

2022 Annual Report to the Community



Dear Dedicated Supporters, Partners, and Friends,

We have much to be proud of at the Lighthouse. Under extended circumstances related to COVID, supply chain disruptions, and hiring challenges, we achieved a great deal in 2022. From a business standpoint, supply chain disruptions persisted and hiring for all positions was a challenge.

Financially, we had a tougher year than we expected. Having said that, we are on track for stronger years to come and we continue to lay a solid foundation for our strategic initiatives. We resumed offering services to the community that had been on hold due to the pandemic.

In February, the board approved a new three-year strategic plan. The plan emphasizes growing and diversifying job opportunities for blind and DeafBlind employees; implementing an enterprise-wide, state-of-the-art software that will help us be more efficient, improve accessibility, and make new jobs possible for blind and DeafBlind individuals; build our philanthropic capacity to allow more services to be offered to our employees and to the community; and deepen connections with elected officials and organizations in the blind and DeafBlind communities.

The Employee and Community Services
Department served more individuals than
ever before. Visits to the low vision clinic
increased and more individuals were served
in their homes through the Independent
Living Program.

Our DeafBlind Program resumed planning the DeafBlind Retreat, which has been on hold for three years. We trained five blind employees in our Summerville, South Carolina, facility, on newly installed CNC machines.
These machines allow us to expand our capabilities in that facility and grow employment opportunities. We also added a Contract Management Services team in Falls Church, Virginia, to serve the Defense Health Agency.

The Lighthouse has over one hundred years of experience being an inclusive and model employer of individuals with disabilities. We also want to proactively ensure that individuals of diverse and marginalized groups feel a true sense of belonging at the Lighthouse.

I am proud that this year we engaged a cross-organizational employee work group to help us develop our first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement, which can be found on our website. This is just one step in our journey of prioritizing DE&I.

As you review this year's report, you will note that despite some of the economic speed bumps we navigated, we stayed true to our mission thanks to our creative, dedicated, and talented employees, trustees, supporters, volunteers, and partners.

The future is bright at the Lighthouse!

George asbott

Sincerely,

George Abbott
President & CEO

Thank You, Generous Donors!

Your generosity allows us to meet people on their journey of vision loss. Your gifts provide the necessary support, funding the services critical for navigating the intricacies of work and life for people who are blind.

Employees are able to work in accessible environments and receive ongoing training and support, enhancing skills that lead to upward mobility and empowerment.

Your Gift Provides:

- Braille Literacy Program
- Computer Training
- Interpreting Services & Protactile American Sign Language
- Orientation and Mobility Training
- Low Vision Clinic & Store
- Technology Training Center
- And much more!

You are making a positive and meaningful difference in the lives of people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities. Thank you!

"One of the really unique and important things about what we do here is that we provide services directly to our employees before anything else."

- Tim Paulding, ECS Services & Instructional Manager





\$309,258 Individual Contributions

\$589,702 Trusts & Bequests

\$557,571 Corporations & Foundations

\$131,881 Government Grants

Digital Equity

Digital access is a critical piece of successful and sustainable expansion. The U.S. economy and workforce is digitalizing at an extremely rapid pace, meaning that most jobs require basic digital skills. In order for individuals who are blind and visually impaired to compete in the marketplace for secure jobs with family sustaining wages, they must have strong technology skills and accessible training.

The pandemic exacerbated existing barriers to employment and training for individuals who are blind and DeafBlind in our community, leaving people increasingly isolated, without support, and for some, unemployed. To respond to this need, the Lighthouse adapted how we deliver our services to ensure the stability of our programs.

We were able to reconfigure our training model to include distance learning by changing our curriculum and service delivery. We incorporated webinars and 1:1 training using accessible tools like JAWS screen-reading software, Fusion, and Zoom. This has been a great benefit to our employees and now we are looking to expand to provide training to the broader community, who remain under-served and more isolated due to pandemic concerns.

Employees participating in our remote training and classes come away with increased skills that enable them to participate in their communities more effectively and enhance their personal independence.

In 2022, the Lighthouse was thrilled to receive a \$74,000 grant to support our digital equity efforts. In 2021 the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund was established, and with these funds King County Office of Equity and Social Justice installed a new initiative to provide funding to organizations who promote the digital inclusion of communities who face barriers to accessing digital services, which have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.





David Geary:

A Journey to Empowerment

David Geary, Indirect Labor Employee of the Year and HR/Legal Project Manager and Corporate Secretary, has been instrumental in ensuring the organization operates within legal parameters for the last 15 years.

David's typical work day involves reviewing policies, working on HR issues, and providing legal support. He spends a lot of time researching, writing, and keeping a watchful eye on any legal changes that may impact the Lighthouse.

David's personal journey has been one of perseverance and determination. Born with optic nerve hypoplasia, a condition that affects the development of the optic nerves, David has had to overcome many challenges in his life, including difficulties finding employment.

Despite these challenges, he went on to pursue a law degree and worked as an attorney and assistant district attorney.

David's journey is an inspiration to many, and his work at the Lighthouse means a lot to him. "This job has given me the opportunity to help this organization grow," he shares. He feels proud to be part of an organization that is making a difference in the lives of people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities.

David's dedication to the Lighthouse has not only impacted the organization but has also benefited his life in a positive way. He feels empowered and fulfilled, knowing that his work is making a difference. His career goals continue to focus on providing legal support to the organization and to take on increasing responsibilities within the Human Resources Department.

Upward Mobility

One of the ways the Lighthouse supports our employees is prioritizing upward mobility in all aspects of the business. By providing on-the-job training and career development resources to help employees build the skills and experience necessary to advance their careers, employees are able to explore new career opportunities.

Last year, the Lighthouse celebrated the promotion of 11 employees who are blind, a testament to the organization's commitment to upward mobility. These promotions were the result of the Lighthouse's focus on career development programs, including mentorship, training, and continuing education opportunities.

In addition to career development, the Lighthouse also fosters a supportive and inclusive workplace culture. The organization values diversity, equity, and inclusion, and strives to create an environment where employees feel valued and supported. This culture of inclusivity extends to promotion opportunities, where all employees, regardless of disability status, are encouraged to apply for open positions.

Upward mobility has created a workplace culture that values and supports the growth and development of its employees. By prioritizing career development and promotion opportunities the Lighthouse is empowering employees who are blind and DeafBlind to achieve their full potential and build fulfilling, meaningful careers.

<u>Please join us in congratulating these employees</u> on their new roles:

- Wallace Woodard, Contract Administrator I
- Antonio Rozier, IT Systems Director
- Ian Angelo Gayola, Order Processing Specialist BSC
- Shawn Dobbs, VP of Marketing & Public Relations
- Alex Carter, CNC Lead Aerospace
- Ivan Weich, Employee Relations & Leave Administrator
- Katy Todd, Community Engagement Manager
- Alco Canfield, Braille Literacy
- Junior Ah Siu, Assistant Store Manager
- Dan O'Brien, First Part Check Aerospace
- Morgan Breese, DeafBlind Program Manager











Nicholas Shively: A

Fascinating Leader

When Production Lead Nicholas Shively was seven years old, he and his three older brothers were diagnosed with Usher Syndrome II.

At age 30, Nicholas noticed it was becoming harder for him to navigate independently. At that time, he was working in the laundry industry maintaining machines. There were a lot of specialized bolts and tools that were required to fix broken machines, and it was getting increasingly difficult to do his work. The turning point for him was after his peripheral vision diminished, he was driving the company rig and just missed hitting a person.

He then went to massage school, to practice in the massage business his wife had started. They practiced together until she died. After her passing, Nicholas visited the Lighthouse to see first-hand the kind of work his brother Mark was doing. Then Nicholas was offered a job.

Nicholas started at the Lighthouse in 2009 as a production worker, then moved into a set up role, and then a lead position in 2015 — all on the wallboard line.

Working at the Lighthouse has given Nicholas tremendous confidence. He was taught by the Lighthouse Orientation and Mobility team to travel independently around town, and to and from work. Nicholas has learned to communicate with others using voiceover, JAWS, and is now a braille reader.

"Nicholas understands the importance in building high quality products for our customers," shares a Liahthouse coworker.

"Nicholas has always been a collaborator. He understands the importance of team camaraderie, but never takes his eye off the goal of quality and productivity in his work."

Employees by the Numbers



hours of direct services across all programs

hours of direct

We empower people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities by creating diverse, sustainable, and meaningful employment opportunities.

174 employees are blind **24** employees are DeafBlind 19 employees are blind with other disabilities

195 employees are sighted



Building Confidence at the Low Vision Clinic

If you ever visit the Low Vision Clinic at the Lighthouse, Customer Service Admin and Scheduler Eun-Gyong Lee-Rossow might be the first voice you hear. Her upbeat personality and cheery demeanor help make those who visit the Low Vision Clinic feel at home.

"I always say our clinic is pretty noisy because we're always laughing," she says. Eun-Gyong has been working at the Low Vision Clinic since July, 2022 when the clinic was starting to ramp up again after the pandemic.

"With vision loss, people tend to be devastated, which is understandable," Eun-Gyong says. "But there are so many things out there, both assistive devices as well as groups and places you can go to for support."

She said the doctor always makes sure people are armed with information. In addition, the store carries all kinds of assistive devices, like reading machines and tools for performing daily tasks, such as needle threaders, tactile timers, and calculators.

Eun-Gyong herself has been blind since she was born, and uses a braille display to interact with the online calendar, where she schedules client appointments. To her, this role at the Lighthouse has been rewarding.

"My boss, my team, and the people I serve are all really great," she says. "I feel respected, and once you have respect from others, your self-confidence goes up."

The clinic has an optometrist, as well as an occupational therapist on staff. The clinic includes the Low Vision Store, which offers a variety of assistive devices.

Low Vision Services

The Lighthouse's Low Vision Services program provides important resources for our employees and community members with low vision needs, as it's one of the only secondary care clinics in the Puget Sound area.

Our clinic is available by referral, and our in-house optometrist Dr. Anna Shagas and staff are here to meet people where they are on their journey of vision loss. The clinic provides vision testing, training in the use of assistive devices, and rehabilitation services. During the pandemic, the program pivoted to meet people via telehealth appointments, and continues to meet hundreds of patients in person and virtually.

Additionally, our Low Vision Store is stocked with all the devices and tools to help patients continue to use their remaining vision. Whether that's large print or braille playing cards, high contrast keyboards, or every type of magnifier you can imagine, there's something for everyone.

Within our store, we have our *Partners In Empowerment* donor wall. This wall features our wonderful donors who support the low vision program. The *Partners in Empowerment* wall also serves as a reminder of the generosity of our community. If you'd like to support low vision care and join the wall, email **Engage@LHBlind.org** to learn more.



DeafBlind Program

Morgan Breese, DeafBlind Program Manager, knows all too well how important resources are for DeafBlind employees. "My job is supporting employees who are DeafBlind here at the Lighthouse," she shares. "Many things aren't accessible for people who are DeafBlind, so we work on providing access to our employees so that they can gain information and do their job."

The Lighthouse is one of the largest employers of people who are DeafBlind in the U.S. Morgan shares, "Our DeafBlind Program is unique in the world. It was designed specifically for DeafBlind community members and employees."

After challenges presented by the pandemic over the last number of years, the DeafBlind program at the Lighthouse is once again fully staffed and community programs have been reinstated.

Having the DeafBlind Program running at full capacity is important for the community as a whole. Morgan explains, "We really offer a full comprehensive service. We are unique! Without our program Seattle would look very different than it does. We impact the employees and we impact the community here! People have the opportunity to be part of a critical mass, which is often not the case elsewhere."



Update on Our Strategic Plan

In 2022, the Lighthouse Board of Trustees approved our new Strategic Plan, a plan that continues to clearly guide the Lighthouse operation into the next three years and beyond.

The eight strategic priorities are aimed at strengthening the Lighthouse's impact. The first priority emphasizes business growth and diversification, all with the ultimate goal of increasing employment opportunities for people who are

blind and DeafBlind. The other priorities focus on updating business systems; workforce development and succession planning; expanding Employee and Community Services programs; leveraging philanthropy to fully fund employee and community service programs; increasing community engagement to advance the Lighthouse mission; expanding mission advocacy and government relations; and building and maintaining a diverse, high-performing Board of Trustees.

Employees to Be Advocates

After years of doing advocacy work himself, Greg Szabo, Director of Government and Public Relations, is now training fellow employees to be advocates for people who are blind.

Participating in advocacy training is an incredible opportunity for employees to not only make a difference, but also enhance skills like networking and public speaking. Through this program, they will have the opportunity to lead tours, connect with local officials, and share their personal stories.

Nicole Corbett, Computer & Assistive Technology Instructor, wanted to participate in advocacy training because the issue is personal to her. "I wish that I would have had someone advocate for blindness more where I came from. Now I've seen that people who are blind do so much more than what I was taught."

Nicholas Shively, Production Lead, is excited to get involved in local government! He shares, "It's always intrigued me how things get done in government. I've always felt I need to learn about how things get done. It's kind of a dream situation for me." He also notes the impact that getting involved can have.

Deng Kong, Receptionist & Office Assistant, is excited for the opportunity to get involved. She shares, "I thought this would be a good way to get back into being active in my community. I love to be face-to-face, interacting with people and this provides that opportunity."

Newly trained advocates from our Seattle facility include Deng Kong and Nicole Corbett. From Spokane are Karl Schaeffler, Nicholas Shively, and Wanda Johnson. Dexter Gibbs and Pendah Goode have joined from Summerville.



Financials: Prepared By Management

<u>Income</u>

ManufacturingAerospace

\$9,470,000 \$36,340,000 \$9,730,000

Services

Defense

AbilityOne Base

Office Products

Supply Centers \$19,930,000

Contract Management

Services \$1,300,000

Employee & Community

Services Contracts & Fees \$450,000

Donor Contributions \$1,650,000

Investment Income (Loss) (\$4,080,000)

<u>Total Income</u> \$74,790,000

Change in Net Assets

Expense

Materials \$43,010,000

Personnel \$27,000,000

Facilities & Infrastructure \$7,840,000

Professional Services \$1,800,000

Other Administrative

Expenses \$1,280,000

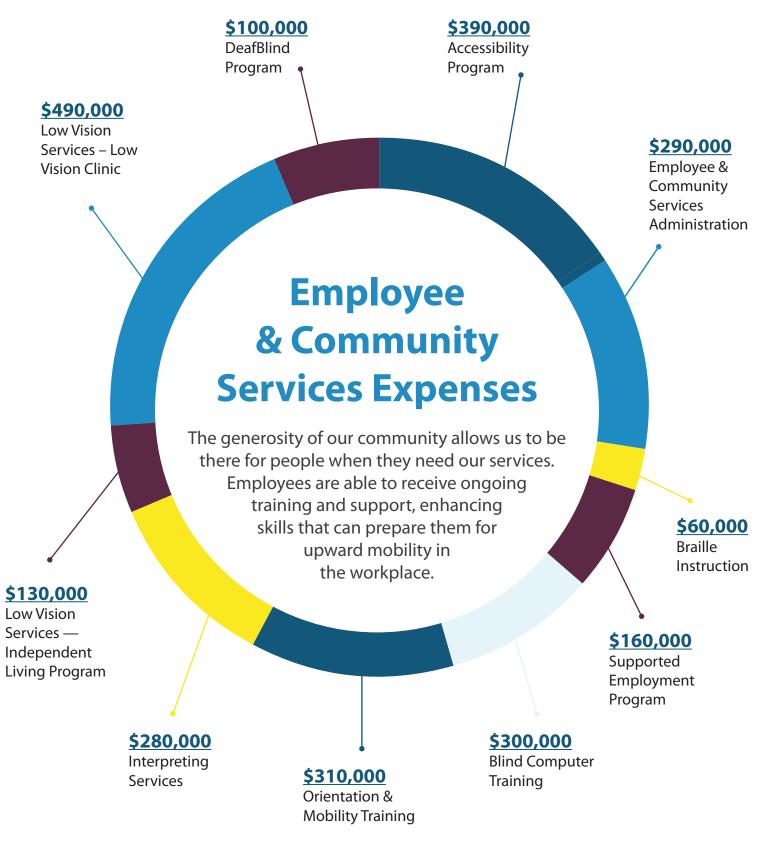
Employee & Community

Services Expenses \$2,510,000

<u>Total Expense</u> \$83,440,000

\$(8,650,000)





Total: \$2,510,000

Foundation Board

David Kidd, President
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Join the Legacy for Empowerment Society

Your generosity will be your legacy. The Legacy for Empowerment Society celebrates the individuals who support the Lighthouse through transformative planned gifts.

Everyone is welcome to join, and every gift supports people who are blind find fulfillment and independence through meaningful employment. Your planned gift will ensure a future of dignity for people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities.

Your legacy will have a lasting impact and demonstrate to your loved ones that helping others and being generous are important to you. There are many types of planned gifts, and they all create a legacy of generosity for people who are blind and DeafBlind. Many of them are easy to create and all of them have an impact:

- Make the Lighthouse a beneficiary of your retirement or life insurance by filling out a designation form
- Leave a gift in your will. Write your will through FreeWill, an easy step by step process of drafting and finalizing your will
- Create a charitable gift annuity or remainder trust

If you have questions, need assistance creating your legacy, or to notify us of your gift, please contact us at **Engage@LHBlind.org**



Corporate + Foundation Support

Institutional support through grants and sponsorships enables the Lighthouse to continue its mission of creating and enhancing opportunities for independence and self-sufficiency for individuals who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities.

There are many ways for local corporations and foundations to strengthen their community by supporting Lighthouse programs and services. A partnership with the Lighthouse creates real change in our community

through increased jobs, independence, and empowerment, while demonstrating to your clients and partners that your community matters to you.

The Lighthouse seeks community support for the jobs, assistive technologies, programs, and support services that we provide to individuals who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities in our community. We are fortunate to partner with many local and national foundations, corporations, and service organizations to ensure that these vital programs remain available to those who depend on them.

U.S. Bank employees at the Opportunities Breakfast



Foundation Board

The Lighthouse Foundation Board of Directors had a terrific 2022, thrilled to get back to in-person events, engagement opportunities, and supporting new endeavors. The Foundation Board is made up of members of the community who wish to engage with and support the philanthropic efforts of the Lighthouse. Members attend quarterly meetings, encourage event attendance and act as Lighthouse Ambassadors. If you're interested in joining the board, contact <u>Engage@LHBlind.org</u> or visit <u>LHBlind.org</u> to learn more.

"Serving on the Lighthouse Foundation Board has been an extremely positive experience for me. It has allowed me to better educate myself and to volunteer in an impactful way to help the community.

Each time I volunteer at an employee function, I am humbled, amazed and touched by the inspirational and happy workforce. I truly feel like I am receiving so much more than I am giving, so for those reasons, it is a great investment of my time."

 Foundation Board Member Chelsea McLaughlin, Sr. Director of Program Management at Sekisui Aerospace



Our Programs & Services

A commitment to our employees' personal and professional growth drives us to provide highquality programs and services that make a positive impact on their lives. Our programs and services are designed to provide valuable training, resources, and support to our employees who are blind, enabling them to achieve their personal and professional goals.

Accessible Workspaces

Each employee has the opportunity to customize their environment to suit their individual access needs. This includes providing braille displays, adaptive computer technology, enhanced lighting, and more.

Braille Literacy

Braille literacy is a vital skill for upward mobility and employment, and the Lighthouse seeks to address this need through classes and individual instruction.

Computer Training

The Lighthouse has four computer training labs at our different locations where employees can learn to use a wide range of access technology devices and software, and develop skills for upward mobility.

DeafBlind Program

The DeafBlind Program creates a space for people who are DeafBlind to come together, share and learn information in an accessible format and environment. The Lighthouse is one of the largest employers of people who are DeafBlind in the United States.

Ethel L. Dupar Fragrant Garden

The garden is a beautiful place for employees and community members to relax and relieve stress during the workday, and enjoy the sensory experience of the fragrant garden.

Independent Living Program

The Independent Living Program (ILP) provides instruction to help individuals new to vision loss learn new techniques to perform everyday tasks.

Interpreting Services & ProTactile American Sign Language

The Lighthouse hires freelance interpreters to meet the needs of DeafBlind employees and employees who use a language other than spoken English. Employees who are blind or sighted have the opportunity to learn basic American Sign Language to better communicate with their coworkers.

Low Vision Clinic & Store

Available to the community as well as employees, our Low Vision Clinic and Store seek to meet the immense gap in services for individuals with low vision. Rehabilitation services, clinical exams, and a store offer tools to assist people as they adjust to vision loss.

Orientation & Mobility Program

Our Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialists ensure that individuals who are blind can safely travel to work, home, and around their communities. Skills instruction includes white cane travel, bus and street route planning, electronic travel aid training, and supplemental dog guide training.

Supported Employment Program

The Supported Employment Program utilizes the Lighthouse's specially trained Employment Advocates to empower people who are blind with other disabilities in continuing and expanding their career.

Technology Training Center

The Technology Training Center (TTC) offers fully accessible computer stations to DeafBlind employees and community members, along with individual courses taught by our DeafBlind instructor.





people served through our programs &

Expanding our Reach

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. expanded our reach to serve more people in our community. In the Puget Sound region, tens of thousands of people have a visual impairment that interferes with daily life.

As our elderly population continues to grow, that number will continue to increase. To meet this glaring need in our community, the Lighthouse grew our already successful computer and assistive technology programs to reach more individuals in our community. This allows more people to discover their independence while also showcasing the success of our employees, and accessible employment opportunities that are available.





New Opportunities in South Carolina

The Lighthouse has been making strides in expanding career opportunities for people who are blind in Summerville, SC. With the installation of two Okuma Computer Numerically Controlled (CNC) machines, we have expanded our precision machining capabilities and diversified job opportunities at our Summerville facility.

Roosevelt Stevenson, Production Lead, has worked for the Lighthouse for over 26 years. Bringing experience from his time operating manual machines at our Seattle facility, Roosevelt has found it relatively easy to adapt to the CNCs and has been helping to train others.

Roosevelt believes that the new machinery and expanded manufacturing capabilities will bring opportunities and independence to the visually impaired community in South Carolina.

"I think it's a good thing because it brings people in and shows them there's opportunity out there for us, for people who are blind," he shares. The Summerville location has already expanded the manufacturing skill sets of three other individuals, as well.

Prior to the installation of the new machines, the Summerville location has primarily manufactured MOLLE hydration systems for the military, as well as aerospace parts such as e-nuts and felt strips. The new machines are capable of producing high-precision parts, meeting the stringent requirements of the aerospace industry and allowing for production of a wider variety of aerospace parts.

All Okuma CNC machines that the Lighthouse operates have been adapted to ensure that they're accessible for those who are blind and DeafBlind.



Manufacturing by the Numbers

Every line of business at the Lighthouse supports our mission to empower people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities. We do that by creating diverse, sustainable, and meaningful employment opportunities.



111,205 office parts

864,030 aerospace parts

1,324,966 defense parts Michael Leifson has worked in the aerospace industry for nearly 30 years. "I've been in a lot of manufacturing operations," he notes. But there's one thing about the Lighthouse that is different.

2,300,20 total parts manufactured

Ursula McCully, Production Worker, holding a canteen

"At any other company I've been at, my job was to produce profits no matter where I was at. But what I'm really tasked with at the Lighthouse is to expand opportunities to make jobs. That's our driving force," Michael continues. "We have around 100 employees working directly on manufacturing aerospace parts. Of those employees, 77% are blind or DeafBlind."

Become A Lighthouse Ambassador

Here's what you can do to support independence & empowerment for people who are blind, DeafBlind, & blind with other disabilities!



New Contract Management Support Location in Falls Church, Virginia

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. expanded our Contract Management Support (CMS) program with a new location in Falls Church, Virginia. Matthew Diharce, Contract Closeout Specialist, is one of the first employees to work there.

The Lighthouse has been providing CMS services for more than 20 years, helping businesses and government agencies meet their contractual obligations while also creating job opportunities for people who are blind or visually impaired. The program offers a range of services, including contract administration, customer service, and supply chain management.

Matthew, who has Retinitis Pigmentosa, was thrilled to join the team at the new location. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to work for an organization that values inclusivity," he said. "And being part of the CMS program means that I can use my skills to help others succeed while also developing my own career."

The new CMS location is a testament to the success of the program and the growing demand for its services.

"We're excited to see the CMS program expand and to welcome new employees like Matthew to the team," says Melanie Wimmenauer, Vice President of Service Business and AbilityOne Base Supply Centers. "Our goal is to provide high-quality services while also making a positive impact in our community, and we're confident that this new location will help us achieve both."

Our Locations

Washington

- 1. Seattle Facility
- **2.** AbilityOne Base Supply Center, U.S. Coast Guard Seattle
- **3.** Lakewood Office
- **4.** Spokane Facility

Joint Base Lewis-McChord

- **5.** JBLM–eXpress/Web Fulfillment
- **6.** AbilityOne Base Supply Center, Ft. Lewis Main Post
- 7. AbilityOne Base Supply Center, McChord Field
- **8.** AbilityOne Base Supply Center, North Fort Lewis

Nevada

9. AbilityOne Base Supply Center, Naval Air Station, Fallon

California

- **10.** AbilityOne Base Supply Center, Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake
- **11.** AbilityOne Base Supply Center, National Training Center, Fort Irwin
- **12.** Naval Station Ventura County, Port Hueneme

San Diego

- 13. San Diego Facility
- **14.** AbilityOne Base Supply Center, Fleet Readiness Center
- **15.** AbilityOne Base Supply Center, SPAWAR, Point Loma
- **16.** Naval Base San Diego Transportation
- **17.** Naval Air Station North Island Transportation, Coronado
- **18.** Contract Management Services, SPAWAR/NAVSUP

Alabama

19. Contract Management Services, Redstone Arsenal Huntsville

South Carolina

20. Summerville Facility

<u>Virginia</u>

21. Contract Management Services, Falls Church

We empower people who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities by creating diverse, sustainable, and meaningful employment opportunities.



Front page, left to right: Nicole Corbett, Computer & Technology Program Instructor, Deng Kong, Receptionist and Office Assistant, and Greg Szabo, Director of Government and PR standing in front of the Lighthouse's Seattle facility.

Back page: the team from AbilityOne Base Supply Center, North Fort Lewis at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

