



July 17, 2023

Fellow Lions and Community Supporters,

It has been my pleasure to serve as the Lions Charity Foundation of Southeastern Virginia President for Lions year 2022 – 2023. Our board of directors had successes on several fronts this year. The number of grant applications had tripled over last year; 51 District 24 – I Lions Clubs applied for 64 charitable grants donating nearly \$139,000 back to the communities in which our Lions Clubs serve. We've streamlined the grant application process to shorten the turn-around time on club requests to a rolling basis if the request is less than \$5,000. This means most grant requests will no longer need to wait until our quarterly board meetings for approval. This new policy, along with a few other grant guideline changes, takes effect July 17, 2023. The new policies can be found on our website at lcfsv24i.org.

We've also faced some challenges. We continue to struggle to create a new signature fundraising project that will engage our members and community partners while raising enough funds to support our charitable humanitarian efforts. Nevertheless, we've begun online fundraising and have plans to expand this fundraising avenue next year with Give Local 757. We'll need the ongoing support of our Lions Clubs to make this online event successful!

As you know, the Lions Charity Foundation of Southeastern Virginia, Inc., supports the 85 Lions Clubs of District 24-I located throughout central and southeastern Virginia. The Foundation operates using contributions, interest on investments and net proceeds from our fundraising events. We owe a special thanks to the Suffolk Rods & Muscle Cars Club for their \$5,000 donation. They have been very generous donors over the past few years, and we sincerely appreciate their ongoing support. If you haven't been to the car show sponsored by the club, come on out on September 23, 2023, and check it out. Details are posted on our Facebook page. We'd also like to give a big "roar" to the Princess Ann Lions Club for their generous \$10,000 gift.

Our new Lions Clubs International President Dr. Patty Hill's theme is "Changing the World". I mention this theme because over the past few years, our board has seen the changes in the needs of our communities and we're rising to the challenge. The two largest focus areas of the Foundation are now diabetes and hunger relief. This year, we provided 54 hunger grants totaling \$40,000. Most of this funding was available as \$500 individual grants totaling \$25,000 for Lions Clubs to assist their local food pantry or food bank partners. Other funds supported the Virginia Beach Public School Division's Beach Bag Program, two elementary schools' backpack feeding program in Newport News, Armed Services YMCA of Hampton Roads Operation Holiday Joy Baskets, and Thanksgiving food baskets. The Lions Family Diabetes Camp and REACH program in partnership with Old Dominion University are committees of the Foundation. Diabetes programming has spent \$81,197 on these programs assisting 140 overnight campers at the three-day Lions Family Diabetes Camp and a total of 225-day campers at the ODU REACH program from July 2022 – March 2023. In January, the board approved a \$30,000 grant for required matching funds on a grant application to Lions Clubs International Foundation to expand the REACH program to include children ages six to nine years old with Type 1 Diabetes. We'll learn the outcome of this application in October 2023.

The Foundation's sight and hearing programs providing care for indigent individuals is a backbone of our mission. We've provided three individuals with five cataract surgeries for an estimated value of services of \$15,000, one client with a prosthetic eye, and provided three Lions Clubs with \$3,000 in grants to provide free eye exams and

glasses in Sussex County, Surry County and Virginia Beach. Our hearing aid program has provided 36 hearing aids to financially disadvantaged individuals on behalf of 15 Lions Clubs totaling \$9,220.

Additional grants were given to help prevent avoidable blindness or support people who are blind or vision impaired. Nearly \$45,000 was designated to sight conservation. Projects included medical expenses for a two-year old child's critical eye surgery, purchasing three lensometers for three Lions Eyeglass Recycling Centers, two SPOT devices for use in the Lions Kids Sight children's eye screening program allowing children as young as six months old to be checked for a condition commonly known as "lazy eye", providing the Lions Mobile Sight and Hearing Unit free to Lions Clubs to conduct free public screenings and sponsoring transportation for persons who are blind or vision impaired to Burkeville Lodge for the Blind to enjoy a recreational weekend.

Over \$8,500 for four youth-focused grants provided scholarships to the Tidewater Wooden Boat Builders Workshop, teaching students hands-on building skills; Boy Scout Explorer Post 140, the largest special needs Boy Scout Troop in the USA; Heavenly Peace, providing beds so children don't need to sleep on the floor and Pretlow Library, Maker's studio encouraging children's creativity.

I'm pleased to report these grants increase our community contributions to over \$1.3 million since 2010. As you can see the work of the Lions Charity Foundation of Southeastern Virginia is essential to both the Lions Clubs of District 24-I and the individuals we serve. Therefore, I hope you will continue your generous support of the foundation.

Finally, I'd like to thank our donors, Lions and our Board of Directors for their generosity and tireless efforts to support the Lions Charity Foundation of Southeastern Virginia. It has been my honor to lead, and I wish Lion Mike Petty well as incoming President.

Together in Service,

Beth Stevens

Lion Beth Stevens, Past District Governor
President 2022 - 2023

* Financial numbers presented were unaudited at the time of this report *

