

Will I hear from the donor family?

While you may wish to correspond with a donor family, it also is a personal choice whether they return the sentiment. Some families say it helps in the grieving process while others prefer privacy and choose not to respond. Still others may take several months or years before they feel comfortable responding.

If you need further information about corresponding with a donor family, you may contact LifeGift at donorfamilyservices@lifegift.org or 800-633-6562.

Yijia Chen
Kidney recipient, Lubbock



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Writing
to donor
families



Bailey & Kim Thompson
Cornea recipients, Fort Worth

The decision to correspond with a donor family is a personal one for a transplant recipient.

Some wish to express their gratitude. In return, many donor families have said a card or a personal note from a transplant recipient offers some comfort. Whatever the reason – it is your choice whether you wish to correspond with the family members of your donor.

As the organ recovery agency making the donation and subsequent transplant possible, LifeGift can help you and your transplant center with this process – forwarding written correspondence to the donor family members involved in your transplant. All correspondence is completely anonymous and identities are kept confidential – if you so wish.

If you are considering writing to the family of your donor, LifeGift recommends the following to guide you in drafting your correspondence.

Provide general information about yourself, which may include:

- Your first name – **please do not include your last name**
- Your job or occupation
- The state (not city) in which you live
- Your marital status, children, grandchildren

Carefully consider whether to include religious comments because the views of your donor family are unknown.

Talk about your transplant experience.

- Use simple language.
- Recognize the donor family and thank them for their gift.
- Discuss the experience and how long you waited for a transplant.
- Explain how the transplant has improved your health and changed your life. Detail whether you now can participate in activities unheard of prior to your transplant.
- Describe key life moments that have occurred since your transplant. Did you celebrate another birthday? Did you bear a son or daughter? Did you return to school or accept a new job?

Conclude your letter.

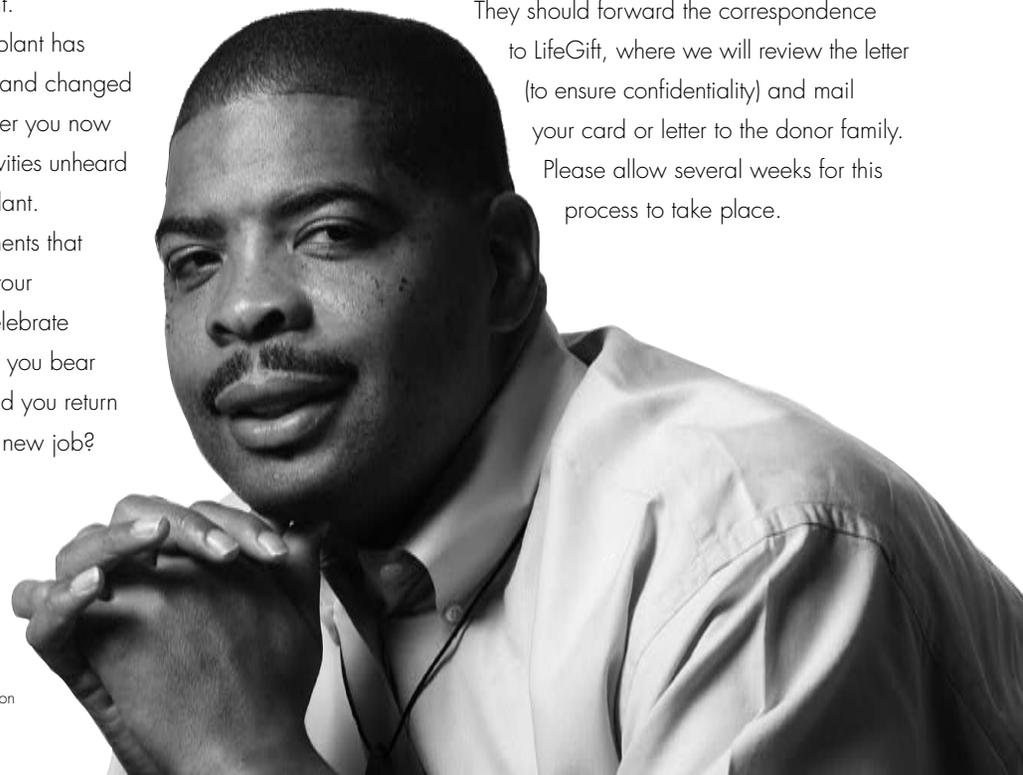
- Sign your first name only.
- Do not reveal your address, city or phone number.
- Do not reveal the name or location of the hospital where the transplant took place.

Send your letter.

- Place the letter in an unsealed envelope.
- Include a separate piece of paper in the envelope listing:
 - Your full name
 - The date of your transplant

Mail the information to the coordinator at your transplant center.

They should forward the correspondence to LifeGift, where we will review the letter (to ensure confidentiality) and mail your card or letter to the donor family. Please allow several weeks for this process to take place.



Zeke Smith
Kidney/Pancreas recipient, Houston