

On January 31, 2023, I donated my kidney to a stranger through the National Kidney Registry voucher program at UW Health Transplant Clinic in Madison, Wisconsin. As a result of my donation, a woman from my hometown received her life-saving kidney transplant just three months later. We started as strangers, and now we are family!

My decision to donate wasn't made lightly, but it was made easily. I believe God gave me two kidneys when I only needed one precisely for this purpose. Beyond that, I'd say three things motivated my decision to become a living donor: 1) Hearing the personal stories of people living with kidney disease and realizing the immense need for living donors; 2) Working in global health in under-resourced countries where diagnosis of kidney disease, dialysis, and organ transplantation are rare makes me acutely aware of my privilege around health access; and 3) Having been raised in a way where generosity towards others is celebrated and encouraged.

I have been active my entire life, as a soccer player in my younger years, and through weightlifting, hiking, biking, kayaking, and keeping up with my kids in more recent years. Prior to donating, I did my due diligence in research, asking important questions of my transplant team to ensure that my own health and quality of life wouldn't be negatively impacted by my donation. Since donating, I have been able to resume my active lifestyle with a renewed focus on my overall health and well-being.

I participated in the 2024 One Kidney Climb on Mount Kilimanjaro, a truly life-changing experience! People often ask me what the best part of that trip was, and it was truly being around so many incredible kidney donors. The KDA family is an inspiring, amazing group to participate in! I am excited to have the opportunity to participate in another One Kidney Climb, this time tackling Guatemala's Three Volcano Challenge. Participating in the One Kidney Climbs with a group of fellow donors is my way of showing the world what is possible after donation, with the hope of inspiring others to become living kidney donors, too!