

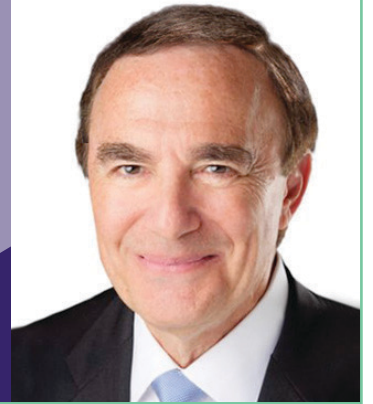
April 2023



Lighthouse Guild

Lighthouse Guild In Brief

From Dr. Cal Roberts, President and CEO



Dear Friends,

Play It Safe

Every year in the U.S., 100,000 eye injuries are related to sports activities. Around 13,500 of these injuries lead to some degree of permanent vision loss. A regrettable outcome, especially since 90 percent of sports-related eye injuries can be prevented by using protective eyewear.



Photo from left to right: Two women holding racquets and wearing sports goggles.

April is Sports Eye Safety Month, a time to remember the importance of protecting your eyes while participating in sports and other recreational activities. Here are some tips for preventing sports-related eye injuries:

- **Wear protective eyewear** such as goggles, helmets with face shields, or sports glasses with polycarbonate lenses.
- **Make sure your eyewear fits properly** and is appropriate for the activity.
- **Be aware of your surroundings** and potential hazards, such as other players, flying objects, or uneven terrain.
- **Keep your equipment in good condition** and replace any damaged or worn-out gear.
- **Get regular eye exams** which can detect any underlying vision problems or eye conditions that could increase your risk of injury.

Check out our [website](#) for tips on keeping your eyes safe when playing sports. You can also request an [appointment](#) for an eye exam with one of our vision experts.

Recognizing the Work of VRTs

April also includes **Vision Rehabilitation Therapists Appreciation Week**. Vision rehabilitation therapists (VRT) are essential in helping individuals who are blind or visually impaired adapt to their daily life, learn new skills, and improve their independence and quality of life. They work with people of all ages, helping them with various aspects of daily living, such as orientation and mobility, communication, independent living skills, and assistive technology. Visit our [website](#) to see the many services Lighthouse Guild's VRTs provide.

A Visionary Kickoff for Team Lighthouse Guild Riders

On March 29, our Visionary Committee hosted a kickoff event to raise awareness and funds for Team Lighthouse Guild's participation in the 2023 TD Five Boro Bike Tour. Over 60 guests met current and former Team Lighthouse Guild riders, members of Team USA Blind Baseball league and enthusiastically participated in a raffle. The evening raised \$1,800 that will help support Lighthouse Guild programs and services.



Photo: From left to right, Lighthouse Guild Visionary Committee members Josh Berger, Jeremy Edelson, Graham Rainsby, David Lefty, Jeremy Reimann, Galyna Ganieva and Jeremy Morak

Support the Cyclists of Team Lighthouse Guild!

Sunday, May 7, is the 2023 TD Five Boro Bike Tour and **Team Lighthouse Guild** is ready to cycle 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. But we cannot do it alone! Please visit the **Team Lighthouse Guild fundraising page** to donate and help us exceed our goal of \$15,000. The funds go directly toward helping Lighthouse Guild provide exceptional programs and services to people with vision loss.

David Keeps Moving Forward

David, a New Yorker from Michigan, worked in marketing, advertising, and computer graphics for almost 40 years. After, he returned to school at Columbia University, where he learned about teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). He spent the next 15 years in a volunteer teaching position in the East Village.

When David went for a routine eye exam to get a new pair of eyeglasses, an issue with his vision was detected. He was later diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa (RP), making him legally blind. David stopped teaching because he felt he could no longer provide the students with what they needed.

“Lighthouse Guild will help you so that you can maintain your independence to the best of your ability.”

—David

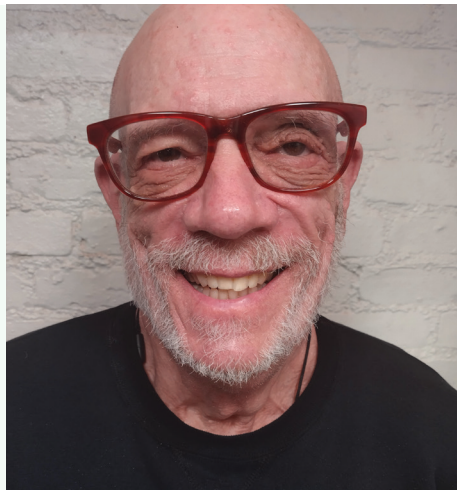


Photo: A quote, “Lighthouse Guild will help you so that you can maintain your independence to the best of your ability,” next to a portrait of David.

Connecting to Lighthouse Guild

David’s vision condition made it difficult for him to use the telephone. Someone recommended that Lighthouse Guild could help him. Since contacting Lighthouse Guild, David has met with the Chief of Low Vision Services, Dr. Bruce Rosenthal. David says, “Dr. Rosenthal has been very helpful to me, and he has been like a coach and a cheerleader — providing me with lots of encouragement.”

When David lost his vision, it was early in the COVID-19 pandemic, when everyone was dealing with the same issues. David became very depressed, and nothing seemed to work for him. Since then, David says, “I have been doing so much better in the past year and a half, and much of that has to do with Lighthouse Guild and Dr. Rosenthal.”

Group Therapy

Dr. Rosenthal recommended to David that he might benefit from the Group Therapy program. David immediately signed up for the program and has participated intermittently for the past few years. David has been able to experience the meetings in an in-office setting, in-person group meetings, and group meetings over Zoom. David says, “I really enjoy participating in the group therapy meetings from home over Zoom. I feel I get a lot more out of them.” David continues, “We all share what we are doing, what the difficulties are, and how we get over them and keep moving forward. And I find them all to be very encouraging.”

David says, “Social Worker Tamara Greely has put a group of us together via Zoom, and she has been a tremendous asset to the group and individuals.” Through the group therapy program, David has learned to develop more patience and that he can do things differently to get the same result.

Volunteering

Knowing that David had a marketing and advertising background, Dr. Rosenthal connected him with the Lighthouse Guild marketing team. Following the connection, David met with the team as a volunteer marketing and advertisement consultant. He shared his expertise, ideas, and insight to help make a future project they were embarking on successful. David says, “It was a wonderful experience and one of the best things I have done in a very long time. It drew on my background, training, and experience. I shared my observation on what they can do, or try to do, to make this new adventure a success.”

Next Steps

Soon, David plans to schedule some time at Lighthouse Guild’s Vision Rehabilitation program. He plans to learn to navigate the phone more fully and to have the phone read building addresses to him when he’s walking around in the city and how he can change trains in the subway without much difficulty. David says, “I cannot imagine not having such social services available. They are unsurpassed, and they offer what you need.”

About Lighthouse Guild

David says, “Lighthouse Guild is an organization that offers safety nets all over. They offer services for every imaginable kind you need for a person with vision problems in their daily life.” He continues, “The doctors there are phenomenal. They are patient. They listen to you. They provide the appropriate tests and the most suitable glasses for your individual needs.” David adds, “The options they offer in the technology center are outstanding. Lighthouse Guild is just amazing.”

David concludes, “Lighthouse Guild will help you so that you can maintain your independence to the best of your ability. And that’s the most important thing for people to know when vision loss is new to them.”

Read more about David on our [website](#).

Support for Youth-Driven Programs

I am pleased to announce renewed support from The Graham Family Foundation (\$17K) for our **Tech Pals** and **Summer Youth Pathways** initiatives! Tech Pals is our exciting intergenerational technology training program, tech-savvy young adults (aged 18-24) who are blind or visually impaired serve as mentors to older adults (aged 55+) who are also visually impaired and want to become proficient in using their mobile phones and tablets. The Summer Pathways Program brings approximately 15 teens together daily to explore careers, participate in community enrichment activities and field trips, and learn pre-employment and job readiness skills.



Photos: Left to right, a female mentor in the Tech Pals program providing mobile phone instruction to an older adult woman; Three young women of the Summer Youth Pathways program learning about Target’s check-out system.

The Graham Family Foundation has a long history with Lighthouse Guild, and we are honored that they are once again partnering with us to help people who are visually impaired attain their goals.

Inclusion is the Name of the Game

For decades, people with vision loss had limited options for accessing video games. But in recent years, the same cutting-edge technology used to create games has also been used to make them more accessible. In the latest **On Tech & Vision podcast: Leveling Up Accessible Video Game Features**, I talk to Robin Spinks, Head of Inclusive Design at the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), about how new technology is making gaming more immersive and inclusive for people with vision impairment. Tim Devine, AKQA Executive Director of Innovation, shares about Action Audio which creates an information-rich 3D audio experience for tennis fans with vision loss enabling them to experience every thrilling rally as it happens. He hopes to make 3D audio a universal technology to use in gaming. We also get insightful commentary by Kaitlyn Jones, Program Manager, Xbox Accessibility Team, and Elaine Abdalla, creator of Blind Gamer Chick YouTube Channel!



Photo: The back view of a player wearing head phones sitting in front video game monitor with graphics swirling around the monitor.

Public Notice

A proposed settlement has been reached that would resolve the class action lawsuit Douglass v. P.C. Richard & Son, LLC, Case No. 2:22-cv-399 (W.D. Pa.). The lawsuit alleges that P.C. Richard violated the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101, et seq., by failing to take the necessary steps to ensure its website and mobile apps do not discriminate against individuals who are Blind and/or who have a Visual Disability. Under the settlement, P.C. Richard agrees to make its website, mobile apps, and any new website or mobile app it develops or acquires accessible to individuals who are Blind and/or who have a Visual Disability. For a more complete summary of the terms of the proposed settlement, please visit **PCRichardADAsettlement.com** Have questions? Contact East End Trial Group at **eastendtrialgroup.com**.

Make a Difference and Receive Benefits

Another way to help make a lasting difference in the lives of individuals with vision impairment is to establish a Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA). CGA rates for 2023 have gone up! Visit our website to see the **current rates** for annuitants. And starting this year, if you are over age 70½, you can establish a CGA by making a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA of up to \$50,000. To learn more, visit our **website** or contact Donna Lippman, Director of Gift Planning, at 646-874-8443 or dlippman@lighthouseguild.org.

Lighthouse Guild can only make a difference in the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired with your support. 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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Dedicated to providing exceptional services that inspire people who are visually impaired to attain their goals.
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