



The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.

Impact Report - Fiscal Year 2023

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Letter from the President

Dear Dedicated Donors, Partners, and Friends,

Thank you for supporting us this year! We have much to be thankful for and proud of. Despite taking longer than expected to break out of the grip of the pandemic, we accomplished a great deal and achieved many of our goals - allowing us to serve more employees and members in the community than ever before.

As we moved from summer into fall, our business operations, supply chain challenges, and our financial situation improved significantly, and we are now on strong footing going into our next fiscal year.

We implemented two new programs in 2023. First, we hired a specialist to provide career guidance to employees who are blind and DeafBlind. Through a variety of workshops and skill building exercises, employees will be better prepared to seek other positions within the Lighthouse or with other employers. A cohort was established to pilot this program and will inform its future direction.

The other program that grew considerably is our new webinar series offered on a variety of topics related to using technology for employment and independence. Attendance for these monthly webinars has grown steadily and attracted attendees from across the globe.

I am thrilled to report that we were able to resume the DeafBlind Retreat in August. For the first time, it was planned and executed by DeafBlind staff. Emphasis was on networking, recreational activities, and leadership development. It was a smashing success! We look forward to next year.

Much attention was devoted this year to implementing a new Enterprise Resource Planning system that will not only help the Lighthouse operate more efficiently, but it will allow for blind and DeafBlind employees to have new job opportunities, previously not accessible to them.

Our new robust computer system will significantly increase our planning, tracking, and reporting capabilities, helping to ensure our continued success with customers and partners. This important work will be completed in 2024.

As you review this report, I invite you to take note of how skills are gained, confidence is instilled, and lives are transformed at the Lighthouse.

Thank you for your support. The future is bright at the Lighthouse!

Sincerely,

George Abbott

President & CEO



Trieva Smith, Direct Labor Employee of the Year

Trieva Smith's journey into the world of blindness began nineteen and a half years ago when optic neuritis clouded her vision at the age of 34. A former preschool teacher with dreams and aspirations, she found herself grappling with the loss of independence and a sudden change in her life's trajectory.

The Lighthouse became a transformative space for Trieva. The process of vision loss, while initially challenging, became a catalyst for personal growth. Trieva, now a Production Worker, not only contributes to the manufacturing of a variety of canteens and replacement caps but also trains her peers who are blind.

Trieva's impact extends beyond her work ethic. She actively supports colleagues and ensures inclusivity during gatherings, creating a vibrant and connected workplace culture.

In recognition of her exceptional contributions, Trieva has been named the 2023 Lighthouse Direct Labor Employee of the Year. This prestigious award reflects her dedication and positive influence since joining the Lighthouse in 2014.



Advocates Program

Lighthouse Advocates had opportunities to interact with elected officials in Spokane WA, and Summerville, SC. Advocate Pendarh Goode met with South Carolina State Senator Sean Bennett, outlining the difficulties she experienced when looking for a job. Even with a college degree, Pendarh was not able to find employment in her chosen field. She went on to explain that this is a common scenario for college-educated people who are blind.

Advocate Nick Shively spoke with the Spokane City Council about E-scooters and bikes, and the hazards they can create for a person who is blind. Informing the City Council about these issues was enlightening for them. The Lighthouse appreciates all its advocates, and the work they do to support people who are blind and visually impaired throughout the country.



Our Spokane Facility Celebrates 15 Years!

This year we celebrated the 15-year anniversary of opening our first satellite manufacturing facility, located in Spokane, Washington.

When we opened our doors in 2008, we employed ten people who are blind and visually impaired. By fiscal year 2023 employment opportunities had grown to 50 employees who are blind or visually impaired.

We doubled the manufacturing facility from 45,000 to 95,000 square feet. Within that time, creating more space to expand production and overall operations. In June of 2020, we celebrated the milestone of one million wallboards produced for our Federal Government customers through the AbilityOne Program, all manufactured in Spokane.



Junior Ah-Siu, Indirect Labor Employee of the Year

Junior Matia Ah-Siu was diagnosed with retinal dystrophy at the age of eight. Junior faced significant challenges due to his vision loss, leading him to drop out of high school.

Junior made the proactive decision to pursue his GED while enrolled at the Orientation & Training Center through the Washington State Department of Services for the Blind. It was at this time that he learned about the Lighthouse.

Starting as a stocking clerk, Junior navigated through various roles before eventually being promoted to Assistant Manager at the AbilityOne Base Supply Center (BSC) Coast Guard Base in Seattle, WA. Junior shares that working at the Lighthouse has been transformative for him both professionally and personally.

A champion of adaptive technology, Junior serves as the Secretary of the BSC Share Team Committee. His approach to adaptive technology is not just about using it for personal efficiency but also about inspiring others to embrace it. He does this by conducting training for others. In recognition of his dedication and accomplishments, Junior was named the Indirect Labor Employee of the Year.

Quotes

“The AbilityOne Base Supply Center staff are very helpful, polite, and professional. The employees are AWESOME.” - AbilityOne BSC Customer

“The staff at my local BSC are always a pleasure to work with. Some of the best purchasing experiences I have had. Always helpful, professional, and prompt.” - AbilityOne BSC Customer



Accessibility in Manufacturing

Celebrating his 33-year anniversary with the Lighthouse, Mike King's story embodies the transformative power of accessible technology.

After Mike was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa, he embarked on a journey from Wyoming to Washington, braving snowstorms, and uncertainty to pursue a career opportunity that would change his life.

Though he had no prior experience in machining, with the support of his colleagues and some training, Mike quickly adapted.

At the Lighthouse, technology isn't just a tool, it's a gateway to independence and advancement. Mike embraced the computer training available at the Lighthouse to learn assistive technologies like ZoomText, then JAWS, opening new avenues for learning and paving the way for career growth.

Through accessible technology, comprehensive training, and a supportive community, individuals like Mike prove that with the right tools and opportunities, the possibilities are limitless.



There are many types of adaptive equipment that make our machine shop accessible for people who are blind or visually impaired:

- Refreshable braille displays are electronic tools that function by raising and lowering combinations of pins. Those pins form braille dots corresponding to text on the computer screen.
- Large print screens allow text and graphics to be magnified anywhere from two times to 60 times their original size.
- Voice technology allows text to be read aloud with computer synthesized speech.
- Tactile fixturing allows machinists to identify machine controls through touch.
- Thorough organization of tools and equipment ensures that employees can locate what they need to perform their jobs safely and efficiently.
- Many other features can be implemented to fit each individual's accessibility needs and preferences, as well.

Financials

Income

Aerospace \$10,155,000

Defense \$33,612,000

Office Products \$10,983,000

AbilityOne Base Supply Centers \$23,954,000

Contract Management Services \$1,622,000

Employee & Community Services Contracts & Fees \$553,000

Donor Contributions \$1,386,000

Investment Income \$2,640,000

Total Income \$84,905,000

Expenses

Materials \$45,687,000

Personnel \$28,660,000

Facilities & Infrastructure \$8,312,000

Professional Services \$1,745,000

Administrative & Other \$1,905,000

Employee & Community Services \$3,142,000

Total Expenses \$89,451,000

Change in Net Assets \$(4,546,000)



Your Support Makes a Difference

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

Employees 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 (ASL)
- Orientation & Mobility Training
- Low Vision Clinic & Store
- Technology Training Center
- And so much more!

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

Donations

Corporations & Foundations **\$588,400**

Individual Contributions **\$322,800**

Government Grants **\$197,300**

Trusts & Bequests **\$161,300**

In-Kind Gifts **\$115,800**



Corporate & Foundation Support

Philanthropic support through grants and sponsorships for Lighthouse programs and services transform the lives of people 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. Partnering with the Lighthouse creates real opportunities for independence and self-sufficiency for people who are blind, while demonstrating a commitment to community, clients, and partners.

We seek community support to provide vital programs, assistive tools, and job opportunities to individuals who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities. We partner with local and national foundations, corporations, and service organizations to ensure our programs remain available to those who rely on them.



Foundation Board

This year, the Foundation Board combined with our Inland Northwest Lighthouse Advisory Council. Previously the two boards advised and supported the philanthropic work of the Foundation by broadening our community reach but were separated by geographic location. In the era of Zoom meetings, it became clear that we could be more effective and cohesive working together as one board. If you're interested in joining the Foundation Board, please reach out to Engage@LHBlind.org or visit our website LHBlind.org to learn more!

Foundation Board Members

President:

- David Kidd

Vice President:

- Meghan Fox

Members:

- Barbara Ross
- Barbara Sandberg
- Brad Wiens
- Caitlin Bannister
- Chelsea McLaughlin
- Dave Bertsch
- Don Mollett
- Fred LeFriece
- Gary Jespersen
- John Dubay
- Kirk Laughlin
- Lorna Walsh
- Laura Hard
- Marieke Iwema
- Melody Furze
- Pam Beasley
- Paul Lwali
- Rachal Kidd
- Roya Fereidouni
- Sandra Amodt
- Yue Ou

Board of Trustees

Chair:

- Paul Reed

Vice Chairs:

- Peter Chiarelli
- Harry Egler

Members:

- Alan Chaffee
- John Craddock
- Matthew Janusauskas
- Jude Johnson
- David Kidd
- Gary Mackenstadt
- Matthew Pedersen
- Mark Rowley
- Lachelle Smith



Tom Kuebler's Legacy of Support

Leaving a planned gift secures a future of independence and empowerment for people who are blind and DeafBlind.

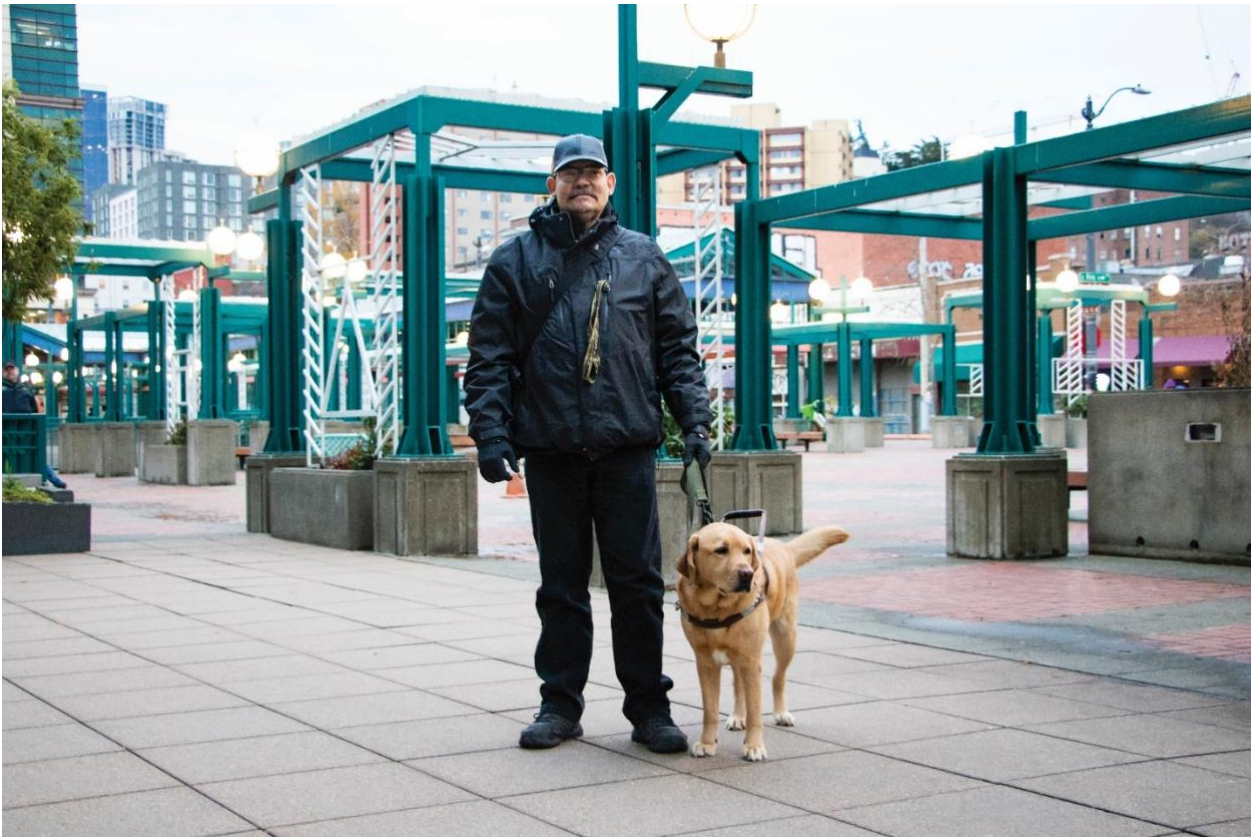
Tom Kuebler served on the Board of Trustees and Foundation Board and is a Legacy of Empowerment Society member. He has worked tirelessly advocating for resources for people who are blind and DeafBlind. After years of service, then-President & CEO Kirk Adams wanted to create a fund that fulfilled a need for employees. Tom had seen first-hand at the Lighthouse just how important a dog guide could be for someone.

Dog guides are a critical tool for people with visual impairments, allowing them to be more self-sufficient and independent.

The Tom Kuebler Dog Guide & Employee Assistance Fund was created and provides paid time off for employees to attend dog guide training, as well as ongoing maintenance of the on-site kennels where dogs go to rest while their owners are working. To ensure this resource will be available for Lighthouse employees for years to come, Tom has left a generous gift to the fund in his estate plan.

Leaving a legacy gift keeps funds like these alive and thriving, so that services continue to expand at the Lighthouse.

There are many ways to follow in Tom's footsteps through gifts in your will and other estate plans. Ready to leave a legacy? Reach out with questions and more: Engage@LHBlind.org.



Employee & Community Services

A commitment to our employees' personal and professional growth drives us to provide high-quality 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 and DeafBlind, enabling them to achieve their personal and professional goals.

Statistics

- 14,900+ hours of service
- 3400+ employee sessions

People Served

- 146 Employees who are Blind

- 23 Employees who are DeafBlind
- 11 Employees who are Blind with Other Disabilities
- 56 Employees who are Sighted
- 864 Community Members with a Visual Impairment
- 46 Community Members who are DeafBlind
- 7 Community Members who are Sighted

Employee & Community Services Expenses

Accessibility \$380K

Braille Literacy \$40K

Computer Training & Technology Training Center \$360K

DeafBlind Program \$340K

Independent Living \$190K

Interpreting Services \$410K

Low Vision Clinic \$560K

Orientation & Mobility \$340K

Supported Employment \$100K

Career Development \$90K

Administration \$330K

Total \$3.14M

Our Programs & Services

Accessibility

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

Employees can learn to use a wide range of accessible technology devices and software and develop skills for upward mobility at computer training labs across our locations.

DeafBlind Program

The Lighthouse is one of the largest employers of people who are DeafBlind in the US. This program provides support to DeafBlind employees, delivers our DeafBlind Retreat, and DeafBlind Community Classes.

Ethel L. Dupar Fragrant Garden

The garden is a beautiful place for employees and community members to relax and enjoy the multi-sensory experience of the 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

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 (ASL) to better communicate with their coworkers.

Low Vision Clinic & Store

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

Orientation & Mobility

Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialists ensure that employees who are blind and DeafBlind can safely travel to work, home, and around their communities. Skills instruction includes white cane travel, bus and street route planning and more.

Supported Employment Program

The Supported Employment Program (SEP) utilizes specially trained Employment Advocates to empower people who are blind with other disabilities in continuing in and expanding their career.

Technology Training Center

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



Investing In Career Development

Designed for employees who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities, the Career Development program, led by Cheryl Cumings, Workforce Development Manager, focuses on individualized growth and monthly training sessions covering essential skills like emotional intelligence and presentation.

The unique strengths model encourages participants to identify and leverage their strengths, providing practical tools for success, including resume crafting and interview techniques. Cheryl, a mentor in the program, guides participants in setting and achieving milestones, ensuring a journey towards self-discovery and career advancement.

Going beyond formal training, the program offers ongoing support to alumni, emphasizing a commitment to lasting impact. Through training, mentorship, and personalized guidance, it equips individuals with the confidence and skills for career advancement, both within and beyond the organization.



Low Vision Services

Low Vision Services at the Lighthouse, including our on-site Clinic and Store, and the Independent Living Program, is a life enhancing resource for our community and our employees. Now in our third full year, the program continues to meet the growing needs of the community, seeing more patients and community members, and putting in more service hours than ever before. As one of the only secondary care clinics in the area, we provide access to eye exams, ongoing care, and specialized tools that people with low vision need to continue to work, live, and thrive independently. The Independent Living Program provides services in each client's home so they can remain as independent as possible.

Statistics

5 Staff Members

12 Counties Served

12-101 Age Range of Patients

741 Patients Served

1,668 Direct Service Hours

Quote

“What they do is the utmost of professionalism and excellence, to help somebody like me to keep going with life.” - Susan, Low Vision Services Patient

Overall Statistics

Employees

- 191 Employees are Blind
- 25 Employees are DeafBlind
- 20 Employees are Blind with Other Disabilities
- 192 Employees are Sighted

Where Employees Who Are Blind Work

- 52% Manufacturing – Defense & Office Products
- 20% Manufacturing – Aerospace Parts
- 14% Service Businesses & AbilityOne Base Supply Centers
- 10% Administration & Support
- 4% Employee & Community Services



The DeafBlind Retreat Returns!

After a hiatus forced by the pandemic, the DeafBlind Retreat made a triumphant return in 2023, marking a poignant reunion for those in the DeafBlind community.

Paul Ducharme, Aerospace Machine Operator and long-time retreat attendee, shares the profound impact it has had on his life.

“Something that I really like about the retreat is the role modeling that happens. We have different generations of DeafBlind people and people who are at all stages of their journey as DeafBlind people. So, the younger people have folks to look up to. It’s a place where a lot of people really develop a strong DeafBlind identity.”

The retreat’s significance became even more pronounced in the wake of the pandemic-induced hiatus. Amanda Warren, the Coordinator of the DeafBlind Community Class and Retreat, reflects on the community’s anticipation and joy upon the retreat’s return. “It’s more than just a job — it’s a profound opportunity to give back to my community and foster connections,” she shares.

The retreat welcomed approximately 100 attendees, including 30 DeafBlind individuals and around 70 volunteers.

“We have accessible biking, hiking, workshops, arts and crafts, and tactile games, ensuring there’s something for everyone,” shares Amanda.

In addition to traditional recreational activities, the retreat focuses on accessibility, ensuring that all participants can fully engage. A comprehensive rope system facilitates safe navigation, while co-navigators offer support and guidance. Activities are designed with tactile elements, allowing DeafBlind individuals to participate independently.

Amanda notes, “for us, accessibility isn’t just a goal — it’s a fundamental aspect of the retreat experience. We’re dedicated to ensuring everyone feels included and empowered.”





The 50th Anniversary of the Ethel L. Dupar Fragrant Garden

July 27th, 2023 marked the 50 year anniversary of the partnership between the Lighthouse and the Dupar Foundation. In 1973, the Ethel L. Dupar Fragrant Garden opened at the Lighthouse's Seattle location, offering employees a serene spot to relax and refresh during the workday. The garden boasts a variety of 60+ plant species, chosen for their fragrance, so that all employees can enjoy the beauty of the garden. A special thank you to the Dupar family and Foundation for your generosity and partnership over the years.

Accessibility & Innovation

This summer, in preparation for the 50th anniversary, the Lighthouse partnered with NaviLens, a technology company that makes information and wayfinding more accessible. We used this technology to create accessible signage providing information to visitors about the plants and the history of the garden. These signs, which look a bit like a colorful QR code, allow anyone with a smart phone and the NaviLens app, to quickly capture the information they need electronically. The Lighthouse is exploring how to utilize this accessible signage throughout the facilities in other ways.



Connecting with Community

Community engagement at the Lighthouse has reached new heights through a dynamic blend of initiatives. Spearheading the revival of our Tours Program, Katy Todd, Community Engagement Manager, has led an impressive 380 individuals on tours across our Seattle facilities, offering firsthand insights into the capabilities of individuals who are blind, DeafBlind, and blind with other disabilities. Katy's infectious enthusiasm mirrors the excitement of visitors as they witness our mission in action.

Complementing our physical tours, our Employee & Community Services Virtual Programming has extended our reach globally, with informative webinars attracting diverse audiences. These sessions, featuring expert guests, not only educate but also foster connections within the blind and visually impaired community. Bolstered by a King County grant, we are committed to expanding these impactful virtual

engagements, driven by valuable feedback and a dedication to enrichment.

Our vibrant volunteer community has been pivotal in this journey, with opportunities both remote and in-person. With a doubling in our volunteer base, we've diversified our offerings, including non-event related roles and remote fundraising support. Weekly volunteers contribute tirelessly to administrative tasks, embodying our ethos of collective involvement in community betterment.

Together, these initiatives foster understanding and empower all individuals to contribute meaningfully to our shared vision of inclusivity and support.

Locations

Alabama

- Contract Management Services, Redstone Arsenal Huntsville

California

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

San Diego

- San Diego Facility
- AbilityOne Base Supply Center, Fleet Readiness Center
- AbilityOne Base Supply Center, SPAWAR, Point Loma
- Naval Base San Diego Transportation
- Naval Air Station North Island Transportation, Coronado
- Contract Management Services, SPAWAR/NAVSUP

Nevada

- AbilityOne Base Supply Center, Naval Air Station, Fallon

South Carolina

- Summerville Facility

Virginia

- Contract Management Services, Falls Church

Washington

- Seattle Facility
- AbilityOne Base Supply Center, U.S. Coast Guard Seattle
- Spokane Facility

Joint Base Lewis-McChord

- JBLM–eXpress/Web Fulfillment
- AbilityOne Base Supply Center, Ft. Lewis Main
- AbilityOne Base Supply Center, McChord Field
- AbilityOne Base Supply Center, North Fort Lewis