

Everyday Heroes

Blood Centers of the Pacific's Diversity E-newsletter

June 2011

Fear the Beard. Not the Blood.



Giants fan? We've got something just for you!

Save lives by donating blood during the month of June and receive a one-of-a-kind Giants T-shirt!

To make your appointment, visit www.bloodcenters.org or call 1-888-393-GIVE.

Fear the beard. Not the blood.

Stepping Up To The Plate

Don Franklin sits at a table near the window at BCP's [Marin Center](#) enjoying a donut. He smiles as he explains that sometimes he enjoys giving himself a treat before his [apheresis donation](#). As he's been doing for years, Don is "stepping up to the plate" and making an impact in the lives of others.



Like many long-time donors, Don first gave blood when he was in high school. Don's father, a member of the U.S. Army, and family were stationed in Germany. When Don returned to the United States to attend college in Oklahoma, he continued donating blood. He smiles sheepishly when sharing that in addition to being able to make a difference in someone's life, there was another reason why he was a frequent blood donor during that time. He was paid \$5 for each donation. As a college student in the 1960s, with gas at about 25 cents per gallon, he was able to use the money to fill the car tank and still have some money left over. Don continued donating whole blood after college, mainly at blood drives hosted by his employer. Now retired after a successful career in the utilities industry, Don has been a committed apheresis donor for the last 13 years.

When the daughter of Major League Baseball Hall of Famer Rod Carew became ill with leukemia, Don transitioned from being a whole blood donor to donating platelets through a process called [apheresis](#). For seven months, the Carew family looked for a bone marrow match for Michelle. In an effort to find a match for Michelle, more than 70,000 people registered with the National Bone Marrow Program, including Don. Unfortunately, 18-year-old Michelle passed away. Don, like so many other people, was saddened by her death. Don looked for additional ways to help patients in need and one of those ways was to continue donating [apheresis](#).

Being an athlete his whole life, Don is no stranger to fitness. His increased blood donation schedule has him naturally focusing on staying healthy. He exercises regularly and has developed better eating habits to avoid a low [iron](#) deferral. A low iron deferral refers to ineligibility of someone to donate blood because the level of iron in his/her blood is less than the minimum level required. The rate of low iron deferral is higher in some blood donor groups, African-Americans being one of them.

Don stands up, stretches a little and discards his napkin, the only reminder of the pre-donation donut he enjoyed earlier, in the wastebasket. A phlebotomist, in seeing him rise, approaches to escort him to his usual seat. As he follows the phlebotomist to the donation area, Don says with a smile that the other advantage to donating platelets every two weeks is "you get free donuts" more often.

Listen to this great volunteer profile that aired on KQED about blood donor [Don Franklin](#).

"If I can help, I will!"

San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) Captain Raemona Williams recently visited the Irwin



Center during the three-day Firefighter blood drive in April. Early on a Thursday morning, after having been up all night fighting a fire, Captain Williams still made the time to donate blood. Captain Williams has been participating in the SFFD's blood drives since 1992.

A member of the department for more than 21 years, Captain Williams works out of Fire Station #31 in the city's Richmond District. The Captain tries to donate blood as often as she can. She lives by the creed "If I can help, I will!" which is consistent with her ideals as a Firefighter. She says that she along with most Firefighters have a desire to help out in their community, and are willing to assist those in need whenever possible. Captain Williams knows people with sickle cell

disease and is acutely aware of their need for regular blood transfusions.

Captain Williams feels strongly that it's [important for African-Americans to donate blood](#) to meet the blood needs of sickle cell patients in particular. Ninety-eight percent of people suffering from sickle cell anemia are African-American. These patients, most of whom are children, need blood transfusions as often as every three to four weeks. Frequently, patients develop antibodies to the blood they receive, which can lead to potentially life-threatening reactions. But if they can receive blood that's more closely matched to their own, that risk is minimized. And the best matches are found among other African-Americans.

In addition to her SFFD duties, Captain Williams is a wife, mother of two sons, and she sits on the board as a Director of the Rodeo-Hercules Fire Protection District.

We thank Captain Williams for saving lives - at work as well as off-duty at blood drives!

Saving Lives at a Blood Drive Near You

Save lives by donating blood at one of these community-sponsored blood drives or at any of our [center locations](#):

1) Ingleside Presbyterian Church, 1345 Ocean Ave, San Francisco, CA 94111

Sunday, June 5, 2011

12pm– 4pm

Bloodmobile in front of church

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)

2) Missionary Church of God In Christ, 1125 Allston Way, Berkeley, CA 94702

Saturday, June 25, 2011

11am– 4pm

Bloodmobile in front of church

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)

3) True Hope Church of God in Christ, 950 Gilman Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94124

Sunday, June 26, 2011

9am– 2pm

Bloodmobile in front of church

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)

4) Oakland Community Drive

Monday, June 27, 2:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Children's Hospital Oakland

Location: Bloodmobile on 52nd Street next to Outpatient Hospital, Oakland

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)



Donate Blood. Save Lives. | 1-888-393-GIVE | www.bloodcenters.org

