



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Melissa Margulies, Program Coordinator, AOPPO
(703) 556-4242 Ext. 202

WROC-NEWS 8 ROCHESTER RECEIVES AWARD FROM ORGAN DONATION ASSOCIATION *WROC-News 8 of Rochester, New York recognized for outstanding contributions to organ, eye and tissue donation*



From Left to Right: Martha Anderson, executive vice-president, MTF; Maureen McGuire, news anchor, WROC-News 8; Rob Kochik, executive director, Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network

VIENNA, Va. — July 29, 2016 — The [Association of Organ Procurement Organizations](#) (AOPPO) Crystal Heart Award was awarded to the team at [WROC-News 8](#), the CBS affiliate in Rochester, New York, on June 22nd, 2016 at the Association's 33rd Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas. This national award, generously sponsored by the [Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation](#) (MTF), honors one print or broadcast media representative for their outstanding efforts to accurately depict the science and reality of organ, eye and tissue donation and transplantation to the public.

In introducing the award, Martha Anderson, executive vice president of donor services at MTF, said, "We look for stories that have a lasting and direct impact on how people can understand what donation and transplantation can mean." WROC-News 8 was nominated by [Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network](#), the organ procurement organization (OPO) serving the Finger Lakes, central, and upstate regions of New York State. "This year's winner has not only worked very closely with that OPO, but with

the rest of the community and has created a strong partnership that continues to promote organ, eye and tissue donation to the public,” said Anderson.

WROC-News 8 received the prestigious award for their ongoing series of news segments surrounding donation and transplantation. News 8 announced their commitment to raise awareness about organ, eye and tissue donation following Chief Meteorologist Scott Hetsko’s life-saving heart transplant in September of 2015. The station has since produced over 15 news stories educating viewers about donation and transplantation and inspiring them with interviews from donor families, transplant recipients, and some of the many individuals waiting for a transplant. News 8 also created a page on its website dedicated to these stories and educational resources titled [Pass Life On](#), linked to the public awareness campaign of the station’s local OPO, Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network.

“The awareness this news organization has brought to our region about organ, eye and tissue donation has been incredible from their news stories, website, and also through social media,” said Rob Kochik, executive director of Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network. “Our OPO is so grateful to the entire WROC-News 8 Team for inspiring people to think and talk about the gift of passing life on through organ, eye and tissue donation. And I’m sure the people who continue to wait for their second chance are even more grateful.”

On behalf of WROC-News 8, news anchor Maureen McGuire accepted the Crystal Heart Award stating, “Scott’s mission is to spread the word about organ donation and naturally it has become a mission that we share. Our work is infused with a special purpose now and we’re so grateful to the doctors, to the nurses, to the social workers, to the teachers, to transplant recipient, and to donors and their donor families for sharing all of their stories with us.”

###

About AOPO

AOPO is a non-profit, national organization representing all federally-designated organ procurement organizations (OPOs). The Association represents and serves OPOs through advocacy, support and the development of activities that will maximize the availability of organs and tissues and enhance the quality, effectiveness and integrity of the donation process.

About OPOs

OPOs are federally-designated non-profit organizations that are responsible for coordinating organ and tissue donation across the United States, bridging the gap between the generous donation of organs and tissues, and the thousands in need of these life-saving and life enhancing gifts. The federal government has designated 58 organizations in the U.S. to oversee the organ donation process. These organizations are the national stewards of the donation, and they work collaboratively with hospitals, medical professionals and their local community to build the programs, the systems and processes needed to make donation possible.