



## May 2023 Grant Request Proposal

Submitted to:

The White Family Foundation

Attn: Ruth Banther, Grant Coordinator & Foundation Advisor

### **LiFT Contact:**

Beatriz Maxson, Grant Writer

BMaxson@LiFTFL.org (407)415-3446

### **Grant Request Proposal Contents:**

- Case Statement (pgs. 2-4)
- Specific Program Request (pgs. 4-5)
- Financials (pg. 6)
- Board of Directors (pgs. 6-8)
- Executive Staff/Leadership Team (pg. 8-9)
- Additional Documentation (pg. 9-10)
- Non-Profit Status Documentation (pgs. 11-12)
- Florida Charity Solicitation of Contributions Documentation (pg. 13)

## Case Statement

---

The Mission of Learning Independence For Tomorrow, Inc. (LiFT) is to inspire and empower people with neurodiversity to learn, thrive and succeed. LiFT is committed to providing exceptional and equitable opportunities in education, employment and life experiences for children and adults living with neurodiversity so they may achieve their fullest potential and increase their capacity for independence.

### History and Impact

Learning Independence For Tomorrow, Inc. (LiFT) opened its doors in 2013, the vision of two special needs mothers with a dream drawn on the back of a napkin. Keli Mondello and Kim Kuruzovich's preliminary sketch on the back of that napkin depicted a safe educational space, one that was free of bullying and offered unique opportunities and academics using a wide variety of learning styles for their two daughters and others living with autism, Down syndrome, ADHD, dyslexia, Tourette syndrome, OCD, learning disabilities, processing disorders, and developmental delays. They had a dream of a place where their children and other neurodivergent students could discover their innate talents in a place created for those who think and learn in unique ways. That dream would first take shape in the form of a school for Kindergarten-12<sup>th</sup> graders with 17 students its first year at the LiFT Academy. That dream would be driven by a team of five unpaid teachers and volunteers; a bank account started with only \$500; donated and thrifted desks and supplies; and passion fueled by the determination of special needs mothers seeking a better quality of life for their children and others facing similar challenges in the traditional school system.

Today that vision has grown from its humble beginnings; and LiFT has evolved into an essential resource for special needs families in Tampa Bay and is a leader in the landscape of neurodiversity. LiFT has expanded programming for not only children, but also neurodiverse adults; created in-house revenue-producing student-run Microbusinesses; and has established a community-based Family Resource Center open to families in the general public. Today, LiFT has a student enrollment that has grown by nearly 750% in only 10 years of operations and in August will move to its purchased campus in Clearwater where more than double the number of students currently served can participate in LiFT's programming.

The following programs are offered by LiFT to benefit individuals with neurodiversity:

- *LiFT Academy* was LiFT's first program and is a school providing neurodiverse children in grades K-12<sup>th</sup> with academic supports, social skill-building, necessary accommodations, emotional supports, and more in a setting where they are valued, encouraged, and free from bullying.
- *LiFT University Transition Program* (for neurodiverse young adults ages 18-22 who have transitioned out of high school) and *LiFT Adult Training Program* (for neurodiverse adults ages 23+)

LiFT's adult programs offer opportunities and supports for neurodivergent adults to develop the skills necessary to achieve meaningful sustainable employment, increase their capacity for independence, learn independent living skills and financial literacy, create meaningful relationships with other neurodiverse peers and with neurotypical members in Tampa Bay, take part in regular events that allow them to be immersed in their surrounding community, and participate in activities and sports to connect with others with mutual interests.

- *LiFT Microbusinesses* are sustainable, revenue-producing social enterprises that were developed by LiFT and are operated by the neurodivergent adult program participants on-campus and out in the community. The Microbusinesses allow participants to gain confidence, work together, make connections based on mutual interests, and interact with community residents during markets, events and off-site jobs. The three businesses are *LiFT Your Heart* (creation and sale of custom boutique-quality unique gifts such as bags, soaps, and candles that are sold at markets and in local shops), *LiFT U Cleaning Crew* (commercial

cleaning services provided to local businesses), *LiFT Your Fork* (a full-service catering company creating custom menus and foods for events of all sizes – from small gatherings to groups of hundreds of guests).

- The *Sandi Lynn Geller Memorial Family Resource Center* was established to help all special needs families to create meaningful connections with other special needs families, receive advice and resources for navigating the unique challenges they face, and participate in support groups. It has an online community group that serves almost 200 members and meets regularly monthly for in-person meetings to share ideas, connect families and hear from providers in our community with invaluable resources to share.
- LiFT founded an *Alumni Group* for LiFT graduates so they may continue to foster meaningful friendships with their classmates; avoiding social isolation that can produce negative health outcomes for the population that routinely can experience a lack of a sense of belonging and experiences difficulties in creating personal connections due to social challenges.

### Community Need

Neurodivergent individuals face unique challenges affecting their ability to succeed in school, when seeking employment, and in living independently. 1 in 54 children identify as having autism, a 175% increase since 2000 (CDC, 2016). On average, autism costs are an estimated \$60,000/year through childhood (Autism Resource Foundation). However, the cost of lifelong care can be drastically reduced by 2/3 with interventions and early diagnosis. LiFT provides programs that provide these interventions and resources to our community so that individuals with neurodiversity can increase their capacity for independence and be valuable, contributing members of society.

Graduation rates and academic success for neurodivergent students are consistently reduced in traditional school systems. Those traditional school systems lack the resources and educational curriculum that reaches students with unique learning differences so that they can learn the information in a way that they can understand it most effectively and retain it. Class sizes in traditional school systems are typically exceptionally large, making it difficult for students with learning disabilities, processing disorders and sensory sensitivities to learn as the setting is one that is overly-stimulating with an instructor that does not have the ability to devote the extra time to accommodate their specified needs. Neurodivergent students are also routinely bullied in schools where their needs are not understood, which can cause them to have low self-esteem and feel isolated.

The children and adult students that come to LiFT have endured bullying, isolation and low self-esteem; while having been consistently underestimated their entire lives. They are students who have been rejected by their peers for being “different,” and their unique abilities and talents have been overlooked because they don’t fit the “one size fits all” approach to education. They often struggle with changes in routine, have sensitivities to sounds and other sensory input, have difficulties with social interactions, and lack organizational skills and motor skills. Without the proper attention early on; these challenges can prevent neurodivergent individuals from completing school, maintaining employment, having meaningful relationships and leading productive lives. Although there are numerous benefits to employing neurodiverse individuals (including increased productivity, reduced turnover, and competitive advantage); the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics reports that individuals with disabilities are employed at *less than one-third* the rate of those without disabilities. Not having successfully completed high school can contribute to this.

To address the challenges and needs of our student population, LiFT provides the accommodations necessary to meet the social, emotional and academic needs of each student by providing academic supports for high school graduation and beyond, internship opportunities (in partnership with local businesses), interview preparation, on-the-job training, on-site one-on-one job coaches, independent living skills training (meal planning, nutrition, cooking classes, self-care), entrepreneurship through our three student-run revenue-producing LiFT microbusinesses, social skill-building classes (teaching self-awareness, empathy, communication strategies, self-control, and appropriate behaviors), financial literacy training, and a strong foundation of meaningful supports for students to establish

themselves as productive citizens in their community and increase their capacity to live independently. Speech, occupational and behavior therapists work directly with LiFT students to provide services directly in the classroom among peers; and each LiFT student has an individualized Support Plan that includes the unique goals, challenges and strengths as they relate to that individual student. These plans are regularly reviewed and updated throughout the year when necessary to promote performing at (or above) grade level standards and to ensure continual progress with social, emotional and vocational skill-building.

### Population Served

LiFT serves individuals ages 5+ living with neurodiversity that include (but are not limited to) autism, Down syndrome, ADHD, dyslexia, Tourette syndrome, OCD, learning disabilities, processing disorders, and developmental delays. The LiFT Academy K-12 program (whose population will be directly affected by this grant) included a total of 104 students enrolled in the 2022-2023 school year:

- 24 females, 80 males
- 65% white, 11% black, 16% Hispanic, 3% Asian, 5% other ethnicity
- 93% of LiFT Academy students this year received scholarship funding
- 100% of LiFT Academy Seniors earned a traditional Florida high school diploma (*as a comparison, 84.1% of Pinellas County Schools students with disabilities were graduates in 2021-22*)

### Specific Program Grant Funding Request and Program Need – *The Acaletics Math Intervention Program*

**LiFT respectfully requests a \$20,000 grant from the White Family Foundation.** This funding will allow LiFT to be able to purchase the Acaletics Math Intervention program that will serve 25 students in every grade level in the Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. This Acaletics program has been used by our current LiFT Academy Principal Dr. Tami VanOverbeke at one of the previous schools in her recent career prior to coming to LiFT in 2022. Dr. VanOverbeke was able to take that previous school, which had 6 years of receiving D and F grades in the county, and worked to elevate their level to a B school. She attributes the success of those students and the school to this Acaletics Math Intervention Program.

The Acaletics method of math instruction was founded by Educational Development Associates Inc. (EDA). EDA offers research-based and results-based products to schools to boost student performance and achievement. In 2010, Acaletics was recognized by the Florida Department of Education and the Council for Educational Change as a Best Practice in Mathematics at the Florida Leadership Academy held at the University of South Florida – Tampa. LiFT Academy seeks to incorporate the following Acaletics programs into its curriculum to help our students make gains and bridge the learning gap in math subjects:

- **Quik-Piks:** This Acaletics series offers quick ways to pick a series of math problems which are designed to preview, review and reinforce the math concepts and skills of Common Core math. The Quik-Pik booklets are multi-domained and offer multiple ways for students to answer problems using a series of multiple choice, open response, and other options. Each booklet includes problems that allow students to practice and strengthen their reasoning skills.
- **Comprehensive Pre-Post Assessments:** These assessments are designed to check students' progress towards mastering State standards and to develop projections of student performance. The assessments can also be used as an on-going supplemental tool to inform and guide classroom instruction based on

analyzing commonly-missed problems. Results from these assessments are used to determine student mastery of essential math concepts and skills, while also driving “problem attack strategy sessions.”

- **Comprehensive Mid-Term Assessments:** These assessments are a shorter version of the longer pre-post assessments. The mid-term assessments compliment the pre-post assessments by providing teachers with a mid-year opportunity to assess students’ mastery of math concepts and identify the specific skills that are continuing to challenge students.
- **Winter Break Prep:** The Winter Break Math Prep is a tool used to engage students and help them maintain learning gains during the Winter break.
- **Spring Break Prep:** The Spring Break Math Prep is utilized by students, encouraging them to stay engaged during the Spring Break and to strengthen their skills prior to State assessments.
- Winter Break Math Prep for Grades 3-5 is an ideal tool to engage students and help them maintain learning gains during the break.

### Program Need

Neurodivergent children face a unique set of challenges causing them to have significant obstacles with academic success when schools lack the appropriate supports for a population of students that learns more effectively using a wide range of learning styles. There have been many advances in technology and specialized curriculum that help break the barriers for people with varying abilities, providing them access to innovative educational learning programs that can help them learn more effectively. Acaletics is a math intervention program that can be used in conjunction with LiFT’s existing curriculum. It provides students struggling in math with the opportunity to make substantial gains and the program is aligned with Florida’s Best Standards.

The daily 30-minute sessions improve classroom instruction, while allowing students to increase their understanding of particular math concepts that are challenging for each individual student, allow them to gain competence in those subjects, increase their math confidence while improving test scores, and provide invaluable resources and supports for LiFT’s teachers. It is highly interactive and uses repetition so that students can achieve their goals.

### Measurements of Success

- 1) The Acaletics program has built-in assessment measures that will be used by LiFT to target each individual student’s areas of need when it come to math concepts. The program’s Pre-Post Assessments and Mid-Term Assessments allow LiFT to continually monitor students’ comprehension of math subjects and progress.
- 2) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing is used at LiFT to measure student progress in Math 3 times per year. MAP testing is used not only at LiFT, but also at public schools and is an approved assessment by the Florida Department of Education. A student’s personalized MAP assessment accurately measures student performance as it relates to grade-level expectations. LiFT uses this data to identify instructional gaps and target instruction to support each individual student’s growth.

## Financials

---

- **Program Budget**

Expense Item	Cost	Explanatory Notes
Acaletics Curriculum (grades K-8) for 25 students in each grade level	\$16,467.00	Includes: Placement and Pre-Post Assessment, Midterm assessments, all classroom materials for each student, and Winter/Spring break prep booklets
Acaletics On-Site Professional Development for Teachers (3 sessions)	\$8,250.00	
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$24,717.00</b>	LiFT requests that the White Family Foundation fund \$20,000 towards this program, and LiFT will fund the remaining costs (plus additional on-site professional development in the future, as needed).

A copy of the following requested documents have been emailed to the Foundation as attachments in addition to this Grant Proposal:

- Organization Annual Budget (2022-2023)
- Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statements (April 2023)
- IRS 990 Tax Filing

## Board of Directors

---

LiFT Board Members advise, govern, oversee policy and direction, and assist with the leadership and promotion of LiFT to further its mission. Members participate in quarterly board meetings (2 to 4 hours each), serve on a minimum of one standing committee (that meets a minimum of one time per year), and attend a minimum of one LiFT special event each year. Members provide financial management (including the oversight and approval of the annual budget), review organizational and programmatic reports, participate in community engagement, assist with development efforts, and provide financial support to LiFT. 100% of LiFT's Board Members contribute to the organization, with 11% of LiFT's annual private sector fundraising attributed to contributions from our Board.

### **Keli Mondello, Board Chair**

#### **Co-Founder – Learning Independence For Tomorrow, Inc. (Board Member 2013 to present)**

LiFT co-founder Keli received her degree in Speech Language Pathology and Audiology from Florida State University, concentrating on language development, pragmatics and social skills development. She serves as the Chair of the Advisory Committee for the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities, is a Council member for the Pinellas County Commission for Persons with Disabilities, was appointed by Governor Scott to the Florida

Independent Living Council, and served on Governor DeSantis' Transition Advisory Committee for Education. Keli and her husband Mark's daughter Morgan inspired Keli to co-found LiFT with her friend Kim Kuruzovich; where Morgan attended LiFT Academy and the LiFT University Transition Program, graduated from the fully-inclusive 4-year REACH Program at College of Charleston, and works at Freedom Square (an assisted living facility in Seminole).

**Kim Kuruzovich, Board Vice Chair**

**Co-Founder – Learning Independence For Tomorrow, Inc. (Board Member 2020 to present)**

LiFT co-founder Kim received her Master's degree from Florida State University in Learning Disabilities, Emotional Disturbances, Varying Exceptionalities, and a Pre-K Handicapped endorsement. Kim has devoted her entire career to education, having worked in public schools for 13 years teaching elementary and preschool students with disabilities; educating middle and high school students for six years at a private school; and co-founding LiFT in 2013 where she served as the Executive Director until her retirement in 2020. Kim and her husband Mike's daughter Gina graduated from LiFT Academy and the LiFT University Transition Program, attended the LiFT Day Program, and currently works full-time for Pinellas County Schools.

**Matthew Rich, Board Treasurer**

**Senior Vice President of Wealth Management – UBS Financial Services (Board Member 2015 to present)**

Matt's career spans over 24 years in the financial industry, specializing in designing financial plans for individuals focused on capital preservation, retirement and college planning, and estate planning. Matt utilizes Asset Allocation to analyze existing portfolios and determine asset correlation and risk assessment. Since joining LiFT's Board of Directors in 2015 and while serving as LiFT's Treasurer, Matt has ensured that LiFT has the adequate resources to not only advance LiFT's mission, but also to help prepare LiFT for its future growth and sustainability. Matt also serves on LiFT's Capital Campaign Leadership Committee.

**Amy Maguire, Director**

**Principal – Shumaker Advisors (Board Member 2020 to present)**

With a deep dedication to the Tampa Bay community and economic development, Amy's diverse experience spans across for-profit and not-for-profit groups. She has served on numerous boards including United Way Suncoast, Boys and Girls Club, Pinellas Community Foundation and Feeding Tampa Bay. Amy managed marketing and communications for Orlando Health; and oversaw over 30 team members and secured millions of dollars in funding and grants as Vice President of Corporate, Community, and Government Relations for Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital. Amy led a successful lobbying and communications practice with a focus on corporate philanthropy and sustainability; and specializes in advocacy at the local, state, and federal levels, as well as community engagement, corporate philanthropy, and corporate communications.

**Elliad Granger, Director**

**Global Business Unit Manager – Jabil, Inc. (Board Member 2014 to present)**

Elliad Granger serves as a Global Business Unit Manager for Jabil, Inc. Jabil is committed to diversity and inclusion; and like the company he works for, Elliad sees the immense value in hiring employees that are diverse thinkers to offer unique perspectives and innovative solutions. Elliad is a native of St. Petersburg, graduated from the Center for Advanced Technologies at Lakewood High School, received his Bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering at New York's Columbia University, and received a Master's degree in Business Administration from Liberty University in Virginia. He also serves as the Strategic Task Force Chairman for the Board.

**Kyle Maxson, Director**

**Corporate Counsel – Progressive Insurance (Board Member 2017 to present)**

Kyle serves as Corporate Counsel for Progressive Insurance, and has spent the majority of his legal practice focused on civil litigation and insurance defense. In 2014 he became one of the youngest attorneys in the state of Florida to

achieve the distinction of Board Certified in Civil Trial Law by the Florida Bar. Kyle is a two-time graduate of Florida State University, earning a Bachelor's degree in Finance in 2003 and Juris Doctor in 2006.

#### **Colby Masterson, Director**

##### **Owner and Partner – Frey Masterson Investment Advisors (*Board Member 2023 to present*)**

Colby is a Certified Financial Planner and one of less than 1% of financial advisors with a CFP designation and Juris Doctor. He is a two-time graduate of Florida State University where he received both his Bachelor's degree and Juris Doctor. Colby is an active participant in non-profit community organizations, having served on the Board of Directors for various organizations including Suncoast Estate Planning Council, Give Hope Foundation, Menorah Manor, and LiFT. He has also volunteered with LiFT, Gulfcoast Legal Services, Police Athletic League (PAL) of St. Petersburg, Northeast High School Academy of Finance, Boy Scouts Pack 209, American Heart Association, Great American Teach-In and Habitat for Humanity of Pinellas County. Colby is also an alumni of the 2014 Class of Leadership St. Pete.

### LiFT Executive Staff/Leadership Team Members

---

#### **Shawn Naugle, Executive Director (*Duration of Service: 2020 to present*)**

Shawn has over 12 years of experience in the non-profit management industry. His career is characterized by a results-driven approach with a proven track record of programmatic growth and sustainability through enhanced process development. Shawn holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Denver and a Master's degree in Public Administration from Strayer University. Prior to joining LiFT, Shawn worked for over 6 years at the Children's Home Society of Florida in program leadership and administration. He has led regions of more than 150 employees serving more than 2,500 children annually across Florida; has led local, statewide, and federal advocacy efforts for children's issues; and has presented at numerous delegation hearings and legislative meetings in both Tallahassee and Washington, D.C.

#### **Dr. Tami VanOverbeke, LiFT Academy Principal (*Duration of Service: 2022 to present*)**

"Dr. V" was brought to LiFT to bring the education, experience, and strategies necessary to help bridge the learning gap for our neurodivergent learners. Her educational background includes three Bachelor's degrees, two Master's degrees, an Educational Specialist degree, and a Doctorate. Tami also brings over 25 years of experience in education; including teaching, starting an arts secondary school, and being the Principal of a school that had the highest indicator of generational poverty in the county (where under her leadership, the school received a B grade for the first time since being recognized as a Title 1 school). She personally worked with students using the Acaletics model described in this grant at that school, allowing them to achieve the B rating after 6 years of D and F grades.

#### **Lois Mays, LiFT University Transition Program/Day Program Director (*Duration of Service: 2017 to present*)**

Lois was born and raised in St. Petersburg, and graduated from the University of South Florida. As President of Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society, Lois led the charge for inclusivity in opposition to self-contained learning. She graduated from USF in 1994 with a degree in Elementary Education and spent the next 11 years teaching reading and language arts to middle school children. In 2005, she earned her Master's Degree in Educational Leadership. She served as a school principal in Florida, Tennessee and Alabama, specializing in working in under-performing schools. She has served as the Director of LiFT's Transition and Day Programs since 2017, advocating for increased opportunities for neurodiverse adults.

#### **Julie Brecher, Development Director (*Duration of Service: 2021 to present*)**

Julie brings nearly 25 years of professional fundraising experience to LiFT. Julie graduated from the University of South Florida with a Bachelor's degree in Communications. She joined Junior Achievement (JA) in 1996, a global non-profit dedicated to educating students K-12<sup>th</sup> about entrepreneurship, work



readiness and financial literacy. During her time at the Tampa Bay branch, JA expanded exponentially from a 4-county franchise to serving 100,000 students in a 12-county area. After 21 years at JA, Julie became the Director of Development for Special Olympics Tampa Bay, whose mission spoke to her personally having a brother on the autism spectrum who was an accomplished 30 year Special Olympics athlete.

## Additional Documentation

---

- **Annual Impact Report:**

To view a digital copy of LiFT's most recent 2022 Annual Impact Report (released in March 2022) please click [here](#).

- **News Articles and Publications:**

**May 19, 2023:** ABC Action News featured LiFT Academy in their *Brag Book* segment where Deiah Riley interviewed LiFT Academy Principal Dr. VanOverbeke as well as several LiFT students about their experiences at LiFT. One LiFT Academy student shared a song he co-wrote with his mother to the tune of Amazing Grace. View the video and read the article [here](#).

**May 2, 2022:** Step Up For Students featured LiFT Academy Class of 2022 high school graduate Dylan Quessenberry and Step Up For Students scholarship recipient, outlining all he has accomplished with the help of LiFT. View the story [here](#).

**April 19, 2022:** Registry Tampa Bay featured LiFT in their digital guide, highlighting our programs and services to the neurodiverse community. View the story [here](#).

- **Recent Awards:**

**April 21, 2023:** Step Up For Students honored 3 LiFT students for their achievements during the 2022-23 school year. Two LiFT Academy K-12 program students were honored (one with the *Outstanding Character Award* recognizing students who demonstrate outstanding compassion, perseverance, courage, initiative, respect, fairness, integrity, responsibility, honesty or optimism; and the other with the *Super Senior Award* which honors high school Seniors that demonstrate academic achievement, leadership, community service and/or extra-curricular activities). One of LiFT's adult students enrolled in the LiFT University Transition Program also received a *Super Senior Award*.

**February 24, 2022:** The National Association of Private Special Education (NAPSEC) named LiFT University Transition Program and LiFT Day Program Director Lois May as the Educator of the Year. This award honors teachers and supervisors for their excellence and innovation in meeting the needs of children and adults with special needs.

**January 27, 2022:** LiFT Academy Principal Holly Andrade was honored as the 473<sup>rd</sup> Lightning Community Hero, presented by the Tampa Bay Lightning Foundation, for her work as a founding teacher and current Principal at LiFT Academy's K-12<sup>th</sup> campus. She received \$50,000 which she donated to LiFT for their Capital Campaign efforts in creating sensory-friendly classrooms for students at the new Clearwater LiFT campus. View the story [here](#).

- **Marketing Collateral/Videos**

In 2023, LiFT released a video which included testimonials from our students and their families telling their stories and the impact their time at LiFT has had on their journeys. The video also outlines LiFT's programs and leadership within the organization [here](#).

In 2022, LiFT released a video highlighting our students, their families and our team members that all work together to further LiFT's vision – a world where independence is possible for the neurodiverse. View the video [here](#).

Non-Profit Status Documentation

IRS Determination Letter:

JUL-17-2014 16:14

IRS

309 603 1802 P.003

513 263 3695 P.05

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE  
P. O. BOX 2508  
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: JUL 17 2014

LEARNING INDEPENDENCE FOR TOMORROW  
INC  
C/O RAYMOND C VANKIRK  
2165 INDIAN ROCKS RD S  
LARGO, FL 33774-1037

Employer Identification Number:  
46-1088977  
DLN:  
17053045316043  
Contact Person:  
PETER A ORLETT ID# 31436  
Contact Telephone Number:  
(877) 829-5500  
Accounting Period Ending:  
December 31  
Public Charity Status:  
170(b)(1)(A)(ii)  
Form 990 Required:  
Yes  
Effective Date of Exemption:  
September 24 2012  
Contribution Deductibility:  
Yes  
Addendum Applies:  
No

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to [www.irs.gov/charities](http://www.irs.gov/charities). Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

Letter 947

07/17/2014 3:05PM (GMT-05:00)

JUL 17 2014 10:10

IRS IRS

304 665 1802 P.004

JUL-17-2014 16:14

IRS

513 263 3695 P.06

-2-

LEARNING INDEPENDENCE FOR TOMORROW

We have sent a copy of this letter to your representative as indicated in your power of attorney.

Sincerely,

*Tamera Rippanda*

Director, Exempt Organizations

Letter 947

07/17/2014 3:05PM (GMT-05:00)

**Florida Charity Solicitation of Contributions Approval Letter:**

*Not applicable for LiFT, Inc.*

The Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act does not apply to bona fide religious or educational institutions. *Section 496.403, Florida Statutes*. The term “educational institutions” includes private nonprofit organizations, the purpose of which is to raise funds for schools teaching grades kindergarten through grade 12, colleges, and universities, including any nonprofit newspaper of free or paid circulation primarily on university or college campuses which holds a current exemption from federal income tax under s. 501(c)(3) of the IRS. *Section 496.404, Florida Statutes*.

--- --- ---