



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mid-States Distributing expands its benefits to support living kidney donation

The Kidneys for Communities program supports living kidney donation within one of the largest farm, ranch and home retail organizations in North America

Sept. 13, 2022 — FORT WORTH, Texas — [Mid-States Distributing LLC](#), a consortium of 33 privately held farm, ranch and home retail companies with over 700 locations across the U.S. and Canada, has selected [Kidneys for Communities](#), a nonprofit and the only national community-directed donation program, to empower its members' 30,000+ associates to support living kidney donation and help save lives. Now, associates and their families can direct their kidney donation to a person who needs a kidney and is affiliated with the Mid-States community — even a potential stranger.

Chronic kidney disease is the ninth-leading cause of death in the U.S., according to George Washington University. Through Kidneys for Communities, Mid-States is now positioned to help thousands of people living with end-stage renal disease. Altruistic kidney donor and Kidneys for Communities Board Member Debbie Shearer introduced the program to Mid-States CEO and President Tom Mahlke.

“Relationships are the foundation of what makes Mid-States special with our communities, customers and each other,” said Mahlke. “Our partnership with Kidneys for Communities is yet another way we can empower our members and their associates to help one another.”

Kidneys for Communities will provide Mid-States the tools to educate, generate awareness and create a connective dialogue among community members to link up prospective living kidney donors and those in need of a kidney within their community, even though they don't personally know each other. Donors will remain anonymous unless they choose otherwise after the donation.

“We are more than owners, managers or team members. Our lives are intertwined with people within our communities, and we step up when someone is going through a hardship,” said MaryKay Yeley, Mid-States past board member and chief operating officer of Murdoch's Ranch & Home Supply, a merchant member of Mid-States. “Chronic kidney disease is a hardship that has impacted families in the Mid-States community, which spans across the country. Our partnership with Kidneys for Communities is a way for us to help those in need of a kidney transplant.”

Recognizing the financial barriers associated with donating a kidney, the program works with donors to help eliminate financial or familial risk barriers to living kidney donation by partnering with organizations that provide additional protections and reimbursements throughout the donation process. Cost reimbursement includes travel and lodging expenses for the donor and companion; lost wages for missed work for surgery and recovery; child care and adult care; life, disability and complication insurance for donation; and kidney prioritization, if needed.

“Our partnership with Mid-States is a testament to how one community can change lives for the better,” said Atul Agnihotri, Kidneys for Communities chief executive officer and board president. “Connecting people across one of the largest farming retailer networks in North America helps Mid-States member employees and their family members who urgently need a lifesaving kidney.”

Tackling the living kidney donor shortage, Kidneys for Communities’ solution has broad applicability across industry segments. The nonprofit is working with national trade and professional associations, unions, cooperatives, first responders and other organizations to increase the pool of living kidney donors in the United States.

About Mid-States Distributing

Founded in 1954, Mid-States Distributing Company has become one of the nation's largest retailers in the farm store channel. Mid-States currently has 33 members, employing over 30,000 associates, with approximately 700 store locations in 36 states and nine Canadian provinces, with annual sales in excess of \$7 billion.

About Kidneys for Communities

Kidneys for Communities is a nonprofit that partners with organizations to impact the lives of their members by offering resources about living kidney donations to their membership, increasing the chances of a donor directing a gift-of-life kidney to a fellow member in need.

The community-directed donation model allows potential donors who belong to membership-based associations to direct their lifesaving donations within a community they want to support.

Addressing the shortage of living kidney donors through proactive community outreach programs, Kidneys for Communities developed the first-ever national community-directed donation program. The program unlocks connections created through membership-based communities with the goal of increasing the number of living kidney donors in the U.S.

The leadership team includes innovative leaders, kidney recipients and donors, social workers and medical experts in the field of renal transplantation — all of whom have seen this disease up close and are committed to making an impact. Learn more about donating, or connect directly with the Living Donor Connections team, at www.kidneysforcommunities.org.

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