

2013 VOLUNTEERS

Dispelling myths and misconceptions

by Ray Gabel, Midwest Transplant Network



Melissa Bongiovi

Midwest Transplant Network (MTN) relies on dedicated volunteers and ambassadors to help increase awareness and provide education about organ and tissue donation throughout the western two-thirds of Missouri and Kansas.

Melissa Bongiovi has been an active Midwest Transplant Ambassador since 2011. In 2009, her son Gabriel passed away and saved five lives as an organ donor. After Gabriel's donation, Melissa made the decision to become involved. Her volunteer work is especially valuable within the African-American community where Melissa shares her story to help dispel any myths or misconceptions about organ and tissue donation.

"Our Ambassadors and volunteers, like Melissa, are crucial to helping MTN increase the number of registered donors in our service area," said Ray Gabel, MTN community education coordinator. "We are grateful for the time that Melissa and others provide to increase organ and tissue donation awareness."

Additionally, Melissa works with the Vial of Life program of the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Pharmacy for pharmacists students. She has been able to bridge the volunteer work she does with MTN and the Vial of Life program to organize a Live Well, Plan Well seminar held in the spring for community members that do not have access to good medical care and information. Thank you, Melissa, for your dedication and hard work!

Melissa shares her story to help dispel any myths or misconceptions about organ and tissue donation.