



# 2014 Annual Report

LIFT USA



# Dear Friends of LIFT USA,

As I reflect on the past year at LIFT USA, I am filled with gratitude. I am grateful for the program's expansion, the lives that have been transformed, and the continuing growth of our support network. What more can we say on behalf of LIFT USA, but thank you.

It began with an idea, a prayer really; a prayer that every child could have the chance to live a full life using their gifts and talents and that the education of a single child could lift a family out of poverty. That prayer has been answered for the children of LIFT. By providing a home environment, education, and leadership training, LIFT empowers children living in extreme poverty in Tamil Nadu, India to change their lives and the lives of their families. Since 2004, LIFT has educated on average 70 students per year, supporting students from 6th grade through graduate school. 60% of LIFT students are female.

To make clear what real success means, I want to share just a couple of brief stories of two of our graduates. Ambika, a recent LIFT graduate, was quickly employed as an engineer upon completion of her college studies. Ambika's father died several years ago, but because of her education and employment, she can help with her younger sister's education and care for her mother. Ambika has also been able to get married even though her family could not afford to fund a dowry, a traditional custom still widely practiced in India. When Ambika's company could not grant her request for a transfer to the city of Chennai to be closer to her fiancé, she quickly interviewed for a new job and doubled her salary! This kind of mobility and opportunity is made possible through the education she received with LIFT. Ambika's confidence, tenacity, and intelligence make her an inspiring role model for the young girls that follow her through LIFT.


Arther, another LIFT graduate, leads LIFT 2.0, a group of LIFT graduates who find the time and resources to give back to the program that gave so much to them. Arther entered LIFT in the 6th grade and is the first student to complete both an undergraduate degree (in mathematics) and graduate degree (in computer applications). Arther's first job was with the Chicago based consulting company Thoughtworks. When Arther was recruited by his current company Stayzilla, Thoughtworks paid him

the compliment of offering an open invitation to return if and when he wished. Arther grew up in a one-room house, but is currently building a new, modern home for his family in his home village of Pettai. Arther has also supported his brother George's education, allowing him to complete a degree in business. Not only is Arther transforming life for his entire family, but he regularly visits LIFT to mentor students and assist with site improvements.

Visitors to LIFT are always impressed by the students' work ethic, sense of gratitude, and ability to work together as a family. I always wonder how much more we all could accomplish if we could bottle that spirit and drive. LIFT takes students from poor neighborhoods where education is only a dream and gives them the tools and support they need to not only lift themselves out of poverty, but to also become leaders in their communities.

Again, thank you for helping make all this possible. I hope you are as excited as I am to continue this journey with the students of LIFT.

Sincerely,



Mike Hobbs  
Treasurer, LIFT Board of Directors



*Board Member Mike Hobbs and Founder Fr. Jamels James*

# LIFT by the Numbers



Since 2004, LIFT has educated on average 70 students per year.



60% of LIFT students are female. Evidence shows that girls' education brings a wide range of benefits not only for the girls themselves but also for their children and their communities.



More than 25 students have completed their undergraduate degree with LIFT. Graduates are working for companies such as Caterpillar, Honeywell, and Tata Consulting.



Currently 100% of LIFT students progress to the next grade level each year.

# Connections

## A Summer at LIFT

During the summer of 2014, Rachel Freeman, a Journalism major at the University of Arkansas spent two months at LIFT in Tamil Nadu, India as part of a college internship. Rachel's goal was to interview each LIFT student and record their stories. Ultimately, the experience became much more personal and changed the way she approaches each day. While sharing meals with students and their families, Rachel realized first hand just how vast the space is between rich and poor in our world. However, these families, who struggle against severe poverty, generously shared what they had with Rachel. They taught her not to feel guilty about her blessings, but rather to take full advantage of the opportunities she has been given. Rachel says, "I now study longer knowing my LIFT brothers and sisters are spending most of their day in school and studying. I seize the day knowing my LIFT friends are putting their all into their classes and hobbies. I dream bigger knowing how much harder my LIFT friends must work to achieve their career goals. I believe I am now a more loving, grateful, and hardworking person and have the students of LIFT to thank for this change in my life".



## Bollywood Bindis

Bollywood dance is a traditional Indian dance that is heavily influenced by hip hop and modern dance. Bollywood Bindis, led by Dr. Anju Peters, is a group of Frances Xavier Warde ("FXW") students who enthusiastically perform Bollywood dances for LIFT events. The group started about 5 years ago, and most of the students have now graduated from FXW. However, some of them have continued to learn this energetic form of Indian dance and look forward to performing for future LIFT events. This dance troupe provides not only an opportunity to learn an art form from another culture, but also teaches the importance of reaching out to those less fortunate than ourselves. By helping LIFT raise funds for education in India, the Bollywood Bindis are learning they can be blessings to children in need.



# Board of Directors

July 1, 2013- June 30, 2014

Liam Healy, President

Michael Hobbs, Treasurer

Laura Field, Member

Tom Fitzsimons, Member

Anne Gross, Member

Fr. Jamels James, Member & Founder

Henry Munez, Member

Terry Nelson-Johnson, Member

Dr. Neill Peters, Member

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# Key Financials

## LIFT USA

### Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets - Cash Basis

June 30, 2014 and 2013

#### Assets

Assets:	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$196,038	\$298,788
Total Assets	\$196,028	\$298,788

#### Liabilities

Net Assets:	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
Unrestricted	\$140,894	\$243,654
Temporarily Restricted	<u>\$55,154</u>	<u>\$55,134</u>
Total Net Assets	\$196,028	\$196,028
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$196,028	\$298,788