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HIDALGO COUNTY AND TEXAS ORGAN SHARING ALLIANCE TO HOST TREE DEDICATION CEREMONY TO HONOR LOCAL DONOR FAMILIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2011

To help raise awareness about the importance of organ donation in the Rio Grande Valley, Hidalgo County in conjunction with the Texas Organ Sharing Alliance will host a Tree Dedication Ceremony tomorrow morning in remembrance of the Hidalgo County donor families who have shared the gift of life.

More than 6,500 of the patients on the national waiting list died last year (*about 18 patients per day*) without ever receiving their transplant because there are not enough organs to transplant. Transplant success rates increase when organs are matched between members of the same ethnic and racial group. A patient is less likely to reject a kidney if it is donated by an individual who is genetically similar. Therefore, a lack of organs donated by minorities can contribute to death and longer transplant waiting periods for minorities.

There is a severe shortage of organ donors in this country. As of October 2010, there are more than 108,500 patients on the national waiting list in need of an organ transplant. 10,200 of them are Texans. The County hopes to raise awareness about organ donating and encourage more people to consider saving a life. In addition to the tree dedication, Hidalgo County will be hosting a donor registration drive for employees and the public next Tuesday.

At Friday's ceremony, donor and recipient families will be on hand to share their personal experience; doves symbolizing each of the 2010 Hidalgo County donor families will be ceremoniously hung on the "Tree of Hope," a live oak tree planted on the Courthouse's east lawn. The tree will memorialize the legacy and generosity of donor families.

All media and the public are invited to attend.

DETAILS:

TREE DEDICATION CEREMONY

Friday, September 16, 2011

9 am – 10 am

Hidalgo County Courthouse – East Lawn
100 N. Clossner, Edinburg, TX 78539

DONOR REGISTRATION DRIVE

Tuesday, September 20, 2011

Hidalgo County Courthouse (100 N. Clossner, 1st Floor, Edinburg)

10:30 pm – 4 pm

Old Administration Building Atrium (100 E. Cano, 1st Floor, Edinburg)

10:30 pm – 1pm

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Hidalgo County Commissioners' Court

Ramon Garcia
County Judge

Joel Quintanilla
Commissioner, Precinct 1

Hector "Tito" Palacios
Commissioner, Precinct 2

Joe M. Flores
Commissioner, Precinct 3

Joseph Palacios
Commissioner, Precinct 4

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Valde Guerra
Executive Officer

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