



PRESS RELEASE



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2016 Donate Life Transplant Games to be Held in Cleveland

9,000 Organ Recipients, Donors & Supporters to Experience Cleveland in July 2016

CLEVELAND (April 29, 2014) – The Donate Life Transplant Games will bring thousands touched by organ, tissue and cornea donation to Cleveland in the summer of 2016, the Greater Cleveland Sports Commission announced Tuesday. The event will involve an estimated 9,000 visitors participating in over 20 events and ancillary activities throughout Greater Cleveland from July 22 – 26, 2016. The Transplant Games is expected to provide \$5 million of economic activity to the region. The Sports Commission will manage the event with extensive support from local partners Lifebanc, Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals.

The biennial Transplant Games aim to raise awareness for the life-altering benefits brought through the transplantation of organs, tissue and corneas. Organ transplants save thousands of lives each year and the Transplant Games celebrate the gift of life and honor donors and their families. The event also provides a platform for education on organ and tissue donation. 120,000 people in the United States are currently awaiting a life-saving organ transplant and donor registry lists in every state need continued growth.

The 2016 Transplant Games will feature a minimum of 18 events in addition to numerous ancillary activities, including opening and closing ceremonies, donor recognition events and several receptions. Many events and activities will take place in Downtown Cleveland, with area universities also serving as venues. Exact event locations will be announced at a later date. The 2016 Games will be the 14th edition of the event with Houston hosting The Games in July 2014.

"Our community's proven ability to host major events, outstanding healthcare industry and status as a traveler destination make Cleveland an outstanding site for the 2016 Donate Life Transplant Games," said David Gilbert, President and CEO of the Greater Cleveland Sports Commission. "The event will infuse \$5 million into our local economy, provide an opportunity for 9,000 visitors to experience Cleveland and raise awareness for a cause that saves or improves tens of thousands of lives each and every year. The partnership between the Sports Commission, Lifebanc, Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals will allow Cleveland to hold an event that will simply wow its participants and supporters. Hosting the Transplant Games in 2016 is another huge win for our city."



Cleveland was selected to host the event due to its potential venues, lodging options, public transportation, flight pricing and schedules, and driving distance from other markets. 12 other cities submitted official bids to host the event and Cleveland was one of three finalists. Cleveland also benefitted from having world-class transplant centers at both Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals.

"Cleveland won out over a number of exceptional communities for a variety of reasons. The Cleveland bid clearly demonstrated an overwhelming commitment to the rich history of the Transplant Games and the cause of donation and transplantation," said Bill Ryan, President and CEO of the Transplant Games of America. "The local medical community and Lifebanc, Cleveland's organ procurement organization, played a great role in the selection of Cleveland for the Donate Life Transplant Games. The leadership and professionalism of the nationally-recognized Greater Cleveland Sports Commission created an unmatched excitement in bringing the games to this community."

As Northeast Ohio's organ procurement organization Lifebanc will provide leading assistance in managing the event. Lifebanc has continually supported the Transplant Games throughout the event's history and will be using the 2016 Transplant Games to greatly increase the number of people on the state of Ohio's donor registration list.

"Lifebanc is excited that the City of Cleveland will host the 2016 Transplant Games of America," said Gordon Bowen, CEO of Lifebanc. "This extraordinary event highlights the athletic abilities of transplant recipients and living donors. The games present the opportunity to increase the Ohio donor registry while raising awareness about the critical need for more registered organ, eye and tissue donors. The true legacy of donation and transplantation is revealed in the lives of the participants involved in the games. These individuals are our family, our neighbors, our friends, they are our community."

The Transplant Games is the latest in a long line of large-scale, multi-sport events brought to Northeast Ohio by the Greater Cleveland Sports Commission. Similar events hosted by the Sports Commission since 2000, include the 2004 International Children's Games, 2007 World School Games and 2013 National Senior Games.

"We are thrilled that our community continues to be chosen to host these immensely impactful and important events. The Sports Commission takes great pride in hosting events better than they have ever been hosted before and creating a legacy that lasts for many years," Gilbert said.

ABOUT THE GREATER CLEVELAND SPORTS COMMISSION

The Greater Cleveland Sports Commission prides itself on being one of the most distinguished Sports Commissions in the country, effectively leveraging sports events and activities to further economic development in Northeast Ohio. The philosophy of the Sports Commission sets it apart from others by operating as an economic and community development organization utilizing sports as a vehicle to forward other community agendas. The organization takes the unique approach of becoming a management and financial partner in each event with the goal of producing events that are more successful in Cleveland than other cities in which they have been held. Since 2000, the Sports Commission has been responsible for attracting over 150 sporting events, contributing to more than \$400 million in economic activity. For more information, visit www.clevelandsports.org.

ABOUT THE DONATE LIFE TRANSPLANT GAMES OF AMERICA

The Donate Life Transplant Games is a multi-sport festival event produced by The Transplant Games of America®, a 501(c)(3) non-profit whose mission is to promote organ, eye, and tissue donation. The organization based out of Grand Rapids, Michigan brings awareness to the tremendous advances in the field of transplantation and in the development of immuno-suppressant drugs in the pharmaceutical industry. For more information visit www.transplantgamesofamerica.org



ABOUT LIFE Banc

Life Banc, northeast Ohio's non-profit organization that saves and heals lives through organ, eye and tissue donation. Life Banc facilitates the donation process, provides bereavement services to the families of individuals that have generously given the gift of life, and educates our community about the importance and need for organ, eye and tissue donation. One-hundred and twenty thousand people are currently waiting for a life-saving transplant. Every registered organ, eye and tissue donor can potentially save and heal the lives of more than 50 people. It's all about one ordinary person making an extraordinary difference. All of us can be that person.

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