

Record-Setting Shincheonji Youth Volunteers, WE ARE ONE saving over 270 lives at Blood Drive with Versiti

On October 22nd, 2022 from 9am to 3pm, the Chicago chapter of Shincheonji Youth Volunteers, WE ARE ONE hosted a blood drive with Versiti Blood Center of Illinois. They had 41 first-time donors and, in total, will save 270 lives with their blood.



Chicago, Illinois Oct 29, 2022 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Members of the Youth volunteer group, WE ARE ONE, together with Versiti Blood Center of Illinois hosted a blood drive at **Oliver McCracken Middle School** to address the national blood shortage ahead of the high demand that comes with the fall season. With more than 150 people from all over Illinois and the surrounding Midwest states in attendance, Shincheonji's Chicago chapter of WE ARE ONE was inspired by the outstanding efforts made by their counterpart Shincheonji Youth Volunteers, WE ARE ONE in South Korea, who recently set a new Guinness World Records title of the "most people to sign up as blood donors online in 24 hours" with 71,121 participants. Participants of the record have also been donating blood as part of a 3-month global campaign run by WE ARE ONE, "Life On, Youth On" to have more than 70,000 donors. The blood drive hosted by the Chicago chapter of WE ARE ONE also participated in this 3-month campaign.

Versiti Blood Center of Illinois (Versiti) serves 63 hospitals in a 12-county area in Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana and collects more than 155,000 units of blood annually. In the United States of the 35 percent of people who are eligible, only 10 percent donate blood. Chastity Smith, a team leader at Versiti shared the impact that each donor makes by choosing to donate - "It's good for people to come out every 8 weeks, or however often they can since it does help a lot of people. We tell everyone that

you do save 3 lives with every donation because someone gets your red blood cells, someone gets your platelets, and someone gets your plasma, so it's just beneficial for everyone to keep coming out, that way we always have something on the shelf for anybody in need.” For Smith, it’s personal because she has a family member who was diagnosed with leukemia and receives a round of platelets after their chemo treatment. “Everyone is actually helping to save [their] life, so I appreciate it!”

Appreciation Ceremony

Around 1:30 pm, there was an appreciation ceremony, where a special certificate of appreciation was presented to Chairman Lee Man Hee of Shincheonji Youth Volunteers, WE ARE ONE by John Wielgosz, an account representative of Versiti Blood Center of Illinois. The certificate reads as follows, “This is commended for your dedication and compassion to serve. Thank you for supporting our blood supply at this critical time. Versiti Blood Center appreciates you and all of your volunteers for making a life-saving difference for patients in need. You have helped impact countless lives through your efforts and are a beacon of hope for the community.”

Community Impact

WE ARE ONE, Chicago chapter’s blood drive collected enough blood to save 270 lives. Donors who were deferred still have the opportunity to participate by searching on Versiti’s “Donate Now” section on their website to find and schedule an appointment to donate using the code NHNE in the Notes section.

The blood drive brought in 41 first-time donors with Versiti, with some sharing how seriously they prepared for the opportunity to share their lifeblood. “I have been preparing myself, taking iron pills to do this. Participating to give blood and help a life too, is so fulfilling,” said Christine, a local from the Skokie Community. Not only did the youth volunteers of WE ARE ONE donate, but also honorary members such as mothers and fathers of the community.

The blood collected from the drive included 8 double red blood cell donors, which has a more significant impact than donating whole blood units. Double red blood cell donations are about to help 2x the number of people, making it have an effect on 6 lives rather than 3.

WE ARE ONE youth volunteers invited donors from their local communities because the lives that are influenced include patients in the hospitals local to Chicago. One donor confessed his reason for attending, “I know many people who have benefitted from blood transfusions, so that really inspired me to not only receive but give back to others who are in need.”

Life On, Youth On

The uniqueness of blood means that it cannot be made synthetically, and hospitals can only receive blood from voluntary donors – meaning the decision to donate blood is truly a selfless act of life-giving.

Interested donors who were not able to attend the October 22nd drive can still participate by registering to donate at any of Versiti Blood Center’s donation centers in the Midwest (<https://www.versiti.org/ways-to-give/blood-donation/locations>) by including the sponsor code “NHNE” in the Notes section when registering. For more information, email contact@nhnemidwest.org.



Media Contact

NHNE Midwest

shincheonji.usa@gmail.com

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