

# ANGELAS

KAPPA DELTA SORORITY | SUMMER 2016

## PURSuing passions

IT'S A  
BELLISSIMA  
LIFE

### THE RED ZONE

HELP COLLEGIATE SISTERS  
FEEL SAFE AT SCHOOL

### A PLACE TO CALL HOME PART 2





# gifts of life

COLLEGIAN  
BROOKE DAWKINS  
GRANTED LIFE  
TO OTHERS  
WHEN SHE LOST  
HER OWN

BY BRIA BOLTON MOORE,  
NU-OKLAHOMA STATE

It was an easy decision.

“When I took Brooke to get her license, she answered *yes* without hesitation — she didn’t even look at me for approval — when they asked her if she wanted to be an organ donor,” says Laura Dawkins, the mother of Brooke Dawkins, a 2012 Epsilon Omicron-Central Florida initiate.

That simple *yes* proved to be an important choice for Brooke.

On Feb. 23, 2014, Brooke was struck by a vehicle while crossing a street near campus. She suffered a traumatic brain injury and a ruptured brain aneurysm. Brooke passed away less than two weeks later, on March 5.

“Brooke was a very giving person in her spirit and loved people, and we know in our hearts that organ donation was something that was important to her,” Laura says. “We’re glad we knew that because when the time came, it wasn’t a difficult decision for us to make.”

Six people’s lives were directly impacted by Brooke’s gifts of her



“... to know even one life has  
breathed easier because you have  
lived. This is to have succeeded.”

RALPH WALDO EMERSON



*Opposite page: angel wings Brooke crafted during the winter break before her death; far left this page: KΔ sisters Brooke, Gabby and Kristin; top middle: Laura and Carol at the Orlando airport; bottom middle: Carol and Gabby, who is listening to Brooke's heartbeat; above: Brooke with little sister Gabby at left and big sister Kristin at right.*

corneas, liver, kidneys, pancreas and heart.

Carol Wright, a mother of four and grandmother of two from Wisconsin, had been living with heart failure for more than a decade when a nurse came into her room at 12:30 in the morning and told her a heart was available — Brooke's heart.

This past February, two years after the successful heart transplant, Carol flew to Orlando to meet Brooke's family and friends. The reunion was documented through an Orlando Health video, *Two Lives, One Heart: The Brooke Dawkins Story — #BrookeStrong*, which has been viewed nearly 535,000 times.

"I wanted to hear Brooke's heart and for it to come back to Orlando and be in our home," Laura said in the video.

Brooke's parents were nervous and excited to meet Carol but say they immediately felt like family.

"I've never met you before, but you feel so good," Carol says about Brooke's loved ones. "And I feel like they were touching my heart; that they were feeling Brooke. I sensed that."

Hugs and tears were shared at the Orlando airport before Carol and her

stethoscope visited the Dawkins' home as well as the Kappa Delta chapter house at the University of Central Florida.

"I'm so thankful I had the opportunity to meet Carol and feel Brooke's presence again," says Kristin Stevenson, Brooke's Kappa Delta big sister. "I could feel a wave of comfort and knew everyone else in the room felt it, too."

Brooke's KΔ little sister, Gabby Alfano, also met Carol. "It just shows how awesome Brooke continues to be," Gabby says. "She might not be here physically, but she's still impacting so many people with the amount of lives she has saved, and now they're continuing her story."

Every 10 minutes, someone is added to the organ transplant waiting list, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. And each day, 22 people die waiting on that list, waiting for a lifesaving organ.

Meeting Carol was an emotional experience for the Dawkins, but they are grateful another family didn't have to go through the pain of losing a loved one like they did. "It brought

us a lot of joy and happiness to see what Brooke was able to do for this family," Laura says.

After Brooke passed, her family discovered a PowerPoint presentation about organ donation that she put together for a speech class just a few months before the accident. Brooke's decision to be an organ donor wasn't flippant. It was confident, thoughtful and undoubtedly powerful.

The Dawkins family created the BROOKESTRONG Foundation as a tribute to Brooke and an avenue to encourage others to register as organ donors. The foundation also has a scholarship available for a student who has suffered a brain injury.

Brooke's legacy lives on not only through her family, friends and Kappa Delta sisters, but also through the countless people who know and love the six individuals who were blessed to receive her organs. With one word — yes — Brooke gave life. ♦

*For more information and to view the Orlando Health video, go to <http://brookestrong.org/>.*