

Dear Donor Family,

I wanted to write sooner, however I could not find the words to appropriately express my gratitude for the gift of life and sympathy for a loss as overwhelming as yours in the same letter.

Let me start by introducing myself. My name is Mark, and I am in my early fifties and live with my wife. We have two wonderful children. For the past 10 years prior to receiving my new lungs, I was unable to work, travel, or enjoy hobbies such as playing sports or flute. During the last six months prior to my transplant, I stayed at home on oxygen 24 hours a day and was unable to perform basic tasks such as showering or getting dressed and needed constant care. Despite never smoking or abusing my body, I did not have much longer to live. My only hope for survival was a lung transplant but it didn't really register that someone had to pass away for that to happen until I got the call early in the morning in December. My thoughts were with you as I faced a huge operation. I am grateful that you agreed to help others during what must have been an extremely painful time. This decision is amazingly heroic.

The transplant has tremendously improved my health and quality of life. I no longer need oxygen or assistance to dress or shower. Every day I take long walks with my wife and I also took her on a much needed vacation for the first time in over 10 years. We walked along the beach and saw the sunset. I visited my daughter in college and played tennis with my son. I play the flute again. I appreciate every day. You have given me a second chance in life. I feel every new day brings new possibilities and that I can accomplish things that were inconceivable before.

I know that no words I could possibly say could relieve you from the grief of your overwhelming loss, but please accept my heartfelt deepest sympathy. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for the gift of life.

Mark