THE LIFEGIFT TIMELINE

1987 – LifeGift is established on Aug. 18, under the original name Gulf Coast Organ Procurement Organization (GCOPPO).

1988 – LifeGift’s West Texas Region operates its first tissue recovery.

1989 – GCOPPO officially changes its name to LifeGift Organ Donation Center.

1990 – The Southeast Region completes its first tissue recovery.


1992 – Samuel M. Holtzmann is selected as president and CEO of LifeGift.

1993 – First life is saved due to the Texas medical examiner’s denial of organ recovery from a pediatric donor in a hospital in Houston, prompting some to call Texas Health & Safety Code 693, “Peter’s Law.”

1994 – Routine notification is implemented. Hospitals within LifeGift’s service area now notify the OPO of all deaths, resulting in significant increase in organ and tissue recovery.

1995 – LifeGift partners with the United States Postal Service to unveil a new organ donation commemorative postage stamp in its three regions.

1996 – Senator Mike Moncrief of Fort Worth and Representative Diana Delisi of Temple lead the effort that makes it easier for Texans to use their driver’s licenses to indicate their wishes to be donors.

1997 – The Regalo De Vida program is established at LifeGift, coordinating outreach efforts to raise awareness of organ and tissue donation among the Hispanic community.

1998 – LifeGift’s West Texas Region obtains more space for tissue recovery in the Lubbock Medical Examiner’s Office for expanded operations. Tissue recovery in the West Region increases by 48 percent in the following year.

1999 – LifeGift purchases a building, which eventually will house the company’s contemporary 28,000-square-foot facilities, including rooms for tissue recovery to take place.

2000 – LifeGift celebrates 25 years of saving and enhancing lives through organ and tissue donation.

2001 – LifeGift’s Communications Center is renamed the Donor Resource Center.

2002 – Governor Rick Perry signs House Bill 2914, giving the three OPOs in Texas ownership and maintenance of the Donate Life Texas Registry. All three OPOs expect to see a large increase in the number of Texans registering to become organ, eye and tissue donors.

2003 – LifeGift is awarded the Golden Heart Glass Award by the Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation in recognition of excellence.

2004 – The United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) awards LifeGift two three-year grants. One grant supports the establishment of the In-House Coordinator Program in Level 1 Trauma Centers. The other grant allows LifeGift to create the African-American Clergy Outreach Program.

2005 – Tropical Storm Allison submerges Houston, including the Texas Medical Center, in 33 inches of rain. The LifeGift tissue recovery team clears the elements to safely transport lifesaving and life-enhancing tissue through the storm.

2006 – LifeGift purchases a building, which eventually will house the company’s contemporary 28,000-square-foot facilities, including rooms for tissue recovery to take place.

2007 – LifeGift celebrates 25 years of saving and enhancing lives through organ and tissue donation.

2008 – LifeGift’s Communications Center is renamed the Donor Resource Center.

2009 – Governor Rick Perry signs House Bill 2914, giving the three OPOs in Texas ownership and maintenance of the Donate Life Texas Registry. All three OPOs expect to see a large increase in the number of Texans registering to become organ, eye and tissue donors.

2010 – LifeGift is awarded the Golden Heart Glass Award by the Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation in recognition of excellence.

2011 – LifeGift celebrates 25 years of saving and enhancing lives through organ and tissue donation.

2012 – LifeGift’s Communications Center is renamed the Donor Resource Center.

1987-2012

Celebrating 25 Years

LifeGift opens its 24-hour, state-of-the-art Communications Center in Houston to field referrals and inquiries about donation.

LifeGift appoints four full-time, in-house coordinators (BHC) to work at Hermann Hospital and Ben Taub General Hospital in Houston, Texas.

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1989 – LifeGift begins its Emergency Medical Services Referral Program, collaborating with emergency medical units to call in tissue referrals from the scenes of accidents.

1990 – Nearly 200 runners and walkers attend LifeGift’s inaugural 2nd Chance Run, promoting organ and tissue donation awareness in Fort Worth.

1991 – LifeGift Chief Operating Officer Teresa Shafer is named national co-chair of the Department of Health and Human Services U.S. Organ Donation Breakthrough Collaborative, which focuses on increasing donation in 300 U.S. hospitals with the greatest organ donor potential.

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