



January 2009

New Year's greetings to you and your family from the **HOPE** Transplant Support Organization at the Nazih Zuhdi Transplant Institute at INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center. The **HOPE** Group's mission is to inspire hope in transplant candidates, recipients and donor families through the promotion of donation awareness, the presentation of educational opportunities, and the provision of comfort, support and encouragement.

We had our 13th annual Celebration of Life this year with close to 350 guests in attendance. The Church of the Servant offered a nice large space for eating and visiting, with beautiful holiday decorations, and a spacious auditorium for the program. Everyone enjoyed themselves and the accommodations for our event. Last Frontier Council Troop 381 opened our program with the Call to Colors. Our donor family and recipient guest speakers told their personal stories, the heartache and the triumphs. We are always reminded of the precious gift of life that has been donated so that we can continue our lives with our family and friends. Dr. Jabbour, Chief Medical Director at NZTI, gave a splendid overview of transplantation. Doctors, nurses and staff from NZTI served as our rose bearers and presented red long stem roses to each recipient present. Our celebration continues to be a high point in the Oklahoma transplant community. We are looking forward to our celebration this year and to seeing each of you there.

It is time to renew the **HOPE** Transplant Support Organization membership. Please read the enclosed membership application, as there are some changes. The membership year is based on the calendar year and the dues are \$15.00 per family. If you will be joining **HOPE** for the first time, we welcome you and look forward to meeting you and your family. Please use the enclosed application form and return it to the address listed on the application, along with your check made payable to **HOPE** Transplant Support Organization. If you have any questions, please e-mail us at txhope@txhope.org.

The **HOPE** Group is an all-volunteer support group involved in various functions throughout the year to enhance the awareness of donation and transplantation. Volunteering our time and energy to this organization gives us the opportunity to share our thankfulness for a second chance at life. We invite you to join us in the many activities our members are involved in. Our monthly meetings include presentations by guest speakers on a variety of topics, which are relevant to patients dealing with the transplant process. The meetings are 1 ½ hours and provide time to share our stories and experiences with each other as well as hear from professional speakers. The educational focus is designed to equip participants with successful strategies and skills to cope with the challenges and stress faced by candidates waiting transplantation and those who have already transplanted.

In February 2009 it will be time to elect a new slate of volunteer officers to serve the **HOPE** Group and the transplant community. The current officers, Linda Monnard, lung recipient and **HOPE** Vice President, Mary Ellen Walker, liver and kidney recipient and **HOPE** Treasurer, Connie Byrum, **HOPE** Secretary, and myself, liver recipient and

HOPE President, would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve as officers for the **HOPE** Group for the last two years. We each feel we are blessed to be able to serve. The opportunity to do so has enabled us to give back to the transplant community and others that have helped us in our own healing process.

I would like to acknowledge and thank other volunteers who help make it possible to have a successful support group. Dave, liver recipient, and Sandy Harvey serve as our **HOPE** Closet coordinators. Sandy works with the volunteer office at the hospital to provide paper and cleaning products for the patient apartments provided by the NZTI Foundation. Last semester, heart recipient Sharon Williams selected a fund-raiser for the **HOPE** Closet as a class project in her Business Management and Organizational Behavior class at the University of Central Oklahoma. This was an educational opportunity about transplantation and donation, as well as a chance to raise money for the **HOPE** Closet project. Karen Bowzer, kidney and pancreas recipient, serves as our web editor. Larry Elliott, transplant candidate, serves as our web master. Karen and Larry have volunteered many hours of their time developing, editing, formatting and updating our web site for the last four years. I encourage each of you to visit our web site at www.txhope.org for upcoming meeting dates, speakers and topics, and Celebration of Life photos, links to transplant-related web sites, and other information. Karen also serves as our OETA AugustFest Membership Drive coordinator. This is an opportunity for **HOPE** members to support OETA and to share the success of transplantation with the public. Linda Monnard coordinated the Celebration of Life t-shirt project. T-shirt sales by **HOPE** volunteers amounted to over \$500 at the celebration. I also want to thank all the volunteers that helped organize and implement Celebration of Life: Linda Monnard, Mary Walker, Connie Byrum, Cheryl Hille, John and Kim Wilson, Emily Jackson, Mike Lane, Bart and Kim Garbutt, Cloyce Mills, Naomi Peltekian, Faye Hubbard, Dave and Sandy Harvey, Ricky and Sharon Williams, and the teen volunteers from Church of the Servant.

We continue our partnership with the INTEGRIS Foundation to offer our members, their families and pharmaceutical companies an opportunity to support the **HOPE** Group by making a tax-deductible financial donation. Your support will be used exclusively to fund **HOPE** programs, services and events. Please contact Tami Loch, Director of Development, INTEGRIS Foundations at (405) 951-5037 if you have any questions. You can mail your donations to INTEGRIS Foundations, Attn: Tami Loch, 3300 NW Expressway, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. Please indicate on your donation that it is intended for the **HOPE** Group.

We hope you will join us at our monthly meetings. We meet the second Monday of each month (except May and December) at 6:00 p.m. at INTEGRIS Baptist Medical Center's Conference Center. Green meeting notice cards are sent bi-monthly.

Thank you for your continued support. Our joint efforts will create a more powerful and more meaningful message about the importance of organ, eye and tissue donation. Working together we can make a bigger difference and save more lives.

Sincerely,
Carmen Eppler, Liver recipient
HOPE Transplant Support Organization
Board of Directors, Chair