

We Will Get Through This as a Family

Dear Friend,

Thank you for being part of our IFB Solutions family, and for remaining by our side during these difficult times. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and yours.

The coronavirus pandemic offers our community an opportunity to find new ways to help, connect, and support one another. It calls on all of us to rise to the occasion and assist those most vulnerable.

Here at IFB Solutions, we are responding to the crisis the way we respond to all problems – by coming together and finding different ways to do what needs to be done. Our Coronavirus Response Team is working to meet the needs of our employees and clients.



Eli proudly shows off his marble run, one of the many activities our SEE Charlotte Program participants have created together via Zoom while schools are closed.



Raised in a totally blind household, despite her cerebral palsy and lack of sight, single mother of three Regina Dumas has worked with IFB trainers to modify her tasks to her abilities. "Whatever I can do to help, I am willing – don't tell me what I can't accomplish!" says Regina with a smile.

Although our Student Enrichment Experience (SEE) After School Programs are closed, our work continues. Our instructors have mailed craft kits to students' homes so they can continue to develop their fine motor skills. We are sponsoring online chats so they can work on social skills by interacting with peers. We've created online classes to teach assistive technology,

so they can keep up with their sighted classmates. When schools re-open, they will be prepared.

To help counter feelings of isolation, we are sponsoring online conference calls so that guide dog users, diabetics, and other groups can offer each other peer support without fear of spreading the virus.

Some employees' spouses have been furloughed or lost jobs, and we are finding ways to offer them support. Our medical staff is assisting our employees at no charge to them.

You can help ensure that SEE after school and summer camps, as well as our Community Low Vision Centers in North Carolina and Arkansas will be able to reopen once it is safe to do so. With your help, we will continue to serve thousands of people who live with blindness. Our actions now will enable us to look back on this crisis knowing that we did the right thing.

Stay safe and healthy,

David Horton, President and CEO



IFB Solutions People First Fund assists our employees and the people we serve in the community. Please help us build on this investment by giving generously.



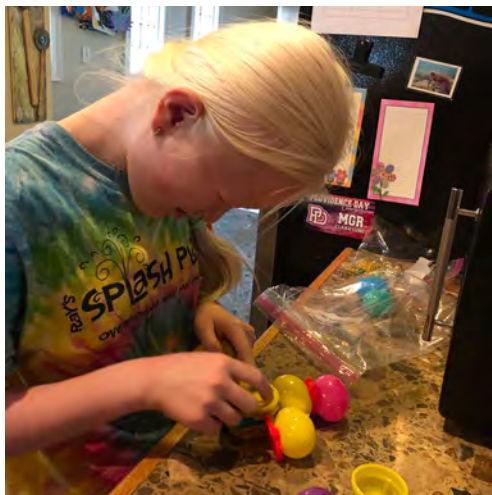


A Message from Our Director of Programs and Community Low Vision Centers

It is in times like these that we are even more grateful to be a part of a caring and supportive community. If you've ever wondered whether your efforts or your donations to IFB Solutions make a lasting difference in someone's life, I'm here to assure you it does. You are planting a seed and helping us grow our impact on the lives of students who are blind or visually impaired and their families.

You can trace this growth by looking at the history of our Student Enrichment Experience (SEE) Camps and After School programs. Back in 2005, a grant and a donation of 300 audiobooks gave us an opportunity to add a lending library and computer classes to our youth program. Donations to our capital campaign enabled us to build a multipurpose room, computer lab, and small kitchen.

Donor support meant we could leverage the partnerships



Carly, our SEE After School student, is completing a STEM activity while under stay-at-home order.

we'd established between our Community Low Vision Centers and local schools to start the Focus on Literacy program. This program provides adaptive equipment for students to use at home to do homework and keep up with their sighted classmates. We invited parents to come to the multipurpose room to learn braille and independent living skills so they could more fully engage in their children's development. Adding childcare deepened our ability to support these families.

In the summer of 2007, we held our first week-long donor funded SEE Day Camp in Winston-Salem. The following year, we extended it to two weeks and added a day camp in Asheville. In 2009, our camps were three weeks long.

In 2012, thanks to gracious donors and sponsors, we opened Tracy's Little Red Schoolhouse in Winston-Salem. Our Charlotte SEE After School Program is now going into its third year. And students from Arkansas now attend our summer camps.

IFB Solutions is proud to offer meaningful and engaging after school programs. After school programs allow students who are blind or visually impaired to participate in accessible, guided group learning and enrichment activities. We help students with homework and braille. There is a lot more social interaction than many children who are blind or visually impaired experience in



"I am giving to the People First Fund, because IFB Solutions has always taken care of me. It's time to give back."

– Cole DeLuca, a former SEE camper, who has been using our low vision equipment since he was 6, makes Air Force masks to keep our troops safe during the pandemic.

school. We also have begun to offer transportation from neighboring counties to the after school programs.

In 2016, we started our first residential overnight camps in North Carolina for older students, grades 8-12: SEE Adventure Camp at the Nantahala Outdoor Center in Bryson City and SEE Camp H2O at Camp Dogwood in Sherrills Ford. The guided activities are adapted to give students the same thrills and challenges their sighted siblings and classmates experience at camp.

We are now serving more than 200 young students each year! It is a joy to see what they learn from their SEE summer camp and after school experiences from year to year. And it's all because of your generosity. On behalf of IFB Solutions and all our SEE campers, we thank you!

Sincerely,

Chris Flynt, Director of Programs and Community Low Vision Centers

Why I Give: Joel Schanker

There is no community representative who enters the doors of IFB Solutions more often than Joel Schanker. Joel, a former bank manager, now enjoys retirement. He spends his time traveling the world with Barbara, his wife of 51 years, and volunteering for IFB Solutions.

Joel first heard about IFB nearly 15 years ago. He was so impressed with what he learned about the IFB manufacturing plant, that he hosted a presentation at the Clemmons Kiwanis Club. This led to a tour of IFB, where he would meet with Chris Flynt, now Director of Programs and Community Low Vision, starting 14 years of friendship and participation.

Barbara and Joel have since been involved every step of the way. They have led a Toastmasters Club for people who are blind or vision impaired, volunteered for summer camps and other activities for children, and became major donors. Through the Schankers, the Clemmons Kiwanis Club has also been involved in many projects, including granting playground equipment to the Little Red Schoolhouse and participating in the annual Field Day for children with visual impairments.

Joel is often behind the scenes ready to lend a hand. For him, philanthropic support is indivisibly connected to personal involvement. "The more time I spent with employees and the kids, the more I learned about the community served by IFB.

It was natural to get involved philanthropically," Joel shares. Helping people with vision impairments develop their communication skills so they can be independent has also allowed Joel to connect with them on a more personal level. He enjoys watching how they overcome life's challenges. Joel goes on to say, "I grew to admire the people I was working with, and that inevitably made me want to help financially."

When SEE summer camps were created, Barbara and Joel were more than ready to go through training. "We saw a need that existed at IFB around children's programs, and we knew immediately we had the time and skills to be volunteers during summer camps," says Joel. Whether children were zip lining or feeding safari animals they could not see, Joel was equally inspired. He continues, "Working with children who are blind is one of the most rewarding things I've done in my life. I marvel at the tenacity with which these children tackle challenges presented to



"Volunteering at IFB Solutions gives me the chance to witness life-changing opportunities for people who are blind. Being a part of that mission is why I keep coming back." Joel Schanker, Programs and Services Committee Member, IFB Solutions

them. I admire their bravery in navigating through life."

Just as IFB has impacted Joel's life, Joel has also greatly impacted IFB. Our deep gratitude is best expressed by Chris' words, "Joel is a wonderful and generous person who has enriched the lives of so many individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Thank you, Joel!"

For most recent information about our fundraising events in 2020, visit our website: ifbsolutions.org/events

Navigating Life's Challenges



Lexy enjoying her time on the bus as campers sing songs on their way to camp in summer 2019.

IFB Solutions' Student Enrichment Experience (SEE) Camp programs offer opportunities for students who are blind or visually impaired to develop skills, gain confidence, and make new friends, while participating in guided group activities.

For high school senior Lexy, going to SEE Camp H2O meant getting out of her comfort zone. "I'm not an outdoorsy person," she admitted. "I don't go outside unless coerced. I'd rather be reading books, listening to music, or playing the piano. And I'm not one for trying new things."

When a friend she had known since sixth grade became a Camp H2O counselor, he convinced Lexy to check it out. Their flight from Arkansas to Camp Dogwood in Sherrills Ford, NC, marked the first time she'd ever been on a

plane. But that was just the first in a series of firsts.

Although she swims, "I didn't have much experience with water stuff," Lexy said. "In the beginning, it was daunting. You had to pass a test in order to be allowed to swim without a life jacket."

Her first experience with a paddle board started out well. "I stood right up. Just as I thought: Oh, this is not so bad; I fell in!" But falling in was all part of the

process. She got right back up and tried again and was soon standing for three to four minutes. Once she learned she had to paddle her

kayak from both sides, she finally stopped going around in circles.

Lexy appreciated having a rafting guide call out the location of rocks and other obstacles. "The counselors made me feel safe and that made it easier to try something new."

All in all, Lexy's experiences at H2O Camp were positive and valuable. "I absolutely love the people there. The staff talked to me like I was a friend and an adult. It was great to meet new people. I felt a real sense of belonging to a community."

Text PeopleFirst to 41444 to donate to IFB Solutions!



Teacher for the visually impaired Whitney Musick and Lexy during SEE Camp Abilities H2O water activities