

# CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

## Blacks urged to sign up as organ donors

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Priscilla Long Holiday knows the importance of organ donation because donated kidneys prolonged her late husband's life.

But Holiday, a volunteer for the Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network's African-American Task Force, said she often encounters resistance from African Americans to organ donation.

"Especially the older generation, they feel what you've been born with is what you take to the grave," said Holiday, 62, a Waukegan resident.

The Gift of Hope hosted a telethon Saturday at Rainbow-PUSH Coalition headquarters as part of a campaign to sign up 8,000 Illinois African Americans as donors.

Currently, some 98,000 people nationwide need lifesaving organ transplants, including 5,000 in Illinois. While African Americans make up about 13 percent of the U.S. population, they make up 35 percent of the patients awaiting kidney transplants.

People who want to become an organ donor can sign up online through [Lifegoeson.com](http://Lifegoeson.com) or [Iamareyou.org](http://Iamareyou.org) or by visiting a Secretary of State facility. They can also call (800) 210-2106.

*Mary Wisniewski*