



Gift of Life: 'Angel' Bone Marrow Donor Saves Man

Inspires Son, Fellow Students, to Organize Campaign to Match Donors with Patients



By Denise Dador

CITY OF HOPE, Nov. 15, 2007 (KABC-TV) - For people diagnosed with certain types of cancer, a bone marrow match is their only hope to survive. But if there are no family members who match, the likelihood of an anonymous donor matching is about 1-in-10-million. One local teen is trying to change those odds.

It can be a frustrating and often tiring journey for cancer patients who are looking for bone marrow matches. But increasing the pool of bone marrow donors increases the odds for a match. That's just what one Southland teen is doing, with his father being his inspiration.

Ed Sachse and his wife have no idea what to say to the woman who saved his life. Ed searches through a crowd of strangers as they wait at LAX for the donor's arrival. He says he'll know who she is.

"I received a gift of life and hope from an angel," said Ed. "And I am a blessed man -- a lucky guy."

An "angel" is the only way this cancer survivor can describe what she's done for him. Ed had non-Hodgkins lymphoma and it had spread to his internal organs. A bone marrow transplant was the only way he could survive, and it was a 1-in-10-million match. But an anonymous donor matched, and her stems cells saved his life.

At the airport, Ed finally met his angel.

"Knowing that I was doing something for someone else that needed me, that was like what encouraged me to go through the small pain," said the donor.

This match is why Ed's 16-year-old son Jake has organized the Be An Angel campaign.

"I felt that I had the obligation to give back, because society gave me my dad back by just finding this lady," said Jake.

Seeing Jake's father make a complete turnaround inspired these teens to try and make the same thing happen for others.

"If we can find one more story, if we can make one happen, it would make the whole thing worth it," said one of the teen volunteers.

"We need to attempt to save lives," said Jake. "We can't just sit back and say, 'Somebody else will do it.'"

Ed's alive today thanks to a stranger with a big heart.

There is a bone marrow drive this Saturday for people who would like to volunteer, donate, or learn how to organize their own bone marrow drive.

- November 17, 2007
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Crossroads School
Santa Monica
(at the northwest corner of Olympic Boulevard and 18th Street)

To RSVP to the Be An Angel campaign, send an email to jssaxy@gmail.com

To make a donation or for more information, visit www.BeAnAngelSaveALife.org

Or make a check payable to:

- Phase One Foundation
attn: Be An Angel
256 26th Street
Suite 201
Santa Monica, CA 90402

All donations are 100 percent tax deductible.