

## West Haven man suffering with rare disorder urgently needs kidney *Transplant he received in 2007 failed after 5 years*

By Patricia Villers

Photos by Katelyn Hickman

Last week a friend showed me a Facebook post about Yannick Napier, a West Haven resident she knows who desperately needs a kidney.

A few days later another friend - who knows I had a kidney donated to me three years ago - also told me about Napier's plight. She hoped I could publicize it here in *The Valley Voice*.

Coincidence? I think not; it was meant to be.

I recently spoke to Yannick, 35, and his fiancée, Katelyn Hickman, about their urgent quest for a kidney. Yannick has Type A blood and has end stage renal disease.

On Feb. 28, shortly before the COVID-19 quarantine, the couple welcomed a baby boy, Marley. The three have been quarantined ever since.

In July Katelyn, a teacher in West Haven, wrote a post on Facebook

asking readers who had ever thought about being an organ donor to consider donating a kidney to Yannick.

She wrote in part: "[Yannick] remains in end stage renal disease until he gets a kidney transplant; we've run home hemodialysis treatments 4x a week for the last 2.5 years just to keep him healthy.

"Marley needs his dad and I need the love of my life."

Here are excerpts from a detailed description of what Yannick has experienced for his entire life.

"I am blessed to be 35 even though due to a birth abnormality, I was not supposed to live past 7 years old. I was born in Jamaica, West Indies and first hospitalized at five days old with what was thought to be just a urinary tract infection from a normal bacteria found in adults from the West Indies.



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“After spending my first three months of life in the hospital and having hundreds of tests performed on me, doctors and nurses finally found and diagnosed me with posterior urethral valve disease. This is a rare condition which inverts the urethral valves. These valves control the flow of urine from the kidneys to the bladder. As a result of the inversion, urine continued to back up into my kidneys causing recurring urinary tract infections.

“Unfortunately, this rare disease claims the lives of many children under the age of 7 in third world countries like Jamaica. Once I was diagnosed with posterior urethral valve disease my life became a battle against time.

“With time not being on our side, my parents became my superheroes by being proactive in the fight against this disease; going as far as performing medical treatments in order to help empty my bladder to prevent further UTIs and the resulting damage. My



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“With kidney failure being imminent my parents made the decision to seek more advanced medical options and brought me to the United States. Upon arrival I was seen by medical professionals who informed my mother that had I been born in the United States this disease would have been prevented.

“However, at this time, the damage was so severe the doctors only had one choice; that was to cordorize the urethral valves away. My parents had a tough decision to make due to the fact that this procedure could have prevented me from ever having children; (luckily I am now the proud father of Marley).

“My parents made the decision to go through with the cordorization procedure in order to save my life. As a result of the procedure the frequency of the UTIs was lessened which prolonged the inevitable end stage renal disease diagnoses.

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During my senior year of high school I began to notice I was gaining weight and feeling very ill. After a month of tremors, chills, and nausea I went to the emergency room at Yale. The doctors performed multiple rounds of labs and upon receiving results, rushed into my room to perform an emergency dialysis treatment via access through an artery in my groin because I could've stroked out at any moment being that my labs were negatively off the charts.

"I was then informed I was currently experiencing symptoms of end stage renal disease. It was 2005, I was 19 years old in my senior year of high school, trying to persevere through the end of my educational journey and again told by doctors I may not live much longer without treatment or transplant.

"I was put on the kidney transplant list while receiving life saving dialysis treatments in-center three times a week. I waited only two years and received my first kidney donation in 2007. I received a cadaver kidney which I was told could last between 7-10 years. It lasted five years and in 2012, that transplanted kidney failed which put me back on the transplant list and back to in-center dialysis treatments. I have been on three different types of dialysis treatments; in-center, peritoneal, and now home hemodialysis.



"We have been running home hemodialysis treatments for the past two and half years. We have lost countless hours of sleep and missed out on many things that couples do because of my disease. Being that we have been friends for 16 years, since high school, we both knew the situation we were getting into before taking on the responsibility of performing these treatments in our home.

"We did not anticipate how hard it would be to continue to run home hemodialysis treatments with an infant. Last summer, when we found out we were going to have a baby, my fiancée didn't pause for a second. We continued running home treatments until her due date when we went to the hospital. Two days later, we had our miracle baby boy, Marley.

"Unfortunately, treatments have gotten harder because Marley is very active and due to the current coronavirus pandemic and for medical safety purposes, we cannot ask nor have family members over to entertain our boy while we run four-hour treatments four days a week.

"I have been positive and in high spirits throughout my treacherous disease-filled life and have never felt the need to ask for help until now.

"I love my family and my boy more than life itself and this is why I'm reaching out to finally tell my story and ask for a living kidney donor. A living kidney donation can give me my life back and I would have the pleasure to ensure a lifetime of seeing all of Marley's firsts and watching him grow into the generous, smart, well-rounded young man his mother and I will raise him to be."

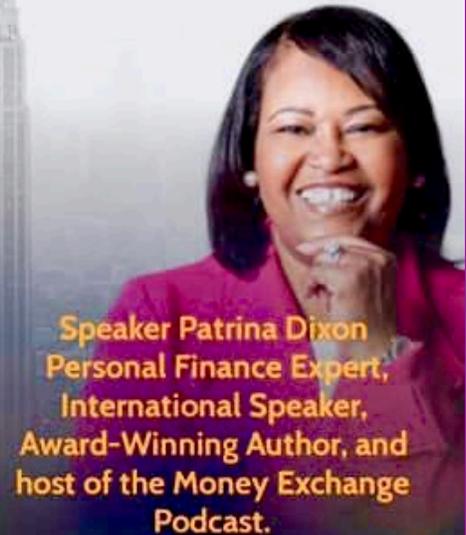
***If you have ever considered being an organ donor, call the kidney transplant donation number 1-866-925-3897 and tell them you want to be tested to be a living kidney donor for Yannick Napier***



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