

# Threshold of Life Memorial

*A Symbol of Hope for those who are Waiting*



# Our History

In 1994, the Montana Community Service Act created the Commission on Community Service and the Governor's Office of Community Service (GOCS).



Since 2010 the Governor's Office of Community Service has served as the state's lead on educating, increasing awareness, and recognizing Montanans who, in loss of life, gave others the Gift of Life through organ, eye, and tissue donation.

Each April is National Donate Life Month. Donate Life Month raises awareness about donation, encourages Americans to register as organ, eye, and tissue donors, and honors those who have saved lives.

# Honoring Donors

To honor individuals and families whose loved one gave the ultimate gift, the Governor's Office of Community Service has two metal tree sculptures by Montana artist Jim Dolan.

Each leaf bears the name of a Montanan who gave the gift of life. Both trees are on public display - one on the first floor of the Capitol, and the other in the Department of Justice's Motor Vehicle Division in Helena.



Gift of Life Trees displayed together for Donate Life Month.

Montanans of all walks of life will continue to lose loved ones each year, many by tragedy and unexpected events. This presents the need to create a sustainable, and place-based outdoor memorial to Montanans and their families and to serve as a symbol of hope to those who are waiting.



# Statistics

**86%** of Montanans are registered organ donors, significantly higher than the national percentage of 56%

More than **1,626** Montanans, living and deceased, have given eye, tissue, or organ donation since 1988 including **14** in 2024

In 2024, **60** from Montanans gave **164** life-saving organ transplants.

There are more than **100,000** Americans waiting for a life-saving organ transplant, and on any given day, **178** of those individuals are Montanans

[lcnw.org/](https://lcnw.org/) and [donatelifenet.org/donation/statistics/](https://donatelifenet.org/donation/statistics/)  
[optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/data/view-data-reports/state-data/#](https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/data/view-data-reports/state-data/#)

# Progress so Far

The design and location on the Capitol grounds are approved for such a memorial near an existing walking path that is accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

While the legislature has approved the design and location, there are no public funds to build it.

Over \$15,000 has been secured and invested in the design, including a land survey donated to advance the effort.

Threshold of Life project phases	Fundraising Goal	Status
I. Concept and Design, approvals	\$15,000	Complete!
II. Design Development and Pre-Engineering	\$50,000	Happening
III. Architectural Construction documents, structural, civil, and electrical engineering and permitting	\$50,000	
IV. Materials, fabrication, signage, transport, installation, and inspection	\$220,000	
V. Site excavation, concrete footings, walls, and flat work. Pollinator garden walls, landscaping of the hillside and the pollinator garden irrigation and plantings.	\$150,000	
VI. Maintenance and contingency	\$30,000	
Threshold of Life Completion		Summer 2028

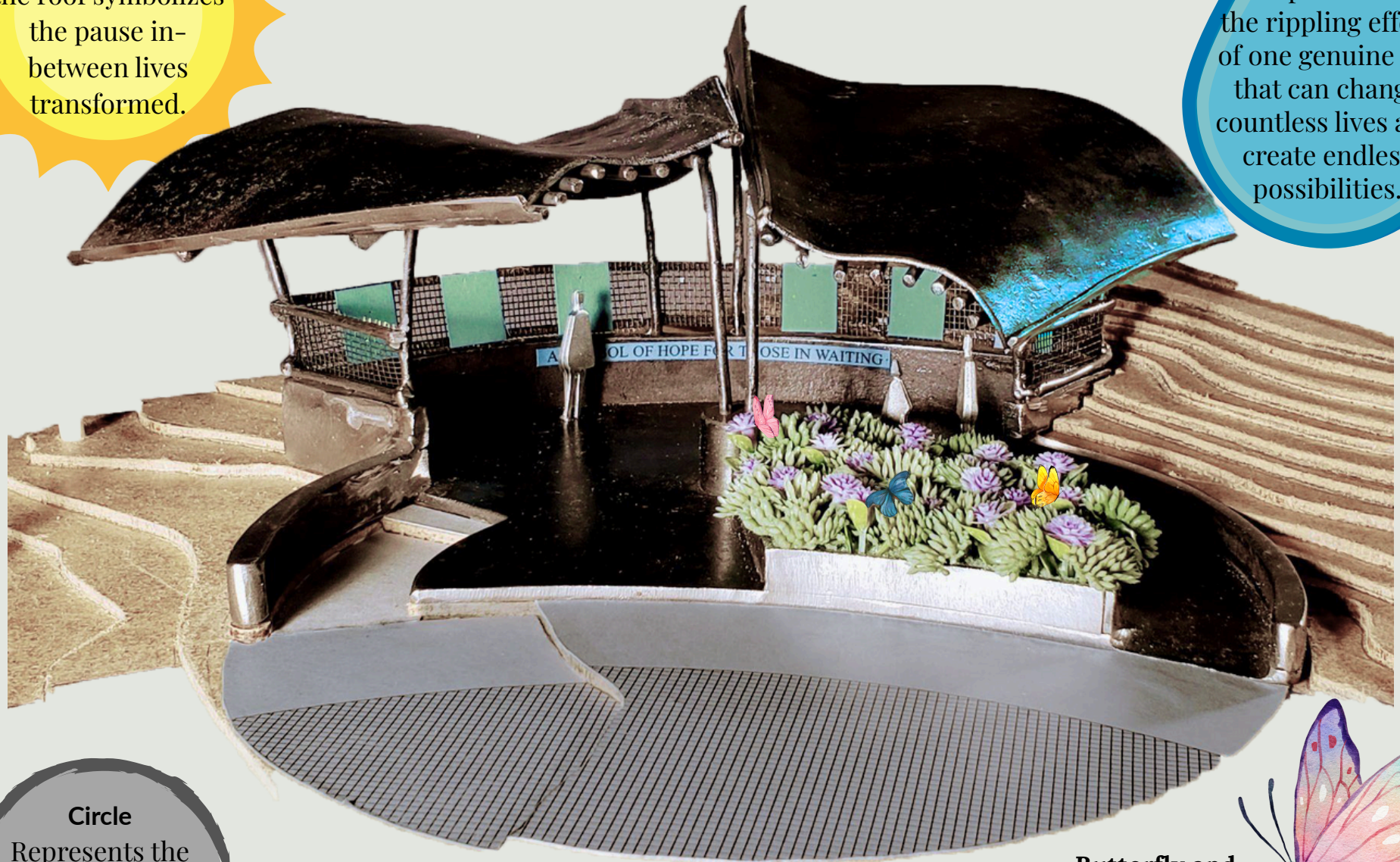
### Sunlight

The space between the roof symbolizes the pause in-between lives transformed.

Every element of the Threshold of Life memorial has heartfelt artistic meaning relating to the journey of organ, eye, and tissue donation – the loss, the hope, and the life gained.

### Water

Represents the rippling effect of one genuine act that can change countless lives and create endless possibilities.



### Circle

Represents the infinity loop, the continuous circle of life.

### Signage

Signs will show the statistics of the value of giving and the value of receiving life.

### Butterfly and Pollinator Garden

Represents new life, hope, transformation and growth, reminding us that “life is short”.





# Will You Join Us?

## Donor Benefits

Completing the outdoor Threshold of Life Memorial for Montana's organ, eye, and tissue donors is the right thing to do.

Once completed the memorial will be a symbol of hope for the many lives impacted.

Donor	Benefits	
Primary Donor \$250,000	1-15	1. Permanent Acknowledgement at Memorial site 2. Receive Personalized Donor Award 3. Invitation to happy hour with key partners
Principal Donor \$100,000	4-15	4. Opportunity to speak at milestone events 5. Acknowledgement in Case for Support 6. Meet the Architect, Ken VanDeWalle
Key Benefactor \$75,000	7-15	7. Press Release and Logo on GOCS website 8. Newsletter Feature
Benefactor \$50,000	9-15	9. Recognition and Feature on all GOCS platforms 10. Letter of Acknowledgement from the Governor
Principal Supporter \$25,000	11-15	11. Direct updates on your investment 12. Site Visit 13. Certification of Appreciation
Contributor \$5,000-\$10,000	14-15	14. Updates on the Memorial Project 15. Personalized Thank You Note

Donations of all sizes welcome and honored!

While the legislature approved the design and location, there are no public funds to build it.

With Helena Area Community Foundation serving as the fiscal sponsor for the fundraising project, individuals, groups, and organizations can join us in reaching the \$500,000 goal to make the Threshold of Life Memorial a reality.

Threshold of Life Giving Levels	Approximately Number of Supporters	Goal
\$8 for the 8 lives each organ donor can save	6,255 people	\$50,000
\$17 recognizes the 17 people who die every day waiting for a life saving transplant	3,215 people	\$55,000
\$75 honors that one tissue donor can heal 75 people	1,000 people	\$75,000
\$198 recognizes the 198 Montanans waiting for a live saving organ, eye, or tissue donation	375 people	\$75,000
\$684 recognizes that over 500 living donors have donated an organ since 1988	215 people	\$150,000
\$1,000 honors the nearly 1,000 people who, in their passing, gave the ultimate gift of life since 1988	75 people	\$75,000
\$1,600 honors the people, living and deceased who gave eye, tissue, or organ donations since 1988	15 people	\$24,000
Threshold of Life Completion - Summer of 2028		\$500,000
Thank you each and all!		

# Ways to Donate

Visit

[serve.mt.gov/commission-initiatives/Organ-Donation-and-Memorial](https://serve.mt.gov/commission-initiatives/Organ-Donation-and-Memorial)

1.

Mail a check to

Helena Area Community Foundation

P.O. Box 92

Helena, MT 59601

with “Threshold of Life” on memo line

2.

Scan the QR Code



3.

Contact us at [serve@mt.gov](mailto:serve@mt.gov) or 406-444-9077 with any questions regarding your donation!

# Project Leadership

## **Commission on Community Service Threshold of Life Memorial Workgroup**

Morgan Hubbard, Forsyth

Jim Larson, Billings

Marie Stark, Helena

Jim Swan, Rocky Boy

Vicki Turner, Helena

## **Architect**

Kenneth J. VanDeWalle, Bozeman

## **Governor’s Office of Community Service**

Sarah R. Sadowski, Director

Keena Irby, Fiscal Officer

Anastasia Matheison, Program Specialist

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Helena Area Community Foundation  
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[serve.mt.gov](http://serve.mt.gov)

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