

## Dr. Peter Papadakos gives keynote address at Rochester Donor Family Celebration

▶ Peter J. Papadakos, M.D., Associate Professor of Anesthesiology and Surgery at Strong Memorial Hospital, was the featured speaker at Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network's sixth annual Rochester Donor Family Celebration held Sept. 16. About 250 people attended the celebration at the RIT Inn in Rochester, including donor family members, recipients, and medical personnel.



*Peter J. Papadakos, M.D., was the keynote speaker at the Rochester Donor Family Celebration.*

The event was sponsored by Fujisawa Healthcare, Inc., and the Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation (MTF). "We come here today to celebrate the gift of life," said FLDRN Executive Director Bill Morris in his opening remarks. "We come today from different perspectives — donor families come to remember their loved ones, organ recipients come to thank organ donors and their families for the gift of life. Health care professionals come to honor the humanitarian acts performed by ordinary people at the most difficult times of their lives. And we at Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network come to say thank you to those donor families for allowing us to come into your lives. On behalf of the staff of Finger Lakes, I thank each of you for allowing us to assist you during your time of grief."

In his keynote address, Papadakos praised the local community for its support of transplantation. "As a community, we in Western New York State are always ready to give the gift of life," said Papadakos. "It is well known in New



*David Beatson, recipient of the first heart transplant at Strong Memorial Hospital, expresses his gratitude to organ donors.*



*Donor family members Ellen and Stephen Karnisky address the gathering at the celebration.*

York State that we have one of the highest percentages of organ donation."

In his more than 15 years of critical care practice in Rochester, Papadakos noted, he has participated in the care of hundreds of organ donors and transplant patients. "It is my patients and their families that daily reinforce my calling, and the calling of many in this room, to the field of medicine," he said. "We, as a group, care for the sick and attempt to relieve suffering. The field of organ transplantation has given us physicians and health care professionals another frontier to breach in the battle to relieve suffering."

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*Author and guest speaker Michelle J. Peele, center, talks with donor family members Joan and Lowell Foland.*

## "Glimpses of God" author is featured speaker at Evening of Appreciation

▶ North Carolina teen Morgan Peele had long red hair and drove a red Jeep. Artistically gifted, she'd been accepted to a school for jewelry design upon graduation from high school. In March, 1999, an auto accident left Morgan brain dead. Just two weeks and two days before the accident, Morgan told her parents and sister at dinner that should anything happen to her, she wanted to be an organ donor.

"It was a conversation I didn't want to have," said Michelle J. Peele,

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## Donor Family Celebration

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Dr. Stuart Sacks and his racing partner, Dr. Pearce Sloan, were honored for their fundraising efforts on behalf of FLDRN.

Papadakos recalled being asked by the family of a potential donor why organ donation was so important.

"I responded that it is the supreme example of the flame of life, which we all have, defeating death and bringing upon us the spirit of victory over illness and the suffering of others," he said. "It is a great honor that you donor families allow me and others in the ICUs of Syracuse, Buffalo, Rochester, and many other local communities, to participate in that golden moment when we understand that your supreme sacrifice is allowing us to assist in caring for many, many others."

Guest speakers included David Beatson, recipient of the first heart transplant performed at Strong Memorial Hospital; Ellen and Stephen Karnisky, donor family members; and Ellen Kulik, donor mom, MOD Squad member and co-founder of the Donor Family Network. Special recognition was given to Stuart Sacks, M.D., and Pearce Sloan, M.D., who raise money for FLDRN through auto racing.

"Our hope this afternoon is that each of you will, in your own way, remember those who have gone before us and left the greatest give anyone could give to mankind," Morris said. "And that is the gift of life." ❤️



Rochester donor mom Georgia Lester, right, her daughter Lelia Jackson and granddaughter Kennede Jackson, attended the National Donor Recognition Ceremony in Washington, D.C., where the National Donor Family Quilt was displayed.

## MOD Squad members attend National Donor Recognition Ceremony

▶ Georgia Lester and Ellen Kulik, donor moms and MOD Squad members, were among those attending the 2001 National Donor Recognition Ceremony and Workshop held July 6-8, in Washington, D.C. The biennial event pays tribute to all Americans who have donated their organs, tissues, or marrow to save or enhance the lives of others.

The National Donor Recognition Ceremony and Workshop was sponsored by the Division of Transportation, the Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with the National Kidney Foundation's National Donor Family Council and many other national and local organizations. Featured speaker was Tommy G. Thompson, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. On display was the National Donor Family Quilt, created by donor families across the country. ❤️

## Update

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Or:  
Corporate Woods of Brighton,  
Building 30, Suite 220  
Rochester, NY 14623  
Telephone: 716-272-4930  
Fax: 716-272-4956

24-hour Information number:  
1-800-810-5494

## FLDRN welcomes new employees

► **Henry Mundorff** joined FLDRN in July as chief financial officer. He came to FLDRN from Strong Memorial Hospital, where he served as a senior financial analyst for reimbursement.

"I am well versed in reimbursement requirements under the Medicare program for organs," Mundorff says in explaining his decision to join the OPO. "It was clear that with the addition of liver and heart transplants at Strong, the OPO needed more accounting presence in the transplant department to manage the increasing organ activity. It also seemed like a nice career change for me."

Mundorff's new position encompasses not only accounting, but helping the OPO secure the resources it needs to function efficiently.

"One of the reasons why I took the job is to see if we could make some changes in meeting the needs of the OPO as it relates to reimbursement," Mundorff says. "The OPO has different requirements than do most hospital departments and we are working to present that concept to hospital and university administrators."

Mundorff, who lives with his wife in Macedon, spends his off-duty hours refinishing furniture and making patchwork quilts. He has made a number of quilts, from crib-sized to king-sized.

"I never took lessons to learn how to quilt," he says. "I read a book. I think you can learn to do anything you want in this world if you read a book."

**Beth Carpenter**, R.N., BSN, has been working as an organ procurement coordinator at FLDRN's Rochester office since August. She was working in Strong Memorial Hospital's Burn Trauma Unit when she had the opportunity to assist with a donor. "The experience made me think about working for the OPO," Carpenter says.

"I was ready for a change, too, and thought this would be a good opportunity."

Carpenter has found there's a lot to learn about organ transplantation, and has spent a great deal of time observing. "I'm learning about sterile techniques and operating room procedure," she says. "Every Tuesday and Friday, we do living related liver and kidney donations. It's very fascinating that people who are living can give a portion of themselves to help a loved one or a friend, or sometimes it's just altruistic. And seeing the medical team do what they do is just amazing."

An exercise enthusiast, Carpenter lives in Rochester with her Rottweiler, Montana. She is a graduate of Alfred University and the University of Rochester.

"The job at FLDRN has been great," she says. "I enjoy the people I work with. It's a real team effort."

**John Nolan**, R.N., came to FLDRN from Highland Hospital in Rochester, where he worked as a nurse manager of the Intensive Care Unit. He started working as an organ procurement coordinator at FLDRN in September. "Highland Hospital was going through some changes and I thought it was a good time to move on," says Nolan, who is also a registered respiratory therapist. "I have a good relationship with FLDRN's Sue Cimbalo and when she told me there was going to be an opening at FLDRN, I decided to pursue it."

And he's been busy ever since. In his first six weeks as an organ procurement coordinator, Nolan assisted with five donors. "There are a lot of benefits to me in this job, especially in leaving a management position," Nolan says. "That responsibility is gone, taking a big weight off my shoulders. Another benefit is the interaction with the donor families."

Nolan has found that the learning curve at FLDRN is a bit steeper than he'd expected. "Even though I've been in health care for over 20 years, there is so much to learn on this job. It's a type of health care I've never done before. It's a challenge and very exciting."

Nolan, who lives in Greece, N.Y., has three children: John, 20, a sophomore medical engineering student at Purdue University; Sheila, 17, a senior at Greece Olympia High School; and Terry, 15, a sophomore at Greece Olympia High. In his spare time, Nolan volunteers with a local fire department/EMS agency, and referees high school hockey.

Data coordinator **Cheryl Scott** spends half of her work week at FLDRN and half at the Rochester Eye and Human Parts Bank. "Everything I do is centered on data," says Scott. "I help with the compliance reports for the hospitals."

Scott worked for 18 years at a Rochester-area manufacturing firm, but lost that job during a downsizing. She went back to school to hone her computer skills, then landed the position at FLDRN. "I like what I do because the people here are great," she says. "They believed in me. It's hard to get an opening in a field other than what you had been doing for so many years. I've found a little niche here and I'm happy."

Scott enjoys spending time with her nieces and nephews, socializing, and working on the computer at home. 🌟

### Incidentally...

Aloha to **Nance Conney**, who left FLDRN in September to assume her new job as an organ procurement coordinator with The Organ Donor Center of Hawaii. 🌟

Best wishes to **Peter Frateschi**, who is working as a registered nurse in the Intermediate Care Unit at Upstate Medical University. 🌟



Donor Family Network co-founders Ellen Kulik, left, and Michelle Lester, received the Nicholas Miller Award from the Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation. Behind them is the local donor family quilt.

### "Glimpses of God"

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Morgan's mother and author of *Glimpses of God* (Pentland Press, 2000), a book about her journey through grief to faith and hope following Morgan's death. "But to know what her wishes were is the greatest gift I've ever been given."


Peele was a featured speaker at the Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network's Evening of Appreciation, held Nov. 8 at the Wyndham Hotel in Syracuse. In her speech, Peele encouraged the gathering to give generously of themselves because, as she says, "The more I do for someone else when I hurt, the more I heal. In giving, there's healing." All of the royalties from her book will be used to promote organ donation.

Guest speaker Mark Thomas Scrivani, a bereavement and loss therapist and author with more than 20 years' experience in the field, offered thoughts on coping with loss and bereavement. "The one question everyone wants answered is why," said Scrivani, as many in the room nodded in agreement. "Why did this happen? Why do we go on? The question why has no answer. But the beauty of the human spirit is that we do survive."



Dr. Frank Szmalc, Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network's Syracuse medical director, laughs during Susan Wagner-White's introduction to his closing remarks.


Ellen Gottmann Kulik, donor mom, MOD Squad member and co-founder with Michelle Lester of the Donor Family Network (DFN), unveiled the DFN's new medallion. The colorful medallion will serve as both the DFN's logo and as a bronze graveside memorial marker which will be available to donor families.

"I want to remind everyone that it is the donors who are the miracle makers," Kulik said. "They are the true heroes of organ donation." 

## Donor Family Network founders receive national award

▶ Ellen Gottmann Kulik and Michelle Lester, co-founders of the Donor Family Network, received the 2001 Nicholas Miller Award for Excellence in Donor Family Support from the Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation (MTF), the nation's largest provider of bone, tendon, and ligament tissue for transplant. The award honors individuals, programs and/or organizations for excellence in providing donor family services, including bereavement support.

Presenting the award was Elizabeth McNamara of MTF. Kulik and Lester were nominated for the award by FLDRN.

The award was initiated by MTF in 1993, in honor of Nicholas Miller, the son of MTF staffer Jayne Miller and her husband, Tom. In April, 1986, 14-month-old Nicholas was the youngest heart recipient at Loma Linda Hospital in California. Following the rejection of the heart, Nicholas became a tissue donor. 



### Update is online!

For the latest news and information about Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network, visit our Web site at [www.donorrecovery.org](http://www.donorrecovery.org)

## FLDRN, Upstate Medical Center co-host Upstate New York Transplant Meeting

Medical personnel and transplant professionals gathered at the Embassy Suites in East Syracuse on Oct. 5 to share the latest information in the field of organ transplantation. The 2001 Upstate New York Transplant Meeting was co-hosted by Upstate Medical University and Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network.

More than 60 people attended the daylong seminar, including physicians, nurses, and personnel from organ procurement organizations and transplant centers across Upstate New York. The program was sponsored by Fujisawa Healthcare, Novartis, and Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories.


Participants were welcomed to the event by Bill Morris, FLDRN's executive director, and Dilip Kittur, M.D., director of Transplant Service at Upstate Medical University. In the morning session, Charles Canver, M.D., director of The Heart Institute, Division of Cardio-thoracic Surgery at Albany Medical Center, discussed cardiovascular transplant; Dr. Kittur spoke about laparoscopic live kidney donation; Henkie Tan, M.D., Assistant Professor of Surgery at University of Rochester Medical Center, discussed living donor liver transplantation; and Mark Laftavi, M.D., Assistant Professor of Surgery at Buffalo General Hospital, presented on pancreas transplant, past, present, and future. In the afternoon session, Frank Szmalc, M.D., Associate Professor of Surgery, Upstate Medical Center, spoke about pediatric transplants. Two concurrent break-out sessions, informal forums for sharing ideas and experiences, were held. The session for transplant physicians was conducted by John Leggat, M.D., Assistant Professor of Medicine,



*Sriram Narsipur, M.D., left, and John Leggat, M.D., conducted the session for transplant surgeons at the Upstate New York Transplant Meeting.*

Upstate Medical University, and Sriram Narsipur, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics at Upstate Medical University. The

session for clinical/procurement professionals was conducted by Martin Zand, M.D., Medical Director of the Renal and Pancreas Transplant Program at Strong Memorial Hospital. Zand was the keynote speaker at a dinner meeting held Oct. 4, discussing "The Care and Treatment of the Well Transplant Patient."

Response to the seminar was positive, according to Elana Henner, FLDRN senior coordinator, who organized the event. "The participant evaluations we received rated the speakers very highly," she says. "We are pleased to have been able to present this seminar to transplant professionals in the Upstate area." 

### Wanted: FLDRN Poster Contest entries

Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network's first annual "Donate Life" poster contest is underway. Students in grades six through 12 are eligible to enter the contest, which features a \$100 Grand Prize. Four honorable mention prizes of \$25 each will also be awarded.


The contest's goals include:

- educating the public about organ and tissue donation;
- educating young adults, their families, and school staff about the importance of and urgent need for life-saving transplants; and
- recognizing and rewarding talented students for their creative efforts.

Entries, which should illustrate the message of promoting organ and tissue donation, must be submitted no later than Jan. 31, 2002.

Artwork must be original and accomplished by the student without assistance. Entries should be at least 8 1/2 x 11 inches and no larger than 11 x 14 inches, and include the student's name, age, school, and grade. The posters can be mailed to:

FLDRN Poster Contest  
c/o Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network  
Attn: Sue Cimbalo  
Corporate Woods of Brighton  
Building 30, Suite 220  
Rochester, NY 14623

 Winners will be notified by phone or mail by March 20, 2002.

For more information, visit the FLDRN Web site at [www.donorrecovery.org](http://www.donorrecovery.org).

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# *Holiday Greetings*

We wish everyone a blessed and peaceful holiday season.

*—The staff of Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network*