



Monmouth College is number one. No, this is not a sports article on how one of the sports teams is at the top of the national rankings, nor is this a display of an undying school spirit for the College. Led by senior Kristin Bickett, Monmouth College has recently won the “I am. Are you?” Campus Challenge, when 125 students (9.3% of all students) registered in the new organ and tissue donation registry for Illinois.

Bickett has been a member of the Facebook group for organ and tissue donation for a while. When she saw that other people were posting their stories of organ and tissue donation, she decided to share her own, about her cousin who had a severe heart defect as a baby. He was in and out of the hospital and finally received a heart at the tender age of six months. She noted, if he hadn’t gotten that heart transplant, he would not be the happy 13-year-old that he is today.

When Scott Meis and Jeff Slutz, leaders of the “I am. Are you?” campaign, got word of Bickett’s story from Facebook, they asked her to jump aboard the campaign and help spread the news of organ and tissue donation across Illinois, starting at Monmouth College.

Bickett was picked to be the representative from Monmouth College for the “I am. Are you?” Campus Challenge. This challenge is part of the Donate Life Illinois campaign, which has a goal to register 3.5 million Illinois residents to the new organ and tissue donation registry by April of 2008. The campus challenge involves colleges and universities across the state working together to register students, faculty and alumni to the new state registry system.

Bickett and Monmouth College started on the campaign in early October and fought hard until the end to win the challenge. Bickett mentioned that the biggest competitor the College had was probably Illinois Wesleyan University but noted, “A lot of the schools were much bigger than us and we beat them. But more importantly, besides winning by percentage, we saved tons of lives.”

At the end of the competition, Bickett was excited to see the results of Monmouth winning by percentage, but is still concerned about more people registering. “I am glad that the campus realized how important being an organ and tissue donor was,” stated Bickett. “I am glad that we got a lot of people to sign up and help out the cause, and I hope we can get even more over time. Thanks to everyone that registered!”

Even though the campus challenge is over, there is still a goal to be reached in getting people to register online. If one has not yet registered online for the new registry of Organ and Tissue donation in Illinois or did not even know that there was a new way of registry for the Organ and Tissue donation, such a person is encouraged, not only by Bickett but by all of those in need as well, to go to <http://www.IAmAreYou.org> and click on *Register TODAY!*. The actual process takes no more than thirty seconds and in doing so could save lives. The website claims that 97,000 people nationwide are waiting for life-changing transplants and more than 4,700 men, women and children from Illinois are on the organ transplant waiting list. Now that Monmouth College has won the campus challenge, the time may have arrived for the people not yet registered to jump on board.

IMPORTANT: If you are living in Illinois and signed up to be an organ and tissue donor before January 1, 2006, you need to re-register in order to ensure your wishes are carried out. Signing the back of your driver’s license is no longer adequate in Illinois!

Monmouth tops the donors list in '07

By: Natalie Pistole
Contributing Writer

Monmouth College triumphs in organ and tissue donation competition

Senior Kristin Bickett led a campaign to inspire more than 100 Monmouth College students to become organ and tissue donors as part of the "I am. Are you? Campus Challenge," sponsored by Donate Life Illinois



