

Choosing to write your donor's family is personal decision...

We realize that, although the gift of sight dramatically improves the lives of cornea recipients, it is often difficult to express emotions and gratitude into words that seem adequate. Recipients may also fear that writing to the donor's family may intensify that family's grief. As someone who works with the donor families, I assure you that donor families do indeed find comfort in receiving a simple note of thanks from the recipients of their loved one's corneas. Your written expression of gratitude often reassures them of their decision to donate and help others in the midst of their grief, or confirms their support in fulfilling the prior decision and wishes of their loved one to be a donor. The Lions Eye Bank West Central Ohio is honored to facilitate the correspondence between a recipient and their donor's family.

You may or may not receive correspondence from the loved ones of your cornea donor. Some donor families have stated that writing about their loved one helps them in the grieving process while other donor families prefer privacy and choose not to respond or write to the recipients. Individuals differ in coping with loss and managing grief; choosing to write is a personal decision for the donor's family, just as it is for you, the recipient.

Questions or Comments?

Please contact us:

937.396.1000

www.lebwcoonline.org

"Dear Donor Family,

It is with much sadness and joy that I write this note to you.

The joy is that your most generous gift will enable me to have much better vision after 50 years of struggle.

The sadness is obvious. My joy is at an unbelievable cost to you. I cannot even comprehend the anguish and heartache that you are experiencing. Please know that your family will be in my thoughts on a daily basis when I am able to see the leaves on the trees, the petals on the flowers and the funny expressions on my grand children's faces.

I am truly indebted to you.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU"

~Nitzi, cornea recipient

Corresponding With Your Donor Family

The gift of sight is confidential. Your identity, along with that of your donor's next of kin, will remain anonymous through the correspondence process. The information below offers guidelines and suggestions when writing to your donor's family and directions for submitting your note to the Lions Eye Bank West Central Ohio. Our eye bank encourages and receives correspondence from both recipients and donor families, then forwards it on to the appropriate individual(s).

- Please address your correspondence to "Donor Family"
- Use your first name only, whether introducing yourself or in the closing
- Recognize the donor family and their loss of a loved one, sincerely thanking them for the gift you have received from their loved one
- Provide general information, such as your occupation, hobbies and interests, family situation (marital status, children, grandchildren)
- Before stating religious comments, please consider that the beliefs of the donor's family are unknown.
- Write about your transplant experience, using simple language, and explain what it was like for you and your family before and after your cornea transplant
- Explain how the transplant has improved your vision and changed your life, emphasizing things you can do now that you could not do before the transplant
- Share important events in your life (birthday, marriage, becoming a parent or grandparent, new job, returning to school) and how restored vision has made those occasions more meaningful
- Communicate in a sensitive and caring manner
- Do **NOT** include your address, phone number, email or other contact information in your letter
- Please provide your personal information (name, date of birth, address, date of transplant, name of transplant surgeon, etc. O on the enclosed post card- this information will not be sent with your correspondence to the donor family
- Mail your correspondence and the completed post card to:

Lions Eye Bank West Central Ohio
3309 Office Park Drive
Dayton, OH 45439

*All Correspondence is subject to editing by the Lions Eye Bank West Central Ohio in order to maintain confidentiality.