

MEDIA ADVISORY / PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

For

Wednesday, Feb 11th & Saturday, Feb. 14^h

Birmingham Native Needs Support to Survive Aplastic Anemia Community encouraged to join Be The Match Registry[®]

WHAT: On Wednesday, February 11th Saturday and Saturday, February 14 Lawson State Community College is hosting a donor registry drive to raise awareness about the need for marrow donors, and to perhaps find a matching donor for Birmingham resident Brandi Lewis who is suffering from a severe form of a blood disease called aplastic anemia and urgently needs a bone marrow transplant to be cured of the disease. Like many patients, Brandi does not have a matching donor on the Registry.

Birmingham residents can take the first step to save a life by joining the Be The Match Registry on February 11th from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and February 14th from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on at Lawson State Community College's Birmingham Campus located at 3060 Wilson Road SW, Birmingham, AL 35221. Residents can join the Be The Match Registry by filling out a consent form and swabbing their cheeks and will only be contacted if they are a match for a patient in need. In order to join the Registry, donors must be between the ages of 18-44, in generally good health and willing to donate to any patient they may match. Donors with diverse racial or ethnic backgrounds are especially needed, as patients in need of a transplant are most likely to match someone who shares their same race or ethnicity. African Americans only have a 76% chance of having a matching donor on the Registry. So we need more African Americans to join so Brandi and other patients will be able to find a donor!

The total cost to add each new member to the Be The Match Registry is about \$100. Be The Match[®] relies on financial contributions to help cover these costs. Contributions to Be The Match Foundation[®] help add more members to the Be The Match Registry, giving more patients hope for a cure. Those joining the Be The Match Registry are asked to give what they can. To make a tax-deductible donation or for more information, visit <http://www.bethematchfoundation.org/goto/brandisblessings>.

PHOTO/INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Rachel Harris**, local Be The Match Community Engagement Representative, will be available to discuss the need for more people to get involved by joining the Be The Match Registry, making financial contributions to Be The Match Foundation and volunteering
- **Denise Lewis**, mother of Brandi Lewis, will be available to discuss her daughter's journey.

WHY: For thousands of patients with life-threatening cancers and blood diseases, such as leukemia, lymphoma, sickle cell and aplastic anemia, a marrow transplant from an unrelated donor is their best or only hope for a cure. These patients, like Brandi, depend on the Be The Match Registry to find a match – and a second chance at life. While many patients do find the life-saving match they need each year, more donors are needed to help increase the likelihood that all patients will find a match. Financial contributions to Be The Match Foundation and volunteers are also needed to help save lives.

About Be The Match

Be The Match helps patients with leukemia, lymphoma and other diseases who need a marrow or umbilical cord blood transplant. People can join the Be The Match Registry[®] – the world's largest listing of potential marrow donors and donated cord blood units – contribute



financially and volunteer. Patients and their families can also turn to Be The Match for support and resources before, during and after transplant. Be The Match is operated by the National Marrow Donor Program® (NMDP), a nonprofit organization that matches patients with donors, educates health care professionals and conducts research so more lives can be saved. For more information, visit BeTheMatch.org or call 1 (800) MARROW-2.

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