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Media contact: Edwige Buteau
Phone: (917) 655-3843; Email: Edwige.Buteau@outlook.com

**OVER 440 COLLEGE STUDENTS NATIONWIDE JOIN GIFT OF LIFE MARROW
REGISTRY EFFORT TO SAVE LIVES**

Student Interns Witnessed First-Time Meetings of Two Lifesaving Heroes and Transplant Survivors during Annual Symposiums in South Florida

BOCA RATON, August 17, 2023 – As the new academic year begins, more than 440 college students nationwide have joined [Gift of Life Marrow Registry's](#) Campus Ambassador Program (CAP) to serve their communities and save lives. The organization welcomed the new Fall 2023 class of donor recruiters, with students from 136 colleges and universities, at its 9th annual CAP Symposium, hosted in two parts on July 24 and August 14. The program equips students with the skills and tools they will need to recruit new stem cell and bone marrow donors into the registry.

Following welcome messages from Gift of Life CEO and Founder Jay Feinberg and Gift of Life Donor Recruitment Director Christopher Camacho, the Campus Ambassadors were immersed into the organization's mission through panel discussions and breakout sessions. The highlight of the gatherings took place when the students saw first-hand the tremendous impact donors can have on the lives of patients with a blood disease when two donor pairs met for the first time.

The first pair included Adam LeBlanc, a 21-year-old Florida Atlantic University student from Fort Lauderdale, Fla. and his blood stem cell recipient Michael Johnson, a 15-year-old survivor of Leukemia and Fanconi Anemia. LeBlanc, a member of the university's Men's Lacrosse team, joined the registry at an on-campus donor recruitment event.

The second pair introduced was Raphael Eidelman, a 22-year-old from Los Angeles, Calif., who had joined Gift of Life's registry at a donor drive held by Campus Ambassadors in 2019 at California State University, and his stem cell recipient Mitchell Stern, 66, from Boca Raton, Fla. who survived Myelodysplastic Disorder.

“Our Campus Ambassador Program gives students an incredible opportunity to help save lives and experience the long-term satisfaction of seeing the donors they recruit saving lives for many years into the future,” said Camacho. “We are thrilled that so many have joined us in the fight to cure blood cancer while gaining valuable internship experience that will help create a path to success during and after college.”

Throughout the school year, the ambassadors will take the lead in hosting donor drives, awareness campaigns and educational events. By leveraging their peer networks, social media presence, and community connections, these passionate students will amplify Gift of Life’s mission and encourage their fellow students to get involved.

Since its start in 2014, the Campus Ambassador Program has added more than 95,000 new donors to Gift of Life’s registry, who have completed 467 lifesaving transplants to date. Since 90% of donors requested by transplant centers are between 18 and 35, a constant influx of new donors is needed to ensure that patients battling blood cancer, sickle cell, and other life-threatening diseases can find their matching donors.

To learn more about joining the internship program, students may visit giftoflife.org/programs/cap. Anyone between 18 and 35 years old may join the registry by simply requesting a cheek swab registration kit.

About Gift of Life Marrow Registry

Gift of Life Marrow Registry is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Boca Raton, Fla. The organization, established in 1991, is dedicated to saving lives by facilitating blood stem cell and bone marrow transplants for patients with leukemia, lymphoma, and other blood-related diseases. The registry houses its own state-of-the-art stem cell collection center, biobank, and laboratory. To learn more about Gift of Life Marrow Registry, visit www.giftoflife.org