The Sight Society of Northeastern New York, Inc. (Lions Eye Bank at Albany) is hosting a Donor Family Memorial Service on Sunday, September 29, 2013, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center, Albany, NY.

As you know, each year thousands of lives are saved or enhanced by the miracle of organ, eye and tissue donation. A Donor Family Memorial Service pays tribute to those that gave the “gift of life and/or sight,” allowing others to live on through their heroic and generous spirit. This will be our ninth annual Donor Family Memorial Service to honor those who have given the gift of sight.

At this ceremony we will be presenting donor families with the New York State Medal of Honor. Thanks to the support of several state legislators, Governor George E. Pataki signed legislation in 2002 establishing the New York State Gift of Life Medal of Honor Program to recognize the selfless, life-saving contributions of organ and tissue donors. As part of that legislation, the Governor has commissioned a medal to be presented to families of deceased organ and tissue donors and to living organ, bone marrow and peripheral blood stem cell donors. The medal features a sugar maple tree, the official tree of New York State, and comes in a box with two matching lapel pins. The medal was designed and produced in such a way that it allows family members to have the medal affixed to the deceased donor’s head stone as a means of recognizing their life-saving decision.

On behalf of the more than 9,000 New Yorkers who are waiting for organ transplants, and the tens of thousands of more in need of eye or tissue transplants, we thank Governor Pataki and our legislators for supporting the Medal Program. We can’t think of a more fitting way to honor those families who have made the decision to donate at such a difficult time in their lives and encourage families to discuss the opportunity to give life’s most precious gift, the gift of sight.

For those who would like to attend the memorial service, the courtesy of a reply is requested by September 18, 2013, to Joann Beach, (518) 489-7606 or jbeach@lionseyebankalbany.org