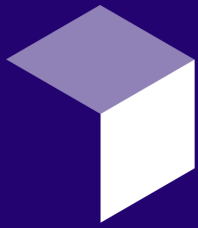


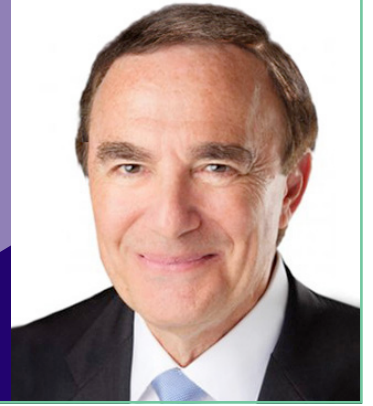
August 2022



# Lighthouse Guild

## Lighthouse Guild In Brief

From Dr. Cal Roberts, President and CEO



Dear Friends,

### Back-to-School Eye Health Tips

Back-to-school season is starting for many students, and August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month. Here are a few important tips to help safeguard your child's eye health.



Photo: A young girl wearing glasses seated next to her teacher, who is giving her instructions.

**Get Regular Vision Screenings** – “Vision health is one of the keys to success in school, and the most important thing you can do to protect your child's vision is to make sure they get an eye exam,” says Dr. Laura Sperazza, Director of Vision Rehabilitation Services at Lighthouse Guild. “An eye health professional can determine if your child needs eyeglasses or contact lenses, or if there is a vision problem that requires further intervention.”

**Eat Your Carrots** – Encourage your child to eat a well-balanced diet with different fruits, vegetables, and fish.

**Speak Up** – Ask your child to let you know if they notice any vision changes. For instance, if their vision is blurry, they may squint a lot, or their eyes start bothering them.

**Wear Your Glasses** – Help your child understand the importance of wearing their eyeglasses. Talk with them about how to clean and store them.

**Wear Safety Gear** – Make sure your child wears goggles or other protective eyewear while playing sports or using chemicals or tools for school projects.

For more tips, visit our [website](#). You can also schedule an appointment for an eye exam with one of our [vision experts](#).

# USA Takes the Bronze!

In April, I shared with you about Blind Baseball and one local team, the NY Rockers, who held a hands-on clinic about the sport for the teens in our Youth Transition Program.



Photo: Players of Team USA wearing their bronze medals.

Blind Baseball has gained popularity internationally over the last seven years and is growing here in the United States. Lighthouse Guild and other sponsors are showing their support for the newly formed Team USA, a team comprised of U.S. Blind Baseball Association participants aiming to compete in tournaments worldwide. Several Lighthouse Guild employees and clients tried out and made it on Team USA. Adaptive Technology Specialist Ed Plumacher, a former volunteer for the Youth Services Program Amanda Makson, and Lighthouse Guild client Kiana Glanton are all members of the newly formed team. Rehabilitation Specialist Lilly Harris volunteered to join Team USA's coaching staff.

Team USA has just competed in the first WBSC Blind Baseball International Cup hosted by the Netherlands. The tournament made history as the first parasport event sanctioned by the World Baseball/Softball Confederation (WBSC). USA competed against teams from Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Italy – where the sport originated back in 2015.

I am thrilled to report that Team USA brought home the bronze by defeating Germany in the bronze medal game! One of Team USA's starters, our very own Kiana Glanton, shared a powerful message about what Team USA means to her: "I'm most excited to compete in a sport where the playing field is leveled. It's been a long time since I've been able to compete safely and challenge myself athletically. We're [people with visual impairments] always scared that we could get hurt, but with this sport, it is safe, and you can run as fast as you can and hit as hard as you can, build confidence, and I can push myself in a safe way."



Photos left to right: Team USA players Kiana Glanton and Ed Plumacher.

On behalf of Lighthouse Guild, we congratulate Team USA and all the teams for their accomplishments, and we look forward to the expansion of Blind Baseball in the years ahead!



## Community Impact Day

Young people in our Pathways Program and members of our Manhattan Adult Day Health Care Program, GuildCare, benefited from the generosity of corporate volunteers from **KPMG**. On the firm’s worldwide Community Impact Day – celebrating 125 years of service – the teens in our summer program experienced tandem bike rides. For most, it was their first bike riding experience. GuildCare clients received customized activity bags full of fun and therapeutic tools for each of the 70 program participants.



Photo: KPMG volunteers posing with tandem bikes while the enthusiastic teens from our Pathways Program wave to the camera.

## Sammy’s Dream

Sammy (Samantha) is 22 and lives in Queens, New York. She was born with a condition known as Degenerative Myopia, a severe form of nearsightedness that can lead to vision loss. She also has Nystagmus, a disease that causes rapid, uncontrolled eye movements.

Her dream is to be a Teacher’s Assistant for pre-k and elementary students. She says, “I love kids. They are filled with energy and love to learn, just like how I love learning new things at a job.”

Sammy came to Lighthouse Guild to prepare for the Assessment of Teaching Assistant Skills (ATAS) exam through our **Academic Services** program that helps people who are blind and visually impaired attain their educational goals. As part of the exam preparation, she took English, Instructional Support, and Math classes.

She says, “All of my teachers were great. They provide the students with one-on-one instruction, making the classwork fun and easy to understand. They work together to accommodate each student based on their needs so they can learn and get the most from the classes.”

“It’s all thanks to the wonderful team at Lighthouse Guild,”

—Sammy

A close-up portrait of a young woman with glasses, smiling. She has dark hair and is wearing a dark top. The background is a solid light blue color.

Photo: A quote, “It’s all thanks to the wonderful team at Lighthouse Guild,” beside a smiling portrait of Sammy.

“I learned so much from the classes and felt completely confident when I took the ATAS exam,” Sammy says. She took the ATAS exam and passed it with flying colors. She continues, “It’s all thanks to the wonderful team at Lighthouse Guild!”

Sammy has received work readiness preparations from another organization and is actively applying for Teacher’s Assistant positions.

For anyone considering taking academic test preparation classes, Sammy says she would tell them they should go for it. The instructors at Lighthouse Guild will work with them to get the most from their classes and will do what they can to accommodate their requests. She shares, “It’s an excellent program because of the kindness and helpfulness that the instructors provide.”

If you are dreaming about the day you graduate from college, we are here to offer support and cheer you on. Visit our [website](#) to learn about our Academic Services that can supercharge your educational goals with your visual abilities in mind.

## Reading Services Program Receives Support from Gail Brewer

Lighthouse Guild’s **Reading Services Program** recently received a \$5,000 grant from New York City and Councilmember Gale Brewer. We are so grateful for the support and long-term advocacy of Councilmember Brewer — she has been a champion of our mission and our community.

The volunteer-driven **Reading Services Program** has been an essential part of our **Stephen T. Pearlman Volunteer Center** — making print accessible to people who are blind and visually impaired. For people with vision loss, getting help navigating mail and bills to websites and complex business documents can significantly impact their lives.

During the pandemic, it became clear how critical this service was to clients who did not have support to keep up with their everyday needs, like reading their mail and paying their bills. For many, the weekly two-hour meeting was a critical time for human connection.

You can help us ensure our essential Reading Services Program is possible. To learn more, contact Chief Volunteer Officer Cheryl Pemberton-Graves at [gravesc@lighthouseguild.org](mailto:gravesc@lighthouseguild.org).

## GuildCare is Here for You and Your Loved Ones

**Lighthouse Guild’s GuildCare program**, offers comprehensive healthcare and a full day of activities. With centers in New York City, Albany, Buffalo, and Niagara Falls, we provide a safe, comfortable, and attentive environment. Our **GuildCare** team is ready to provide your patient or loved one with the daily care that meets their medical and social needs. For more information, to make a referral, or schedule a tour, visit the GuildCare section of our [website](#).

## Balancing Innovations and Ethics: Who is Protecting the Early Adopters?



Graphic illustration: On the left is a side view of a face made of circuitry and on the right is a side view of a woman’s face. Both faces are looking towards a digitalized image of a scale located in the center of the illustration.

Innovations in implant technology are advancing at lightning speed, profoundly impacting the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired. In the latest episode of our podcast **“On Tech and Vision,”**

I talk to leading medical ethicist Dr. Joseph Fins, Professor of Medical Ethics and Professor of Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College, about a critical part of the innovation process: the ethical frameworks that protect participants in early clinical trials. Dr. Fins shares his thoughts on balancing the life-changing potential of electroceutical implant technology with the ethics of caring for early participants - particularly after clinical trials are over.

### Essential Support for Youth and Teens with Vision Loss

Lighthouse Guild is pleased to announce a grant of \$150,000 from the **Blavatnik Family** Foundation in support of two of our essential youth and teen support programs.

The grant will evenly support our **Youth Transition Program** for teens and **Youth Skills Program** for younger youth who are visually impaired. This funding will help the programs grow to provide vital skill-building, social and emotional learning support, and a sense of community to reach even more youth.

The school-year programs will start in September, and we are currently recruiting young people between the ages of 6 and 21 in the New York City area. For more information visit our **website**.

Thank you to Len and Emily Blavatnik and the Blavatnik Family Foundation for this generous investment in our youth and teen services. We look forward to a long partnership!

With your support, Lighthouse Guild can provide the exceptional services that inspire people with vision impairment to attain their educational, career, and life goals. Please consider **donating**, **volunteering**, or **referring** people who can benefit from our services, and spreading the word on **Twitter** and **Facebook**!

Be well and stay safe,



**Calvin W. Roberts, MD**  
President and CEO, Lighthouse Guild  
Twitter: @EyeDrCal

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