

# COMMERCIAL APPEAL

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## 'Call from God'



Jenny Joyner hugs Stacy Hobson as they meet for the first time at Methodist University Hospital in Memphis on Nov. 7. Joyner donated her kidney to Hobson, who was suffering from stage-five kidney disease. CHRIS DAY/THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

### How kidney donation changed two Memphis-area women's lives

Brooke Muckerman Memphis Commercial Appeal | USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Stacy Hobson had been living with kidney disease unknowingly for years. She knew she had high blood pressure, but she did not know the severity of it.

"I had an incident about eight years ago that caused me to go to the hospital. (The doctors) saw I was stage one or two (kidney disease)," Hobson recalled in early November. "I didn't have any signs or symptoms or anything."

Hobson was given two options by her doctors. She could take a medication on her own for 30 days or stay in the hospital for three days for medical staff to administer the medication. Hobson chose to stay three days.

"Well, three days turned into about 30 days," Hobson said. "The medicine that I was given, I had an internal allergic reaction to it."

She was supposed to bounce back, and just check in with her doctors every year or so to make sure everything internally was in order. Then, during the COVID-19 pandemic, she went in for a doctor's appointment, and she was told she had stage

four kidney disease.

"I felt traumatized because now you are telling me I am a step from dialysis?" Hobson said.

From lack of sleep to foamy urine, Hobson said all the symptoms she experienced, she was able to explain away.

"Because I am a real estate broker, I'm able to take naps, because I am able to set my schedule," Hobson said.

After that appointment, Hobson was living in practice with stage five kidney disease. Treatment options are limited for stage five kidney disease: only dialysis or a kidney transplant. Hobson didn't want to go on dialysis because it would limit her ability to travel.

So, Hobson went the kidney donation route. She did not tell her family initially, and it was extremely isolating. After telling her mother and a few other close family members, her cousin offered to see if she was a candidate, but it was not a match.

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#### Memphis Allies sees progress in reforming violent offenders

Lucas Finton

Memphis Commercial Appeal
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Louis walked into Memphis Allies for the first time in early 2025. He wasn't there by choice, but rather a court order.

Just after he turned 18, Louis was arrested and charged with attempted first-degree murder, aggravated robbery and possession of a firearm.

"I had no idea who they were or what they did," Louis told a reporter with The Commercial Appeal about that first day.

His story is similar to many Memphians whose lives intersect with the criminal justice system. He was raised by his mother in a single-parent household. He had multiple siblings, but most had different fathers.

"I just got into the streets very early. I'm also the middle child, too, so no attention," he said. "I was just seeking attention, seeking love, so I just veered off to the streets."

Memphis Allies is a nonprofit specializing in gun violence intervention. It is funded primarily through public grants and private donations. Its flagship program brings people involved in violent crime off the streets, layering therapy and life coaching to restructure someone's path in life.

Through processing trauma established from an early age, the organization hopes to provide coping mechanisms, career training and further education. When it works — and their internal data indicates it does, with 91% of nearly 800 participants over the last three years not receiving a new

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Memphis Allies Managing Director of Operations Carl Davis and Executive Director Susan Deason pose for a portrait in the recreation area of the facility in Memphis on Sept. 3.

CHRIS DAY/THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL









