



Healthcare Heroes 2026



CORPORATE ACHIEVEMENT HERO

Remonia Chapman

Director of Public Education & Community Relations

Gift of Life Michigan

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For nearly three decades, Remonia Chapman has worked to bridge the gap between life and loss, helping communities understand the power of organ, eye, and tissue donation through education, trust, and presence.

“I’ve always been interested in healthcare,” Chapman said. “My work at Gift of Life brought together my interests in medicine, spirituality and education.”

Raised in Detroit, Chapman said her approach is rooted in understanding the communities she serves.

“I understand the disparities. I understand the reluctance. I understand how myths and misconceptions find generational homes,” she said.

Rather than short-term outreach, Chapman has focused on long-term relationships — working alongside community and faith-based organizations to build trust over time.

“I’m not a presence that comes in and goes out,” Chapman said. “I’m a presence that stays.”

That strategy has helped drive measurable change. Multicultural donor participation in Michigan has grown from 10% in 1997 to 24% in 2022 and now to 55% in 2025, while deaths among Black patients on the transplant waiting list have declined by 67%.

Chapman credits that progress to shifting the conversation from statistics to human stories. “You move the message from head to heart,” she said, emphasizing the importance of donor families and transplant recipients sharing their experiences.

“My goal is to reach 70% to 75%” of total multicultural organ donor transplants, Chapman said, adding, “These are not just numbers. These are your neighbors, your coworkers, your family.”

Her work through the Minority Organ Tissue Transplant Education Program has focused on breaking down long-standing mistrust tied to historical inequities and limited access to care. The COVID-19 pandemic, she said, further exposed those disparities and reinforced the need for community-centered solutions.

A defining moment in her career came when a friend, a grieving mother whose child was stillborn, asked Chapman to help her donate what she could to save another family from a similar loss.

“That’s when I realized the impact of what we do,” Chapman said.

Looking ahead, Chapman hopes to continue normalizing organ donation through education, including programs in high schools.

“This is not a death conversation,” Chapman said. “It’s a life conversation.”

— *Jay Greene*