

Aimee Jahnke Bio

April 2025

Aimee was inspired to donate when a friend and co-worker posted on Facebook that she needed a kidney. This wasn't her friend's first transplant—she had previously received kidneys from both living and deceased donors. After speaking with her friend's mother, who had also donated a kidney, Aimee felt encouraged to sign up for testing and enter the paired kidney donation program. She was approved and became part of a 12-person exchange: six people received kidneys, and six people donated—each pair offering the other a chance at better health and a higher quality of life that would not have been possible alone.

Aimee is participating in the Rim to Rim Challenge to raise awareness about donation options, including living donation and paired kidney exchange. By joining a group of living donors taking on physical challenges, she helps elevate the conversation around donation and build a supportive community. This community shares their stories, offers guidance to those considering donation, and helps others decide if giving the gift of life is right for them. Like many others, Aimee found that donation was nothing to fear—and that it was deeply rewarding for both the recipient and the donor.

Aimee comes from a large family and lives in Green Bay, Wisconsin. You'll find her at most Packers games or relaxing at the family cottage, where she teaches her four-legged pups how to paddleboard like West Coast surfers. She loves being outdoors, has completed multiple marathons, and in 2019, to celebrate her donation, became a Wisconsin IRONMAN finisher. Her daily mantras—*“Lead from love and pull from grace”* and *“Always stay in the breath you are in”*—guide her through physical challenges, work, and life.

Aimee donated her kidney on November 14, 2017, at UW Madison Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin. She is forever grateful to everyone who helped her friend feel better—from the other donors and hospital staff to the people maintaining the algorithms that power paired donation programs, and to the advocates who support individuals and families navigating kidney disease.