



Founded in 1969, Lions World Vision Institute (LWVI) grew from a small local Tampa Bay initiative into the world’s largest combined eye bank, ocular research center, and pediatric vision health nonprofit. Committed to elevating standards in site restoration, tissue transplantation, research, and education, LWVI has transformed lives by helping 500,000 people across Florida, the U.S. and around the world regain or improve their vision.

At Lions Vision Health Center, LWVI’s pediatric and adult optical care clinic in Tampa’s Ybor City neighborhood, the organization serves residents who often face significant barriers to healthcare, including professional shortages, transportation challenges, lack of insurance, financial constraints, and language barriers. The center provides access to essential eye and vision care services that many low-income families would otherwise go without.

With financing through the New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program, LWVI is expanding Lions Vision Health Center to meet growing community needs. Construction is underway on a new three-story building across from its existing 45,000-square-foot facility, adding 17,632 square feet of new clinical, research, and community optical care space. The new facility will allow LWVI to expand its vision screenings, eye exams, and eyeglasses distribution as well as its mobile vision clinic services to Title 1 schools. Services will be provided either free of charge or on a sliding scale based on patient ability to pay.

The expansion had been in planning and fundraising stages for more than three years. Despite strong grant and donor support, traditional fundraising alone could not fully meet the project’s scope or timeline. Without NMTC financing, construction would have faced significant delays and higher costs, ultimately impacting the low-income and medically underserved residents who rely on LWVI for accessible eye care.

The existing Lions Vision Health Center facility and the new project have been integral to the Ybor Community Development Area, aligning with the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) objectives by driving economic growth and revitalizing the neighborhood. Conveniently located near main thoroughfares, the Selmon Expressway, Interstate 4, and Interstate 275, with bus stops adjacent to the site, the center is easily accessible for residents of Hillsborough and surrounding counties. An estimated 28 permanent jobs – all with benefits and exceeding Living Wage – and 61 temporary construction-related jobs will be created or retained because of the expansion.

Florida Community Loan Fund provided \$14 million in Federal NMTCs for the Lions Vision Health Center expansion. Truist Bank served as investor and provided an additional \$2 million in Federal NMTCs as well as additional funding.

**NMTC ALLOCATEE**

Florida Community Loan Fund  
 Orlando, Florida  
 Nelson Black, Chief Lending Officer  
 407.246.0846

**COMMUNITY PROFILE**

- 32.7% Poverty Rate
- Medically Underserved Area, Brownfield, FEMA-Designated Disaster Area

**PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS**

- 17,632 sq ft of new construction to expand services for optical healthcare
- \$19.5 million Total Project Cost
- \$16 million Total Federal NMTC Allocation
- \$14 million FCLF Federal NMTC Allocation
- Investor: Truist Bank
- 32,714 reached annually; 97% low-income
- 89 jobs created or retained:  
 28 permanent  
 61 temporary construction

[www.fclf.org](http://www.fclf.org)  
[www.lwvi.org](http://www.lwvi.org)

**“This new Vision Health Center will be life-changing for the one in four school-aged children affected by vision impairment – and especially for the one in five who cannot afford the care and services needed to correct it.”**

**Jason Woody,  
 President & CEO,  
 Lions Vision Health Center**