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# Good News Department

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## Postal Service Puts Its Stamp Of Approval On Marrow Donor Effort

(NAPSA)—There's hopeful news for the more than 35,000 children and adults who develop life-threatening diseases of the blood or immune system, including leukemia, lymphoma and genetic diseases each year.

For many of these individuals, the best hope for a cure is a marrow or blood cell transplant from a volunteer donor or donated cord blood unit.

In one such case, Jerry Arreola, a 46-year-old San Antonio, Texas, resident and longtime employee of the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) felt compelled to make two marrow and blood cell donations for a recipient he didn't know and thought he would never meet. Postal workers who make similar donations refer to this as "delivering the gift of life."

To date, more than 25,000 USPS employees have joined the National Marrow Donor Program® (NMDP) Registry through the Delivering the Gift of Life campaign. Of the 25,000 Postal employees who have joined the NMDP Registry, more than 60 have made life-saving marrow donations.

The USPS is the first organization to add 25,000 donors to the Registry, which helps match donors and recipients through a worldwide network.

The Postal Service joined forces with the NMDP, The Marrow Foundation and 3M in 1997 to establish the Delivering the Gift of Life Campaign. This campaign focuses on building awareness of



**Jerry Arreola, left, delivered the gift of life to Alice Masticola.**

the need for unrelated volunteer marrow donors and recruiting volunteer donors for the Registry.

A marrow or cord blood transplant requires careful matching of patient and donor tissue types. Although a family member is the most desirable donor, 70 percent of patients do not have a matched family donor. The NMDP and its funding partner, The Marrow Foundation®, make transplants possible for these patients.

The NMDP connects, supports and informs patients, donors, physicians and researchers in 30 countries.

The Marrow Foundation supports this work by building relationships with individuals, corporations, and other organizations to recruit volunteer donors and raise funds to support scientific research, public outreach and financial aid for marrow transplant patients and their families.

During National Marrow Awareness Month and throughout November, the world's transplant community makes a special effort to recognize the 10 million individuals who have registered as volunteer stem cell donors. This includes participants from 56 donor registries in 41 countries and 38 cord blood banks in 21 countries.

In the United States, the NMDP plays a key role in facilitating life-saving transplants. Through the efforts of NMDP Network donor centers and recruitment groups, the NMDP Registry includes more than 5.9 million donors and 45,000 cord blood units available to serve patients around the world.

Tissue type is inherited, so a patient is more likely to find a match within their racial or ethnic community. The NMDP makes a special effort to register potential donors who identify themselves as Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and Hispanic or Latino.

The NMDP facilitates more than 2,200 transplants annually and has provided more than 20,000 patients a second chance at life. Alice Masticola, 44, of Louisville, Kentucky, is one of those 20,000, thanks to Jerry Arreola's "Delivering the Gift of Life."

To learn more, visit the Web site at [www.marrow.org](http://www.marrow.org).