



www.otapnm.com

facebook otapnm

Organ Transplant Awareness
Program PO Box 37217
Albuquerque, NM 87176

Evelyn Rivera
Member-at-large
505.299.5955
rioreal@earthlink.net

Venae Warner
Support Group Facilitator
505.489.4829

Margaret Lopez
Scholarship Chair
silverlopez@aol.com

**Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Albuquerque, NM
Permit No. 317**





Transplant Times

Organ Transplant Awareness Program

January 1, 2021

Promoting Organ Donor Awareness; Supporting the Transplant Community

A Happy and Healthy New Year to all!

Hopefully we will resume promotional events in the second half of the year. Until then we can all continue to share our stories in any way possible in order to increase the number of organ donors. As of December 8th, 2020, 765 New Mexicans waiting for life saving organs. Of this number 677 are waiting for kidney transplants. The average wait time for a kidney organ in New Mexico is 5 years. Please talk to your transplant center regarding the Covid-19 vaccine. We appreciate your ongoing support and membership. Annual dues are payable by January 31st. Only members in good standing (those with paid memberships) will have their anniversaries published in the newsletter. The support group will meet Friday, January 15th from 10:00 to noon. Please email me for directions to my home. -Evelyn, rioreal@earthlink.net

The 2021 Scholarship Program is underway, a message from Margaret, Scholarship Chairperson:

Hello All,

Happy Holidays! It's also the time of year to get together the team of readers for the 2021 scholarship essays. It's nice to know some things can continue as usual after this very unusual year - Let's hope it's a continuing trend. Please reply to silverlopez@aol.com to let me know if you will be a reader and also let me know if you prefer to be an initial reader, a final reader, or both.

Numbered essays will be sent to initial readers by February 16, 2021. Initial readers will score the essays using the rubric we provide (it's easy to use) and then return results to me by March 2. Finalist essays in each category will be sent to final readers by March 9. Final reader results must be returned to me by March 2 so winners can be determined and notified by April 1.

The OTAP scholarship program depends on its readers, so please let me know right away if you want to be part of the 2021 Essay contest reader team. If you know of anyone else outside OTAP who could be a good reader and wants to participate, please share this info with them. It's interesting and fun to read the essays that are submitted.

Thanks very much

Margaret Lopez, 2021 OTAP Scholarship Chairperson
silverlopez@aol.com

Transplant Recipient Anniversaries

Doris Alrick

2nd Kidney Transplant

January 6, 2014 6 years



NKF Applauds Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage Legislation Passed in the U.S. Senate

Quotes for attribution to National Kidney Foundation - Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2020

"Last night the U.S. Senate passed landmark immunosuppressive drug legislation, which has the potential to save the lives of kidney transplant patients throughout our nation.

"The National Kidney Foundation applauds Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) for their leadership in passing legislation to extend Medicare coverage of immunosuppressive drugs for kidney transplant patients. The legislation represents a **significant change** which will greatly help save patients' lives and taxpayers money.

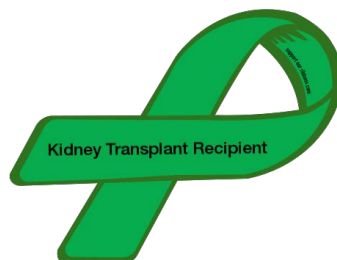
"The National Kidney Foundation sincerely thanks our grassroots advocates who have been fighting alongside us in support of this critical legislation for years.

"Kidney transplant patients must take immunosuppressive drugs for the life of their transplant to help prevent organ rejection. Skipping even one dose will increase the chance of organ failure. But when the current 36-month Medicare coverage for this life-saving medication ends, patients are forced to make a choice between paying for their transplant medications or paying the rent, it's a choice nobody should have to make."

"This landmark legislation ensures that transplant patients on Medicare can afford the lifesaving medication they need following a transplant indefinitely, as opposed to the three-year cap that was previously in place leaving patients to pay for the gap in coverage on their own."

"We are grateful to Congressmen Ron Kind (D-WI) and Michael Burgess (R-TX) who introduced similar legislation in the House earlier this year, and for their leadership in ensuring bi-partisan support for this critically important legislation.

"The National Kidney Foundation sincerely thanks the Administration for their strong backing of this legislation that will greatly help our nation's kidney transplant recipients."



IMMUNO BILL PASSES AFTER 20 YEARS

For the past 20 years, the AST has been advocating and working for passage of the Immuno Bill (officially known as the Comprehensive Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act). At long last, after 20 years of hard work, hope, and disappointment, this legislation has finally become law. Many of us understand the gravity of this moment. Despite continuous advocacy efforts for nearly two decades, we have all too often watched as this key legislation failed to reach the President's desk. Most importantly, we have been forced to watch as our patients struggled to take care of their kidney transplants because of the inherently flawed current law.

The Immuno Bill: A Brief History

For a patient to qualify for Medicare, they must be over the age of 65, be disabled, or have kidney disease. In 2000, Congress passed a law that gave lifelong immunosuppressive coverage to those over 65 or disabled. However, this left younger kidney recipients who were not considered disabled out of lifelong coverage. Instead, the law offered coverage of medications for just 36 months following a kidney transplant.

A patient with kidney disease has their dialysis treatments paid 100% by Medicare. Medicare will also pay for a kidney transplant. However, until the Immuno Bill passed, these kidney recipients only received immunosuppressive drug coverage for 36 months after transplant. If a recipient did not have alternative health insurance or did not otherwise qualify for Medicare, they lost their medication coverage.

The problem was obvious, as these medications are required for the life of the transplant and for the past two decades, the AST advocated to end the arbitrary 36-month limit and to include lifelong coverage in this policy. While the bill has been introduced several times, until now, it only passed in the House of Representatives one time in 2010 but failed to advance in the Senate.

In December 2019, the Immuno Bill was introduced in the House of Representatives by Representatives Ron Kind (D-WI) and Michael Burgess, M.D. (R-TX), along with Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Jason Smith (R-MO), Donald McEachin (D-VA), and Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA). The bill passed the House on Tuesday, December 8, 2020. Prior to the bill's passage, it was marked-up and approved by the House Energy & Commerce Committee on July 15, 2020. During the mark-up, Congressman Michael Burgess M.D. (R-TX) publicly thanked the AST for the organization's many years of staying the course for patients and seeking to pass this critical legislation.

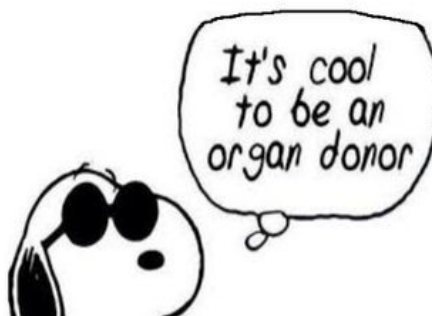
The Bill Makes Sense – So Why Did It Take So Long?

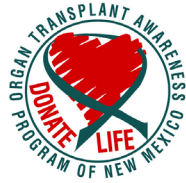
The Immuno Bill has enjoyed widespread support over the last ten sessions of Congress, but as we know, lifelong immunosuppressive coverage comes with a price tag. During the 116th Congress, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) determined that the Immuno Bill would not only help recipients and protect the gift of life; It would also save the federal government money. At present, the Immuno Bill is estimated to save American taxpayers approximately \$400 million dollars.

Immuno Bill: Congressional Leader Champions – Bipartisan & Bicameral Efforts to Victory

In a time where there is so much division in a highly charged partisan political environment, my faith is occasionally restored when I look at public policy efforts such as the Immuno Bill. For nearly two decades, there has been a strong bipartisan and bicameral cast of dedicated and committed members in the House and Senate (and their staff) that have worked tirelessly to introduce, reintroduce, secure cosponsors, hold hearings, convene mark-ups, consideration, and passage on the floor. Every year, both parties on both sides of the Capitol stepped up to keep the Immuno Bill relevant and in play in the House and Senate. The AST and the transplant community cannot thank our bill sponsors enough for their many years of support and for never giving up on transplant patients.

During this 116th Congress, the Immuno Bill enjoyed the support of primary bill sponsors Senator Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA), Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), Rep. Michael Burgess, M.D. (R-TX), and Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI). The AST is forever indebted to these Congressional leaders for their many years of seeking to pass the Immuno Bill. Over the last two decades, the Immuno Bill has resulted in many members of Congress, from both parties, working across the aisle to secure immunosuppressive drug coverage for transplant patients in desperate need of their anti-rejection medications. Many of these elected officials have worked closely with the AST and have expressed their strong support and resolve, frequently providing keynote speeches at AST meetings.





2021 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone # _____ Cell Phone _____

Email address for organization communications only _____

_____ I would prefer to receive the newsletter electronically.

_____ \$15 Individual membership _____ \$25 Family membership _____ donation

All contributions are tax deductible

Please make checks payable and mail to: **OTAP,**
PO Box 37217
Albuquerque, NM 87176

_____ **Candidate:** Organ/Tissue Type: _____ Date Listed _____/_____/_____

_____ **Recipient:** Organ/Tissue Type: _____ Date Received _____/_____/_____

2nd transplant date –month day year: _____/_____/_____

_____ **Donor/member of a Donor Family:** Name _____ Organ/Tissue Type _____

Recipient _____ Transplant date –month/day/year: _____/_____/_____

_____ **Friend of OTAP**

Opportunities - Please check all that apply:

I would like to volunteer: promotional events _____ fundraising events _____

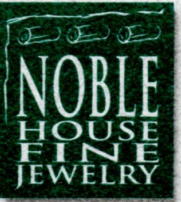
Personal information such as phone number _____ and address _____ may be shared with others.

I am interested in working with the scholarship team _____ newsletter team _____ support group _____

I only want to receive the monthly newsletter. _____

Suggestions _____

Thank You for your support!

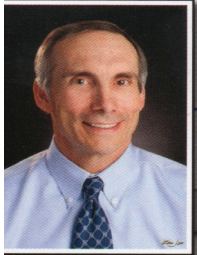


NOBLE HOUSE FINE JEWELRY

Mary Jimenez
Owner

- ♦ Diamonds
- ♦ Watches
- ♦ Fine Jewelry
- ♦ Custom Design

505-299-9009 • Fax 505-332-7913 • Email noblehousejewel@live.com
7616 Menaul Blvd NE • Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110



Creating Healthy Smiles for a Better Life

7520 Montgomery Blvd. NE, Suite D-7
Albuquerque, NM 87109
mthompsondental.com

Michael R. Thompson, DDS, FAGD

505.884.7333

As of December 9, 2020 there are 765 New Mexicans waiting for life saving organs. Of this number 677 are waiting for kidney transplants. The average wait time for a kidney organ in New Mexico is 5 years. A recent national survey found that although 90% of a nationwide surveyed approve of organ donation, only 50% actually register. Studies indicate that making registration readily available increases commitment.

AMAZON SMILE

Sign in to Amazon Smile and select Organ Transplant Awareness Program of New Mexico.

Amazon will make a donation to OTAP quarterly.

Or copy and paste this address to your browser:

Amazon Smile: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/04-3654972>


OTAP Mission Statement

The mission of Organ Transplant Awareness Program is to promote organ donation and support transplant community members including transplant candidates, donor families, living organ donors, transplant recipients, and transplant families. We promote organ donation by participating in a variety of community events. Our support group meets one time per month with those who need support or are seeking information about the transplant process.

Kundalini Yoga
breath, sound, energy

Margaret Lopez
KRI Certified Kundalini Yoga & SuperHealth Instructor

Public, Private & Corporate Classes



505-242-1478
silverlopez@aol.com



Kenneth Herbert Lumber

Free Local Delivery

Dedicated to our customers since 1973

317 South Main
Portales, NM 88130

575-356-5253
575-356-8080 fax

janet@kennethherbertlumber.com