



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2024 BOOTS AND BADGES BLOOD DRIVE COMPETITION ANNOUNCED
Allentown Fire Department & Allentown Police Department Collecting Blood
Donations to Benefit Patients in our Community Hospitals

LEHIGH VALLEY, PA – Miller-Keystone Blood Center (MKBC) has announced that the 2024 Boots and Badges Blood Drive Competition between the Allentown Fire Department and the Allentown Police Department will kick off with a blood drive event at MKBC's Hamilton Donor Center (Five City Center, 740 Hamilton Street, Suite 120) from Sunday, February 4 – Thursday, February 15.

“Every day, regional first responders put their lives on the line to help residents in our community,” says Dara Gonzalez, Community Liaison, MKBC. “The Allentown Fire Department and Allentown Police Department understand the importance of blood donation, and the goal of the friendly Boots and Badges competition is not only to save lives, but to demonstrate and inspire others to give the gift of life as well.”

Ms. Gonzalez explains that the winter is traditionally a difficult time for community blood centers, as inclement weather combined with accidents and seasonal illnesses often prevent people from donation blood.

“Miller-Keystone Blood Center currently serves as blood provider to 35 regional hospitals including the Lehigh Valley Health Network, St. Luke's University Health Network and Geisinger, among others.” she says. “To meet their needs, we need to recruit approximately 350 blood donors daily. These donations save the lives of not only accident victims, but also cancer patients, premature babies, surgery and transplant patients, and individuals with inherited blood disorders such as Thalassemia or Sickle Cell Disease. We encourage all eligible blood donors to support the Allentown Fire Department and Police Department by rolling up their sleeves and giving the gift of life!”

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In addition to the February Blood Drive, there will be additional Allentown Boots and Badges Blood Drive events throughout the calendar year. In order to donate, individuals must be 16 years of age* or older, weigh a minimum of 110 pounds and be feeling healthy; they must not have donated in the past eight weeks. Donors must also provide valid identification. *(* parental consent required for 16-year-old blood donors)*

A full list of blood donor eligibility guidelines can be found on MKBC's website at GIVEaPINT.org. To schedule a donation as part of the Boots and Badges competition, call 800-B-A-DONOR or schedule online at GIVEaPINT.org. Be sure to include the Group ID # for either the Allentown Fire Department (# E187) or Allentown Police Department (# E186).

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