



July 1, 2024

Fellow Lions and Community Supporters,

It has been my pleasure to serve as the Lions Charity Foundation of Southeastern Virginia President for Lions year 2023 – 2024. Our Board of Directors had successes on several fronts this year. The number of grant applications remained constant from last year; 52 District 24 I Lions Clubs applied for 66 charitable grants, donating nearly \$171,000 back to the communities in which our Lions Clubs serve. On July 17, 2023, we instituted and revised the humanitarian grant application process, shortening the turn-around time on Club requests to a rolling basis for requests less than \$5,000. This means many grant requests will no longer need to wait until our quarterly board meetings for approval. 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. For Lion Year 2024-2025, we will focus on online fundraising with "Give Local 757", which is the region's annual 24-hour giving day held the second Tuesday in May. 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 82 Lions Clubs of District 24-I located throughout central and southeastern Virginia. The Foundation operates using contributions, interest from investments and net proceeds from our fundraising events. We owe a special thanks to the Suffolk Rods & Muscle Cars Club for their \$4,200 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 25, 2024. So, check it out. Details will be posted on our Facebook page. We'd also like to give a big "roar" to 26 Lions Clubs, who donated a total of \$8,800 to the Foundation.

Our new Lions Clubs International President Fabrício Oliveira's theme is "Make Your Mark". 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 51 hunger grants totaling \$24,500. The majority of these funds went to 49 Clubs to assist their local food pantry or food bank partners. Other grant funds helped support the Virginia Beach Public School Division's Beach Bag Program, replacement of an HVAC system for the Southside Lions Eyeglass Recycling Center, purchase of audio equipment for Access Virginia, purchase of a slit-lamp biomicroscope for the Lions Medical Bank of Southeast Virginia, support the EDMARC Thanksgiving food basket program for children in hospice care and support for Eastern Shore Health Fair.

The Lions Family Diabetes Camp is a committee of the Foundation. The REACH Program, including the Lions Diabetes Family Camp expenditures from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, were \$47,789.45. The number of camping days, including the REACH Monthly Programs, Little REACH and the Lions Diabetes Family Camp was fifteen (15). The number of diabetic children attending all of the camps combined was approximately 300. In addition to the children, the number of parents and family members participating was approximately 500. The medical staff and Lions volunteers add approximately 35-40 more to these totals. The REACH Program and the Lions Diabetes Family Camp were undoubtedly the largest, and most successful Service Project in District 24I for the past three (3) Lions Years.

The Foundation's sight and hearing programs providing care for indigent individuals is the backbone of our mission. We provided needed eye surgery for one child and keratoconus lens for one client. In addition, we provided a grant of \$18,000 to the Lions Medical Eye Bank for the purchase of a split-lamp biomicroscope. Our hearing aid program has provided 33 hearing aids to financially disadvantaged individuals on behalf of 10 Lions Clubs totaling \$17,360.

Additional grants were given to help prevent avoidable blindness or to support people who are blind or vision impaired. Nearly \$58,000 was designated to sight conservation. Projects, which include medical expenses for a child to receive Strabismus Surgery to address an eye muscle condition which he has had since birth, the purchase of a Tonometer for a child with glaucoma and other eye issues, the purchase of SPOT devices for Clubs in Zone N and Q for use in school screenings, provide the Lions Mobile Sight and Hearing Unit free to Lions Clubs to conduct public screenings and sponsored transportation for persons who are blind or vision impaired to Burkeville Lodge for the Blind to enjoy a recreational weekend.

Over \$5,000 was provided for two youth-focused grants providing transportation for Boy Scout Explorer Post 140, to participate in a Special Olympics program and provide Thanksgiving food basket support for five families with children in hospice care.

I'm pleased to report these grants bring our overall community contributions to over \$1.2 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. This is why 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.

Together in Service,

7. Michael Petty

Lion Mike Petty

President 2023 - 2024