

Driving Registrations

Colorado's new Donate Life license plates take promotion on the road

BY NICOLE WILLIAMS

What better reminder to register as a donor than seeing a colorful Donate Life license plate on a car when you are stuck in traffic during your commute?

The initial energy for the plates was provided by Donor Alliance advocate Robin Mitchell, whose son, Joseph Templeton, a donor, died two years ago. Joseph donated five organs and both his corneas on New Year's Day in 2008. It was her son's gift of life that sparked Mitchell's dream of having a Donate Life license plate in Colorado.

Exactly two years later—on New Year's Day in 2010—Colorado's Donate Life license plates were unveiled. The plates were the culmination of a collective effort by Colorado's donation community.

The American Transplant Foundation (ATF) took on the project with Mitchell, and together they gathered the required 4,000 signatures through a petition and found legislators to sponsor the bill. Mitchell herself testified before the legislature in support of House Bill 09-1347—and Colo. Gov. Bill Ritter signed the bill into law last year.

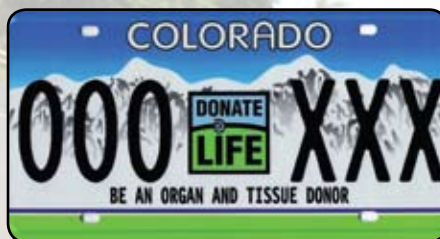
TWITTER, FACEBOOK HELP BUILD MOMENTUM

Because Colorado legislation requires that 3,000 plates be sold by July 1, 2013,* a social-media campaign has been launched—led by the Donor Alliance, the Donor Awareness Council and the ATF. The grassroots campaign is helping to spread the word and making sure the Colorado Donate Life plate is here to stay.

Much anticipation about the plates was built up on Twitter, even before the plates were available, and now the plates are all over the web. On the Donate Life Colorado Facebook fan page, people are posting pictures of themselves with their new license plate. On the free Wordpress blog site, *donatelifeco.wordpress.com*, supporters are posting short stories and videos, telling their stories and promoting the plate as well. The site also includes more about the plate as well as helpful links, including a link to Colorado's online donor registry, *donatelifecolorado.org*.

As of this writing (early March), campaign partners are hopeful they will reach their goal of 1,000 plates sold by the end of April. With the ultimate goal of 3,500 plates, the partners already have launched phase 2 of their social-media campaign.

In phase 2, Donor Alliance and ATF are hosting a competition for people in Colorado and all over the country to enter their own video stories about donation. Prizes will include a Colorado Donate Life license plate and gift cards for the grand prize winners. The videos will be posted to the *wordpress.com* site, and the winners will be determined by creativity and the number of views.



Colorado's new Donate Life license plates were unveiled this year on New Year's Day.



The death and donation of her son, Joseph Templeton, gave Robin Miller the initial inspiration for the Colorado's license plate. In photo, Miller is shown placing flowers on Joseph's gravesite, which includes the floragraph from this year's Donate Life float. Also shown (below) is the last photo of Joseph taken before his death.



After the competition concluded April 23, Donor Alliance and the ATF hosted a viewing party, held April 29 at Donor Alliance, to screen the entries and present the prizes to the winners.

At Donor Alliance, we're expecting to see thousands of Colorado's Donate Life license plates on our highways and byways—and are counting on additional donor registrations as a result. [U](#)

Nicole Williams is community relations coordinator at Donor Alliance in Denver.

[ONLINE](#) For more information, visit donoralliance.org and donatelifeco.wordpress.com. You also can follow the plate on Twitter or Facebook.

*In Colorado, license plates are sold at Colorado "title and registration" offices.