

2014 VOLUNTEERS

Living kidney donation creates brotherly bond

by Ray Gabel, Midwest Transplant Network



Darrin Henry and Jake Jones



Jake and Darrin as MTN Ambassadors at a donor awareness event.

Two men became MTN Ambassadors after a second chance at life bonded them as brothers, or as they refer to themselves, "kidney cousins." Darrin Henry of Carl Junction, Mo., had played the drums all his life and traveled the country touring with many successful musicians and bands. After a break, he began playing again in 2009 for his local church, Joplin's Central Christian Church, and a Christian Rock band, Crossmember. Shortly after, Darrin sought treatment for high blood pressure, but didn't think much of it until he was moving his daughter to a new home and felt fatigue and pain. After seeing his doctor and undergoing many tests, it was determined that he needed a kidney transplant. Many of his family members came forward to be tested to see if they could donate to Darrin, but no one was a suitable match. "I always had faith that God was going to help me out of this situation," said Darrin.

Eight months later, Jake Jones, a member from Darrin's church, wanted to be tested to see if he could be a match. Darrin's prayers were answered when the results came back that Jake would be able to donate. "It is also like I received a gift," said Jake. "I got to see his quality of life improve dramatically and see him living life to the fullest again with his kids and grandkids."

Darrin and Jake work tirelessly as MTN Ambassadors to bring organ donation awareness to Joplin and surrounding communities, including holding an annual fundraiser and participating in several media interviews to tell their story. Their passion for donation and their obvious friendship continues to inspire MTN staff and our other Ambassadors as they advocate for living donation.

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