



### **Statement from AAKP President Edward V. Hickey III**

I am writing to let you know that board member Lana Schmidt, a devoted advocate and inspiring leader in the kidney health community, passed away surrounded by her loved ones. She was a visionary whose tireless dedication and passion transformed countless lives.

Lana was a cherished and active member of the American Association of Kidney Patients (AAKP) Board of Directors. Her extensive contributions as an AAKP Ambassador and member of the policy and strategic communications committees made impactful strides in kidney disease awareness and patient advocacy. Additionally, she served with distinction as a member of the National Kidney Foundation, continually advancing the organization's mission to support and educate those affected by kidney disease.

As a National Kidney Patient Advocate, Lana's voice resonated through her numerous magazine and newspaper articles, TV and radio interviews, and her powerful speeches at conferences and meetings. Her unwavering commitment to raising kidney disease awareness from a patient's perspective became a beacon of hope and education for thousands.

One of Lana's most remarkable achievements was founding the Kidney Patients Support Group in her local area. This initiative provided a vital network for patients to share their experiences, find solidarity, and gain critical information about managing kidney disease.

After 13 challenging years on dialysis, Lana received a kidney transplant from the University of Illinois in Chicago. Her groundbreaking procedure involved eculizumab, a specialized drug used to address her high antibodies. She became the first patient at this center to receive this treatment from a deceased donor. For the past four years post-transplant, Lana thrived and continued to inspire others by sharing her journey.

Lana's passion for raising kidney disease awareness and advocating for improved patient care was unparalleled. She was driven by a profound desire to bring positive change and ensure that kidney patients across the nation could make informed and knowledgeable decisions about their health and quality of life.

Lana's legacy will live on through the countless lives she touched, the knowledge she imparted, and the positive changes she championed in the realm of kidney disease awareness and advocacy. Her spirit, compassion, and dedication will always be remembered and cherished by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Lana Schmidt is survived by her loving family and a community of friends and colleagues who will deeply miss her profound presence and unyielding spirit.

We will miss her dearly.