

In Memorial

"To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die."

~ Thomas Campbell

The Mid-America Blood Services Division wishes to express its sympathy to the family, friends and co-workers of the following staff member who recently passed away.

Sue Shubert was a specialist with the BiTS management and support team. She worked for the American Red Cross in the Midwest Blood Services Region for 24 years.



Six Strategic Priorities

- Reduce Costs
- Grow Collections
- Improve Quality
- Invest in Our People
- Focus on Customers
- Reinforce the Brand

Donor and sponsor surveys analyzed

In late 2010, the American Red Cross conducted separate surveys of blood drive sponsors and blood donors. Organizational leadership is reviewing key findings and developing strategic plans to capitalize on opportunities identified. Some of the key findings include:

Brand

Substantial brand confusion exists for both blood donors and blood drive sponsors. Most donors believe blood centers are essentially the same and are confused about how the Red Cross may be affiliated with other blood centers. Most sponsors perceive little difference in blood centers, with only half seeing a clear difference. Those with more recent donation experience or in markets with fewer non-Red Cross blood centers are more likely to see the difference. And, many sponsors are confused regarding blood center affiliation with the Red Cross.

Motivating sponsors and donors

Survey results show that sponsors remain the primary way to reach donors. Donors say they give more for altruistic reasons than incentives, while the primary influencer regarding the group to which donors give is driven by the sponsor's affiliation. Unlike donors, sponsors indicated that incentives are important. More research about the overall impact of incentives is needed.

Sponsor-driven messaging, encouragement by colleagues and friends are primary influencers for donors, with online resources taking a back seat. Although younger donors were five times more likely to respond to Facebook postings. Posters, announcements in meetings and groups, and emails dominate the approaches sponsors use to recruit donors. Sponsors of smaller drives were more likely to use phone calls and Facebook postings.

The Red Cross has a greater ability to directly motivate sponsor decisions as compared with donors. "Being asked" and

"good customer service" were primary reasons for sponsoring a blood drive with the American Red Cross. Local hospital affiliation is also a driver for sponsors, but less so for donors. Donors stated a greater interest in their donation being used where and when it is most needed. Customer service and reputation are important to both donors and sponsors. Donors also value convenient blood drive hours and locations.

Red Cross services

Red Cross Humanitarian Services are a driver for approximately half of donors, but only one-third of Red Cross blood donors have also given money or volunteered with the Red Cross. Sponsors, more so than donors, are influenced to become more involved with Blood Services by the presence of other Red Cross services and the overall Red Cross brand.

Next steps

The donor and sponsor surveys have helped the Red Cross identify some key opportunities for improvement. For instance, to help attract and retain new blood drive sponsors and new donors, it will be important to create distinctions between the Red Cross and other blood centers. Steps can be taken to strengthen the Red Cross brand in competitive markets. This could be accomplished by reaching out to the public with messages incorporating information about multiple lines of service and finding ways to boost the appeal of the brand with younger donors.

Significant opportunity exists to expand the number of blood donors who also make financial donations to the Red Cross and volunteer in other areas. The Red Cross will explore how to better manage donor communications and enhance donor experiences with the entire organization. Improving customer service, exploring additional ways to increase convenience for donors and honoring appointments are also growth opportunities.

Celebrating those who make a difference

This April, the Mid-America Blood Services Division recognizes and thanks the many volunteers, laboratory professionals and administrative professionals who demonstrate commitment to the American Red Cross.

National Volunteer Week

April 10 – 16, 2011 is National Volunteer Week! This week is devoted to honoring those who have made a commitment to improve their communities through volunteerism. This year's theme, "Celebrating People in Action," is a call to action for Americans to volunteer and inspire others by their example. The Mid-America Division thanks the thousands of volunteer blood and platelet donors, blood drive coordinators, drivers, office assistants and others who help ensure a sufficient blood supply is available for patients.

Laboratory Professionals Week

April 24 – 30, 2011 marks the 36th annual National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week. It's a week set aside to increase public understanding and appreciation for clinical laboratory personnel. The dedicated efforts of laboratory professionals often go unnoticed by the general public. But, American Red Cross hospital partners know that they can always rely on the employees working in Mid-America Division laboratories. In a recent hospital survey, laboratory staff and services were listed as a top reason hospitals choose to work with the Red Cross.

Administrative Professionals Week

April 24 – 30, 2011 is Administrative Professionals Week, and Wednesday, April 27 is designated as Administrative Professionals Day. The week calls attention to the important role administrative professionals play in the workplace. Administrative professionals are valuable contributors to teams in each department throughout the Mid-America Division. Without their support, the Red Cross could not fulfill its mission of helping those in need.

Make a Difference Award recipients Recognized for reinforcing the Red Cross brand

In 2010, the Mid-America Blood Services Division introduced the Make a Difference Awards to recognize employees who went above and beyond to support the American Red Cross Six Strategic Priorities. Listed below are the honorees recognized for their valuable contributions to reinforce the Red Cross brand.

Badger-Hawkeye Region

Jessica Miess: Miess, Collections, has repeatedly demonstrated dedication and passion for the American Red Cross. She has worn the Red Cross blood drop costume on many occasions to increase awareness about the need for blood and initiated the thank you card process adopted by team supervisors.

Russ Pearson: Pearson is a great ambassador for the Red Cross through his work as a problem investigator and as a Chapter disaster volunteer. He also volunteers at various employee events.

Heart of America Region

Theresa Jackson: Jackson, a regional account manager, has gone above and beyond to support the Red Cross brand. She hosts blood drives at her children's school; leads EAC events that reach out to the community; engages Chapters in the blood program, and involves her family at various Red Cross activities.

Monica Keith: Keith, a reference laboratory manager, has represented the Red Cross as secretary of the Illinois Association of Blood Banks and accepted speaking engagements for the American Society for Clinical Pathology.

Cheryl Singleton: As senior associate BiTS management and support, Singleton has served as the Red Cross state nurse liaison for the State of Illinois, developed a program titled "All About Blood," and engaged nursing schools and health departments to present the blood program in their communities.

Midwest Region

Jo Demarco: Demarco, an apheresis donor recruiter, goes out of her way to ensure donors feel good about giving blood. Demarco makes sure she always gives the most current information about the Red Cross to people outside of her work. It is not

unusual for this advocate to spend hours talking about the Red Cross to anyone who will listen.

Frances Harding: Every week, Harding, a volunteer scheduler with collections, demonstrates personal interest in every Red Cross volunteer. This keeps volunteers active with the Red Cross. Like the brand, Harding is comforting and reassuring, offering hope to everyone she meets.

Darrell Rulla: As a team supervisor in Collections, Rulla lives and breathes the Red Cross. He promotes the brand by continually looking for ways to increase and improve relationships with sponsors, volunteers and donors in the community.

North Central Region

Rae Ann Wilcox: In her work as a Marketing Program Manager, Wilcox is committed to applying the Red Cross brand correctly and creatively to all Mid-America Division printed materials. She has successfully applied her expertise to donor recruitment materials, external publications, hospital sales materials and AABB posters. Many of her designs been utilized by other Red Cross Divisions.

River Valley Region

Jody Hutchens: Hutchens does an excellent job representing the Red Cross through her work as a receptionist and by teaching CPR and first aid classes through her local Chapter. She is often the first staff member people meet and provides a positive impression of the Red Cross.

Keith Wedding: Wedding, a donor recruitment representative, consistently provides a friendly and professional image of the Red Cross to sponsors and donors. He is also knowledgeable, and with his approachable personality, he is able to educate people about the Red Cross mission.

Greg Hutchins: Hutchins, a donor recruitment representative in apheresis, is dedicated to Red Cross blood donors. He goes out of his way to be helpful, accommodate their needs and make them feel special. He is also proactive with volunteers and fosters a pleasant team-oriented relationship with collections staff.

Babesia study underway

With safety the top priority, the American Red Cross has initiated a Babesia Seroprevalence study to determine the prevalence of a tick-borne parasite called Babesia microti in blood donors in some areas of the country where ticks are endemic. This study will provide important data that will be used to determine how best to protect blood recipients from possible exposure to Babesia through blood transfusions.

Babesia is a protozoan parasite of the blood that causes a hemolytic disease known as Babesiosis. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has reported 25 cases of clinical infections of Babesia through blood transfusions (1997-2007). Since it

is transmissible by transfusion and can potentially be harmful to patients who are already immunocompromised, it is important to understand the prevalence of Babesia in the general population of blood donors.

Some people infected with Babesia microti, transmitted primarily by common deer ticks, suffer from malaria-like or flu-like symptoms (chills, anemia, fatigue, nausea, night sweats and fever). However, other adults who have babesiosis are asymptomatic. Since there is no FDA-approved rapid test for babesiosis for blood centers to use, it is important to assess how prevalent it is in the general population.

David Mair M.D., chief medical officer of the Mid-America Blood Services Division, initiated the Babesia Seroprevalence project in collaboration with Holland Laboratory, the research and development division of the American Red Cross Biomedical Services.

“Because the endemic range of Babesia has expanded, concerns have

increased regarding the potential transmission of the parasite by blood transfusion,” said Mair. “There have been some studies done in the northeastern part of the U.S. where the seroprevalence of Babesia ranges from 0.3 in the general population to 9.5 percent in patients with Lyme disease. But few studies have been done in the upper Midwest where Babesia is also known to be endemic. So, we want to study it in Minnesota and Wisconsin,” said Dr. Mair.

The study, which has already started, will test all consenting blood donors at pre-selected blood drives. The blood drives are selected based on the number of reported cases of Babesia by the Minnesota Department of Health. The study will also include one county in Wisconsin.

“This study is very important to increase our understanding about the prevalence of Babesia throughout the region,” said Mair.

The plan is to test 2,000 donors for exposure to Babesia. To be included in the study, donors must be 17 years of age and older and consent to the additional testing. The Holland Laboratory will do the testing. The study will continue through the fall of 2011.

If a blood donor tests positive for previous exposure to Babesia, or if Babesia is currently detected in their blood, they will be notified by the Red Cross within two to four weeks of their donation and deferred indefinitely to protect the safety of the blood supply.

Findings from this study will provide important information to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Public Health Service, the FDA and blood bank organizations regarding the potential need for screening blood donors for Babesia.

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Annual refresher training deadline nears

All employees in the Mid-America Blood Services Division must complete their annual refresher training by April 30, 2011. This important, mandatory training is required for all staff.

Employees can sign up for an annual refresher class or access the required self-study documents through the Education section of MidAmericaNET.

This year there are instructor-led refresher courses and self-study courses on topics such as emergency action plans, correcting corrections correctly, bloodborne pathogens, cGMP, general rules of conduct for an inspection, chemical hygiene and more. Employees should consult with their supervisor to verify which annual refresher classes they are required to complete.

Staff must document completed training in the Learning Management System (LMS).

For more information contact a regional member of the fundamentals and continuing education team or Cristy Thompson at (308) 534-7350 ext. 139.

Mid-America Division E-Train 2 Learning... Webinar Sessions

How can I think outside the box when I live in a cube?

April 13 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. CST	Creative problem- solving skills	Barby Clark 402-341-2723 Ext 2112
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How can I think outside the box when I live in a cube?

April 27 11 a.m. - 12 noon CST	Creative problem- solving skills	Barby Clark 402-341-2723 Ext 2112
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Helpful Hints for Instructors

May 5, 2011 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. CST	Plan, prepare for and de- liver effective training	Jennifer Innis 309-636-4260
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Around the Regions and Back Again

Red Cross Month celebrated at Minnesota State Capitol

At the Minnesota State Capitol on March 24, Governor Mark Dayton officially declared March to be Red Cross Month and



(L-R) Geoff Kaufmann and Phil Hansen listened to Governor Mark Dayton praise the Red Cross for its commitment to help the people of Minnesota.

presented a proclamation to Geoff Kaufmann, CEO of the North Central Blood Services Region and Phil Hansen, CEO of the Minneapolis Region and Twin Cities Area Chapter.

“I want to thank the Red Cross for your extraordinary work and commitment to the people of Minnesota,” said Governor Dayton. “I also want to thank all the volunteers who work every day to help save or rebuild lives that have been shattered by disaster.” Dayton encouraged all Minnesota residents to support the work of the Red Cross by donating lifesaving blood products or helping meet the immediate needs of thousands of residents who could be forced from their homes by encroaching flood waters in the state.

Red Cross Day at the Capitol also provided an opportunity for the Red Cross to strengthen its relationships with Minnesota legislators and share information about Red Cross programs and services. ●

Family meets and honors blood donors for giving ‘Gift of Life’ to their loved one

On March 9 in Omaha, Neb., Jane and Monte Mead and their son-in-law, Kim Nielsen, met four people who touched their lives profoundly – Todd Banchor, Margaret Bullock, Marjorie Keller and Austin Zach. On that Wednesday, those four anonymous blood donors were no longer anonymous. They were honored by the Heartland Chapter of the American Red Cross and the family of Christi Mead Nielsen as Gift of Life Heroes during the Chapter’s annual Heroes in the Heartland event.

Jane explained, “We had a daughter for 12 years that we wouldn’t have had.” Because of their blood donations and those of others, Christi survived multiple heart surgeries and health complications for over a dozen years.

Though Christi later passed away, blood donors enabled her to see her son graduate from high school and allowed her to celebrate 28 wonderful years of

marriage. “You can’t put a value on time and that’s what they gave us,” said Jane.

Todd Banchor, who has made over 53 blood donations including platelets, whole blood and red cells, said “just the idea that we can affect others without realizing it” was humbling for him.

“Thank you is such a small thing to say,” said Jane, her voice wavering with emotion, addressing these four donors. “It’s difficult to put into words what time means. You have given us that.”

Kim concluded adding, “I couldn’t ever thank you enough for that.” ●



During the Heartland Heroes event, the Heartland Chapter united four blood donors with the family of Christi Mead Nielsen, a woman who received their blood donations.

Platelet additive solution program expands to Heart of America Region

Last year, the American Red Cross launched the Platelet Additive Solution program (PAS), becoming the first blood center in North America to add Fenwal's InterSol® platelet additive solution to donated platelets for transfusion to study its impact on patient safety.

The pilot study, started in the North Central Blood Services Region, has now been expanded to the Heart of America Blood Services Region with its hospital partner the



Heart of America Region CEO Shelly Heiden visits with platelet donor Peoria Mayor Jim Ardis during his recent donation.

University of Chicago Medical Center.

Donated platelets are currently stored in 100 percent human plasma. InterSol replaces approximately 65 percent of the plasma, which can then be used for other purposes. Reducing the amount of human plasma in donated platelets may also decrease the number of transfusion reactions, including Transfusion Related Acute Lung Injury (TRALI), a rare but serious transfusion-related complication.

A portion of platelet donations through the Red Cross will have InterSol added. American Red Cross hospital partner the University of Chicago Medical Center joins the Mayo Clinic and University of Minnesota Medical Center in transfusing the platelet products and participating in the evaluation. ●

20th annual St. Patrick's blood drive

The River Valley Blood Services Region hosted its 20th annual Louisville St. Patrick's blood drive on March 7. Nearly 350 blood donors from across Kentucky made more than just Irish eyes smile by rolling up their sleeves to help save lives.

Blood donors, like John Schmidt, donned their green and brought some luck into the lives of patients.

"I started donating blood when I was 21 because I wanted to do something for others," said

Schmidt. "Now, more than 40 years later, donating blood keeps me feeling young. I look forward to these special event drives and make a point of attending."

The St. Patrick's blood drive is held annually in March and was created to help ensure a steady blood supply. ●



John Schmidt donates at the St. Patrick's blood drive.

Returning the gift of life

Just six days after completing her junior year of high school, 17-year-old Tansy Sweet accompanied by her best friend, Sarah, set out on an endeavor to pick up Tansy's new car. What began as a promising summer was abruptly curtailed on a county highway.



Tansy Sweet

Driving just outside their hometown of Clintonville, Wis., Tansy approached a slow-moving semi truck and pulled out to safely pass the vehicle. The driver of the semi failed to

signal a left turn, and she and Sarah rear-ended the semi at 50 mph.

Clinging to a one percent chance of survival, Tansy remained in a drug-induced coma for eight days following the accident. Sarah didn't survive.

"When I first woke up, it was my dad that I saw standing at my side and I had no idea where I was," said Tansy, who initially used a white board to communicate. Her first written words read: "What happened?"

Tansy suffered from a ruptured spleen, two broken legs and a lacerated liver that continued to bleed profusely. She received more than 100 pints of blood products while in the hospital.

"If people hadn't donated blood, if that act of generosity never happened, there would have been absolutely no way I would have survived," said Tansy.

Nine years after her life-threatening accident, Tansy is a registered nurse at Bellin Hospital in Green Bay, Wis., and a regular blood donor. She hopes her experience will encourage others to donate blood and join the countless donors who help save lives like hers every day. ●

Improving donor and sponsor relationships



Howie Walz,
Division Vice President

On the front page of this issue of *Division Times*, you read a brief summary of recent surveys the American Red Cross conducted with blood donors and blood drive sponsors. These survey results offered a few surprises

while confirming some information we already suspected. For instance, we knew that our donors and sponsors want us to honor blood donation appointment times and offer good customer service. We suspected, and the data confirmed, that some donors and sponsors are confused and don't understand that not all blood centers are affiliated with the American Red Cross.

The survey results are being analyzed at both the national and divisional level. Opportunities for improvement, key actions and next steps are being identified. One exciting opportunity that stands out is our potential to improve the way we manage our

relationships with donors.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM), part of the BioArch project, is our strategy to transform the way we market to and interact with blood and platelet donors. CRM encompasses transforming processes to be donor-centric, implementing organizational changes that allow us to support these processes and engaging technology through the Donor Relationship Management System (DRMS), enabling us to foster mutually beneficial relationships with donors and sponsors through personalized experiences that inspire loyalty and lifetime involvement.

Through the CRM strategy and the DRMS technology, we can improve donor satisfaction, reduce marketing and sales costs, streamline organizational structure and processes, and lay the foundation for long-term sustainable growth. Some immediate benefits include a single donor database, centralized telerecruitment and online appointment scheduling system, the ability to capture and honor donor preferences,

and more consistent management of donor contacts nationwide. It will create clear and consistent marketing processes and structures nationwide, helping us use our marketing resources more efficiently. DRMS will lead to an improved and consistent donor experience across divisions and regions.

The Mid-America Blood Services Division will be the first to implement the DRMS this summer, and preparations are already underway. Changes are not always easy, but because of the standardization work that has already occurred in the Mid-America Division in recent years, we are the best prepared. We have the right people in place to work on the project and they are laying a solid foundation for the project to be built upon. I'm proud that the Mid-America Division will take the lead for DRMS roll-out and I look forward to sharing more information about the project with you in the months ahead.

Howie Walz
Division Vice President

ACCOUNTABILITY	RESPONSIBILITY	INTEGRITY
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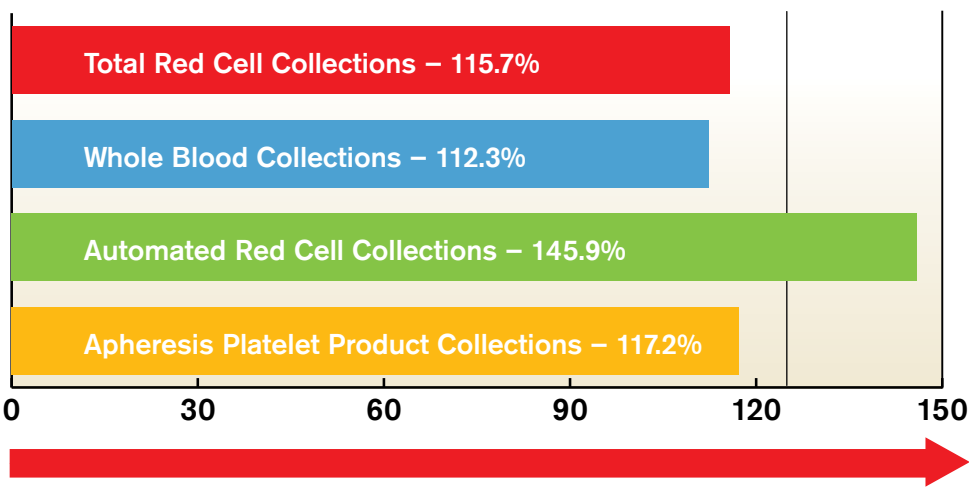
The need is constant.
The gratification is instant.
Give blood.™

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redcrossblood.org
[Facebook.com/redcrossblood](https://www.facebook.com/redcrossblood)

Division Times is published monthly for employees of the Mid-America Blood Services Division. Questions and comments can be directed to the editor, Susan Kluesner, Marketing and Communications, 651-291-4643, or kluesner@usa.redcross.org.

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MARCH DIVISION COLLECTIONS



TOTAL MARCH DISTRIBUTION: Red Blood Cells = 67,108 ▪ Platelets = 11,171