

Dear Fellow Lions,

I would like to update you on recent news in LCIF. I ask that you share this information with your club and district to help promote LCIF.

CSFII Surpasses Goal

Campaign SightFirst II has surpassed the \$150 million minimum goal. On Worldwide Report Day February 20, National and Multi-National Coordinators' telephone calls and reports revealed that Lions have raised more than US\$157.9 million for CSFII. With four months remaining, Lions are now looking ahead to the additional challenge goal and helping ensure the future of SightFirst through continued and expanded efforts to eliminate preventable blindness worldwide. Lions' support of CSFII is crucial in the remaining months. Visit the [CSFII Web site](#) for more information on the campaign and fundraising ideas.

LCIF #1 NGO Ads Available

In a special report released in July, LCIF was ranked the number one non-governmental organization worldwide. From 34 global organizations, LCIF came in first. As a result of the ranking, LCIF has received a great deal of media coverage and has also placed special ads in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal and several other nationwide daily newspapers around the world. These ads are available to [download online](#) for Lions to use in their local newspapers as well. To localize the information, simply add a local telephone number and club Web site. The [press release](#) of this announcement is also online to share with your local media.

Milestone in Trachoma Treatments

LCIF reached a major milestone in trachoma treatments January 23 when LCIF Chairperson Jimmy Ross distributed the [10 millionth dose](#) of azithromycin (Zithromax®) to 16-year-old Messeleche Tilahun. The antibiotic, donated by Pfizer Inc, is a main strategy in the fight against the blinding disease in poor, rural areas. Messeleche lives in the Awi Zone in Ethiopia, the most trachoma-endemic part of the country, where an estimated 18 million are at risk. Representatives from The Carter Center, Lions clubs of Ethiopia, Pfizer, the national trachoma program, government of Ethiopia, and other partner organizations joined the celebration and are a part of the coalition working toward elimination of trachoma in the region by 2012. Lions in Ethiopia have been integral to achieving remarkable results in the country. The 10 millionth dose comes after just 18 months of full scale intervention and points toward meeting the elimination target date. Through SightFirst, LCIF has awarded numerous grants for [trachoma control](#), outreach and training projects in Ethiopia and elsewhere in Africa.

SightFirst Grants Awarded

The SightFirst Advisory Committee Meeting [awarded nine grants](#) at its January meeting. This included grant funding to continue the childhood blindness project with the World Health Organization, which has established 30 need-based centers around the world. Other grants included cataract surgery campaigns, upgrading a Lions eye hospital and establishing and equipping a teaching hospital. A total of US\$9,554,378 was awarded, US\$3,580,708 of which represents grants from undesignated SightFirst funds. The full list is available online.

Grants Approved for Lions Quest

[Seven grants](#) totaling US\$364,872 were approved at the January Lions Quest Advisory Meeting. The grants enable Lions Quest programs to expand in countries currently participating in the program or to begin the program in new countries. Japan, Kenya, Canada and Turkey received

grants to implement and expand the program. Pakistan and Sri Lanka became the newest countries to launch the program. The full list of approved grants is online.

Lions Join Coalition

Lions Clubs International has joined the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) as a sustaining member and partner to enhance the work of local communities and help youth resist alcohol and other drugs. Lions will support their mission to build stronger capacity for anti-drug efforts through the 5,000 community coalitions nationwide. Through Lions Quest, Lions can teach youth how to avoid drugs and make responsible decisions. A letter announcing the partnership was sent to the 500 other organizations in the coalition encouraging these organizations and communities to work with their local Lions club on drug-free programs. LCIF also had a booth at CADCA's annual convention this month, the largest training conference in the U.S. for community coalition activists and substance abuse professionals.

New Giving Publication

A new publication, ForSight in Gift Planning, is available to those Lions wishing to increase their support to LCIF. It provides an overview of various donation programs, news updates and stories of those helped through Lions' contributions. The publication is available [online](#) or by contacting [LCIF Development Staff](#).

Increase Your Support Through an MJF

Have you considered becoming a Melvin Jones Fellow or extending your generosity through a Progressive Melvin Jones Fellow? Fellows are a group of dedicated philanthropists who have changed the lives of hundreds of millions of people worldwide. To increase support for CSFII in the final months, President Mahendra Amarasinghe has issued a challenge to raise the number of Melvin Jones Fellows to 300,000 total. One Fellowship can save the sight at 167 individuals, each with a story, a family and a face. The application form is available [online](#) or credit card donations can be made securely [online](#).

Cruise with the Chairperson

Support LCIF while soaking up the sun in the Caribbean. Join the LCIF Chairperson and fellow Lions from around the world for the 9th annual LCIF Cruise, which will set sail November 9, 2008 for 12 nights in the southern Caribbean. The cruise visits with local Lions in ports of call and there is a special Melvin Jones Fellowship reception on board. All of the cruises are open to the public and US\$1,000 of every cruise is tax deductible. The cruise has raised over \$300,000 for LCIF. To learn more about the cruise, [download the brochure](#) or email lcifdevelopment@lionsclubs.org. Space is limited.

Lions' support and promotion of LCIF is crucial. I thank you for your continued dedication to LCIF.

Serving Through LCIF,

Jimmy M. Ross
Chairperson, LCIF