Camp Michitanki
Summer Camp for Transplant Kids

Camp Michitanki (Michigan Transplant Kids) is a summer camp created by the University of Michigan Transplant Center to provide an exciting camping experience for children 7-16 years of age who have had an organ transplant. Michitanki’s current home is a century-old YMCA camp located in scenic Oscoda, Michigan on the shores of Lake Van Ettan. The camp has more than 170 acres of outdoor fun. Each August, our campers spend seven awesome days together in the great outdoors. Michitanki is not so much a place as a truly special experience for transplant kids to interact with one another in a non-medical setting.

In 1998, two nurses from the University of Michigan Transplant Center agreed to lead a group of pediatric liver transplant recipients on a four day trip to West Virginia to attend an overnight camp for liver and intestinal transplant recipients hosted by the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh. This popular (and grueling) trip continued annually for five straight years and each year included 15-20 University of Michigan liver transplant recipients and 3-5 staff members. A bus departed Ann Arbor early Friday morning in August for the five hour trip to Pittsburgh. University of Michigan campers met 50-60 Pittsburgh transplant campers and then climbed onto school buses for the 2-3 hour drive to Morganstown,
West Virginia. The process was reversed on Monday and arrival back into Ann Arbor was usually around 9-10 PM. This experience was weathered by staff, campers and their families in order to provide these special kids with access to summer camp.

The University of Michigan Transplant Center discussed the concept of creating a transplant camp within the state of Michigan and making it available to all organ recipients. With the support of several transplant families, the transplant center, several pharmaceutical companies, a group of dedicated volunteers and the YMCA, Camp Michitanki was started in August 2003. The first annual camp was held at a camp leased from the YMCA from August 17-22, 2003 with 42 liver, heart and kidney transplant recipients. In 2004 the number of campers increased to 59 and 2005 and 2006 brought 76 transplant kids.

Camp Michitanki is an extension of the transplantation process. All of the children campers have survived the acute stages of organ transplantation and are learning to adapt and cope with medical routines and chronic care. Camp Michitanki provides campers with an opportunity to take additional steps toward returning to routine childhood experiences. Campers have an opportunity to build their self-esteem, develop new friendships, understand their health condition and experience the thrill of summer camp. Many transplant recipients are discouraged from attending other summer camps due to their challenging medication schedules and special medical care requirements. Camp Michitanki provides children who have received organ transplants an opportunity to experience all of the joys, challenges and rewards of summer camp. The camp setting is also used to facilitate discussions of ongoing medical needs, teach important skills such as how to swallow pills and capsules and to explore strategies for the integration of post-transplant regimens with routine daily activities.

Camp activities include horseback riding, swimming, sailing, canoeing, arts & crafts, archery, team building activities, nature walks, campfires, team sports, a rock climbing wall, a skateboard park and an aerial ropes course. Daily medications and health checks are built-in between activities.

For more information about Camp Michitanki please contact us at:

Camp Michitanki
University of Michigan Transplant Center
3868 Taubman Center
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-0391

Douglas Armstrong, RN, Camp Director
Vicki Shieck, RN, Health Center Director
Telephone: 734-615-4013
Transplant nurses, physicians, social workers and community volunteers work with YMCA staff to provide a “normal” and medically supervised camping experience. Children are divided by age and gender and assigned into cabin groups for the week.

Camp Michitanki provides transplanted children with access to quality recreation, outdoor living and a unique opportunity for true peer interaction with other similarly challenged kids. The kids are always pleasantly surprised to learn that everyone at camp has a surgical scar and takes daily medication. Strong friendships develop and campers often stay in touch between camp sessions. An unanticipated benefit of our camp is the overwhelmingly positive influence the Camp Michitanki has on the YMCA staff. They were very touched by the spirit, energy and enthusiasm exhibited by the transplant kids. Pre-camp expectations of debilitated, fragile and ill kids were quickly shattered and the YMCA staff now reserve their place at Camp Michitanki one year in advance.

Camp Michitanki has been established for all children in the Michigan area who have had an organ transplant, regardless of the center that performed the surgery or provides the follow-up care. In 2003 and 2004 there were children from the transplant programs at the University of Michigan, University of Pittsburgh and Children’s Hospital of Detroit. In 2005 and 2006 we added campers from Illinois and Ohio and it is envisioned that future campers will come from the pediatric programs in Grand Rapids, Chicago, Cleveland, London, Ontario and other surrounding transplant centers.

The August 2006 session had a special surprise visit from Olympic Bronze medalist and liver transplant recipient Chris Klug (www.chrisklug.com). The kids (and staff members) all enjoyed talking and interacting with Chris and have invited him to come back for the next camp session August 12-18, 2007.

A one week stay at Camp Michitanki costs approximately $600 per camper. Years of chronic illness and expensive medical treatments and on-going medication requirements challenge even the most economically stable families. For this reason, campers are only asked to pay $50 to attend camp. The remaining costs are covered through generous donations and fund raising events coordinated by friends and family of the Transplant Center. Camp scholarships are available to cover the $50 fee when it creates a hardship for the family.

Donations to Camp Michitanki can be made through our secure web page (www.firstgiving.com/campmichitanki) or by contacting the Transplant Center Office directly at 734 764-4141. There are two annual camp fundraisers; a Spring Bowling Event and a July Golf Outing. Anyone interested in coordinating a fund raising activity or helping with a scheduled event should contact Bob Garypie, Transplant Center Events Director, at 734 936-3460.

– Doug Armstrong, MS, RN
Consider how you’d respond if everyday activities such as showering, walking to the mailbox, or climbing a flight of stairs would steal your breath away? Can you imagine being tethered to oxygen every hour of every day? The constant flow of air would irritate your nose. Other people would step on your tubing - jolting your ears. The tubing would get tangled as you sleep. You would need to face the tedious task of converting to portable oxygen tanks every time you left your home to ensure you’d have enough oxygen while you are away. You’d be frightened of passing out the next time you have a coughing fit or can’t catch your breath. You would look forward – in the hope of breathing easier – to receiving that much anticipated phone call and hearing “This is Jenni, Transplant Coordinator, from the University of Michigan Transplant Center. We need you to come to the hospital for your lung transplant.” The generosity of a stranger would allow you a chance to live again – to participate in activities that have gradually been eliminated from your life as your struggle to breathe increased.

On Friday September 22, 2006, the University of Michigan Transplant Center celebrated “Lung Transplantation Through The Years” at Palmer Commons on the main campus of the University. The Transplant Center invited lung transplant patients and their families to celebrate the success of lung transplantation since the inception of the program at UM in 1990. Over 100 patients with guests attended the event.

Kevin M. Chan, M.D., the current Medical Director of the Lung Transplant Program, opened the ceremony by welcoming all guests, providing a short update on the lung transplant program, its growth over the years, and its role as one of the leaders in transplant experience and research. He discussed the Health System’s dedication to end stage lung disease and lung transplant care and research. He thanked the UM Transplant Center for their support to the lung transplant program and celebration. Dr. Chan asked for a moment of silence in memory of the organ donors and transplant recipients who are no longer with us and their families.

Tammy C. Ojo, M.D., a UM lung transplant pulmonologist, addressing a very familiar crowd shared comments about the crucial role of pulmonary rehabilitation in the lung transplant process. She described lung transplantation as running a marathon. One needs to train for the event prior to surgery by attending pulmonary rehab or an exercise program. The stronger and better conditioned one presents for the surgery the more likely one will have favorable outcomes after surgery. She acknowledged that exercise is especially difficult when one is short of breath but the impact is so valuable. Pulmonary rehab is also very important after transplant. A lifelong maintenance exercise program is recommended for all. She concluded with the anonymous quote, “Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the number of moments that take our breath away.”

Celebration continued on page 5
Dr. Ojo then introduced the guest speaker and mentor of many UM pulmonologists, Joseph Lynch, III, M.D.

Joseph Lynch, III, MD was instrumental in implementing the lung transplant program at the University of Michigan in 1990, where he remained the program’s Medical Director until 2003, when he joined the transplant team at the UCLA Medical Center. Many of Dr. Lynch’s former UM patients were in the audience. Dr. Lynch gave an emotional history of the programs triumphs and challenges through the years. His nostalgic address encompassed the first successful UM lung transplant and program inception to today’s current program. He noted his experience enabled him to write a book *Lung and Heart-Lung Transplantation* published in 2006. He described the honor of caring for this patient population and sharing with his patients the gifts the extra time and quality of life granted them as a result of transplantation. He acknowledged that many challenges still exist in lung transplantation and the time post-transplant still is not long enough. He reflected on patients who were able to see children graduate, play sports, and participate or attend activities that never would have been possible without transplantation. Dr. Lynch said he was pleased to see the program now has seven transplant pulmonologists, four lung transplant surgeons, and many support staff members. The original program consisted of only four members, Dr. Lynch, UM surgeon Dr. G. Michael Deeb M.D., transplant coordinator Ros Florn, R.N., and social worker Oliva Kuester, L.M.S.W. Dr. Lynch called Ros Florn and Oliva Kuester to the podium to recognize the original program members. UM surgeon Dr. Deeb was unable to attend. Dr. Lynch thanked Ros and Oliva for their dedication and participation with the lung transplant program through the years.

Lung transplant recipients Edward McQueen, Donna Smallwood, and Beverly Cherwinski also spoke at the event. Edward McQueen, former Detroit detective and 1995 transplant recipient, spoke of the benefits of the lung transplant support group. Mr. McQueen has consistently attended the support group for more than a decade. He described the early years of the program to the current support group coordinated by UM lung transplant social worker Lisbeth Warner, LMSW. Support group speakers provide valuable education about many life-after-transplant issues. The comradery, lessons, and assistance navigating life after transplant from other recipients is also very useful. Donna Smallwood, UM retiree and 2001 recipient, echoed her friend Mr. McQueen’s remarks. She also spoke of the value of volunteering and supporting Michigan Gift of Life events as well as taking action to increase organ donation awareness. Beverly Cherwinski, a very active 1999 recipient, started the Northern Michigan Transplant Group...
Deeb performed the first successful UM lung transplant and requested she become the program’s coordinator. Ros has been an essential asset to the program since its inception. Ros has been familiar with every one of the more than 390 UM lung transplant recipients and continues to be an outstanding resource in lung transplant care. The crowd rose to their feet for a standing ovation in Ros’ honor.

Concluding the formal ceremony, UM Transplant Administrator Anne Murphy, MBA presented lung transplant coordinator Ros Florn, RN with an award for recognition for her years of service and dedication to the lung transplant patients and program. In 1990 Ros was a UM Thoracic Intensive Care staff nurse when Dr. Deeb performed the first successful UM lung transplant and requested she become the program’s coordinator. Ros has been an essential asset to the program since its inception. Ros has been familiar with every one of the more than 390 UM lung transplant recipients and continues to be an outstanding resource in lung transplant care. The crowd rose to their feet for a standing ovation in Ros’ honor.

The program concluded with informal gatherings and refreshments. A comment made by Trevor Scott, a current UM student and 2006 lung transplant recipient, summarizes the impact transplant can have for a patient. Trevor indicated the UM campus seemed so large before his transplant. Before transplant, his breathing would not allow him to walk very far. Now, he easily crosses the campus. <M

– Catherine E. Walls, RN, BS

U-M Transplant Center again receives HHS Medal of Honor for efforts to increase organ donation

U-M maintains organ donation rate of more than 75 percent for second year in a row

The University of Michigan Health System Transplant Center, in collaboration with Gift of Life Michigan, received the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ distinguished Medal of Honor for achieving an organ donation rate of more than 75 percent for an unprecedented second year in a row, making it one of the leading transplant centers for organ donation in Michigan and one of the best in the country.

This joint effort resulted in 40 organs for transplantation at U-M hospitals in 2005 – 22 kidneys, 10 livers, three hearts, four lungs and one pancreas.

The U-M Transplant Center was one of 16 hospitals in Michigan, and one of 300 hospitals nationwide, to receive the HHS Medal of Honor for achieving a life-saving organ donation rate of 75 percent or greater for a sustained 12-month period. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services also recognized U-M in 2004 and 2005 for its significant efforts to increase the organ donation rate.

Much of the U-M Transplant Center’s success is credited to the work of Jeffrey Punch, M.D., F.A.C.S., director of the UMHS Transplantation Division; Mark Gravel, director of UMHS Donation Initiatives; and Richard Chenault, transplant/donation specialist – all of whom received individual HHS Medals of Honor for their significant efforts to increase organ donation at U-M.

Those efforts include the development of the Organ Initiatives program at UMHS, which strives to shrink the gap between patients on organ wait lists and organs available for transplantation. The program works to increase U-M Health System staff education, and applies a more organized approach to talking with patients’ families about the potential for organ donation.

HHS Medal continued on page 7
The Medal of Honor is part of the HHS Organ Donation Breakthrough Collaborative.

The Collaborative, which the U-M Transplant Center and Gift of Life Michigan joined in 2003, is designed to combat the growing disparity between the supply and demand of organs for transplantation in the United States by pairing the hospitals with the highest number of eligible/potential donors with their local organ procurement organization. Its goal is to raise the donation rate at these institutions to 75 percent. Thanks to these efforts, the current national average organ donation rate is 60 percent.

To learn more about the HHS Organ Donation Breakthrough, visit www.organdonor.gov.

For more information about organ donation and how to become a donor, go to Gift of Life Michigan at www.giftoflifemichigan.org, TransWeb: All About Transplantation and Donation at www.transweb.org, or UNOS (United Network for Organ Sharing) at www.unos.org.

FACTS ABOUT ORGAN AND TISSUE DONATION IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN:

- 278 Michigan patients received a life-saving organ transplant from a living donor in 2005.
- 65 Michigan children received an organ transplant in 2005.
- More than 7,500 Michigan patients have received a life-saving organ transplant in the last 10 years.
- One organ and tissue donor can save and enhance the lives of over 50 people!
- The gift of life is ageless. Everyone can sign up to donate life.
- Cornea transplants have been successful for more than 100 years.
- Organ transplants have been saving lives for more than 50 years.
- On average, 77 U.S. patients receive an organ transplant every day.
- On average, 17 Michigan residents receive an organ transplant each week (5 of those are from living donors).
- Nearly 1,000 cornea transplants are performed in Michigan each year.

The American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS) and the University of Michigan (UM) are pleased to announce the receipt of a major grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The 4-year grant will provide reimbursement of travel expenses and subsistence costs for living organ donors, removing an important financial disincentive to living organ donation.

ASTS and University of Michigan Receive HRSA Grant

HRSA Grant continued on page 8
As part of the ASTS Mission to “increase organ donation”, the UM-ASTS project team will work closely with HRSA to develop an efficient nationwide system to identify potential live organ donors who face financial hardship in meeting travel and subsistence expenses associated with the process of evaluation and undergoing live organ donation procedures.

The project scientists will critically evaluate the specific impact of the reimbursement program on facilitating live organ donations that would not have otherwise been possible. According to Project Director Akinlolu Ojo, MD, PhD, Professor of Medicine at the University of Michigan, “The costs of travel, lodging, and other expenses incurred by individuals who wish to be evaluated as potential organ donors may be prohibitive. For these people, who may otherwise be very suitable donors for their loved ones, reimbursement of these out-of-pocket expenses may make the critical difference and allow them to proceed.”

Under provisions of the grant, a National Living Donor Assistance Center will be established at the ASTS National Office, and the vast majority of the $8 million grant will be used for direct reimbursements to potential and actual living donors. It is estimated that the grant will make live organ donation possible for an additional 800-1000 individuals annually.

SOD was founded with a twelve student executive board and one faculty sponsor, Dr. Jeffrey D. Punch, Chief of Transplantation and Director of the Transplant Center at the University of Michigan. They immediately began registering organ and tissue donors and spreading donation awareness throughout campus. To accomplish this, they set up informational booths across campus and advocated for organ donation in campus residence halls. They even contributed to breaking the Guinness World Record for registering the most organ donors, just a few months after they became established on campus.

SOD started off strong at the beginning of the new school year in September of 2006 by registering hundreds of organ donors at Festifall, a day long gathering of campus student groups in the Diag. SOD also worked closely with the American Red Cross to sign up organ donors during campus blood drives. SOD’s
largest event of the year thus far was the 1st Annual Wolverines vs. Buckeyes Challenge for Life. The goal of this competition between U-M and Ohio State University was to see which of the two rival schools could register the most organ donors before their football game on November 18, 2006. Although the Buckeyes won the competition, the real winners are those that registered and could potentially save the lives of the thousands currently waiting for transplants. Both schools combined to register over 6500 organ donors. Since one organ donor can save up to 8 lives, it is evident an organization such as SOD can have a significant impact on their community.

In addition to registering more organ donors, SOD is an active volunteer organization giving back to the community in many ways. SOD is affiliated with Gift of Life Michigan, a non-profit organ and tissue recovery organization in Michigan. Gift of Life Michigan (GoLM) is the liaison between transplant donors and recipients; providing the services necessary for organ and tissue donation. To assist Gift of Life Michigan, SOD organized a “Meal Sacrifice” fundraiser in campus residence halls. Students were asked to donate one of their meal credits and the money that would have gone toward the cost of the students’ meal was donated to Gift of Life Michigan. In this manner, SOD raised several hundred dollars to contribute to this charitable cause.

For more information about SOD, please feel free to visit their website at www.umich.edu/~umsod. Questions and/or comments about the organization can also be referred to the group’s executive board at sod.exec@umich.edu.

– Shaun Patel, President, SOD

2006 Vita Redita

Vita Redita is latin for “Life Restored” and is the name of the annual gala celebration hosted by the University of Michigan Transplant Center. The 2006 Vita Redita was held on September 30, 2006 at the Polo Fields Golf and Country Club in Ann Arbor. The fun and elegant evening has become a hit among friends of the Transplant Center. In its fourth year, the Vita Redita owes much of its success to the hard work the volunteer event planning committee. Over 40 people contributed their time and effort to help sell tickets and tables, find auction items, and dozens more details surrounding the success of such a big event.
On event night, over 200 people arrived at the Polo Fields and walked the red carpet into the grand ballroom. Guests mingled in the grill room among dozens of silent auction items ranging from golf clubs to beautiful gift baskets and works of art. Dozens of gourmet food items enticed event-goers at the many carving stations, international food stations, and the chocolate fountain dessert center. The evening’s program included remarks from Dr. Jeffrey Punch, UM Transplant Center Director and Tom Beyersdorf, CEO of Gift of Life Michigan, as well as the premiere of the highlights video from Camp Michitanki 2006. The video featured the first ever public performance of a new song entitled “Second Chance” by Michigan recording artist Hunter Brucks.

The song “Second Chance” will be released to the public in April of 2007 with proceeds from all CD sales going to Camp Michitanki.

Vita Redita 2007 will take place at the Polo Fields of Ann Arbor on October 20, 2007. Planning is already underway. Known for its unusual auction items, the Vita Redita is always looking for fun and creative experiences to be sold at auction. Auction items in recent years have included many works of art, week stays at Florida resorts and northern Michigan luxury cottages, a private jet trip to New York City with tickets to the Rachael Ray show, flight lessons, private chef services, wine and cheese tasting parties, gourmet bonfire parties, and kids birthday parties at a fire station. For more information about getting tickets for the Vita Redita, donating auction items, or getting involved in the planning for next year’s event, please contact Bob Garypie, Transplant Center Events Director, at 734-936-3460 or email rgarypie@umich.edu.

– Robert (Bob) Garypie

Dessert!

This specialty dessert, Baked Alaska, was donated by the chef and was the first item auctioned. The high bidder on this item (after bidding the dessert up), paid for the dessert, and then had it delivered to a table with 3 transplant recipient children – Camp Michitanki campers! Nice touch!
In keeping with our annual tradition the Transplant Center has adopted four needy patient families this holiday season. To be sure we met the needs of each family, they were asked to provide a list of the needs and wishes of each member of their family.

Fundraising events occurred throughout the year at the Transplant Center for the gift program. These included a basket sale at Easter time, the donation of bottles and cans throughout the year, and a candle sale in the fall. In addition, gifts, gift cards and monetary donations have poured in during December.

Many transplant staff participated in the gift wrapping party on December 18th. On December 21st and 22nd a transplant team delivered the gifts and donations to the four families; meeting the needs of over 16 individuals. Thank You to all Transplant Center staff for their kindness and generosity.

A special THANK YOU to those who coordinated this program:

Cindy Brown, MSW
Bernie Mathews, RN
Lisbeth Warner, MSW
Scharry Milne, Administrative Assistant
Anne Murphy, MBA, Transplant Administrator
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We welcome your feedback. Please share with us your thoughts on the Transplant Center Newsletter. Whether you wish to share your thoughts on a published article, make a suggestion, share news of your area, tell us what subjects you find interesting or valuable, we are interested in hearing from you!

Send your thoughts to Mary Kruger at mckruger@umich.edu. Please include your name and telephone number so we can explore potential stories.