

PRESS RELEASE

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SECOND ABIOCOR PATIENT IS GOING HOME

Tom Christerson travels to Central City on Tuesday

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – University of Louisville surgeons Laman Gray, M.D., and Rob Dowling, M.D., will release the world's second AbioCor™ Implantable Replacement Heart patient Tuesday to his home in Central City, Ky. Mr. Christerson will hold a short press conference at 10:30 a.m. EDT in the Jefferson Room at The Inn at Jewish Hospital, 100 E. Jefferson Street. He will then depart for his home at 11 a.m. EDT.

On September 13, 2001 – 215 days ago – Mr. Christerson underwent surgery at Jewish Hospital to implant the AbioCor Implantable Replacement Heart, manufactured by ABIOMED, of Danvers, Mass. Mr. Christerson was the second person in the world to receive the heart. (Surgery to implant the world's first AbioCor replacement heart was also performed at Jewish Hospital on July 2, 2001.)

"I'm so grateful to Jewish Hospital and to Dr. Gray and Dr. Dowling. Everyone here has been wonderful to me," Mr. Christerson said. "But I've been given a second chance at life, and I can't wait to get home and begin celebrating it."

"This is a wonderful day for all of us," Dr. Gray said. "This is what everyone involved in the AbioCor project has hoped for and worked so hard to achieve."

"I'm thrilled for Tom and his family," Dr. Dowling said. "He is doing very well medically and emotionally. Today, his spirits are soaring. He is ready to go home, and begin living a more normal life."

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AbioCor Update
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Friends in Central City will be ready to greet Mr. Christerson in style. When he arrives around 1:30 p.m. CDT, a caravan of family and friends, escorted by the town's fire truck, will meet up with his vehicle about two miles outside of Central City and lead him into town and parade down Broad Street.

Preparations have been under way for several months for Mr. Christerson's homecoming. His car has been wired for electricity so that he can plug his device into a power source while he's on the road. Also, Jewish Hospital nurses have conducted training sessions to educate StatCare air ambulance staff and other emergency medical services staff that may have contact with Mr. Christerson should an emergency occur.

Mr. Christerson will return periodically to Jewish Hospital for check ups and to meet with his physicians. He will continue his physical therapy with a therapist in Central City.

The family asks that you give them some privacy to enjoy their first few days at home. Any requests for interviews should come through Jewish Hospital and University of Louisville public relations staffs.

Jewish Hospital is among the top ten cardiac centers in the United States and, along with the University of Louisville, is dedicated to excellence, research and education. University of Louisville surgeons at Jewish Hospital have performed many heart care "firsts," including Kentucky's first heart transplant, the world's first heart transplant following the use of a Thoratec bi-ventricular assist device, the world's first endoscopic saphenous vein harvest and the first ventricular remodeling in the region.

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