

# “Why I Donate”



## Life-Changing Impact

**Name:** Ernesto Rivera

**Age:** 35

San Diego Blood Bank (SDBB) serves hospitals in San Diego, Los Angeles and Orange Counties. SDBB is the primary blood provider to Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego and the safety net for hospitals in its region. Every year, more than 150,000 units of blood provided by San Diego Blood Bank are transfused into patients of all ages, socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds throughout Southern California.

### WHEN DID YOU BECOME A BLOOD DONOR?

I became a blood donor with the San Diego Blood Bank in December 2012. I had donated blood here and there in the past, but my relationship with the San Diego Blood Bank made me a regular, committed donor.

### I AM PROUD TO BE A BLOOD DONOR BECAUSE:

It is an easy way to impact the lives of others and give back to my community.

### CAN YOU TELL US WHAT INSPIRED YOUR DECISION TO DONATE AND WHY YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT THIS CAUSE?

There is something beautiful about donating blood. There's a special connection and bond between donors and recipients. I may never meet a recipient of my blood donation, but I get to walk around this world knowing that I made a life-changing contribution to someone at a time they really needed it. The only thank you I need is the knowledge that I helped someone.

### BLOOD CENTERS ARE CONTINUOUSLY WORKING TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF FIRST-TIME AND REPEAT DONORS TO HELP ALLEVIATE THE BLOOD SHORTAGE. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO PEOPLE WHO MIGHT BE HESITANT TO DONATE BLOOD?

Donating blood is so easy! The San Diego Blood Bank treats you with kindness and respect. Your contribution changes lives in ways you can never imagine, plus they load you up with snacks. You won't remember the tiny pinches and pricks after giving blood because you will be filled with incredible pride, joy and altruism. (Gateway Center always has ice cream!)

### WHAT DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A DONOR?

(Don't say snacks. Don't say snacks) — Knowing that I helped someone in need!

I get an opportunity to give a gift to my community and this world through the San Diego Blood Bank. All I have to do is carve out a small amount of time. I love switching up my habit by going to the community blood drives and bringing friends along. I participate in the May the Fourth Blood Drive, the Comic-Con blood drive, and local brewery pop-ups because they make giving back fun, social and interesting. I get my Comic-Con blood drive shirt every year – and I don't intend on stopping!

### WHAT IMPACT DO YOU HOPE TO MAKE AS A BLOOD DONOR?

I hope to never be in a situation where I desperately need a blood donation or a situation where a loved one needs a donation. If it ever does happen, I take comfort in knowing that there are people like me out there, ready to give and ready to help.

Plus, I have more blood than I need! I feel a specific call to action knowing that giving a little of myself can change someone's life forever.