

Andrews University

Digital Commons @ Andrews University

Lake Union Herald

Lake Union Herald

9-2024

You Could Be the One

Elizabeth Dovich

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs>

You Could Be the One

I was 13 years old when I was diagnosed with leukemia. I thought I was going to die. After my first round of chemotherapy, the doctors determined that my best chance for a cure would be a bone marrow transplant to replace my cancerous blood stem cells.

No one in my family was a match, so we didn't have any option but to turn to the unrelated donor registry, National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP). That's where they ultimately found my match—a young man in Germany. He agreed to donate bone marrow and saved my life.

When I started college at Andrews University, one of my goals was to hold a blood stem cell registry drive on campus. See, I was one of the lucky ones. Not everyone is able to find a match, and

due to genetically inherited cell markers, some demographics of people—especially minorities in

the U.S.—are not represented enough in the registry to reliably find a match. I had to do something to help other people like me, and when my professor suggested I make this project my senior thesis for the J.N. Andrews Honors Program, I realized I had the skills and resources to make it happen.

Unfortunately, U.S. registries only accept U.S. residents between the ages

of 18 and 40 years old who meet certain health criteria (don't worry, there are other registries for people who don't live in the United States). While I was hoping to get 100 people to sign up, I knew that these limitations might cause me to fall short of my goal. I did my best to promote my project on campus, and I even got my friends to help. But it wasn't enough. I only got 99 registrations.

I now turn to you, dear reader. Maybe you could be the person to help me reach my goal of 100 people. You could be the one to save someone's life. It's so easy to help. You don't donate immediately, and most of the time the donation process is like giving blood. Some people never get called to donate. I encourage you to look up NMDP or Be The Match online, or search for your own national registry outside the United States. Find out how you or someone you know can help save lives.

Signing up to be a donor is a way to show love for our fellow human beings and be like Jesus. The Bible says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son" (John 3:16). In fact, Romans 5:8 says, "But God shows his love for us in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us." The cancer of sin is only cured by a gift of blood, and the only suitable match was the Son of God. By joining the registry, you can be like Jesus and offer a life-saving gift of blood stem cells to rescue someone from a deadly disease. ■

Elizabeth Dovich hails from Massachusetts and just completed her communication degree at Andrews University.

