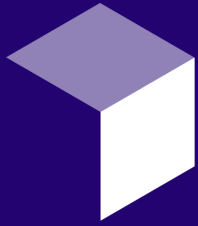


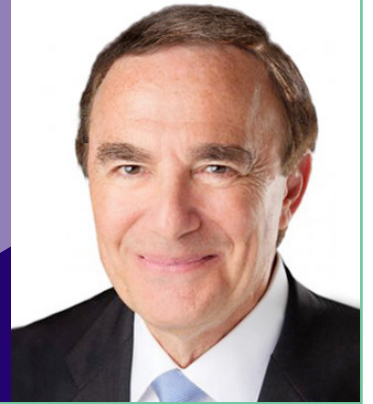
January 2023



Lighthouse Guild

Lighthouse Guild In Brief

From Dr. Cal Roberts, President and CEO



Dear Friends,

How to Prevent Vision Loss from Glaucoma

Glaucoma affects over 3 million people in the United States and is often called the silent thief of sight because it robs people of vision slowly and without early symptoms. January is Glaucoma Awareness Month, an opportunity to stress that regular eye exams can lead to early diagnosis and help prevent vision loss.

Glaucoma is a disease that damages your eye's optic nerve. As glaucoma progresses, it can lead to permanent vision loss. Most forms of glaucoma progress without any symptoms; therefore, it is crucial to have a comprehensive dilated eye exam that can detect the disease in its early stages.



Photo: A young woman receiving a vision exam

"It's important to know that while glaucoma cannot be prevented or cured, it is treatable," says Dr. Laura Sperazza, Director of Vision Rehabilitation Services at Lighthouse Guild. "Glaucoma does not have to lead to blindness. Early intervention can protect vision."

Vision Rehabilitation

For people who already have vision loss due to glaucoma, or other eye diseases, vision rehabilitation can improve their ability to perform daily tasks and enhance quality of life. Technology also offers great solutions including screen readers, voice over for smartphones and apps that can identify money, objects and help with independent travel. Visit our website to learn more about our [services](#).

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

Barry S. Honig Joins Lighthouse Guild Board of Directors

I am pleased to announce **Barry S. Honig**, President and CEO of TruckPay, Inc., a start-up logistics technology company, and President of Honig International, an executive search and management consulting firm, has joined the Board of Directors of Lighthouse Guild.

"I want to do everything I can to help continue the great work of this vitally important and historic organization."

—Barry Honig



Photo: A quote, "I want to do everything I can to help continue the great work of this vitally important and historic organization," next to a portrait of Barry Honig.

“Barry’s knowledge, guidance, and experience will be invaluable as we further our mission of providing exceptional services to our clients and people who are visually impaired worldwide,” said James Dubin, Chairman of the Board of Lighthouse Guild.

Mr. Honig graduated from Columbia University School of Engineering. He was the first blind graduate of the Bronx High School of Science. He is dedicated to helping people who are disabled and those with other special needs. Mr. Honig has served on the boards of numerous nonprofits, such as Recordings for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFBD), and Alphapointe. Currently, he serves on the boards of Freedom Guide Dogs and Road Recovery.

“I’m honored and humbled to be asked to join the board of directors of an organization that is as important, as the Lighthouse Guild. I’m thrilled to be able to give back to an organization that was so helpful to me when I was a kid,” Mr. Honig said. “My parents took me for low vision eye exams at the Lighthouse, I attended Lighthouse day camp, used the social work services, as a teenager, and even was awarded the Charles E. Dilman Academic Scholarship, when I was going to college.”

Mr. Honig concluded by saying, “I want to do everything I can to help continue the great work of this vitally important and historic organization.”

To learn more about Mr. Honig, visit our [website](#).

Ambient Computing and Voice Assistants: From Your Home to the Stars

Many have voice-controlled smart home assistants like Siri, Google, or Alexa to listen to the news or set timers. But this technology can do so much more! In the latest episode of our podcast, **On Tech & Vision**, David Frerichs, Principal Engineer, Alexa Experience at Amazon on the aging and accessibility team, shares his design philosophy for making voice assistants more inclusive and the preferred mode of engagement for every user. He also shares that the next stage of smart home assistants will be ambient computing, where your devices will understand your needs without you speaking to them. We also hear from Lighthouse Guild clients Aaron Vasquez, who has outfitted his home with smart home technology, and Matthew Cho, who traveled to the Johnson Space Center in Houston to speak to the uncrewed Orion Spacecraft via the Amazon Alexa on board. Both demonstrate that voice assistant technology can bring inclusivity and accessibility to many jobs and industries and are not just for the home anymore.



Photo: Illustration of the side of a person’s head with sound waves radiating out.

Tech Talk: Introduction to iPhone Accessibility

We are thrilled to announce Lighthouse Guild’s Tech Talk online workshops! Every third Tuesday of the month, technology and vision experts provide demonstrations and strategies and answer questions to help individuals with vision loss attain their goals. Topics include high- and low-tech devices, accessible features on iOS devices, apps for daily activities, apps for socialization, talking books, smart speakers, and more. Join us on **Tuesday, February 21, 2023**, for our first **Tech Talk: Introduction to iPhone Accessibility**. Learn about the basic accessibility features on your iPhone and how to access them. To register, visit our [website](#).

Join Team Lighthouse Guild in the 2023 TD Five Boro Bike Tour

On **Sunday, May 7, 2023**, Lighthouse Guild will participate as one of the charity partners in the **TD Five Boro Bike Tour** — one of New York City’s iconic athletic events. Join Team Lighthouse Guild for an unforgettable day cycling through New York City and help make a difference in the lives of people with vision loss. Riders will raise awareness of and funds for Lighthouse Guild programs and services while crisscrossing all five boroughs with over 32,000 other cyclists. Visit our [website](#) for more information on how to join our team or support our riders!



Photo: Two bike riders wearing Lighthouse Guild jerseys among a group of other riders along a Manhattan street.

Amanda Attains Her Goals and Then Some

Amanda has Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP), an eye disease that affects the retina in some premature babies born before 31 weeks. With ROP, unwanted blood vessels grow on the baby’s retina. These blood vessels can later cause serious eye and vision problems, such as detached retinas, secondary glaucoma, and cataracts.

Amanda had experienced several retinal detachments in her dominant eye. Fortunately, due to an excellent surgeon, she lost minimal vision in her peripheral sight. Amanda has low vision and uses a cane to navigate around — primarily for drop-offs, stairs, street crossings, uneven surfaces, and identification. She uses public transit to get around New York City and sometimes uses Access-A-Ride.

Amanda first came to Lighthouse Guild in 2002 when she was connected via the New York Commission for the Blind’s Columbia Youth Program. During that time, she received computer, mobility, and enrichment training.

“I am grateful for what Lighthouse Guild has provided to me, helping me succeed with my career and in life.”

—Amanda


A portrait of Amanda, a woman with dark hair and glasses, smiling at the camera.

Photo: A quote, “I am grateful for what Lighthouse Guild has provided to me, helping me succeed with my career and in life,” next to a portrait of Amanda.

In 2016 Amanda received training in assistive technology and work accessibility from Adaptive Technology Specialist Ed Plumacher. Ed taught her techniques for using the iPhone, VoiceOver, Zoom and Zoom features, key commands, JAWS, and how to go back and forth between platforms when using her PC and Mac. She says, “Ed is an amazing teacher who is truly knowledgeable, personable, and very individualized to each student, and he stays updated on the recent technologies available to people who have vision loss.”

In 2021 Amanda reconnected with Lighthouse Guild working under Coordinator of Youth Programs Jaydan Mitchell and the Volunteer Program as an Orientation & Mobility (O&M) intern with the Saturday Youth Transitions Program. It was this internship that qualified her for certification in Orientation & Mobility. Amanda says, “I am so grateful they brought me on and were willing to have me as a volunteer and allow me to work with the students for my internship.”

As of October 2022, Amanda works at Lighthouse Guild with Jaydan and the Manager of Career and Youth Services, Marcia Shaw, as a lead teacher in the Saturday Youth Skills Program. Amanda primarily assists the clients with movement, Orientation & Mobility, literacy, and self-expression. We are truly fortunate to have Amanda on our Youth Services team.

Taking a Swing and Winning the Bronze

When interning with Lighthouse Guild, Amanda met with Ed Plumacher and members of a local Adaptive Blind Baseball team, NY Rockers, at a hands-on clinic about the sport for the teens in our Youth Transition Program. From that first outing, Ed encouraged Amanda to consider trying out for the team. With his encouragement, Amanda attended tryouts in the Bronx. She was fortunate and honored to be selected to be on Team USA. The next thing she knew, August arrived. Team USA was on its way to the Netherlands to compete in the first WBSC Blind Baseball International Cup. Amanda shares, “It felt a little like a whirlwind because it all happened so fast, and there was so much to take in and so much to do. And it was wonderful. It was beautiful.”

Amanda says the game days were intense and that they could not have done it without any of the team members or coaches. She is honored to have been a part of Team USA which brought home the Bronze Medal!

Recommending Lighthouse Guild to Others

Amanda often shares that Lighthouse Guild can provide the resources that students and clients need to become more independent and increase job opportunities. Lighthouse Guild can offer Orientation & Mobility if they need help learning how to get around in a new space that can be complex. They can also assist them with Vision Rehabilitation skills in the home, such as cooking and daily skills.

“I am grateful for all that Lighthouse Guild provided me with and gave me the opportunities to succeed in terms of both my life and my career,” Amanda says. “I am very humbled and grateful to them, and I look forward to continuing to work with them.”

There is much more to Amanda’s story! Visit our [website](#) to find out.

Kickoff Reception for Lighthouse Guild’s Annual Visionary Evening

The Findlay Galleries on Worth Avenue in Palm Beach, the iconic, family-owned art business founded in 1870, hosted a kickoff cocktail reception on January 20, 2023, for supporters and friends of Lighthouse Guild’s upcoming annual **“A Visionary Evening” Dinner**. The dinner will honor **Jacqueline Weld Drake** and **James R. Borynack** – whose philanthropic vision and community spirit transform lives.



Photo: From left to right, Eleanora Kennedy and Beth DeWoody, Adolfo Zaralegui and Andrea Roberts.



Photo: From left to right, Dr. Calvin Roberts, Jackie Weld Drake, and James Borynack

Join us **February 28, 2023**, in Palm Beach for our “A Visionary Evening” Dinner! For more information, tickets, and tables, contact Mona de Sayve at **561-635-5342** or mdesayve@lighthouseguild.org



Photo: A young man in a therapy session.

Mental Health and Your Patients Who Are Visually Impaired

One-third of older adults who are visually impaired experience clinically significant symptoms of depression and anxiety. Vision loss can be detrimental to an individual’s mental health, while mental stress can exacerbate vision loss.

Our **free** webinar, **Psychiatric Care of Persons with Vision Loss and Blindness**, provides physicians, psychologists, and other mental health professionals with an understanding of the bidirectional relationship between vision loss and mental health.

César Alfonso, MD, a psychiatrist with expertise in the clinical care of the medically ill, psychopharmacology, and multimodal psychotherapy, discusses the leading causes of vision loss and psychiatric comorbidities and reviews the ocular side effects of psychotropic medications. His insights can help you formulate the treatment of your patients.

Visit our **website** to learn more.

Future Visionary Leaders

We are excited to announce the launch of the **Visionary Committee**, a group of early to mid-career professionals committed to supporting Lighthouse Guild’s mission. This new leadership group includes 20 members, including many who served as founding members helping to define the goals and focus of the Visionary Committee itself.

This new and diverse group of leaders will serve as ambassadors for Lighthouse Guild. Many of the Visionary Committee members have experience with our work as volunteers, clients, and partners, and all of them bring a passion for vision health, and equity. Looking forward, the Visionary Committee will provide their energy and expertise, guiding Lighthouse Guild into the future through volunteering, fundraising, advocacy, and awareness-building. If you or someone you know is interested in getting involved, visit our **website**.

With your support, people with vision impairment can do anything they aspire to, from navigating their world to reaching for the stars. Please give 2023 a kick-start by supporting our mission through **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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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.
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