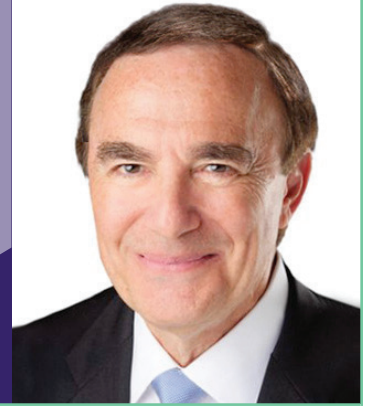




Lighthouse Guild

Lighthouse Guild In Brief

From Dr. Cal Roberts, President and CEO



Dear Friends,

November is Diabetes Awareness Month. For millions of people in the United States who have diabetes, improving health and avoiding diabetes-related complications are essential. One of the most common and serious complications of diabetes is vision loss. The good news is that people can take action to reduce risk and preserve eyesight.

- **Take control.** The most important step is to have regular physical exams with a physician and regular comprehensive dilated eye examinations with an ophthalmologist or optometrist.
- **Don't delay.** See an eye care professional immediately if there are any sudden changes in vision.
- **Explore new technology.** Technology can help people with diabetes manage their disease. Monitoring sugar levels in the blood is essential. Available apps and devices include talking meters – helpful for people who have vision loss. They also track insulin dosing, and transmit data to your health care team.
- **Get support.** Join a diabetes support group to learn from others and share experiences.



A diabetes patient performing a self-check.

Lighthouse Guild's self-management diabetes education program in Manhattan, approved by the American Diabetes Association, offers individual and group sessions that teach practical techniques for taking medications, strategies for monitoring blood sugar, and essential tips maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

- **Everyone is different,** so it is important that people with diabetes consult their healthcare providers to put together a plan tailored to their needs. For more on tips and resources, visit our **website**.

Day of Inspirations

November 17, 2021 was an important day for our organization. It was recognized as "Lighthouse Guild Day of Inspirations" by the Honorable Kathy Hochul, New York State Governor, and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer. For us, it was special because we were honoring the members and supporters of the Lighthouse Guild Community.

The day began as **Staff Appreciation Day** to celebrate what our Lighthouse Guild team does every day to provide exceptional services and support our community. We gathered for



Dr. Philip Kiser presenting his research at a podium.

breakfast and met Dr. Philip Kiser, 2020 **Pisart Award in Vision Science** recipient. Both Dr. Kiser and 2020 **Bressler Prize** recipient Dr. Gerrit Melles (via Zoom) made presentations on their innovative work in the field of vision science to staff and board members at the Bressler Prize and Pisart Award Lecture, followed by a lunch. We will be sending a special communication with a link to our Bressler Prize and Pisart Award Lecture. Stay tuned!



Staffers Catherine Shampine and Helen Culverhouse celebrating at the Buffalo GuildCare program.

That evening, we hosted **A Night of Inspirations: Celebrating People Who Embody the Spirit of Service, Giving, and Leadership**. First, I was honored to recognize our Chairman of the Board, James M. Dubin, for his decades of visionary guidance and exceptional leadership — presenting him with a plaque that will be prominently displayed at our Manhattan headquarters. We then honored Doctors Kiser and Melles. Next, we recognized the community of students — the 2021 Lighthouse Guild Scholarship Recipients — from diverse backgrounds who attend some of the nation’s most competitive universities.



Dr. Calvin Roberts and Scholarship recipient Liam Cruz

But one group took center stage at our celebration: **The Lighthouse Guild Community of Volunteers**. The work of the organization would not be possible without their dedicated support. Despite the challenges of the last year and a half, volunteers, interns, and corporate partners gave 20,000 hours of their time to our organization. We honored Dawn LaSpisa, Jailine Carrion, and Patricia Murphy for their outstanding service. We celebrated the achievements of Lois Tyson Campbell, Lewis Kaufman, Tenena Klinger, and the late Stephen T. Pearlman by presenting them with The President’s Lifetime Achievement Award. This special award enables organizations like ours to amplify our gratitude by joining the President of the United States to thank long-serving volunteers. Visit our website for more on this very inspirational event.



Chief Volunteer Officer Cheryl Pemberton-Graves and Lois Tyson Campbell.

I am proud to share that we are a tight community here at Lighthouse Guild, and our volunteers work closely with staff to fulfill the organization’s mission. You can join our community and make a difference in the lives of people who are visually impaired by visiting the volunteer section of our **website**.

100 Years Never Looked So Good

We continue our theme of inspiration with the story of one of our amazing clients.

Previously, I’ve shared what the return to GuildCare, our **Adult Day Health Care** program has meant to people isolated by the pandemic. Alejandro, who recently celebrated his 100th birthday with us at our GuildCare Manhattan program, is another example.

Born in Guayaquil, Ecuador, in 1921, Alejandro was the eldest of six children. His parents rented land and raised crops. When he was eleven, his mother died in childbirth, leaving his father on his own to raise the family. Alejandro left school in the fourth grade to help on his family’s farm. He also worked at a port transporting goods. When he was 34, he met his second wife, Yolanda. They married in 1963 and moved to New York in 1967 with only \$15. They were both garment workers before he retired in 1985.

In recent years, he has become the primary caretaker for Yolanda, his love of 50 years, who is ill. “Imagine a man who needs so much, having to go home and now take care of someone else who is sick,” said Patricia Rincón, Director of the GuildCare Manhattan program. “But he is so dedicated and loves her so much that it touches my heart. He is such a role model.”

His three days a week in the GuildCare Manhattan program offer a respite from the responsibility of caring for his wife. Our clients receive medical care and therapeutic activities, including a meal and a snack. Here, Alejandro sings and plays the guitar, or enjoys a game of dominoes, while chatting with other GuildCare members, many of whom are inspired by him.

On October 22, at our monthly birthday celebration for GuildCare members, Alejandro sported a black and silver baseball cap and sash, both of which said: “100 Years Never Looked So Good.” I presented him with a proclamation in honor of his many years from long-time Lighthouse Guild supporter and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer. We toasted his health, and he, in turn, treated us by singing a few of his favorite songs as he played his guitar. Spectrum Noticias NY 1 interviewed Alejandro and filmed our celebration.



GuildCare Manhattan Staff with Alejandro seated in the middle.

Check it out on our **website**.

“I feel happy because I am surrounded by ladies and gentlemen, young and old, who I see appreciate me, and I appreciate them all,” Alejandro said.

If you or your loved one need daily medical services and crave social interaction, our Lighthouse Guild’s Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) program is for you. We offer a safe, comfortable, and attentive environment with locations in New York City, Albany, Buffalo, and Niagara Falls. Visit the **GuildCare page** of our website for the phone number of the program nearest you.

It’s the Season of Giving!

You can be an inspiration as well. Please take a moment on Giving Tuesday or any time before the end of 2021 to give the gift of support to Lighthouse Guild. The holidays can be a difficult time for some, especially people with vision impairment. Our services are a lifeline for those coping with depression and vision-related challenges. It is only with your support that our mission, to provide exceptional services that inspire people who are visually impaired to attain their goals, is possible.

Please also consider volunteering, referring people who can benefit from our services, 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**. Episode 2 of the second season – Batman Technology: Using Sonar for Human Navigation – is about SONAR and a somewhat similar technology called LiDAR. Can we use the latest sonar technology for obstacle detection the way bats and other nocturnal creatures do? Dr. Cal Roberts talks with Ben Eynon, and Diego Roel from Strap Technologies, Marco Trujillo of Sunu, and Sam Seavey of The Blind Life YouTube Channel to find out more.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Calvin Roberts, MD".

Calvin W. Roberts, MD
President and CEO, Lighthouse Guild
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