**NATIONAL DONATE LIFE MONTH – Local Stories 2014**

**Robin, Donor Mom – Centennial, CO**

*Son was an organ & tissue donor*

**** Robin and her 22-year-old son Joseph were best friends. And he was not afraid to let everyone know it. While some kids might be embarrassed that their mom worked in the high school cafeteria, Joe wasn’t. He would hug his mom in the middle of the school day. When he was diagnosed with epilepsy in the fall of 2007, Joe made a pact with his mom that whenever he thought he was about to have a seizure he would call her, as he always knew before it happened. On December 30, 2007, Joe called his mom at 9:45 a.m.

“Fortunately, I didn’t go to church that morning, like I usually do, because I wouldn’t have gotten his call,” said Robin. “We were on the phone for 10 minutes when I heard the phone drop and Joe hit the ground.” Joe died on January 1, 2008.

Joe had discussed his decision to be an organ and tissue donor with his mom several months before his death. It came as no surprise to Robin and the rest of Joe’s family because he always extended help to others. Joe could light up a room with his boisterous laughter, his great big bear hugs and constant smile. Not to mention, he stood strong beside his life’s motto “One Love” from the notorious Bob Marley song. Joe’s initial decision to register to be an organ donor at the age of 15 helped save and heal the lives of seven people.

**Pull out quote:** “I give back because it is how I keep Joe’s memory alive. And it helps me cope, which is one of the biggest things that keeps me going,” said Robin.