



# Your Vision Journey

Honoring & Celebrating  
Your Gift of Sight



LIONS  
**WORLD VISION**  
INSTITUTE

# You Received the Gift of Sight

Receiving a cornea transplant is a significant milestone that brings a range of emotions as you navigate this **new chapter of your vision journey**. It is normal to feel excited, nervous or anywhere in between. Change, even when positive, can be challenging.



## Your Vision is a Gift

The remarkable gift you've received is made possible by a **generous cornea donor**.

Your donor wanted to help others. **Their selfless decision to say yes** to organ, eye and tissue donation has led to your renewed vision.

## Now YOU Can Give Back

As part of the LWVI Community you have many ways to honor your gift of sight and become more involved in our mission.

- **Send a message** of thanks to your donor's family
- **Share your story** to inspire others and raise awareness
- **Support the mission** of LWVI and the LWVI Foundation





# Be a Visionary

**Lions World Vision Institute (LWVI)** is the largest nonprofit eye bank and research center in the world.

Our mission comes from a call made by **Helen Keller 100 years** ago for Lions Club International to become the Knights of the Blind. Today LWVI assures that corneas are available for patients in need around the world.

## So the World Can See

The LWVI team guided your donor's family through the donation process, and we will continue to support them by creating **meaningful opportunities to celebrate** their loved one.

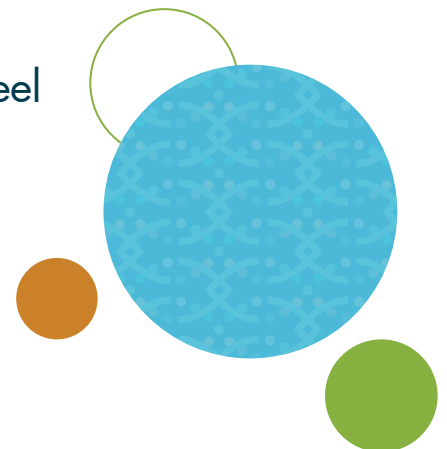
LWVI also carefully and respectfully recovers tissue, prepares ocular tissue for surgery, and works with ophthalmologists to assure successful outcomes.

## Questions?

This guide is an invitation to reflect on your journey, express your gratitude and **honor the gift** by living with purpose, telling your story and continuing the legacy it represents.

As you read this guide and take the actions that feel right to you, please know that we are available anytime to answer questions.

Contact **LWVI Family Services** at [familyservices@lwvi.org](mailto:familyservices@lwvi.org) or 206-838-4638.



# Say Thank You



## ▶ The opportunity to say thanks

Following your surgery you have the opportunity to **write to your cornea donor's family**. This can be a meaningful way to express your gratitude and show how their loved one's gift is making lasting legacy.

## ▶ Confidential correspondence

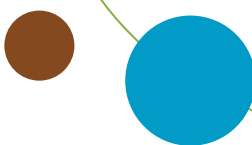
Correspondence between cornea recipients and donor families is completely confidential. When you share your gratitude with your donor family, we **protect your privacy**. Specialized LWVI staff review your letter and forward it to your donor family on your behalf.

## ▶ How we identify your donor

On a sheet of paper, separate from your letter to the family, please include this information **about the cornea recipient**:

- full name
- phone number
- mailing address
- e-mail address
- date of cornea transplant
- name of ophthalmologist

Send your letters to:  
**Lions World Vision Institute**  
c/o Family Services  
1200 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. Suite 300  
Seattle, WA 98101



# Tips For Writing



- Use first names only.
- Remember to sign your first name only.
- Thank your donor family for their loved one's gift.
- What was the reason for your corneal transplant?
- How did the world look before your transplant?
- How did your loss in vision impact your independence?
- How did you feel when you found out your vision could be corrected?
- What was the first thing that looked different after transplant?
- What can you see now that means the most to you?
- In what ways is your life different after transplant?
- What are you able to do now that you couldn't before transplant?
- Has this experience impacted your view on donation?
- How has this experience impacted your family/friends?
- Since the religion of the donor family is unknown, please consider this if you include religious comments.



## Saying thank you is a gift to your donor

Donor families tell us how **important and meaningful** it is for them to receive a note from the cornea recipient.

"It would give me comfort and help me in my healing process to hear from the recipient and **how my loved one's donation made a difference.**"

"So much gratitude to you and your family for sharing your story with us. You have given us the gift of knowing she continues to be a **positive light on this earth.**" - Amber's Mom

# Share Your Story

Cornea donation is incredibly important, yet widely unknown. Stories of cornea recipients benefit our mission and **help us spread the word about cornea donation.**



Your story shows why someone may need a cornea transplant and how **life transforms with the gift of sight.** We share these stories with our hospital partners and on social media, as well as identify speaking engagements for interested cornea recipients.

## Meet Antonio

**Antonio loved his family, he loved life** and he made the best of every situation. Antonio was “a big goofball” making everyone laugh. His mom says there here was never a dull moment with Antonio around.

Antonio loved sports and played football, basketball and wrestling. His mother still finds comfort in being connected to Antonio’s high school football team and coach. The last thing she said to Antonio was that she was **proud of him and loved him.**



When he got his drivers license, Antonio said he wanted to be an organ, eye and tissue donor. When his mom asked why, Antonio replied that he wanted to do whatever he could to **help somebody** and hoped that if he needed help, someone would be there for him.

After his tragic and unexpected death, **Antonio donated both corneas**, giving sight to a 29 year old and a 32 year old.

# LWVI Foundation

The LWVI Foundation expands our mission through these programs:



## ▶ **Gratis Ocular Tissue Program**

We are able to provide **free or reduced fee corneal** tissue to people who suffer from corneal blindness but cannot afford sight-saving surgery. Our Gratis Ocular Tissue Program restores sight to about 200 people a year across the globe.

## ▶ **Vision Health Services for Kids**

Vision is a strong predictor of academic performance in children. Yet **1 in 4 children have an undiagnosed vision problem**. Vision disorders in children affect cognitive, social, and physical development. The LWVI Foundation runs Vision Health Programs to provide free access to the care that all children need and deserve

## **Get Involved!**

Your **tax deductible gift** makes it possible to expand our services. There are many ways to contribute to the LWVI Foundation.

Your time and dedication can impact lives through our **vision health programs for kids**, raising funds for medical research and community outreach. See all the ways you can get involved:

[lwvi.org/ways-to-give/](http://lwvi.org/ways-to-give/)





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## Contact



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## Connect



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**So the world can see.**

