



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## Bone Marrow Drive to Help Save Bronx Infant

JEFFREY D. KLEIN May 20, 2010

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Senator Klein joins Bronx family in calling for participation in DKMS Bone Marrow Drive

NEW YORK, NY- On Thursday, May 20th, Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) joined Wolfgang Billstein, CEO of DKMS Americas, Katharina Harf, Executive Vice President of DKMS Americas and the family of 6-month-old Sophia Lopez to urge New York City residents to attend a bone marrow drive for Sophia who suffers from a life-threatening

blood disease.

The DKMS Bone Marrow Drive will be held Saturday, May 22nd from 10AM-4PM at Rosa E. Scala School (P.S. 71) at 3040 Roberts Avenue in the Bronx.

In January 2010, doctors diagnosed Sophia with hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis (HLH) which affects one in every one million children each year. Neither of Sophia's siblings are a match and her parents, Mike and Denise Lopez, are asking for the public's help.

"I want my precious little girl to be saved," said Denis Lopez, "Sophia is my only daughter. I want her to be able to play with her brothers like the way she did before. Before this happened, she was so happy and loved to laugh. But now, she just cries in pain. It hurts me so much to see her like this. I want my princess to live. We need help."

DKMS, the world's largest bone marrow donor center, contacted Klein's office in early May 2010 asking for help in rallying the community to come to little Sophia's aid. Those interested in participating can register as potential bone marrow donors by filling out a form and swabbing the inside of their cheeks for tissue typing.

"It's heartbreaking to see such a young child suffer with this horrible disease. Sophia is a part of our Bronx family and I encourage everyone in the community to support Sophia and her family during this difficult time by attending the donor drive," said Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

According to DKMS, four out of ten patients in need of bone marrow transplants end up receiving them. Bone marrow donors must be between 18-55 years old and in good general health. Donors who register with DKMS will be listed on the Be The Match Registry® (operated by the Network Data Management Protocol) and can be found as a donor match for any patient in need of a bone marrow transplant.

"I lost my mother to Leukemia when I was 14 and I have made it my mission to recruit more donors so that other families don't have to go through the pain we did," said Katharina Harf, Executive Vice President of DKMS Americas, "DKMS is extremely thankful for public figures like Senator Klein who step forward and support our life-saving mission."

## About DKMS

The DKMS mission is to save lives by recruiting bone marrow donors for leukemia patients. DKMS Americas is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization.

For more information about DKMS please visit [www.dkmsamericas.org](http://www.dkmsamericas.org).

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