

## **CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE EDUCATION FUND**

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*Established 1981*

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### **Walk for Life West Coast 2008**



The West Coast Walk for Life has become an annual event in San Francisco showing our fellow citizens and politicians that there are many people in this state (and throughout the United States) who respect the sanctity of life. It is estimated that more than 25,000 people participated in this year's walk.



Saturday January 19 dawned a beautiful crisp day in San Francisco. Over 25,000 gathered at Justin Herman Plaza Green to for the rally at 11:00AM followed by the walk along the San Francisco Embarcadero.



We were blessed to hear from several wonderful speakers. The favorite of those I spoke with was Gianna Jessen, a young woman who survived a saline abortion, and told those gathered “.” "I was aborted and did not die. The abortionist had to sign my birth certificate.” However, she noted, "My life is not defined by abortion. I am not a victim, I am a victor."

Gianna told the cheering crowd, "I will limp my way into heaven" because she bears the mark of the saline abortion, cerebral palsy, which was meant to end her life at a Los Angeles clinic. She urged the crowd of over 25,000 to forgive and sent out a blessing of "mercy and grace and redemption" over the life of anyone who has had an abortion.

Jessen was one of four speakers at the Walk for Life rally along with Alveda King, the niece of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., BlackGenocide.org founder Rev. Clenard Childress, and radio host Jesse Romero.

After the speeches, the crowd walked along San Francisco's waterfront for 2.5 miles in the 4th Annual Walk for Life West Coast, carrying banners that proclaimed "Abortion Hurts Women" and "Women Deserve Better®." About 250 pro-choice protestors chanted and jeered alongside the pro-life walkers.

The walk ended at Marina Green, where it took almost an hour for everyone to arrive... that's a BIG gathering!



**Mark your calendars now for next year's walk Saturday,**

**January 24th, 2009, beginning once again with a rally at the lawn area of the Justin Herman Plaza at 11:00AM.**

## **Stem Cells May Gradually Replace Anti-rejection Drugs For Kidney Transplant Patients**

ScienceDaily (Jan. 24, 2008) — After a transplant surgery, anti-rejection drugs for the organ recipient are a must, but prolonged use can have serious side effects, including infections, heart disease and cancer. A team led by Joshua Miller, MD, a researcher at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, is working with Northwestern Memorial Hospital's department of organ transplantation to enroll qualifying subjects in a new research study that seeks to transplant stem cells from a kidney donor's bone marrow into the recipient, with the hope of gradually eliminating the need for anti-rejection drugs. If research proves successful, it would mean a dramatic change in the post-transplant quality of life for the transplant recipient.

Northwestern is the only center in Chicago and one of four centers nationally looking at this topic. The Feinberg School of Medicine has received a four-year, \$2.5 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to enroll 20 patients in the study, which is called "Donor Stem Cells, Campath, T/B Cell Regulation In HLA-Identical Renal Transplants."

The first subjects to participate in the study underwent kidney transplant surgery on Thursday, Jan. 10. Sharon Flood of Pingree Grove, Ill. donated her kidney to her brother Steven Yelk of Gurnee, Ill., who suffers from polycystic kidney disease (PKD), which causes cysts filled with fluid to form throughout the kidneys. Eventually, these cysts take over the healthy kidney tissue and the kidneys fail. "Our family is very close and there are seven brothers and sisters, I was thrilled to learn that I was a match and would be able to help Steven," Sharon commented before the surgery.

Joseph Leventhal, MD, PhD, transplant surgeon, associate professor of surgery and director of the Living Donor Renal Transplant Program at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, performed the kidney donor's surgery and Michael Abecassis, MD, MBA, chief of the division of transplantation, and dean of clinical affairs for Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine, performed the recipient's surgery.

"The surgery was successful, everything went according to plan and the new kidney is functioning well," said Dr. Abecassis. From here, the kidney recipient will begin the experimental portion of the study.

This study is open to HLA-identical sibling kidney donor and recipient pairs. HLA, or human leukocyte antigen, is one of a group of proteins found on the surface of white blood cells and other cells that play an important part in the body's immune response to foreign substances. These antigens vary from person to person, and an HLA compatibility test is performed before organ transplantation to find out if tissues match

between a donor and a recipient.

The study is limited to only HLA-identical sibling pairs because these siblings genetically have a more similar set of immunologic markers than a non-related HLA-identical pair. Because this population has the closest genetic relationship, they have the best chance for success with the study. Overall, HLA-identical siblings have very low rejection rates for kidney transplants but until now have still required immunosuppressive drugs to be taken for life.

### **How does it work?**

Stem cells are formed at the marrow and are common blood cells from which other specialized blood cells, like immune cells, develop. These stem cells are considered important to help prevent rejection of the kidney transplant. By transplanting these cells from the kidney donor into the recipient, the study seeks to prove that the stem cells will mature in the recipient's body and will allow his immune system to accept the new organ as his own.

For the kidney donor, the laparoscopic surgery occurs in the standard manner. After the kidney is removed, bone marrow is drawn from the donor's hipbone. About three months following the surgery, the donor undergoes two procedures called leukopheresis, happening one day apart, where stem cells mobilized from the marrow are collected so that they can be given to the kidney recipient to help his body acclimate to the transplant.

Approximately one month before the transplant surgery, the recipient undergoes leukopheresis to draw white blood cells, which are stored in a lab for later testing. After transplant surgery, the recipient receives four separate infusions of donor stem cells.

The stem cells are infused into the transplant recipient via an IV in a procedure that lasts about 15 minutes. The first infusion is five days after surgery, the next is about three months after surgery, then six months and finally nine months after the transplant. During this time the recipient is treated with Campath-1H, a potent antibody used extensively at Northwestern to prevent rejection, in addition to the other standard anti-rejection medications. About a year after the surgery, the subject is weaned off of one anti-rejection drug, then another. There are also ongoing tests to ensure the recipient is tolerating the kidney.

"This is an exciting area of research which holds a great deal of promise if successful," says Dr. Abecassis. "We are excited to be the only center in the region offering this to qualifying patients."

*Adapted from materials provided by [Northwestern Memorial Hospital](#). Northwestern Memorial Hospital (2008, January 24). Stem Cells May Gradually Replace Antirejection Drugs For Kidney Transplant Patients. *ScienceDaily*. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/01/080123125623.htm>*

## **LIBRARY CORNER**

**Pam Stenzel on “Sex, Love and Relationships”** is the latest addition to our library. This DVD includes a 55-minute version of Pam’s talk in both in English and Spanish as well as a version appropriate for a public school setting. Before a teen audience Pam gives a powerful presentation on sex, love and relationships.

Today’s youth have not been told the whole truth about the consequences of sexual activity, experimentation, and permissiveness. Teenagers love Pam Stenzel because she tells it to them straight, mincing no words in showing how the pervasive sexual permissiveness of our culture is a deceptive trap. Every young person should have the benefit of the hard-hitting reality check. Pam’s message has helped thousands avoid disastrous consequences of unwise choices.

This is material EVERY teenager deserves to know. It concerns nothing less than their whole life and future.

If you would like to borrow the DVD with a youth group, please contact this office. We also hope to use the video at upcoming Mall Tables.  
(We also have a wonderful cassette tape of the same material but Pam Stenzel, also available for loan from our library.)

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

*(For the latest information, see [www.calendarforlife.org](http://www.calendarforlife.org))*

### **Students for Life Annual Conference April 19 at Stanford University**

California Students for Life will be holding their 7th Annual Celebrate Life Conference entitled "Empowering Pro-Life Student Groups" on April 19, 2008 9AM-4PM at Stanford University.

The purpose of the Celebrate Life Conference is to create dialogue among students and community members, as well as to celebrate the splendor of every stage of human life.

Speakers, including Students for Life of America Executive Director Kristan Hawkins and Leadership Institutes's Steve Bierfeldt, will emphasize the sacred, intrinsic value of human life and will provide resources for the rising leaders of the pro-life movement.

For more information, visit [www.castudentsforlife.org](http://www.castudentsforlife.org) or contact Statewide Director Mary Ho at [castudentsforlife@gmail.com](mailto:castudentsforlife@gmail.com).

The Conference will be held at the Stanford's Building 200(The History Quad.) Visitors and participants can park at Tresidder Union or at the Oval. Signs will be displayed directing visitors to the School of Education Building.

Please contact our office if you are interested in attending, so we can keep you informed

of last minute changes.

**Monthly Bioethics Seminar on Advance Health Care  
Directives**

**March 6, April 3, May 1, 2008 7:30-9:00PM**

**Heart of Mary Center**

**2580 McAllister Street San Francisco**

Professor Raymond Dennehy will moderate a series of discussions on three Advance Directives by a physician, a nurse, a lawyer and a priest.  
Donation \$30.

For further information contact:

San Francisco Guild of the Catholic Medical Association - Dr. George Maloof 415-219-8719