



MEDIA RELEASE / PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

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NASCAR DRIVER TO HONOR ORGAN & TISSUE DONORS AT V.R. EATON HIGH SCHOOL

Donate Life Texas hosts Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series AAA Texas 500 driver Joey Gase for an organ and tissue donation tribute including late student, Cassie Contreras.

Dallas-Fort Worth, TX (November 1, 2018) – V.R. Eaton High School student and drill team member Cassie Contreras was only 17 years old when she died from critical injuries she suffered in a multivehicle accident and became an organ donor – donating her heart, liver, kidneys and lungs. Cassie’s family, classmates and community will celebrate the gift of life in a unique tribute event at V.R. Eaton High School hosted by the Donate Life Texas organ, eye and tissue donor registry and LifeGift, the organ donation organization that oversaw Cassie’s donation.

During the event, NASCAR driver Joey Gase will unveil the Donate Life Texas #51 car which will feature photographs of Cassie and 12 other donation and transplant honorees. Also being honored is another V.R. Eaton High School student and 2018 heart recipient, Casey Huff. In what has become a tradition for Gase called “Handprints of Hope,” each honoree, including Cassie’s family and friends, will be invited to make painted handprints on the Donate Life Texas #51 car.

These personal tributes to Donor Heroes and transplant recipients will ride with Gase on the track during his race as an inspiration to fans about the power of donation. V.R. Eaton High School students and other Donate Life supporters will also be able to make handprints on Gase’s pit road banner.

For Gase, the Donate Life mission is personal. He has been a passionate advocate for Donate Life organ, eye and tissue donor registries in multiple states since his mother passed away and became a donor in 2011. Gase was awarded NASCAR’s Inaugural Comcast Community Outreach Award in 2015 for his work supporting Donate Life and donor families.

For the upcoming MENCs AAA Texas 500 at Texas Motor Speedway, Gase will race the Donate Life Texas #51 car with the StarCom Racing team in honor of his mother, Cassie and all those touched by the gift of life.

WHAT: Appearance by NASCAR driver Joey Gase to honor students Cassie Contreras, organ donor, and Casey Huff, organ recipient

WHERE: V.R. Eaton High School, 1350 Eagle Blvd, Haslet, TX 76052

WHEN: Thursday, November 1

1:00 pm – interviews with Contreras family, Casey Huff, Gase and other honorees available

2:00 pm – Program and car unveiling

2:45 am – Handprints of Hope activity

WHY: Celebrate the gift of life and the Donor Heroes who make it possible

- MORE -

NASCAR DRIVER AT V.R. EATON HIGH SCHOOL (Cont.)

Additional Resources:

Joey Gase:

- Joey Gase Racing: <http://www.joeygaseracing.com/>
- Fox Sports 1 Mother's Day 2015 interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bttkl3aLfQE>
- Gase meets recipient of his mother's kidney: <https://youtu.be/ckm8cvD3b6M>

Organ, Eye and Tissue Donor Registration

- Donate Life Texas state donor registry: <https://www.donatelifetexas.org>
- Process of donation: <https://www.donatelifetexas.org/learn-more/learn-the-facts-about/donation-process/>
- Donation and transplantation statistics: <http://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov>

About Donate Life Texas

The Donate Life Texas organ, eye and tissue donor registry started in 2006 and now has nearly 11 million registrants, making it the country's second largest donor registry and among the fastest growing. The registry is supported by all three Texas organ procurement organizations, LifeGift, Southwest Transplant Alliance and Texas Organ Sharing Alliance as well as the 13 eye and tissue banks serving the state.

Signing up is fast and easy at DonateLifeTexas.org and provides a way for individuals to make their decision to be an organ, eye and tissue donor known. It also provides legal consent for donation after death, which removes the burden of decision-making from the family during an already difficult time.

Donate Life Texas is part of the Donate Life America not-for-profit alliance of national organizations and local partners across the United States, serving as a national voice and inspiring all people to save and enhance lives through organ, eye and tissue donation.

About LifeGift

Established in 1987, LifeGift is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that offers hope to individuals needing transplants in Southeast, North and West Texas. A founding member of [Donate Life Texas](http://DonateLifeTexas.org), the organization that runs the organ, eye and tissue donor registry, LifeGift services 10 transplant centers and 200 donor hospitals. It is accredited by the [Association of Organ Procurement Organizations](http://AssociationofOrganProcurementOrganizations.org) (AOPO) and the [American Association of Tissue Banks \(AATB\)](http://AmericanAssociationofTissueBanks.org). For more information, visit www.lifegift.org.

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