

# OKLAHOMA BLOOD INSTITUTE

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Donate & Celebrate With Oklahoma Blood Institute – January Is National Blood Donor Month!**

**OKLAHOMA CITY, OK (January 02, 2008)** - As the New Year kicks off, Oklahoma Blood Institute (OBI) is encouraging all healthy individuals to make a life saving resolution in 2008. Giving the gift of life by becoming a regular blood donor is a gift of health to your neighbor and to yourself, and there is no better time to start than January – National Volunteer Blood Donor Month.

Each OBI donor receives FREE health check readings on body temperature, blood pressure, pulse rate and cholesterol and iron levels. Additionally, for moderate processing fees, men can obtain PSA blood tests to screen for prostate cancer and all individuals can take advantage of the OBI HeartCheck program. HeartCheck tests and information help individuals identify heart disease risk factors so that they may seek appropriate medical attention to reduce their potential for heart attack, stroke and early death.

Every two seconds, someone needs blood. In the United States, approximately 39,000 units of blood are transfused per day in hospitals and emergency treatment facilities to patients with cancer and other diseases, to organ transplant recipients, and to help save the lives of accident victims. In one year alone, as many as five million patients will require blood transfusions.

OBI is asking all eligible donors to schedule an appointment to donate blood now – and to continue to donate throughout 2008. As blood usage increases, it is becoming critical that people give regularly. Donors may give blood every 56 days or every two months. Across Oklahoma only 10% of the healthy population actually donates consistently and yet steady donation throughout the year is crucial to sustaining our community blood supplies for all Oklahomans.

“OBI blood donors are ‘givers’ who know that blood donations offer health, hope, healing and comfort to patients in our local communities,” says John Armitage, President and CEO of OBI. “OBI is asking all healthy Oklahomans to strongly consider becoming a regular blood donor. If all who are eligible to donate would do so three to four times per year, shortages could become a thing of the past.”

Oklahoma Blood Institute is the eighth largest regional, non-profit blood center in the U.S. and provides transfusion blood products and clinical services to 110 hospitals in Oklahoma and North Central Texas. OBI, headquartered in Oklahoma City, maintains five donor centers in the Oklahoma City area plus regional centers in Tulsa, Lawton, Enid, Ardmore, Ada and Ponca City. It manages the life-saving donations from more than 120,000 individuals each year.

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