

## For Immediate Release

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### **Heart recipient and tissue donor honored on 2020 Donate Life Rose Parade® float**

*New Year's Day parade spotlights far-reaching impact of organ, tissue and eye donation*

**Thaxton, Va.** (Dec. 31, 2019) — Andrew Madison was known as an energetic and loving person, one who packed a lot of joy into his short life. A native of Thaxton, Va., Andrew became a heart recipient at age 6 and a tissue donor after his death at age 14. He will be honored on this year's Donate Life Rose Parade float on Jan. 1, 2020, in Pasadena, Calif. Andrew was nominated by LifeNet Health to be featured among the float's more than 30 floragraphs — a portrait made of organic materials such as seeds, spices and crushed flowers created to honor organ, tissue and eye donors from across the nation.

"Andrew's unique legacy of being both a recipient and a donor speaks to the power of donation," said LifeNet Health President and CEO Rony Thomas. "Donation is a selfless gift, and we hope honoring Andrew's legacy helps encourage others to make the generous decision to donate."

At only three weeks old, Andrew was diagnosed with multiple heart defects, including Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome (HLHS) — which affects the way blood flows through the heart. It was almost six years before he received the gift of a new heart from an organ donor.

"My sister and I saw the helicopter fly in to Duke Hospital. We ran through the halls to the elevator, just in time to catch a glimpse of the courier carrying the red igloo with Andrew's new heart," said Andrew's mother, Linda Johnson. "That was a powerful moment knowing Andrew would receive life, while another had lost theirs."

After his heart transplant, Andrew's health improved drastically and he began to live the life of a normal child. A jokester and superhero enthusiast, Andrew was able to ride bikes and climb trees and sled in the snow with his brothers. Andrew was full of energy and known to be a funny and loving child. He gave himself the moniker "Little Wolverine" when post-transplant medication caused hair to grow all over his body. He took great pleasure in wearing a Wolverine cape and growling at the people he visited in a local nursing home.

On Nov. 13, 2007, Andrew was getting ready for school when he collapsed and died of cardiac arrest. His wishes to donate were honored, and he was able to help save the lives and restore health to more than 18 people.

"What makes Andrew's life unique and such an inspiration was his desire for others to have a chance at life as he did," his mother said. "It wouldn't have mattered if it was only one. A difference was made. Surely, he is smiling now."

The Donate Life Rose Parade float serves as a memorial to organ and tissue donors. It is a platform for donor families, living donors and transplant recipients to inspire the world to save and heal others need through the gift of life. Today, more than 113,000 men, women and children are waiting for life-saving organ transplant. One donor can help save the lives of nine people through organ donation and restore the health of more than 150 through tissue donation.

**About LifeNet Health**

LifeNet Health helps save lives, restore health, and give hope to thousands each year. It is the world's most trusted provider of transplant solutions — from organ procurement to bio-implants and cellular therapies — and a leader in regenerative medicine, while always honoring the donors and healthcare professionals who enable healing. For more information about LifeNet Health, go to [www.lifenethealth.org](http://www.lifenethealth.org).

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