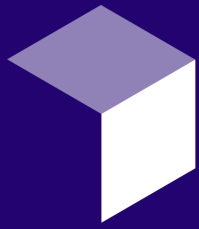


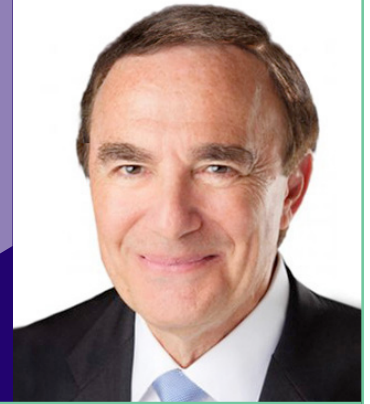
November 2022



Lighthouse Guild

Lighthouse Guild In Brief

From Dr. Cal Roberts, President and CEO



Dear Friends,

November is Diabetes Awareness Month

Improving health and avoiding diabetes-related complications is essential for millions of people in the United States who have diabetes. One of the most common and serious complications of diabetes is vision loss. Fortunately, you can help reduce the risk and preserve eyesight.

Take control. Regular physical exams with a physician and comprehensive dilated eye examinations with an ophthalmologist or optometrist are essential. Diabetic eye diseases, such as Diabetic Retinopathy, a serious eye disorder caused by damage to the blood vessels in the back of the eye, often have no symptoms in the early stages. By regularly monitoring eye health, treatment can begin as soon as signs of disease appear, helping to prevent vision loss.



Photo: Older woman using an app on her smartphone to monitor her glucose level.

Think about technology. Technology can help people with diabetes monitor the sugar levels in their blood if they are unable to use the traditional finger stick. Other useful tech includes apps and devices such as talking meters — which are helpful for people who have vision loss. They also track insulin dosing and transmit data to your healthcare team.

Everyone is different, so people with diabetes need to consult with their healthcare providers to determine the best care plan for their situation. For more tips, visit our [website](#).

Lighthouse Guild Awards Lectures

We were pleased to host the Lighthouse Guild Awards Lectures on the latest advances in treatment, technology, and advocacy for people with vision impairment. We honored three extraordinary pioneers in their fields who presented their work that is changing the lives of people who are blind and visually impaired.

Haben Girma, the inaugural recipient of the Dr. Alan Morse Lecture in Advocacy, is a noted human rights lawyer and disability justice advocate. Ms. Girma is the first deafblind graduate from Harvard Law School, an author, and a frequent speaker on accessibility, diversity, and leadership. She presented “Advancing Disability Justice.”



Photo: From left to right, Lighthouse Guild President Emeritus Dr. Alan R. Morse, Morse Lecture Award recipient Haben Girma, Chief Research Officer Dr. William Seiple and President and CEO Dr. Calvin W. Roberts.

Javier Pita Lozano, the recipient of the Pisart Award in Technological Innovation, is the CEO of NaviLens, a solution whose objective is to increase autonomy, social inclusion, and the quality of life for people who are visually impaired. Mr. Lozano presented “An Accessible New Kind of QR Code Scannable at 40 Feet Away without Focusing It.”

Dr. Sheila Nirenberg, is the recipient of the Bressler Prize in Vision Science for her outstanding advances in applying vision science to the treatment of blindness. Dr. Nirenberg is the Nanette Laitman Professor in Neurology and Neuroscience and a professor of Computational Neuroscience at the Institute for Computational Biomedicine, Weill Medical College of Cornell University. She presented “Talking to the Brain in Its Own Language: A New Kind of Treatment for Blindness.”



Photo: From left to right, Pisart Award recipient Javier Pita Lozano explaining the NaviLens QR code system. Bressler Prize recipient Dr. Sheila Nirenberg presenting her life-changing work.

Visit the Lighthouse Guild website for the trail-blazing honorees' lectures.

Lectures replay

An Evening Focused on Disability Rights

Following our impactful Awards Lecture program, we hosted a discussion between Haben Girma and Peter Slatin, two leaders in the field of disability rights. Award-winning journalist and Founder and President of Slatin Group LLC, Peter Slatin, talked with Ms. Girma about accessibility, diversity, leadership, and her memoir: *Haben, The Deafblind Woman Who Conquered Harvard Law*.

Check out their thought-provoking discussion on our website.

Evening with Haben replay



Photo: From left to right, Haben Girma and Peter Slatin

Kiana's Winning Team

When Kiana was four years old, she was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease called Sarcoidosis and, years later, Angle-Closure Glaucoma and Uveitis. She began to lose her vision when she was 16 years old. As a teenager, Kiana was concerned about appearances and did not accept her diagnosis. Nor would she use a cane or take advantage of the services offered to help her manage vision loss.

At age 32, Kiana came to Lighthouse Guild for eye exams. She saw our low vision specialists and received eyeglasses, magnifiers, and other helpful devices.

She also received services from Lighthouse Guild Adaptive Technology Specialist Ed Plumacher and Lilly Harris, a Vision Rehabilitation Therapist. She says, "Ed is the perfect person and the best technology instructor!" She continues, "I was also expecting my first child and wanted to improve my parenting skills to ensure that our home would be safe. Lilly came to my home and trained me on how to clean the kitchen, cut food safely and change my daughter's diapers."

In 2018, when Kiana's vision began to decline rapidly, she focused on improving the skills she needed to become employable. She learned more about accessible technology with Ed, who upgraded the software to make her screen easier to read. At the same time, Lilly helped Kiana organize her house, especially the kitchen, for optimum safety. Kiana recalls, "Lilly also reminded me of all the help available to ensure my child and I would be safe."

Lighthouse Guild Vision Rehabilitation Therapist and Orientation and Mobility Instructor, Jeff Ambury helped her learn to navigate. They practiced getting back and forth to her daughter's school, the gym, and Lighthouse Guild. Kiana says, "He visited seven times until I got the hang of it, and I used a cane from that point on!"

Kiana shares, "I have found everyone at Lighthouse Guild to be so incredibly patient, professional, welcoming, and warm. I have had only positive experiences with Lighthouse Guild, and they have been important to my development. I don't know how else I could have gotten this far without their resources."

“Without the support, training, and encouragement I received from Lighthouse Guild, I would have never dreamt of being a member of this winning team.”

—Kiana



Photo: A quote, “Without the support, training, and encouragement I received from Lighthouse Guild, I would have never dreamt of being a member of this winning team,” next to a smiling portrait of Kiana wearing her Team USA uniform.

Stepping Up to the Plate

It was Ed who introduced blind baseball to Kiana. She says, “Although I was nervous, I agreed to meet the team Ed played on called the N.Y. Rockers. They gave me a bat and explained how the game is played — and I’ve been hooked ever since.”

In 2022, she became a member of Team USA and participated in the World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Blind Baseball International Cup held in the Netherlands. Team USA brought home the bronze medal. Kiana shares, “Without the support, training, and encouragement I received from Lighthouse Guild, I would have never dreamt of being a member of this winning team.” She continues, “To think that until recently, I didn’t want to participate in anything that would publicly identify me as being blind . . . and now I have represented the U.S. as one of the first two women on [a blind baseball] team!” **Read more about Kiana.**

Breakfast with Champions

In celebration of National Blind Sports Month and National Disability Employment Awareness Month, we hosted a breakfast for the 13th annual U.S. Association of Blind Athletes’ (USABA) Breakfast with Champions. During the event, the USABA’s Breakfast with Champions event was simulcast live into Lighthouse Guild’s technology center from the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum in Colorado. Speakers at the Lighthouse Guild program included: USABA Board Chair Mark Ackermann; four-time Paralympic goalball athlete; two-time Paralympic medalist **Tyler Merren**; and members of Team USA bronze medalists of the 2022 WBSC Blind Baseball International Cup. For more about this inspiring event, visit our **website**.



Photo: From left to right, Kiana Glanton, Amanda Makson, and Ed Plumacher of Team USA Blind Baseball; Paralympic medalist Tyler Merren, Lighthouse Guild CEO Dr. Calvin Roberts, and USABA Board Chair Mark Ackermann.

Thanks, Corporate Volunteers

Corporate volunteers from **Regeneron** created activity bags for our GuildCare members in the Niagara Falls, Buffalo, and Albany programs. GuildCare Network Director Terresa Olenick shared, "This morning as we were passing out the new activity bags, one of our [members] who was smiling from ear to ear looked up at me as she was admiring all her new art supplies and said: 'I love every moment of this!'"



Photo: From left to right, GuildCare clients Joe, Matthew and Kayce proudly hold up their personalized activity bags.

Clients of our Career Services program met individually with corporate volunteers from **Citigroup** and role-played a realistic job interview. Following the exercise, the volunteers offered constructive feedback. Marcia Shaw, Manager, Career and Youth Services, said, "Everyone felt they left gaining so much insight from the experience and much more confidence as they move forward. What a successful day!"



Photo: Citigroup corporate volunteers, Lighthouse Guild staff members Marcia Shaw and Employment Specialist Trisha Samuel, along with clients of Career Services.

There are so many volunteer opportunities available to help people who are blind or visually impaired. For more information, visit our [website](#).

The Latest Smart Tools for Indoor Navigation

The latest episode of our podcast, "**On Tech and Vision with Dr. Cal Roberts,**" explores how new technology can help make public spaces as accessible to people who are blind as they are to sighted people. I speak with three innovators applying new technologies paired with smartphone capabilities to revolutionize indoor navigation, orientation, and information transfer. Idan Meir, the co-founder of

RightHear, uses Apple's iBeacon technology to make visual signage dynamic and accessible via audio descriptions. Javier Pita Lozano, CEO of **NaviLens**, a technology that marries labeling information with orientation guidance to increase accessibility of public spaces and transportation infrastructure for people with vision impairment. Mike May, the Chief Evangelist at **GoodMaps**, uses LiDAR and geocoding to map the interior of a space.



Photo: Line illustration of a person wearing a virtual reality headset while viewing art in a gallery.

Giving Thanks and Giving Tuesday

There are so many reasons to be thankful. At Lighthouse Guild, we are most thankful for the support that enables us to provide exceptional services that inspire people who are visually impaired to attain their goals. We hope you will take the time on **November 29, Giving Tuesday**, or any time before the end of 2022 to give a **gift of support** to Lighthouse Guild. The holidays can be difficult for some, especially people with vision impairment. Our services are a lifeline for those coping with depression and vision-related challenges. With your help, we can do so much in the lives of so many, and that is something we can all be thankful for.

Please consider **volunteering** and **referring** people who can benefit from our services, and spreading the word on **Twitter** and **Facebook**!

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and safe Thanksgiving!

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

Donate: lighthouseguild.org/donate/

Volunteer: lighthouseguild.org/volunteer/

Share: Twitter @lighthousegld | Facebook @lighthouseguild



Dedicated to providing exceptional services that inspire people who are visually impaired to attain their goals.
800-284-4422 | lighthouseguild.org