**Tragedy saves lives through organ donation choice**

Not all superheroes wear capes.

They don’t all have special powers, or save the world single-handedly. Any selfless person with a huge heart can be a superhero. The most incredible superheroes in our real world are ordinary people who have made an extraordinary decision: organ donation.

On August 6, 2015, rising Camden High School senior Robert Edmund “Drew” David IV, tragically passed away in a car accident. The many people of the Camden community who knew Drew all remember him as a funny, kind, fearless, and incredibly friendly person. But one decision Drew made in life- the decision to become an organ donor- would bring hope and peace to his family and friends. Even strangers that Drew never met were given hope for an improved quality of life. For this, Drew is a true superhero.

“His choice to become an organ donor will leave everyone knowing how much of a wholehearted and selfless person he was. No matter the situation Drew always made sure his friends, family, or anybody was happy before he was. When I found out he was an organ donor, I was not surprised at all. That was definitely his best decision,” Junior and longtime friend of Drew’s, Natalie Horton said.

Selflessness, a quality of a true superhero, was a shining quality of Drew’s. Through the donation of his organs, six lives were saved. Six lives were given a fighting chance at a healthy life. Six families were blessed with the gift of life for their loved ones.

The gift of life is perhaps the silver lining in this immense tragedy. Saving the life of another is a decision that any selfless person, like Drew, can make. Every day, organ donors are saving lives across the globe. And the need for superheroes is growing every day.

According to the Organ Procurement & Transplantation Network, there are currently more than 123,000 men, women, and children currently needing lifesaving organ transplants. Every 10 minutes, another name is added to the national organ transplant waiting list. Sadly, an average of 21 people die each day because the organ they need to save their life is not donated to them in time. In 2014, more than 8,500 deceased donors made approximately 24,000 organ transplants. Also, nearly 6,000 transplants were performed thanks to living donors, including corneal transplants that restored the sight of more than 48,000 blind patients. Tissue donation is a procedure that can be done by live donors as well, with more than 1 million tissue transplants done each year and approximately 30,000 lives saved.

“For me, organ donation helps me remember that something totally awesome came out of something so tragic,” Audrey Buchanan, a junior and another close friend of Drew’s said.

And tragedy can strike in any moment in time. But organ donors, our everyday heroes, can leave behind a legacy that will impact countless lives for years to come.

To become an organ donor, visit the DMV and ask to sign up to become an organ donor. All it takes is a little red heart.