

My story is actually pretty simple. I always said if my dad ever needs a kidney I'd give him one. It only took two and a half years to do it. He had been on dialysis for that time and thinking he would be okay doing this I was wrong. I was slowly watching him deteriorate and it was on my mind daily. So in December last year, my wife and I started to seriously talk about it and over a few months of discussion we decided to start researching the process. It was strange coincidence that when we decided to do this signs started popping up everywhere. On TV, on the radio, on Facebook, and in sports. One thing that really influenced me was seeing a post from the Lakers about a lady who had given a kidney and she was being honored at a game in 2015. Turns out it her surgeon was my dad's surgeon that did his. It was like when you buy a new car all of a sudden you see the same car everywhere, my signs were everywhere! So in February I told my dad (super excited) and we contacted UCLA and started the process. We matched and I was strangely completely healthy. I was completely prepared to go into the exchange program if we did not match. That was very inspiring to me. My process was very smooth my dad had a few hurdles to get past and with my schedule August was the perfect fit. Surgery was August 9th, and for me I was cleared to go back to work nine days later. My dad is doing great but is having trouble with anemia that they are working on. My recovery was amazingly quick and besides from the laparoscopic gas pains, very smooth. I feel very lucky and blessed to have been in this program. Since I have been working to raise awareness for kidney disease and transplantation. As a member of the circle of CORE advocacy and support group, I am available to anyone who needs someone to talk to who has been there.

-Brian Gilliam