

**Press release**

**Not for immediate release  
Friday, October 19, 2018 at 9 a.m.**

**25<sup>TH</sup> CODA CEREMONY  
PRESIDED OVER BY THE HONORABLE LIEUTENANT-GOUVERNEUR OF QUÉBEC**

**The Canadian Organ & Tissue Donors Association  
pays tribute to organ and tissue donors as well as citizens and police  
officers involved in the organ donation cause**

**Sherbrooke, October 19, 2018** – The Canadian Organ & Tissue Donors Association (CODA) this morning awarded posthumous **Ambassador of Health** and **Great Samaritan** titles to living donors as well as citizens and police officers in recognition of their selfless dedication. This year marked the 25<sup>th</sup> edition of this event, which drew more than 1,500 people from all regions of Québec. As is the case every year, numerous representative of various municipal, provincial and national police forces formed a receiving line to welcome the families of donors, the persons honoured as well as dignitaries and other guests.

This touching ceremony, marked with respect and recognition, was held at the Saint-Michel Basilica-Cathedral in Sherbrooke under the **patronage of the Honourable J. Michel Doyon, Lieutenant-Gouverneur of Québec**, and in the presence of numerous guests. On this occasion, the Lieutenant-Governor of Québec was accompanied by three honorary co-presidents: Mr. François Deschênes, Assistant Commissioner and Commanding Officer "C" Division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police; Patrick Bélanger, Chief Inspector of the Sûreté du Québec; and Dominic Harvey, Assistant Director of the Service de police de la Ville de Montréal. Mr. Danny McConnell, Director of the Service de police de la Ville de Sherbrooke, acted as host of the event, which held special significance this year.

Over the past 25 years, more than 5,000 people – deceased and living donors, citizens and police officers – have been honoured in appreciation of their donations or commitments, which have allowed more than 15,000 people to receive an organ or tissue transplant.

"With this ceremony, we pay tribute to the men and women who have bequeathed a legacy of health through organ and tissue donation," said CODA President and Founder Richard Tremblay. "Through their actions, they've helped save a great many lives and improve the quality of life for thousands of others. I'd like to express my profound gratitude to all these heroes and the courageous families that agreed to respect their loved ones' wishes despite moments of great difficulty and pain. I sincerely hope this recognition by CODA and all the people in attendance today gives them further comfort and eases their pain."



Officially represented by a family member, some 216 deceased organ and tissue donors from Québec received the posthumous title of *Ambassador of Health*. To close out the ceremony, the first and last names of these donors were unveiled publicly on the Donors' Cenotaph. Finally, some 45 living donors, citizens and police officers received the title of *Great Samaritan* in honour of their commitment.

#### **About the Canadian Organ & Tissue Donors Association**

The Canadian Organ & Tissue Donors Association (CODA) was founded by Mr. Richard Tremblay in 1983. Mr. Tremblay has served as president of CODA since the association's inception. For 35 years, CODA has overseen the transportation of organs and specialized medical teams across the entire province of Québec. Over the years, the association has received support from a growing number of volunteer police officers. Close to 2,000 municipal, provincial and national police officers currently volunteer their time to the cause on off days and often at night. Since 1987, close to 20,000 such trips have been made, for a total of 1,829,739 km travelled, which is equivalent to 45 times around the Earth! Today, the organization boasts a fleet of 11 vehicles across Québec. Thanks to CODA and its volunteer police officers, Québec is one of only a few places in the world that ensures the effective and safe transportation of medical and organ donation personnel.

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**Source:**

Richard Tremblay, President-Founder of CODA

**Information:**

Doris Prince  
Director of Communications and Public Relations  
Transplant Québec  
514-349-0752