

# Everyday Heroes: Your Small Sacrifice Can Save a Life

**Author:** Akendrick

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused an alarming shortage in the U.S blood supply. The initial onset of the virus shut down collection sites at churches, community centers and businesses like National Grid. Blood service collectors like the American Red Cross and Vitalant were forced to cancel thousands of scheduled blood drives, which left the country in dire need of blood and platelet donations. In response to the critical shortage, thousands of people across the country have stepped up to donate blood and platelets, like our very own **Dennis McCaffery, Principal Program Community & Customer Manager** and **Dana Simone, IT & Digital Communications Business Partner**.

Dennis was first made aware of the blood supply shortage by his two favorite frontline essential workers, his wife Laurie and daughter Amelia who are both nurses at Brigham & Women's Hospital. He decided to donate through a drive Thayer Academy in Braintree MA, was organizing along with Mass General. To ensure safety during the pandemic, Mass General took all volunteers' temperatures, required face masks, pre-screened participants and designed a socially distanced environment on the blood mobiles. Dennis' experience was so pleasant he's setting up another appointment to donate again. Dennis stated, "It's a very small sacrifice to make to save lives."

For Dana, her passion around blood donation efforts is personal. Thirteen years ago, Dana's family discovered her son, Jack, had a rare blood disease that would require multiple lifesaving blood transfusions over time. This medical emergency quickly educated Dana on the importance of blood donations and has been a driving force in Dana's advocacy work to help aide issues around the regions' blood supply. Not only have Dana and her family become avid blood donors, but Dana has been the National Grid mobile blood drive coordinator in New England outside of her blue-sky role for over a decade now.

Dana had scheduled six mobile blood drives in 2020 to keep National Grid donors on a regular schedule, but due to the pandemic those have been cancelled. Vital blood donations are still desperately needed, and Dana reminds us "not everything can be done virtually, nor can everything be substituted." The daunting statistics that show 38% of the American population is eligible to give blood, and less than 10% donates, is

why Dana urges everyone to “make a date to donate blood – There is no substitute in existence to save the lives of patients in need.”

With a second wave of the coronavirus anticipated this fall, it’s imperative that eligible candidates make an appointment now to donate blood and platelets to help replenish our nation’s blood supply. The donation process is efficient, and blood collection centers have strict COVID-19 safety protocols in place to ensure safety. If you’re interested in donating blood or need guidance and more information, please contact **Dana Simone** at [Dana.Simone@nationalgrid.com](mailto:Dana.Simone@nationalgrid.com). Thank you, Dana and Dennis, for sharing your experiences. You both are examples of everyday heroes because you’re **#Leadingthroughcovid** and are going **#AboveandBeyond** to save lives, one blood donation at a time.

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