



Lighthouse Guild In Brief

From Dr. Cal Roberts, President and CEO



Dear Friends,

July is National UV Safety Month

While many of us know we need to protect our skin from the sun's harmful rays, it is equally essential to protect our eyes. If you are out in the sun a lot, sunglasses are not a fashion accessory. They are a health necessity. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can harm the eyes, affect vision, and create damage leading to vision loss later in life. Cataracts, one of the primary



causes of vision loss in older adults, are linked to long-term exposure to the sun's harmful rays.

To help you protect your eyes while you enjoy your summer:

- Wear sunglasses and choose them carefully. Visit our website for pointers on selecting sunglasses to safeguard your vision.
- Have your sunglasses tested by an optometrist
- Replace damaged sunglasses
- Wear a hat
- Don't skip wearing sunglasses on cloudy days
- Never look directly at the sun
- Don't forget your kids need to wear sunglasses as well.

Our Manhattan GuildCare Program Re-Opens with a New Director

Last month, I shared about the re-opening of our GuildCare programs in Buffalo and Niagara Falls. As the only Adult Day Health Care program in New York State that specializes in services for people with vision loss, GuildCare provides a broad range of services, including nursing care, medication management, diabetes care, physical, occupational and speech therapy, social work services, nutritional counseling, vision rehabilitation, therapeutic activities, morning snack and lunch. And we do it with strict health and safety protocols in place. Our services and activities are specially designed and adapted for individuals with all levels of disability – physical, cognitive and visual. I'm pleased to announce the re-opening of our Manhattan program, which has a new director, Patricia Rincon. Patricia is a Licensed Medical Social Worker with extensive experience in social services programming



By Way of Technology

Traditional building and street signs can be difficult for people with vision impairment to access, even more so in unfamiliar environments. At Lighthouse Guild, we are all about innovative solutions. That is why our New York City headquarters is a testing site for NaviLens, which marries location finding with information. The system involves a scannable code added to signs that a smartphone can detect and then read information back to the user. NaviLens coded signs include information such as where the user is located, how far away they are from the sign, and more details that ordinary signs do not. We encourage everyone to visit our building to try out this amazing technology that enables people who are visually impaired to travel how and when they want to – independently. You can also view a demonstration on our website.



and administration in New York. She was most recently Program Director at Isabella Geriatric Center Adult Day Health Care Program, where she served for 15 years. She previously held positions at Village Care of New York, at Jewish Child Care Association, and at Grand Street Settlement. She received her MSW from New York University and her BA in Psychology from William Paterson University. **Welcome aboard, Patricia!**

Welcome Back, Cheryl!

When the New York State Department of Health (DOH) put our GuildCare program on hold, Cheryl sought divine help. “My mother kept telling me to pray that GuildCare would open back up after it closed.”

The answer to her prayer came when the DOH approved the reopening of our program in Niagara Falls. Before the pandemic, Cheryl, who lives in a group home, had attended the GuildCare program five days a week for about four years. She enjoyed “the crafts, the games, and exercising. I like that I learn about different things.”

Like many, the pandemic affected Cheryl’s home life as well. She moved down to Florida to live with her mother, Diane until the worst was over to avoid the danger of the virus spreading throughout the group home.

Diane has been impressed by the impact of GuildCare on her daughter. “She has been a much kinder and friendlier person since she has been attending. She did not use to make friends easily, but now she has gotten to know most of the people there.” One of Cheryl’s favorite people is Teresa Olenick, GuildCare Niagara Falls’ program director, whom she calls “Terre.”

Cheryl attended school until she was 18 but had difficulty reading and doing math. “She tries

but cannot do math very well,” her mother said. “GuildCare has helped her with math,” her mother said. “She started to pick up and function better once she entered the GuildCare program. She started learning more, and she looks forward to performing tasks and figuring out things, and she has learned to ask questions.” GuildCare also gave Cheryl practical skills such as learning how to cook, which she used during her stay with her mother. French Onion Chicken is one of her specialties.

One of Diane’s most treasured positions is a heart-shaped magnet Cheryl made while attending the program. It hangs on the dining room doorway so Diane can see it every time she walks into the room. It says: “I love you, Mom.”

Diane was so grateful that GuildCare was reopening that she made a gift to Lighthouse Guild. “I donate to things I think are of value and that are helping people. GuildCare is absolutely the best program Cheryl has ever participated in.”



GuildCare is here for all the families who need us. Visit the GuildCare page of our website for the phone number of the program nearest you.

Join Us: Become a member of Lighthouse Guild’s community of support and care by volunteering, donating, and spreading the word on **Twitter** and **Facebook**. And for the latest on technology to help people with vision loss, listen to our podcast: **On Tech & Vision with Dr. Cal Roberts**.

Be well and stay safe,

Calvin W. Roberts, MD

President and CEO, Lighthouse Guild

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