

About Christian Nelson



Christian Shay Nelson was born April 20, 1994 and died May 30, 2013. His life ended way too soon. In his brief time here, Christian sure did make beautiful memories for those of us lucky enough to know him. He made a lot of friends, was a wonderful son, big brother, and grandson. He left an amazing legacy.

Christian was very unassuming, never putting himself first. He never liked conflict and always wanted everyone to get along. Christian was the one you could count on to put a smile on your face! He only wanted happiness for everyone. So it only seems fitting that he registered as an organ donor the day he got his driver's license. He knew exactly what it meant to be an organ donor.

That dreadful day started out as a normal day that saw Christian smiling and singing out loud for his co-workers to hear, hoping to get them to smile and sing-a-long, but it would also be his last day. Christian gained his Heavenly Angel Wings, but he also gained something else. Christian became a Hero!

Being an organ donor, Christian saved four lives. His heart went to a teenage male that had been waiting for a heart for 18 months with time close to running out. Christian's right kidney and pancreas went to a female in her 30s. His liver went to a female in her 40s. And his left kidney went to a little boy. Not only did Christian save these 4 lives, but he enhanced the lives of so many! His corneas were donated, which gave sight to 2 people. Christian's donation also consisted of orthopedic tissues which are used to hasten recovery in individuals suffering from bone or spine disease or injuries. Christian's donation records indicate the creation of 62 grafts used to perform reconstructive surgery, spinal fusions, and oral surgery. Twenty three of these grafts have been distributed to medical facilities in Mississippi, Kentucky, North Carolina, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Washington, Virginia, California, South Carolina, Colorado and a medical facility in Korea. Christian's gifts also consisted of vascular tissue. Surgical procedures using donated vascular tissue enabled many patients, including those with peripheral vascular insufficiency in the legs, as well as individuals with diabetes related disease. Christian's gift of skin has enabled surgeons to perform reconstructive surgeries for individuals who have suffered severe burns. These grafts have been utilized at a medical facility in Virginia.

When Christian was 16 years old, excited to get his driver's license, he asked his Mom to explain what organ donation was before he checked the box. She gave a brief explanation, and he said "Why wouldn't you do that?" After reading all of this, seeing all of the good that can come from the gifts of ONE donor, Christian's question applies to all of us: Why wouldn't you register as an organ donor? Christian is a hero, not only to those that benefited directly thorough his donations, but also by the example he set for us all. Because Christian gave life, life is his legacy.