Some might say theirs was a match made in heaven.

That is what kidney transplant recipient David Seldner believes, as does his living donor, Ellen Murphy. David, 58, received Ellen’s “extraordinary gift of life” in August at The University of Kansas Hospital’s Center for Transplantation.

Ellen, 42, had been the Seldners’ personal trainer for several years. She knew David’s wife, Jeanne, was not a match and that he had no other living relatives. She eagerly volunteered with the blessing of her husband and sons. Ellen then called the Seldners and said, “I want you to pray I’m a match.”

From that moment, until the day of her testing, Ellen prayed. “Before the blood test, I told the technician, ‘Don’t draw blood until you pray I’m a match,’” she said.

**Living donor program**

David was one of 30 transplant patients to receive a living donor organ this year through the Center for Transplantation. Transplant surgeons, who perform more than 100 kidney transplants annually, want to increase the number of living kidney donors.

“We would like to see 50 percent of our kidney transplants coming from living donors,” said Sean Kumer, MD, PhD, transplant surgeon. “Living donors increase the availability of the donor pool, meaning more deceased donor kidneys are available.”

Among the other benefits, living donor kidneys last three to five years longer than those from deceased donors. The surgery can be performed sooner than the average two-to-three-year wait for a deceased donor kidney.

**A story to tell**

David and Ellen credit the hospital and their surgeons, Timothy
Bequest benefits transplant patients in need

Judy Greathouse had a special place in her heart for organ transplant patients in need.

As a transplant nurse at The University of Kansas Hospital for 30 years, she witnessed the emotional and financial struggles transplant patients and their families experience. Upon her death in October 2012, she left a portion of her estate to the hospital to provide for kidney and pancreas transplant patients in need.

“Judy was dedicated to her patients, but she really enjoyed working with the entire family,” said her sister Sharon Hull. “She was a consummate caretaker, and she wanted to leave something behind that would help people.”

Judy, who retired from nursing in 2008, spent her entire career at The University of Kansas Hospital. She also was in the Air Force Reserves for 30 years, achieving the rank of lieutenant colonel.

To learn more about our transplant program, visit kumed.com/transplant.

Schmitt, MD, and Kumer, for their “positive life-affirming experience.” They said they received “stellar care.”

“This is an extraordinary gift that keeps on giving. We want to help more people understand there is something they can do by becoming a living donor.”

– David Seldner, kidney transplant recipient

“The quality of care at The University of Kansas Hospital is superior,” said David, who also had quintuple bypass surgery in February at the hospital’s Center for Advanced Heart Care. “When a collaborative environment is so innate – the rule, not the exception – patients benefit.”

David and Ellen are passionate about sharing their story with others who may be considering living kidney donation.

“We are remarkably fortunate,” David said of the quality of life he and Jeanne now experience. “This is an extraordinary gift that keeps on giving. We want to help more people understand there is something they can do by becoming a living donor.”

If you are interested in becoming a living donor, contact Joanne Oxman, 913-588-0266.

You can help

To learn more about how you can make a planned gift or donate to our transplant program, contact Vince Nguyen at 913-945-8995.

The new Center for Transplantation opened in August and features 36 exam rooms, inviting waiting areas for patients and families, a dedicated lab and a patient information resource center.