

Lions Raise More Than US\$200 Million to Save Sight

Bangkok, Thailand, June 26, 2008

Lions Clubs International Foundation (LCIF) and Lions around the world have exceeded their campaign challenge goal of US\$200 million for their flagship, global blindness-prevention program, SightFirst. Funds raised during Campaign SightFirst II (CSFII), a three-year worldwide campaign operated by the international charitable foundation, will save or restore the vision of more than 37 million people around the world.

Led by 7,000 CSFII Lion volunteers, Lions surpassed their initial US\$150 million goal in

February, four months in advance of CSFII's conclusion. During the final month of the campaign alone, Lions raised more than US\$20 million to surpass the US\$200 million challenge goal.

"The efforts of Lions worldwide over the last three years makes me incredibly proud to be a Lion", says Dr. Tae-Sup Lee, Lions past international president and CSFII chairperson. "Through CSFII, our role as 'Knights of the Blind' will continue for years to come because of the dedication of our volunteers and all of our donors. Most importantly, LCIF and Lions will be able to continue to deliver the excellent services of the SightFirst program and thereby ensure that millions of individuals around the world are able to live with the gift of sight."

At least US\$100 million of CSFII funds will be granted through LCIF's SightFirst program to contain and eliminate the leading causes of avoidable blindness, including cataract, the leading cause of preventable blindness worldwide.

Another US\$50 million will be used to combat new and emerging threats to sight, including diabetic retinopathy, macular degeneration and low vision. The funds raised beyond the US\$150 million initial goal will make it possible for Lions to fund research and rehabilitation initiatives in developed countries. Lions' goal is to provide 'Vision for All.'

SightFirst was launched by Lions in 1989 to battle preventable and reversible blindness. Lions estimate US\$6 is the average cost to save or restore a person's sight through SightFirst. Lions have already restored sight to more than 27 million people by funding cataract surgeries, vision screenings and treatment, and improved eye-care services for hundreds of millions of people in underserved areas in 91 countries around the world. Lions have also built eye hospitals in developing countries and

trained eye health care workers where there were previously none.

CSFII officially concluded during the 91st Annual Lions Clubs International Convention in Bangkok, Thailand on Thursday, June 26 when the final dollar amount raised was announced. More than 18,000 Lions clubs members, including international media, from around the world were present for this historic announcement for LCIF.

Lions Clubs International Foundation is the charitable arm of Lions Clubs International, the largest service club organization in the world with nearly 1.3 million members in 202 geographic areas and countries. In July, LCIF was ranked the number one non-governmental organization worldwide by a *Financial Times* survey. LCIF provides grants for large-scale Lions service projects around the world. Established in 1968, LCIF has awarded a total of US\$625 million in grant funding for a variety of humanitarian projects. For more information, visit www.lcif.org.