

A YEAR IN REVIEW

2025

Driven by Mission, Inspired by Hope

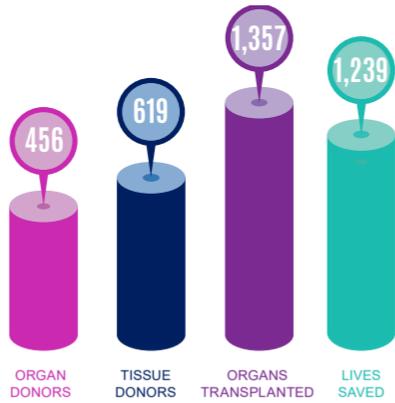


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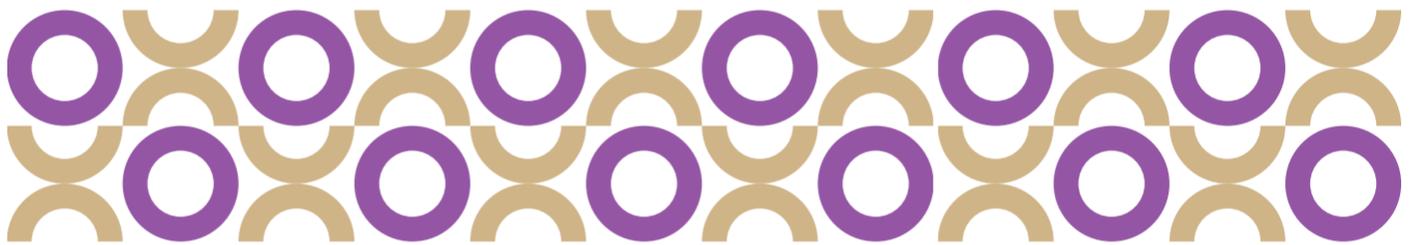


2025

THESE NUMBERS represent lives, families and members of our community impacted by the gift of life.



EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INCLUSIVE COLLABORATION



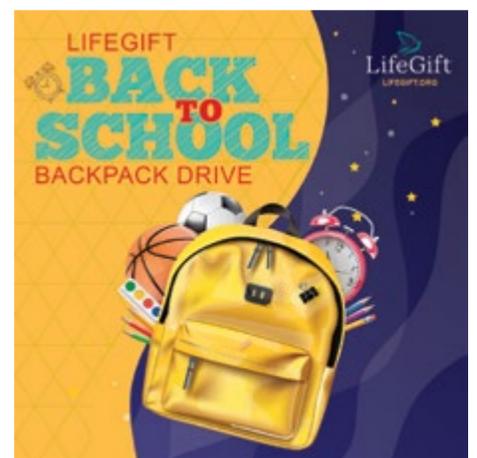
MAC Strengthening Communities Through Service



LifeGift's **Back-to-School Backpack Drive** brought meaningful support to students and families across its service regions, providing more than 800 students with much-needed supplies ahead of the new school year. Led by the **Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC)**, the initiative underscored LifeGift's commitment to uplifting diverse communities through outreach and collaboration. Teams across multiple regions partnered with schools and community organizations to ensure that the backpacks reached students who would benefit most, reflecting a shared dedication to educational success and community well-being.

The backpack drive also highlighted the broader role MAC plays in strengthening community connections throughout the year. In addition to coordinating the drive, MAC actively participated

in several local events, including the City of Pearland Fall Festival, the Heart of Michael Community Health Fair and the Nigeria Cultural Parade & Festival. These efforts demonstrate LifeGift's continued investment in building trust, supporting families and fostering awareness through meaningful engagement across its service areas.



To view our backpack drive video, [click here](#). To view the event photo album, [click here](#).

LifeGift Builds on Partnership with SODA to Advance Donation Advocacy

LifeGift is expanding its collaboration with **Student Organ Donation Advocates (SODA)** to establish more student-led chapters that educate peers and increase donor registration throughout its service areas. By combining LifeGift's subject-matter expertise with SODA's student-driven model, the partnership empowers young leaders to promote organ, eye and tissue donation through campus outreach, awareness events and volunteer engagement. This impact is reflected in recent student success, including the Amarillo High School SODA chapter earning **SODA's 2025 Texas Campus Challenge Award** for leading the state in education, outreach and donor registration efforts.

As SODA continues its national growth—now exceeding 130 chapters—LifeGift plays a key role in supporting and mentoring



new student-led initiatives across Texas. This momentum underscores a shared commitment to building a strong, informed network of future donation advocates. Additionally, **LifeGift's Barbara VerWey was honored with SODA's Advocacy Award**, recognizing the vital role professionals play in guiding and empowering the next generation of champions for donation and transplantation.



Transforming the Future of Lung Transplantation

Lung transplantation remains one of the most complex and time-sensitive procedures in modern medicine, with a limited share of donated lungs ultimately deemed suitable for transplant. Gabriel Loor, MD, cardiothoracic surgeon at Baylor College of Medicine and surgical director of the lung transplant program at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center, and his research team at **The Texas Heart Institute** are working to change that reality through the development of an advanced ex-vivo lung perfusion (EVLP) system. This next-generation platform more closely mimics the human body, allowing lungs to be preserved longer, transported farther and even improved during transit. By expanding the window for transplantation and increasing the number of viable organs, this innovation has the potential to significantly reduce waitlist deaths and improve patient outcomes.

LifeGift's support of groundbreaking research like this reflects its broader commitment to advancing innovation across the donation and transplantation continuum. Technologies that improve organ preservation not only honor the generosity of donors and their families but also ensure that more life-saving gifts reach those in need. As this EVLP system moves through preclinical testing and toward commercialization, it represents a powerful example of how collaboration, research and investment can transform transplantation. LifeGift remains dedicated to supporting these and other innovations that help remove barriers of time and distance, strengthen transplant outcomes and ultimately save more lives.



To learn more, [click here](#).

LifeGift and Surge Ingenuity Partner to Expand Access to Living Heart Valves for Children



LifeGift plays a critical role in advancing pediatric cardiac care by supporting the donation and recovery of partial heart tissue that provides children facing life-threatening heart conditions a chance to survive and

thrive. Through its partnership with Surge Ingenuity, LifeGift helps ensure that donated heart tissue is recovered with care, honored with stewardship and made available to transplant teams when it's needed most. This collaboration expands the impact of organ and tissue donation, transforming generous gifts from donors and their families into living heart valves that

can restore function, grow with young patients and reduce the need for repeated surgeries.

By making these life-saving donations possible, LifeGift is helping redefine what second chances look like for infants and children with complex congenital heart disease. Living heart valves offer hope where options were once limited, allowing donated tissue to support healing, growth and longer-term recovery. Each donation represents not only a medical breakthrough, but a profound act of compassion that can change the course of a child's life. LifeGift's commitment to the gift of donation, partnership and innovation ensures that more children receive the opportunity for healthier futures and more time with the families who love them.

Contributing to a Groundbreaking Study on Fungal Risk in Organ Donors

LifeGift contributed to a pioneering research effort titled **"Increased Fungal Burden in the Gastrointestinal Tract of Brain-Dead Organ Donors,"** which examined potential infection risks associated with different types of organ donors. The study focused on comparing fungal presence in the gastrointestinal tracts of brain-dead donors and donors after circulatory death, an important area of research given the serious and often fatal impact fungal infections can have on transplant recipients. By analyzing intestinal samples from both donor groups, researchers aimed to identify factors that may influence transplant outcomes.

The study found a significantly higher fungal burden in the gastrointestinal tracts of brain-dead donors, including organisms linked to greater virulence and resistance to treatment, compared to donors after circulatory death. Differences in donor management practices, such as the use of corticosteroids and nutritional support, are believed to play a role in these findings. The results underscore the importance of continued research to refine donor care protocols, with the goal of reducing infection risk and improving safety and survival outcomes for transplant recipients.



Fig 1 Workflow for the collection of gastrointestinal fungal samples from organ donors. GIT arrived at the lab within 45 minutes of removal from the donor. The intestines were dissected into anatomical parts (e.g., stomach, duodenum, middle jejunum, middle ileum, transverse colon). Samples for cultivation were obtained from luminal flushes and mucosal scrapings. The resulting fungal growth was purified and sent for whole-genome sequencing for identification.



Copernicus: Advancing Donation Through Smarter Referrals

LifeGift is transforming organ and tissue donation through the implementation of Copernicus,

an innovative electronic referral platform designed to replace traditional, manual reporting methods. Copernicus streamlines how donation referrals are submitted and managed by integrating directly into hospital workflows, allowing clinicians

to make secure, real-time referrals within a patient's medical record. This approach improves communication between hospitals and LifeGift while helping ensure timely identification of donation opportunities.

The platform has already demonstrated success through partnerships with Houston Methodist System hospitals and Texas Health Harris Methodist hospitals. Across both systems, Copernicus has improved referral timeliness, reduced variability and enhanced accuracy and accountability, while supporting alignment with CMS Conditions of Participation. These early implementations highlight how technology-driven collaboration can strengthen hospital-OPO partnerships, improve consistency across complex health systems and ultimately help save more lives through donation.