

2019

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.

Braille code dots that spell out “The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.”

Pullquote: Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” – Helen Keller

Photo with caption: Michelle and her guide dog, Sooner at the Seattle Facility

The Lighthouse hires for a wide variety of positions for people who are blind and DeafBlind, in all levels of our organization.

Upward mobility is central to our mission, and we build and develop our employees’ skills to help advance their careers. In addition to the various employment opportunities we offer, employees are granted three hours of paid time per week which they can use for computer and technology training, braille instruction, American Sign Language classes, Orientation and Mobility, and other curriculum.

From aerospace machining, production, service businesses, retail, administration, accounting, human resources, employee training, and executive-level management, there are people who are blind and DeafBlind powering everything we do.

Our vision is to be the industry leader in the U.S. in providing sustainable, livable-wage employment, with support services for people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities.

WAGES AND BENEFITS

- Health & Welfare (medical, Rx, dental, vision)**
- Basic and Supplemental Life Insurance**
- Short and Long Term Disability Insurance**
- 401(k) Retirement Plan With Matching Benefits**
- Paid Time Off**

- **Holiday Pay**
- **Employee Assistance Program**
- **Tuition Reimbursement Program**
- **Guide Dog Leave Pay**

Average Hourly Wages Paid to Direct Labor Workers Who Are Blind From All Locations:

\$15.48 AbilityOne

\$19.67 Non-AbilityOne

Letter from the President and CEO

Photo with caption: President and CEO Cindy Watson

Dear Dedicated Supporters and Partners,

As I embark on my second year as President and CEO at The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. I continue to be humbled and impressed by the truly transformational work that we do in changing the lives of people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities. I'm so incredibly proud to lead an organization that continues to advance its mission, making meaningful, positive impacts.

The 101-year-old Lighthouse legacy of advocacy has positioned us as a key thought leader in promoting equity and inclusion for people who are blind and DeafBlind, both at the local and national levels. Our reputation, longevity, and expertise enable us to influence public policy, promote disability inclusion in the workplace, and deliver services to the community that directly enhance the lives of those we serve. It is uplifting to take time to reflect on the results of the work we accomplished this past year with our dedicated and talented staff, and the support we received from our committed partners.

I am pleased to share with you that 46 new employees who are blind, DeafBlind, or blind with other disabilities were hired across the organization over the past year. These are 46 individuals who now have opportunities to apply their technical skills, knowledge, and experience, and make contributions in a challenging and dynamic work setting that builds self-confidence and provides personal and professional growth.

Lighthouse employees and community-based clients received 24,483 hours of direct service from our Employee and Community Services department. Services included orientation and mobility training to use a white cane, dog guide, take public transportation, and other various tools to safely and independently travel to and from work, as well as shopping online, banking, and getting to medical appointments. Training on computers with access technology was provided to help individuals learn to efficiently use common workplace software for word processing and spreadsheet tasks. Employees also had access to instruction on reading and writing braille, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting services, as well as ASL classes.

The generosity of our community allows us to meet people where they are in their adjustment to visual impairment and help them advance personally and professionally. Our donors make it possible for the Lighthouse to recruit and train people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities — often leading to their first full-time jobs. Training and support programs also help people reenter the workforce who left their careers when they began experiencing a visual impairment. Employees are able to receive ongoing training and support, enhancing their skills that lead to upward mobility in the workplace.

From braille courses to computer training, to navigating a commute to work, philanthropic donations ensure our employees garner the skills for employment at the Lighthouse and throughout their careers. Support for programs and services allows the Lighthouse to prepare employees to be efficient and effective at their jobs, while reinvesting earned revenue back into the social enterprise to continue offering the highest quality products and services at competitive prices. This ultimately leads to increased opportunities and more jobs for our current and future employees. This past fiscal year we experienced record growth across our lines of business. With increased support, we will be able to continue to grow the number of diverse, sustainable, and meaningful employment opportunities for people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities.

We began implementing the key initiatives outlined in our five-year strategic plan that was ratified and adopted by The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. Board of Trustees, with support of the Lighthouse Foundation Board in January of 2019. This roadmap is helping us to innovate more solutions for accessibility, cultivate upward mobility, develop the next generation of leaders, and strengthen our manufacturing core capabilities while we identified new business ventures and emerging technologies, enabling more growth and employment opportunities.

I am incredibly pleased to announce that as we look forward to the next fiscal year, we will expand some services into the community, which we have not done for over 50 years. The services we plan to offer will be designed to address unmet needs in the health, wellbeing, and independence of older adults adjusting to vision loss.

I envision a future where recognition of the capabilities of people who are blind or DeafBlind is a cultural norm and the

unemployment rate for them is no longer staggeringly high. I invite you to read about some of the amazing accomplishments our employees achieved last year. I trust that you, too, will be inspired by the ways our mission has impacted lives in truly meaningful ways.

I sincerely thank you for your continued partnership. Your interest and engagement are critical in ensuring our employees and community-

Cindy Watson
President and CEO
The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.

Strategic Priorities

Photo with caption: John Cashion, Machinist at the Spokane Facility

The Lighthouse staff extends a heartfelt thank you to the hard work and dedication of the Strategic Planning Committee that was formed, comprised of members from both our Board of Trustees and Foundation Board, in partnership with our Strategic Leadership Team.

In 2018, this committee underwent an eight-month strategic planning process to outline the next five years for the organization. This process involved revising the organization's mission and vision statements, affirming our values, as well as outlining six priority areas in which the Lighthouse will focus its efforts. The strategic plan was adopted unanimously by the Board of Trustees on January 29, 2019.

The purpose of the strategic plan is to clearly state, outline, implement, and measure actions to best fulfill the Lighthouse mission. It provides a roadmap and defined goals with metrics.

Guided by its strategic imperative, the Lighthouse will leverage our resources and efforts into priority areas in order to support our mission. These areas include increasing revenues from operations, retail, and service businesses, advancing the professional development and upward mobility of employees who are blind, growing philanthropic revenues, and building community awareness in the geographic areas the Lighthouse serves.

Thank you again to the vision, expertise, and countless hours invested by the Strategic Planning Committee, their plan which now serves as our North Star as we work towards meeting our clearly defined objectives over the next five years.

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Lighthouse Employees

[Pie chart graphic showing breakdown of Lighthouse employees]

- 217 Employees Who Are Blind**
- 211 Employees Who Are Sighted**
- 33 Employees Who Are DeafBlind**
- 24 Employees Who Are Blind with Other Disabilities**

Employee and Community Services

[Circular Infographic showing the 455 people served by ECS]

- 187 Employees Who Are Blind**
- 33 Employees Who Are DeafBlind**
- 22 Employees Who Are Hard of Hearing**
- 55 Employees Who Are Sighted**

- **55 Community Members Who Are Blind**
- **90 Community Members Who Are DeafBlind**
- **13 Community Members Who Are Sighted**

Our philosophy maintains that each employee be provided with whatever supports are necessary for success in the workplace.

Supports include an in-house sign language interpreting department to ensure effective communication for employees who are DeafBlind, staff mobility instructors to teach independent travel with a white cane or dog guide, and over 100 computer workstations adapted for use by individuals who are visually impaired.

Computer training classes, braille courses, our acclaimed DeafBlind Retreat, and DeafBlind Community Classes are just a few of the employee and community services we offer.

Where Employees who are Blind Work

[Infographic showing the percentages of the areas in which Lighthouse employees who are blind work]

50% Manufacturing Defense and Office Products (graphic of two gears connected)

28% Manufacturing Aerospace Parts (graphic of jet airplane)

12% Admin and Support (graphic of phone ringing)

6% Service Businesses and BSC Stores (graphic of two chat window bubbles)

4% Employee & Community Services (graphic of person)

46 new employees hired who are blind, DeafBlind, or blind with other disabilities.

46 New employees hired who are blind, DeafBlind, or blind with other disabilities.

[Infographic showing 46 individual people icons]

**24,483 Hours of Direct Service - The equivalent of 2.79 years
[Infographic showing 3 suns, (the third of which has a quarter of it taken out)]**

ECS FY19 Expenses: \$2,810,000

[Pie chart showing the breakdown of expenses from the ECS department]

Interpreting Services: \$650K

Orientation and Mobility \$400K

ECS Administration \$390K

Accessibility \$380K

DeafBlind Retreat \$250K

Employee Support Services: \$230K

Supported Employment \$220K

Blind Computer Training \$110K

Braille Instruction \$90K

DeafBlind Computer Training \$80K

Low Vision Services \$40K

Employee Spotlight: Roger Poulin

Photo with caption: Roger Poulin speaking with interpreters

Roger Poulin has been with The Lighthouse since 2013. A fifteen-year veteran of the federal government where he worked as a computer programmer, Roger now uses his technical skills to teach others as an instructor at the Technology Training Center.

“I support people to use the computer for everyday life online, doing email, banking, the internet... The goal is not to have to rely on friends or family, or to get other people involved, but for each person to be able to do whatever they want on their own,” he says. “There isn’t one curriculum that works for everybody.”

After his years with the federal government, Roger completed a hike of the entire 2181-mile Appalachian Trail, which he did over the course of four years.

“It was my intention to show the DeafBlind community and the population at large what a DeafBlind person is capable of,” he says.

Roger talks about the level of community he feels at The Lighthouse.

“I feel so fortunate to be here. There are other programs out there, but the Lighthouse really is the best. There is so much here that doesn’t exist anywhere else.”

With the introduction of Protactile language, his world has opened up even more. “It’s completely changed my world, and The Lighthouse is a source of spreading it.”

Protactile American Sign Language (ASL)

Roger Poulin explains ProTactile ASL and what it has meant for DeafBlind communication:

Roger Poulin explains Protactile Language and what it has meant for DeafBlind people: “Protactile is relatively new as a language and it’s becoming more popular around the world. Protactile brought autonomy to DeafBlind people and true access they’ve never had before. “We are receiving information through our true language.

When I have an interpreter behind me doing protactile on my back I have environmental information, and another interpreter doing protactile with my hand and leg, that means I have full access to my language. It’s phenomenal. It’s completely changed the world for us as DeafBlind people.”

Employee Spotlight: Steven Stefanowicz

Photo of Steven holding fire extinguishers and a white cane with pullquote: “I’m learning new things every day.”

Stephen Stefanowicz was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest. After thirty years as a full-time musician, he’s changed that career into a hobby and started working for The Lighthouse.

Stephen was born prematurely and spent time in an incubator, where the oxygen therapy did damage to his eyes. He was mainstreamed at school growing up, learning orientation and mobility skills from a man who worked with him from preschool through high school, and ended up as the godfather of his child. Stephen is an administrative specialist for the Lighthouse’s Base Supply Store located at Joint Base Lewis McChord, south of his home in Tacoma. He’s been at the Lighthouse for nearly a year (since Feb. 25, 2019), learning everything he can about fire extinguishers and how to schedule service for them so they’re running and ready to go when needed.

“In my small ways I’m keeping the soldiers safe,” he says. “We’re preventing all types of fires from harming soldiers and their family members. I’m learning new things every day.”

His job requires him to travel around the base and talk to the soldiers. He says they’re curious to know more about how he manages his life and his schedule, and he’s happy to tell them about it. He used to teach independent living services for people fifty-five and older with visual impairments. “I’d go into their homes and teach them to cook-clean-sew-mince-slice-dice, that kind of thing.”

At 52, Stephen was looking for more predictability than the musician’s life. “My wife, my son, and my animals are the light of my life.”

“When I played music there was stuff to worry about every day. Now I do gigs once a month and I pick the ones I want,” he says. “Now that it’s a hobby, I can enjoy it more.”

He plays guitar and sings, performing at jazz gigs with his band “The Groovin Higher Jazz Orchestra,” which he’s been a member of for fifteen years.

His time at the Lighthouse has been a fun learning experience.

“I like hanging out with the soldiers,” he says. “They’re respectful and glad that we’re here. I’m glad to be a part of this Lighthouse family.”

Employee Spotlight: Deng Kong

Photo of Deng working at the Front Desk smiling with pullquote: “Meaningful employment leads to self-confidence, self-sufficiency and the ability to live independently.”

Deng Kong is the Receptionist and Office Assistant for The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. She was chosen by her peers as the Indirect Labor Employee of the Year.

Deng grew up in Laos. Born with glaucoma, she became completely blind when she was 10 years old. “In Asia, people with disabilities were treated as being possessed by demons, so my life was quite lonely as a child,” Deng said. Fate stepped in; she had to flee the country.

After she arrived in the United States, Deng was determined to take advantage of the opportunities for a new life. She poured her heart and soul into learning. She learned to speak, read, and write in English and braille, and acquired cane skills and independent living skills. Deng went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Washington.

Deng has been a mainstay at the Lighthouse for 19 years. Working at the front desk, Deng is the first voice people hear when they visit. She demonstrates to visitors and employees that, despite any perceived disabilities or handicaps, the Lighthouse is a place where every person is encouraged to succeed.

“Deng is full of cheer. She has been friendly and helpful to every guest and deals with difficult people and challenging situations with professionalism and grace,” said Brent Weichers, Director of Continuous Improvement at The Lighthouse. “She is the living version of the Lighthouse mission. She cares about her job and the people she interacts with. She has always gone above and beyond to make my job easier.”

“Being at the Lighthouse has provided me with meaningful employment, which leads to self-confidence, self-sufficiency and the ability to live independently. I practice the Lighthouse values of communication, accountability, confidentiality, respect, and training every day at work and in my personal life,” she said.

Employee Spotlight: John Koigi

Photo of John standing next to machining equipment with pullquote: “I love coming to work every day.”

John Koigi is a Set-Up Specialist Sr. Defense at The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. He was selected by his peers as the 2019 Raymond W. Haman Direct Labor Employee of the Year.

John was diagnosed with macular degeneration when he was a child. Growing up in Kenya, he did not have access to the support and training he needed to live independently. He struggled to finish high school and had few career opportunities. John won the immigration lottery in 2005 and was eager to start a new life in the United States.

When John first arrived in Washington, he got a job at a convenience store. His visual impairment was not accommodated, and he felt that he was undervalued because of his disability. “I felt discriminated against as a blind person. I hoped they would teach me or at least acknowledge me, but it did not happen,” John said.

During John’s time working at the convenience store, he was frequently ridiculed about being blind. He was robbed at gunpoint three times. After a bullet narrowly missed his face, he decided it was time for a change. He told his doctor about his vision impairment, and his doctor told him about the Lighthouse.

John started working at the Lighthouse as a production employee. He came to the Lighthouse with no prior experience in machinery. In three short years he is now training to become a department lead and is enrolled in the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship program.

“John is dependable and is willing to work anywhere to help meet deadlines for production needs. He is always eager to learn new jobs and to run new machines,” said Sabino Mata, Division Manager, Defense at The Lighthouse. “He is an inspiration to be around and is an outstanding representative of the Lighthouse company values.”

John now owns a home and is proud to be able to provide for his wife and three children. “I love coming to work every day. I enjoy the community and camaraderie. At the Lighthouse, I have the opportunity to fulfill my family’s dreams and retire proudly.”

A Record Year in Manufacturing

[Infographic showing total number of manufactured products]

2,843,541 Aerospace Parts (graphic of jet airplane)

1,215,161 Defense Products (graphic of entrenching tool)

149,017 Office Products (graphic of dry-erase easel)

4,207,719 Total Manufactured Items

This year we recorded record revenue increases in all lines of business, including Aerospace, Office Products, and Defense, enabling us to put more resources towards the mission.

The Lighthouse was able to make this possible by executing the following business practices:

We improved our canteen cup process by purchasing a state-of-the-art hydroforming press. This increased our production output and efficiency for our existing work.

Equipped employees with devices and implemented new processes to improve the ergonomics and handling of many workstations, resulting in increased productivity, accessibility, and efficiency.

We invested in injection molding and assembly of externally procured items and brought in products from the supply chain. This created seven new jobs for people who are blind in our facilities.

Financial Information (Unaudited)

**Photo with caption: Dan Phelps, Senior Production Worker at
Spokane Facility**

Income

Manufacturing

Aerospace: \$ 17,430,000

Defense: \$ 35,550,000

Business Office Products: \$11,800,000

Services

Base Supply Centers: \$32,840,000

Contract Management Services: \$640,000

Other Services: \$50,000

Manufacturing and Services Sales Total: \$98,310,000

ECS Contracts and Fees: \$250,000

Cash Contributions: \$1,276,000

In-kind Contributions: \$104,000

Investment Returns: \$210,000

Total Income: \$100,150,000

Expenses

Personnel: \$ 30,240,000

Materials for Manufacturing and Retail Operations: \$55,240,000

Facilities and Infrastructure: \$8,160,000

Administrative Expenses: \$2,080,000

Professional Services: \$2,310,000

Total Expenses: \$98,030,000

Change in Unrestricted Net Assets: \$2,120,000

How Volunteers Helped This Year

Photo with caption: Volunteer Deirdre guides Shawn Dobbs, Senior Director of Talent Acquisition

Circular infographic showing breakdown of where people volunteered at the Lighthouse

213 Volunteers

1,357 Hours of Service

General Support

Event Support

Admin Support

Social Media

Sighted Guide

School Tour Support

Photography

Thank You to Our Donors

[Bar graph showing breakdown of contributions to the Lighthouse]

\$1,377,853 in Total Contributions

\$516,982 Corporations and Foundations

\$419,411 Individual Giving

\$213,246 Trusts & Bequests

\$123,809 Government Grants

\$104,405 Gifts In-Kind

The generosity of our community allows us to meet people where they are in their journey of vision loss.

Our donors provide the necessary support, funding the services that are critical for navigating the intricacies of work and life. From braille courses to computer training to navigating a

commute to work, philanthropic donations ensure our employees garner the skills for employment at the Lighthouse and throughout their careers.

Simply put, our donors ensure our employees are poised for success. Because of the community's support, we can provide the necessary services and training that make employment possible for people who are blind or DeafBlind. You help us ensure they have the opportunity to experience the transformative power of independence.

Thank you. Together we empower people to shape a fulfilling and prosperous future for themselves.

Thank You to Our Foundation Board and Council

Photo with caption: Stephen Hamilton and his guide dog, Sumiko

The Lighthouse is extremely grateful for our donors and community supporters. Please visit LHBlind.org/DonorList to view a list of our generous supporters.

The Foundation Board and Inland Northwest Lighthouse Advisory Council exist to serve the Lighthouse by supporting its fundraising activities, networking in the community, establishing new relationships with individuals and businesses, and serving the mission of the Lighthouse which is to empower people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities by creating diverse, sustainable, and meaning employment opportunities.

Foundation Board:

Barbara Ross, President

Doug Fischer, Vice President

Sandra Amodt

David Carter

**Meghan Fox
David Garten
Stephen Hamilton
David Kidd
Matthew Pedersen
Katherine Perry**

Inland Northwest Lighthouse Advisory Council:

**Laura Hard, Chair
Lorna Walsh, Vice Chair
Pam Beasley
Gary Jespersen
Kirk Laughlin
Fred LeFriece
Don Mollet
David Romine**

Our Locations

Map graphic of the United States with numbers identifying each location

Washington

- 1. Seattle Facility, Seattle, WA**
- 2. Lakewood Office, Lakewood, WA**
- 3. Spokane Facility, Spokane, WA**
- 4. JBLM–eXpress/Web Fulfillment
Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA**
- 5. AbilityOne Base Supply Center
Joint-Base Lewis McChord, Ft. Lewis Main Post, WA**
- 6. AbilityOne Base Supply Center
Joint-Base Lewis McChord, McChord Field, WA**
- 7. AbilityOne Base Supply Center
Joint-Base Lewis McChord, North Ft. Lewis, WA**

California

- 8. San Diego Facility, San Diego, CA**
- 9. AbilityOne Base Supply Store
Fleet Readiness Center, San Diego, CA**
- 10. AbilityOne Base Supply Center
Naval Air Warfare Center, China Lake, CA**
- 11. AbilityOne Base Supply Center
National Training Center, Fort Irwin, CA**
- 12. AbilityOne Base Supply Center
SPAWAR, Point Loma, CA**
- 13. Contract Management Services
SPAWAR/NAVSUP, San Diego, CA**

Nevada

- 14. AbilityOne Base Supply Center
Naval Airstation, Fallon, NV**

South Carolina

- 15. Summerville Facility, Summerville, SC**

**The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. logo
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