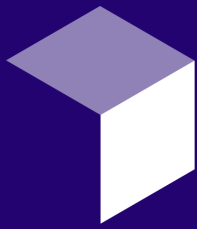


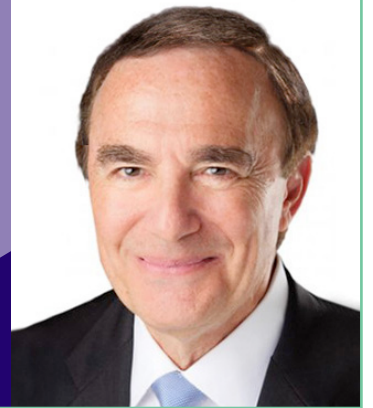
October 2022



Lighthouse Guild

Lighthouse Guild In Brief

From Dr. Cal Roberts, President and CEO



Dear Friends,

Losing Vision Doesn't Mean Job Loss, there is Help Available

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) a time to raise awareness about employment issues such as job retention for people with vision loss. When someone is losing vision for the first time or losing additional vision due to a progressive condition and finding the function of how they do their work is changing, it is essential to understand there is help available.



Photo: A woman providing computer training to a woman who is visually impaired.

A trained Vocational Rehabilitation Professional can provide:

- recommendations on assistive technology that will help the employee in their job
- how the technology works within time, environmental and workflow demands
- the cost effectiveness of one accommodation over another

Rehabilitation specialists are trained professionals in examining the holistic need of the employee. They can recommend which options work best to promote task efficiency, effectiveness, and full access to the accommodations. Through an on-site evaluation, task analysis, and assessment of an employee's needs, the rehabilitation professional can work with the employee and employer as a resource in determining low and high-tech recommendations, software, and hardware.

Employees who are assisted by knowledgeable Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals tend to experience less stress associated with their jobs and concern about workplace efficiency. The rehabilitation experts help with the transition of all that impacts the employee, making it easier to remain successfully employed.

Retaining Qualified Employees is Good Business Practice

Retaining an employee who has become blind or visually impaired saves money as the employee is still a qualified asset to the company. The loss of expertise and experience of such employees impacts the bottom line and costs in terms of institutional knowledge and the value of work. For more on job retention for people with vision loss, visit our [website](https://www.lighthouseguild.org).

Lighthouse Guild's Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals work with employers to help them integrate and accommodate people with vision impairment into their workforce. To request a consultation, contact Marcia Shaw, Manager, Career and Youth Services, at mshaw@lighthouseguild.org.

The AI Revolution

The latest episode of our podcast **“On Tech and Vision with Dr. Cal Roberts”** looks at how AI is revolutionizing vision technology, ophthalmology, and medicine as we know it. I speak to Karthik Kannan, co-founder of the AI vision-tech company Envision, which uses AI to identify the world for a user who is blind or visually impaired utilizing only smartphones and smart glasses. He explains the difference between natural intelligence and artificial intelligence. Dr. Ranya Habash, CEO of Lifelong Vision and a world-renowned eye surgeon, talks about how AI enables faster and more effective ophthalmic diagnosis. And, Christina Cheddar Berk, a reporter for CNBC, shares how the pace of drug discovery is set to speed up thanks to AI algorithms and supercomputing power.



Photo: A robotic hand moves a white chess piece while a human hand holds a black chess piece.

Tech Pals is Here for Seniors!

We have officially launched one of our new programs, **Tech Pals**, partnering with **Cyber-Seniors!** Tech Pals pairs mentors who are blind or visually impaired, ages 18-24, with older adults who are blind or visually impaired, age 55+, who have an interest in improving skills with using their mobile phones and/or tablets. For more information, or to sign up, contact Don Horvath, Lighthouse Guild Program Manager at horvathd@lighthouseguild.org.



Photo: An older woman with vision impairment touches a mobile phone while a young man who is blind holds the phone as he teaches her how to use it.

Camille and Sydney: Tele-Support Friends

Camille was born with Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP), an eye disease that occurs when a baby is born prematurely and their retinas do not fully develop. It affects both eyes and can lead to vision problems or blindness. She had a lot of eye surgeries when she was younger and was diagnosed with glaucoma around the age of two. Her right eye was removed and replaced at age three with a prosthetic eye. She describes her vision as looking through a paper towel tube with waxed paper on the end. She also has mild cerebral palsy.

“Being a visually impaired student, this group has allowed me to meet with people who have the same struggles I do.”

—Camille



Photo: A quote “Being a visually impaired student, this group has allowed me to meet with people who have the same struggles I do,” next to a portrait of Camille who is smiling.

Camille is a 2022 recipient of a **Lighthouse Guild Scholarship**. She says, “It really means a lot to me, and I want to thank Lighthouse Guild for their generosity. [The scholarship] will help me greatly by allowing me to have the full college experience while living on campus and having a social life. It will also allow me to learn in the classroom, develop professional relationships, and obtain internships that will give me valuable field experience.”

Camille just started attending Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, majoring in Business Intelligence and Analytics. Her goal is to work in the field of sports analytics. Her dream job is to help a sports team improve its on-field performance using data and statistics.

Camille has been participating in the **Lighthouse Guild’s Teen Tele-Support Program** since she was in the 9th grade. She says, “I’m always looking to meet people similar to me, not just similar interests, but who are also visually impaired. Being a visually impaired student, this group has allowed me to meet with people who have the same struggles I do. It has also allowed me to receive advice about different topics and give others advice and share my own experiences.”

Sydney was diagnosed with ROP at 32 weeks after being born at 25 weeks. She has been legally blind all her life. She received several laser treatments to try to correct the problem, but that left her with no peripheral vision, no vision in her right eye, and limited vision in her left eye.

Sydney she began attending Nova Southeastern University — a private school in Fort Lauderdale, Florida — majoring in Legal Studies and minoring in sports management. Law school is becoming part of her future plans, and following that, to work for a junior hockey team in operations and work her way up to the NHL.

Sydney has been participating in the Teen Tele-Support group for three years. She says, “I think after I started participating in the calls, they really gave me a sense of community. Talking with the other kids in our group and sharing our similar experiences helped me realize that vision impairment is not that bad after all and that there are other people out there who are like me. Even though we may not live in the same county or the same state, knowing there are other people like me, I think that helped me not only come to grips with my vision impairment, but it helped me embrace it more.”

“I think after I started participating in the calls, they really gave me sense of community.”

—Sydney



Photo: A quote, “I think after I started participating in the calls, they really gave me a sense of community,” next to a portrait of Sydney who is smiling.

Lifetime Connections

Our Tele-Support program is a “safe space” for students to share their feelings and frustrations, advise on coping with vision loss, share technology and resources, and help find solutions to the obstacles they encounter. Many participants say their group is their emotional lifeline and have built lasting friendships.

Camille values her friendship with Sydney. Sydney joined the group a year after Camille, and when they met on that first call, they found they had many of the same things in common. She says, “Even though we live thousands of miles away from each other, she is one of my best friends.”

Sydney says, “I never expected to find someone who had the exact same eye condition as me. I mean, Camille and I are like the same person. Our vision issues are the same. After the second Teen Tele-Support Program call, we exchanged phone numbers and became friends. We started this little group chat between Camille, me, and another group member.”

The two discovered that they love sports, have similar college focuses, and want a career in the sports industry. Sydney says, “Just having someone to say “hey” and to bounce ideas off each other, or having someone to talk to, or if I ever wanted to just chat about something, [Camille] has been great for that.”

Camille and Sydney recommend that anyone who is diagnosed with vision impairment participate in the Lighthouse Guild Teen Tele-Support Program. Camille says, “I have gained a lot of knowledge from the calls and benefited greatly from the group calls.” Sydney shares, “So often, you don’t even know where to turn to, not just for help but for friendship and a sense of community. And I think resources such as the Lighthouse Guild Teen Tele-Support Program is something everyone should be aware of.”

To read more about Camille and Sydney, visit our [website](#).

If you are blind or visually impaired, you can connect with someone who “gets it” through Lighthouse Guild’s Tele-Support groups. Check out our [Tele-Support](#) section of our website for more information.

Lighthouse Guild’s National Tele-Support Program is sponsored in part by [Apellis](#), providing community and care to people across the country.

An Evening with
Haben Girma

Thursday, November 17, 6:30 - 7:30 pm

Join us Thursday, November 17 at 6:30 pm for An Evening with Haben Girma, author of Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law. We are thrilled to host noted human rights lawyer and disability justice advocate Haben Girma who will discuss accessibility, diversity, and leadership. Her memoir has been featured in The New York Times, Oprah Magazine, and the TODAY Show. Visit our [website](#) to register.

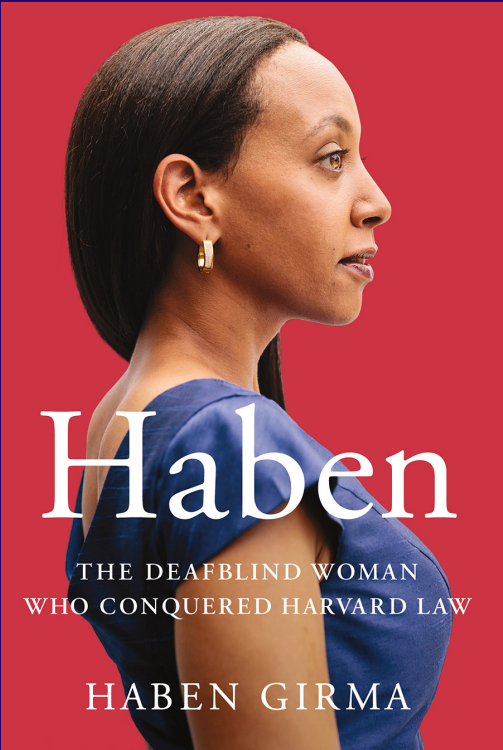


Photo: “An Evening with Haben Girma, Thursday, November 17, 6:30 – 7:30pm” next to a book cover with a side portrait of Ms. Girma and the title “Haben: The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law”.

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**.

Lighthouse Guild could not provide the programs and services that support so many without your help. Please consider **donating, volunteering, 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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**Lighthouse
Guild**

Dedicated to providing exceptional services that inspire people who are visually impaired to attain their goals.
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