



First living HIV-positive kidney donor

On March 25, **Nina Martinez 15MPH** became the first living HIV-positive kidney donor in the United States. Though surgeons have transplanted kidneys from deceased HIV-positive donors to HIV-positive recipients since 2016, this was the first time it had been done in this country with a living donor. The surgery is a step toward lifting the stigma surrounding HIV and potentially opens the door for more organ donations.

“Society perceives me, and people like me, as people who bring death,” Martinez told *The Washington Post*. “And I can’t figure out any better way to show that people like me can bring life.”

Martinez, a 36-year-old public health consultant, acquired HIV as a 6-week-old in 1983, when she received a blood transfusion before blood banks began testing for the virus. She and her family did not learn of her infection until she was eight.

She began considering becoming a donor in 2013, when a law was passed that allowed HIV-to-HIV transplantation. Her interest was piqued shortly afterward when she saw a *Grey’s Anatomy* episode depicting the first kidney transplant between a living HIV-positive donor and HIV-positive recipient. Last year she learned an HIV-positive friend needed a kidney, and she started the process of being evaluated as a potential donor. Her friend passed away before the transplant could take place, but she decided to stay on the donor list.

The recipient, who has elected to remain anonymous, and Martinez are reported to be doing fine. In April, Martinez tweeted, “True facts. Left kidney is off doing amazing things in its next life. Just you & me now, righty.” ■



Hurricane Response Hub

Rollins has been chosen to serve as one of five regional technical assistance centers for the Hurricane Response Hub initiative. Funded by the CDC, this national program is designed to enhance disaster-related surveillance and environmental and occupational health recovery efforts in areas impacted by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria by building disaster-related public health workforce capacity.

Rollins will be the coordinating body of the Georgia Hurricane Response Hub Technical Assistance Center. The Hub will operate in close partnership with the Georgia Department of Public Health and the Georgia Hospital Association. “We are enthusiastic about bringing together the leading public health and health care preparedness professionals in Georgia to enhance storm resilience capacity in the state,” says **Dr. Melissa (Moose) Alperin**, director of the center.

The 2017 hurricane season was considered extremely active with 17 named storms, 10 hurricanes, and six major hurricanes, causing more than \$200 billion in damage nationwide. Recovery efforts from the hurricanes are ongoing, and many organizations still need assistance to ensure disaster-related environmental and occupational health best practices are applied to their work. ■