9th Annual No Shower Happy Hour hosted by the David Nelson Jr.

11th Annual Bensalem Township Charity Challenge hosted by the **Bensalem Economic Development Corporation**

Reth DeMichele and Alexa Martino The Aisling & Olivia Fun Run and Remembrance Walk Designer Bag Bingo hosted by Team Spiers **Dress Down Day coordinated by Guy Carpenter & Company LLC** Dress Down Day coordinated by Jefferson Heart Institute

Dress Down Day coordinated by Jefferson Nicoletti Kidney Transplant Center

"A Celebration of Life" event in memory of Casey Michalek, coordinated by

Student Activity Fund Family House Fundraiser hosted by "Papa Carl" Anderson Family House Fundraiser hosted by Jodi Boyd Family House Fundraiser hosted by St. John Evangelical Lutheran Family House Fundraiser hosted by Weidner's Deli Global ImpACTors present "The Tin Woman" play benefitting Gift of Life

Heavenly Hall Full Gospel Church Car Wash Jackson's 13th Annual Mulligan on Life Golf Outing hosted by the Heller Family Team Matt collection benefitting Gift of Life Family House

Thomas Jefferson University Hospital Transplant Institute HAP Campaign

WeeUsables Stuff-A-Bag Charity Fundraiser

Weis Store #240 Store Raffle coordinated by Kathy Miller

Wiffle Ball Fundraising Event hosted by TD Bank Summer Interns

Wish List Drives coordinated by:

Welsh Mountain Medical and Dental Center **Donna and Richard Waechter**

Kacey Fennel

Mt. Holly Elks #848

Tahisha Anderson

David Snyder Cooke & Bieler, L.P. Home2 Suites by Hilton Philadelphia William Zettner St. Mary Medical Center

Emergency Department

Online Fundraisers

Beth McMullin's Facebook Fundraiser in honor of William Tashiian Domingo Pena's 70th Birthday Skydiving to Support the Family House CTI Cares – Gift of Life Family House Fundraiser

The Legacy Society for Planned Giving

The Estate of V. Marie Bechtold David and Flizabeth Kennedy

To make a contribution to Gift of Life Family House,

The official registration and financial information of Transplant House d/b/a Gift of Life Family House may be obtained from PA Dept. of State by calling toll free 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. United Way #48974 | Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) #28458

please visit www.GiftofLifeFamilyHouse.org or use the enclosed envelope.