



Chicago Leukemia Survivor Meets Bone Marrow Donor for First Time at Cubs Game

Pair Matched by DKMS, World's Largest Bone Marrow Donor Center

Chicago – July 16, 2016 – A leukemia survivor met the bone marrow donor who saved his life for the first time at Wrigley Field before the Chicago Cubs played the Texas Rangers today. The two shared a special moment together at the ballpark before they exchanged the lineup cards on the field just prior to the start of the game.

Josh Byrd, 31, was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia (AML) in 2014. DKMS, an international nonprofit dedicated to the fight against blood cancer, led the search for a bone marrow donor, and found a match in Stephanie Newton, a 35-year-old wife and mother of two from Brentwood, TN. Josh underwent a successful transplant in February 2015. By law donors and recipients must wait at least a year before they can meet.

While finding a matching bone marrow donor is already extremely rare due to the uniqueness of our DNA, Josh and Stephanie are additionally both lifelong Cubs fans – an unlikely coincidence given that many people who register are never called on to donate, and a donor can be matched with a patient anywhere in the world.

“We need more heroes like Stephanie, people who save lives by registering, and ultimately acting, as bone marrow and peripheral blood stem cell donors,” said Carina Ortel, DKMS chief executive officer. “It’s inspiring to watch Josh and Stephanie meet, two strangers now connected through a powerful force. Thank you to the Chicago Cubs for bringing these two amazing individuals together today, and inspiring many more to take action and register to become donors.”

Josh has said that just stepping foot on the field at Wrigley would be his ultimate dream come true, and Stephanie’s children are named Addison (after Addison Street) and John Banks (after Ernie Banks).

About DKMS

[DKMS](http://dkms.org), part of the world’s largest bone marrow donor center, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to eradicating blood cancer and other blood-related illnesses by inspiring as many people as possible to register as bone marrow donors – thereby providing patients with second chances at life.

To register as a bone marrow donor, please visit dkms.org.

CONTACT: Michelle Friedman
Marino
240-888-9007
mfriedman@marinopr.com

ON SITE: Jack Kirkland
DKMS
347-931-1729
James@dkms.org

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