

Cristina Fontana Bio KDA Rim to Rim

Cristina Fontana was first inspired to become a living kidney donor while working as a pediatric nurse, caring for a young diabetic patient. But the seed had been planted long before, back when she lost her father to kidney cancer at just 14 years old. That patient reignited something deep within her: the desire to give someone else the chance at life she couldn't give her father.

In 2018, Cristina donated her kidney as a non-directed (altruistic) donor, expecting nothing in return except the hope of giving someone a second chance. What she didn't expect was how much it would change *her* life, too.

Since then, Cristina has become a passionate advocate for living donation. She's worked as a transplant nurse, hiked mountains alongside fellow donors and her family to raise awareness, and uses her voice to inspire others to consider the ripple effect of saying yes.

This October, Cristina will take on the Rim to Rim Challenge, a 21-mile trek across the Grand Canyon in a single day, with 14 other living kidney donors through Kidney Donor Athletes. For Cristina, this isn't just a physical challenge. It's a powerful way to show the world what's possible after donation.

Cristina lives in Zionsville, Indiana, with her husband, Daniel. She is an oncology nurse navigator, certified health coach, yoga teacher, and wellness advocate. She's also a proud mom to Gabriela, Tomas, and Alex, and a grandma or "Nonna" to her granddaughter, Audrey.

When she's not climbing mountains or teaching yoga to cancer patients, you'll find her training for her next adventure, travelling or helping others reclaim their health, because she believes the greatest gift we can give is taking care of the one body we've been given.

Her upcoming memoir, *Metamorphosis: The Gift of a Life Lived Twice*, is set to be released later this year, a deeply personal story of living with loss, finding purpose, and learning to begin again.

She often says, "*Donating a kidney didn't slow me down; it gave me a whole new purpose.*"

Cristina donated her kidney on March 8, 2018, at Indiana University Health in Indianapolis, Indiana.