

# UNOS

*Working together. Saving lives.*



National network. Richmond based.

*First Lady Maureen McDonnell and her sister Ellen share their family's transplant story*





UNITED for UNOS

# An Evening of Education

OCTOBER 8, 2010 7PM – 11PM

UNITED NETWORK FOR ORGAN SHARING 700 N. 4TH STREET, RICHMOND

Join us for an Evening of Education as we learn about life's finer things: food, wine, art and working together to save lives. Sample dishes from your favorite chefs and learn their cooking secrets while chatting with wine experts about pairing mouth-watering meals with the perfect bottle of wine.



901 East Cary Street  
Richmond



2601 Tuckernuck Drive  
Richmond



11448 Belvedere Vista Lane  
Richmond



3734 Winterfield Road  
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301 Franklin Street  
Richmond



11173 West Broad Street  
Glen Allen



10 East Franklin Street  
Richmond



2825 Hathaway Road  
Richmond



100 Grand Cru Drive  
Charlottesville

In the spirit of life's finer things, watch local artist Dr. W. Baxter Perkinson, Jr. create an original watercolor in The Gallery at UNOS. Engage in intimate conversations with organ recipients and donor families, and learn how we can work together in saving lives.

Tickets are \$50 each and available at [www.unitedforunos.org](http://www.unitedforunos.org)  
or by calling 804-782-4924

Your support of United for UNOS will fund educational programs supported by UNOS to increase awareness of organ donation and transplantation.

## UNITED NETWORK FOR ORGAN SHARING

DEAR RICHMOND NEIGHBORS,

Each day, approximately 78 people around the country receive a lifesaving organ transplant, while more than 107,000 remain on the national waiting list. Approximately 2,800 of those waiting are Virginians.

Working together, we can save lives. We can unite to support organ donation by registering to be an organ donor ([www.save7lives.org](http://www.save7lives.org)) or by sharing personal stories to educate the public – as the First Lady of Virginia Maureen McDonnell does in this special section. We can also show our support by thanking the family members who say “yes” to organ donation, and to the increasing number of people who become living donors to family members, friends and even strangers.

United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) is the national network of organ procurement and transplant professionals, based in downtown Richmond. The heart of this non-profit organization is the Organ Center, which maintains our nation's transplant waiting list and allocates donated organs to patients based on medical urgency. We unite transplant and donation professionals, patients and others interested in organ transplantation to allocate scarce organs most equitably.

During the past year we have increased our efforts to get Richmonders “United for UNOS” through social media, special events and community activities. We mention several of our upcoming events in this section, and we hope you'll join us. And please visit the National Donor Memorial, located at our headquarters at 4th and Jackson Streets – or call us for a tour of our building and a briefing on UNOS.

Why the extra outreach efforts? Because we've been here for more than 25 years, and UNOS is still mistaken for “UNO's,” the pizza place. Because our mission and organization are growing, and we want to share our pride in the work that we do. And, most important, because we want to unite you with UNOS – because the decision of one individual to say “yes” to organ and tissue donation can have a profound effect on the lives of many others.

As I said above, working together, we can save lives. What could be better than that?

Walter K. Graham  
Executive Director  
United Network for Organ Sharing



These key Richmonders form The UNOS Foundation President's Council, established in May 2009, to help increase awareness of UNOS and its lifesaving mission.

- |                      |                            |                                     |
|----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Viola Baskerville    | Palmer P. Garson           | Nadine Marsh-Carter                 |
| Nancy Belleman       | William M. Gottwald        | Dorothy A. Pauley                   |
| Robert M. Blue       | Hugh F. Gouldthorpe        | Wallace Stettinius                  |
| Diana F. Cantor      | David L. Heavenridge       | Marilyn H. West                     |
| Richard Cullen, Esq. | Marc R. Katz, M.D., M.P.H. | Robert S.D. Higgins, M.D., M.S.H.A. |
|                      | Anne R. Lower              |                                     |

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### COVER STORY



The same evening her husband, Governor Bob McDonnell gave a nationally televised address, Maureen McDonnell was awaiting word from the hospital where her sister, Ellen, was having a lifesaving lung transplant. Both are now committed to promoting organ donation across the Commonwealth.

Richmond  
magazine

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# What is UNOS?

## No, it's not the pizzeria!

BY LISA SCHAFFNER

If you've ever travelled southbound on Interstate 95 through downtown Richmond, you've seen the UNOS building. It sits right off the highway as you exit onto 3rd street near the Coliseum. You'll recognize the four story glass and brick building by the large blue and green logo on the side that reads, *UNOS Donate Life*.

Inside, you'll find more than 300 Richmonders saving lives through organ donation and transplant, and you'll hear the uplifting stories of life: a mother who received a liver transplant and recently sent her son off to Kindergarten; a grandfather who received a kidney and celebrated his 50th wedding anniversary last year; a baby who received a heart transplant and is now rocked to sleep by his parents.

United Network for Organ Sharing—also known as UNOS—is a national nonprofit that runs the nation's transplant system. Simply put, we match donated organs from deceased donors to patients on the national waiting list. Every transplant in this country comes through downtown Richmond—through the vast computer system of UNOS.



There are approximately 78 lifesaving transplants that take place daily in this country—28,000 yearly. The organs are matched by size, blood and tissue type. Children and the sickest patients take priority. And because organs can stay out of the body for only a short amount of time, geographic location between the organ donor and recipient is also a crucial factor when matching organs.

In addition to the match runs, UNOS develops policies that determine who receives an organ and when. The policies are needed because there's a huge organ shortage—more people need a lifesaving transplant than the number of organs that are available. Right now more than 107,000 patients are on the national waiting list. Every 11 minutes, on average, a new patient is added to the list.

UNOS and our dedicated staff of researchers, analysts and IT experts work 24/7 to ensure organs are equitably allocated and quickly transplanted to save the greatest number of lives. You can help save lives by registering to become an organ donor, educating yourself about organ transplant, and supporting UNOS. Visit us in person at 700 North 4th St. or on line at [www.unos.org](http://www.unos.org), [www.donormemorial.org](http://www.donormemorial.org) or [www.transplantliving.org](http://www.transplantliving.org).



## UNOS Calendar

### SEPTEMBER 3:

*Art Opening*  
*A Retrospective: 30 Years of Giving Back*  
by Dr. W. Baxter Perkinson, Jr.  
The Gallery at UNOS  
700 N. 4th Street  
5pm–10pm

### OCTOBER 8:

*Special Event*  
*United for UNOS: An Evening of Education*  
UNOS Headquarters  
700 N. 4th Street  
7pm–11 pm  
\$50 tickets: [www.unitedforunos.org](http://www.unitedforunos.org)

### NOVEMBER 5:

*Art Opening*  
*Works from the private collection of renowned collector William Hodges*  
The Gallery at UNOS  
700 N. 4th Street  
5pm–10pm

### DECEMBER 2:

*Special Event*  
*National Tree of Life lighting ceremony*  
UNOS Headquarters  
700 N. 4th Street  
5pm

### DECEMBER 3–JANUARY 1

*Special Event*  
*National Tree of Life on public display*  
UNOS lobby  
700 N. 4th Street  
Monday–Friday 8am–5pm



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*Art in the (bio)Park*

If you haven't yet visited UNOS' headquarters in the Virginia Biotechnology Research Park, here's a reason you should. UNOS now is home to "The Gallery at UNOS," which will be part of the city's First Fridays Art Walk. You'll be able to visit the gallery at its inaugural show, Sept. 3, 5–10 p.m. There's also free parking in our visitors' lot in front of the building at Fourth and Jackson streets.

Dr. W. Baxter Perkinson Jr., one of Richmond's premiere dentists and painters, is our first featured artist. More than 50 watercolors from his first retrospective, '30 Years of Giving Back,' will be on display. The Gallery will also be open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Future shows will showcase art created by members of the transplant community.

*Honoring America's Organ & Tissue Donors  
...in the heart of Richmond*

The National Donor Memorial on the grounds of the UNOS headquarters has been called America's thank you to donors and their families. Take some time to visit this beautiful memorial and walk through the series of symbolic rooms that represent the emotional journey of families facing organ donation.

You can request a personal tour at the front desk (available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) or you can grab one of the self-guided tour brochures available and explore it on your own. You can also read personal donor tributes or write one of your own on the memorial's Web site.

**NATIONAL DONOR MEMORIAL**  
700 N. Fourth Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

Visit: [donormemorial.org](http://donormemorial.org)

## A double lung transplant saved Ellen Gardner's life: *Here's her story*

BY LISA SCHAFFNER

Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell and his wife, Maureen, could always turn to one key supporter during his fight last year for the state's top office — the First Lady's younger sister, Ellen Gardner. But when time came to celebrate his big win during inauguration weekend in January 2010, Gardner was in a battle of her own. A life-and-death battle waiting for a lung transplant.

"I was so sick. I was on oxygen and was gasping to get a word or two out. I totally missed the entire election and inauguration celebrations. They were all celebrating, and I was at home," recalls Gardner while sitting in a small parlor room at the Executive mansion. "I was the only person in my family who was not part of the inaugural ceremony and celebrations. I had been so much a part of the campaign, and I'm very close to Maureen and Bob. I was just devastated." But the devastation turned to joy a short 10 days later when Ellen received THE call. The single mother of three was a match, and her double lung transplant was a go. The day: January 27, 2010.



Ellen Gardner and her sister, First Lady Maureen McDonnell

If that date sounds familiar, there's good reason. Gov. Bob McDonnell gave the Republican response to the State of the Union address to millions of Americans live from the Virginia State Capitol. For Virginia's first lady Maureen McDonnell, it was an emotional day. "As I sat listening to Bob give his speech, all I could think about was that my sister was getting the lungs she desperately needed to save her life and that some where out there was a grieving family that we would never know but would always keep in our prayers." The first lady of Virginia is true to her word, not only keeping the donor family in her thoughts, but advocating for them as well. She recently spoke at the National Donor Memorial Rededication, personally thanking each donor family in attendance for their courage. As McDonnell told the crowd of more than 200 who gathered, "My family is now part of the UNOS family."

An autoimmune disease that attacks the lungs is what led to Gardner's health crisis. She was diagnosed with sarcoidosis in 1997. The disease gradually worsened over

the next decade. By 2009, doctors told her a lung transplant was her only chance of survival. When Gardner learned her lifesaving transplant was just hours away, one of her first thoughts is what her

### *"My family is now part of the UNOS family."*

doctor had told her days earlier. "I need to be honest with you, Ellen," she recounts. "Your case is the most difficult we've seen in 20 years because of the condition of your lungs. There are some risks we are concerned about." Those risks included a fifty-fifty chance of getting off the operating table. Not only did she beat the odds, but looking today at this mother of three grown children you'd never guess what she's been through. "But a year ago, that wasn't the case. My color was awful. My weight low, under 100 pounds. Just trying to talk was an effort. I was gasping. I couldn't breathe.

Today, the only telltale sign of Ellen's life-and-death battle is her voice. It's weak, and often barely louder than a whisper. But there's one message she is sending loud and clear. Thank you. "There have been so many people. When I think about how I made it through it's a miracle. It starts with the donor...who made it possible for me. Without that person who I don't know, whose family I don't know, I wouldn't be alive." When asked if she would like to meet the donor's family, she says "... if I'm lucky. If they'd like to know me, I'd like to know them." And she vows to be even more productive than she was before the transplant in honor of her donor and the skilled medical staff that gave her a second life.



Lisa Schaffner and Maureen admire Ellen's guardian angel necklace

Ellen's children are also thankful for her second life, often travelling to Richmond to be with her for family gatherings such as Ellen's recent July birthday. Several college graduations have also resulted in celebrations. Her oldest child, Jason, is a Virginia Tech graduate with daughter KC graduating a year ago from Reed College. Ellen's youngest child, John, is entering his third year at VCU this fall.

One of nine siblings, family is important to Gardner. And her family knows the meaning of loss. Her mother died unexpectedly last June, and her father also recently passed away—almost a year to the day of her mother—June 19, 2010. Gardner credits the January transplant with giving her five wonderful months with her father, time she was healthy enough to enjoy with him.

A silver angel necklace she wears—a gift she received several months before her transplant—is a constant reminder of those who have prayed and supported her. "There have been so many miracles that have involved so many people. The miracles start with the donor." ■

#### **DO YOU HAVE THE HEART?**

A heart on your driver's license indicates you're listed on Virginia's Organ Donor Registry. When you visit the Department of Motor Vehicles to apply for or renew your driver's license, you can sign up to become an organ donor. You can also register instantly by visiting [www.save7lives.org](http://www.save7lives.org).



UNITED *for* UNOS



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# Thank you to our sponsors. Working Together. Saving Lives.

United Network for Organ Sharing operates the nation's transplant system, matching lifesaving organs from deceased donors to patients on the national waiting list. Every lifesaving organ transplant in the country comes through downtown Richmond through the vast computer system of UNOS.

Money raised by United for UNOS: An Evening of Education will support these lifesaving matches as well as fund educational programs put on by UNOS to increase awareness of organ donation and transplantation.

The support of these generous sponsors will save lives.

You can join us for United for UNOS: An Evening of Education

October 8th at 7pm, 700 N. 4th street, Richmond

For event and ticket information visit [www.unitedforunos.org](http://www.unitedforunos.org)

