



Lions Clubs International

Fact Sheet

MEMBERSHIP

Lions Clubs International is the world's largest service club organization with 1.4 million members in more than 43,000 clubs in approximately 185 countries and geographical areas.

Lions are men and women who volunteer their time to humanitarian causes. Founded in 1917, the association's motto is "We Serve."

SERVICE HISTORY

Worldwide, Lions clubs are recognized for their service to the blind and visually impaired. This service began through a challenge issued by Helen Keller to become "knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness" during the Lions' 1925 International Convention.

Today, Lions extend their commitment to sight conservation through countless local efforts, as well as through their international SightFirst program.

Lions also make a strong commitment to young people and are instrumental in youth outreach programs.

PRIMARY PROGRAM: SIGHTFIRST

In 1990, Lions established SightFirst, a US\$140 million global initiative to rid the world of preventable and reversible blindness. The unprecedented program joins leading blindness prevention experts, blindness prevention organizations, governments and Lions volunteers in an effort to establish long-term solutions in eliminating preventable and reversible blindness.

The SightFirst program has:

- Funded 47 eye clinics and hospitals that are completed or under construction;
- Provided more than 1,022,000 cataract surgeries;
- Treated more than 3.3 million people with ivermectin to prevent river blindness;
- Allowed more than six million patients to be screened for eye disease.

OTHER SIGHT-RELATED ACTIVITIES

In addition to the SightFirst program, Lions clubs continue to support other sight-related activities:

- Lions provide 600,000 free professional glaucoma screenings and make 25,000 corneal transplants possible each year.
- Lions establish and support a majority of the world's eye banks, hundreds of clinics, hospitals and eye research centers worldwide.
- Lions annually collect more than three million pairs of old, unwanted eyeglasses for free distribution to the poor in developing countries.
- Lions provide thousands each year with free quality eye care, eyeglasses, Braille-writers, large print texts, white canes and guide dogs.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH PROGRAMS

Second only to the Lions' commitment to aiding the blind and visually impaired is a strong dedication to serving young people.

Lions Youth Outreach

This comprehensive program challenges young people to learn, to achieve and to serve. By focusing on volunteerism, it steers young people away from harmful behaviors such as gang involvement, violence and substance abuse.

- **"The Future Is Ours...So Now What?"**— At the heart of the Lions youth outreach initiative is a comprehensive educational unit, including a video program designed to motivate youth to volunteer, called "The Future Is Ours... So Now What?"

- **Lions-Quest**— Lions clubs around the world sponsor drug abuse and violence prevention curricula in their community schools. The Lions-Quest "Skills for Growing," "Skills for Adolescence" and "Skills for Action" programs teach young people the skills needed to resolve conflicts peacefully, say no to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and grow into personally and socially responsible adults.

Leo Club Program

Lions clubs in 138 countries sponsor 5,000 Leo clubs worldwide. The more than 132,000 members, ages 12-28, perform various community service activities and support a special worldwide Literacy and Culture project.

International Youth Exchange

In 1994-1995, it was reported that more than 3,800 young people, ages 15-21, stayed with Lion host families in 67 countries.

International Youth Camps

Camps in 35 countries bring youth together from many nations to enjoy educational, recreational and cultural activities.

Lions International Peace Poster Contest

Each year more than 300,000 students, ages 11-13, from over 50 countries, creatively share personal ideas about world peace through artwork judged at local, regional, national and international levels.

FOUNDATION GRANTS

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) is the charitable arm of Lions Clubs International (LCI). The foundation's mission is to support the efforts of Lions clubs around the world in serving their local and global communities by funding humanitarian service projects.