

## **BROADCAST- Mom gets new life from living organ donor**

April is [National Donate Life Month](#), and few people understand the value of that kind of gift more than April Post of Normal, Illinois. The busy single mom is living her best life because of someone else's sacrifice.

This was the second time Post needed a new kidney because of a birth defect. The first time was when she was in high school and her dad was a living donor. This time, she learned through another annual physical that her donor kidney was failing. She was 44 at the time; a single mom with a 5 year-old daughter.

Post spent nearly five years on dialysis until her transplant in December of 2019 at OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria, Illinois. She was forced to quit her job and went on disability. What got her through? Daughter Sophia and her church family at College Park Church in Normal, Illinois.

### **SOT-April Post, kidney recipient from Normal, Illinois.**

**“They helped me with my daughter, helped me financially every once in a while if I needed help, just prayed with me, yeah.” (:12)**

At the urging of a friend, Terri Thede (THEE-dee), who was part of six-person organ chain donation in 2017, she agreed to make a video to post on social media to expand her chances of finding a donor match.

Thede's friend Kelly Stonger, an executive assistant at Heartland Community College saw [Post's video](#). It touched Stogner.

### **SOT-Live kidney donor Kelly Stonger (pronounced STAUGH-nur)**

**“I could see myself in her and I could see her as a mom, making the best of a situation that she had no control over and just wanting to live the best life she could for herself and her daughter. And I thought, ‘If I could help, why wouldn't I?’” (:17)**

Testing included blood work, scans and a psychological evaluation. Was she worried about what might happen in the future while living with only one kidney?

### **SOT-Live kidney donor Kelly Stonger (pronounced STAUGH-nur)**

**“I don't do a lot of ‘what ifs’ like some people say, ‘What if you need it later? What if somebody in your family needs it later?’ I trust that God will take care of that when the time comes, and it might not ever happen, so I can make a difference now with somebody who needs it, so why wouldn't I?”**

### **A Match Made in Heaven**

When Stogner learned in September 2019 that she was a match, she and Thede decided the best way to share the good news was after a Sunday church service.

### **SOT-Live kidney donor Kelly Stonger (pronounced STAUGH-nur)**

**“Her church had been with her along the journey, and some people had tested and weren't approved to be a donor, so it was very much an answer to the prayer for the entire congregation. For them to experience that as well I think was exciting for them.” (:15)**

Living donors incur no costs because it's covered by the recipient's insurance. At OSF Saint Francis Medical Center, Stogner says everyone made her feel like a VIP.

### **SOT-Live kidney donor Kelly Stonger (pronounced STAUGH-nur)**

**“I was treated, I feel, like a princess in the hospital. Everyone was very kind and came to check on me to make sure everything was going very well. I had a great experience.” (:11)**

As for the surgery, Stogner called it, “one of the easiest things I've ever done.”

**SOT-Live kidney donor Kelly Stonger (pronounced STAUGH-nur)**

**“I was hiking within two weeks. I had flown on a vacation two weeks after and hiked in Arizona. It didn't stop me from doing what I wanted to do and what I normally would do.” (:14)**

**SOT-April Post, kidney recipient from Normal, Illinois.**

Post recalls almost immediately feeling like a new person after receiving her donated kidney.

**“I had so much energy, and I was so hungry. When I was on dialysis, I had no appetite. I could hardly eat anything. (After surgery) I was so hungry and so energized. It was awesome.” (:17)**

During those nearly five years waiting for a kidney, Post managed to get a bachelor's degree in Health Information Management from Illinois State University and she graduated among the top in her class last May.

**SOT-April Post, kidney recipient from Normal, Illinois.**

**“Because I had a clear head, I made the Dean's List. (laughs) And, I had never done that because now I could actually think and I actually had energy to do it.” (:13)**

Post now she enjoys walks and being fully present when she's with daughter Sophia. She also purchased her first house, works as a contract tracer for the McLean County Public Health Department, and feels blessed every day.

**SOT-April Post, kidney recipient from Normal, Illinois.**

**“I mean I don't know what I would do if I passed away (and left) my daughter. I know people can be on dialysis for a long time but they do not have a quality of life. They don't.” (:16)**

More than 100,000 men, women and children in the United States are waiting for life-saving organ transplants. Each day, 20 people die because the organ they need is not donated in time.

**\*\*\*for website**

Learn more about organ and tissue donation and sign up as a donor at [www.organdonor.gov](http://www.organdonor.gov).

Learn how you might become a living donor by calling the OSF Saint Francis Living Donation line at (309) 624-5433.