



## Answer the President's Call and Volunteer for the Red Cross

*Donate blood and change a life, starting with your own.*

**MADISON, Wis.** (June 17, 2009) – The American Red Cross invites the public to join President Barack Obama's "Summer of Service" by becoming volunteer blood donors or by hosting a summer blood drive. The "Summer of Service" initiative will officially kick off on June 22 and will run for 81 days, culminating on September 11 as a National Day of Service.

"We are very excited to take part in the President's 'Summer of Service'," said Greg Novinska, CEO of the Red Cross Badger-Hawkeye Blood Services region. "Donating whole blood takes about one hour. For busy people, this is a wonderful way to answer the President's call and give back to the community. The need for blood is constant, and the gratification of donating is instant."

The stability of our nation's blood supply is in the hands of healthy, volunteer blood donors who give generously for others in need. Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs a blood transfusion. Just 38 percent of the population is eligible to give blood, and only a fraction of those people actually do. The summer is a particularly difficult time to reach young donors. Donations from high school and college donors drop 57 percent in the summer months.

The blood you give today can make a difference in the lives of patients in your community and throughout the nation. Answer the President's call to volunteer your time this summer. Donate blood through the American Red Cross.

### **How to Donate Blood**

Simply call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE (1-800-448-3543) or visit [givebloodgivelife.org](http://givebloodgivelife.org) to make an appointment or for more information. All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver's license, or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Eligible donors must be at least 17 years old, or 16 years old with a signed Red Cross parental/guardian consent form where state permits, must weigh at least 110 pounds and be in general good health.

### **About the American Red Cross**

Governed by volunteers and supported by giving individuals and communities, the American Red Cross is the single largest supplier of blood products to hospitals throughout the United States. While local hospital needs are always met first, the Red Cross also helps ensure no patient goes without blood no matter where or when they need it. In addition to providing nearly half of the nation's blood supply, the Red Cross provides relief to victims of disaster, trains millions in lifesaving skills, serves as a communication link between U.S. military members and their families, and assists victims of international disasters or conflicts.

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