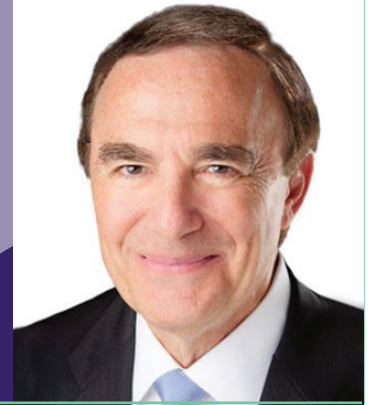


April 2022



# Lighthouse Guild

**Lighthouse Guild In Brief**  
From Dr. Cal Roberts, President and CEO



Dear Friends,

## April is Sports Eye Safety Month!

With the spring weather, more people will enjoy the outdoors and play sports. Lighthouse Guild wants to remind you about the importance of protecting your eyes when playing any sport. 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. Check out our website for **Lighthouse Guild's tips** on keeping your eyes safe when playing sports.

## Play Ball!

More than a dozen teenagers who are blind and visually impaired in our **Youth Transition Program** had the opportunity to learn Adaptive Blind Baseball. Created in Italy over 25 years ago to cultivate self-reliance and social inclusion, Adaptive Blind Baseball serves as a powerful tool for physical and psychological rehabilitation for people of all ages who are visually impaired.

The sport uses larger balls with holes and built-in bells that provide aural cues to the players. Sighted individuals stand behind the bases with a horn or clappers, to help players navigate the bases. The teens received instruction and practiced hitting, throwing and running the bases with the help of the coach and players of a local Adaptive Blind Baseball team, **NY Rockers**.

One of the teens, Janine, has Wolfram syndrome, a rare genetic disorder that causes childhood-onset diabetes and optic atrophy, among other issues. Janine started to lose her vision in the sixth grade. On this day, when she stepped up to the plate to bat, it was the first time in seven years. "I was learning by feeling and hearing." In addition to learning the game, she says, "We learned that we have a connection in a few things. We're all different, but the same."

Watch the play-by-play of this fun-filled event covered by Fox 5 New York on our **website!**



Photo left to right: Lighthouse Guild Adaptive Technology Specialist and NY Rocker Ed Plumacher provides batting instruction to one of the teens; Participants enjoying pizza donated by Pepperino West Side, located at 21 West End Avenue, NYC.

## National Volunteer Week: April 17 - 23

Our community of volunteers support almost every program and service we provide at Lighthouse Guild and are the key to our plans for expansion. Last week, we recognized our volunteers with daily spotlights to celebrate their gifts of time and talent – whether in direct service, providing administrative support, or on the board of directors or advisory committees. Our volunteers range from people still in college to individuals well into retirement. Our longest-serving volunteer is **Gayle Landers**, who has worked with us for 30 years.



Photo left to right: An older woman wearing glasses facing a woman who is smiling and using a computer.

In 2021,

- **199** volunteers provided **14,755** hours of service.
- **56** tax returns were prepared by our volunteers.
- Volunteers for **91** reading pairs provided **2,674** hours of reading assistance.
- Our volunteers selflessly donated their services – an in-kind contribution of **\$783,600!**

Another volunteer, **Terry Frankenberger**, spends two hours every week reading to one of our clients, Nooria. Blinded in a subway attack, Nooria started a foundation for refugees from her native country, Afghanistan, and is pursuing a career in social work. Terry helps her by reading material related to her graduate school studies and drafting correspondences. He facilitates her online and phone interactions and advises on foundation matters. Nooria's PhD applications are a big priority now.

Visit the **Our Volunteers** page of our website to learn more about Terry and our other dedicated volunteers. And check out **volunteer opportunities or join our community**.

**“Learning about my client’s journey has been a regenerating experience for me, and it is truly an honor and a pleasure to work with her.”**



Photo: Quote “Learning about my client’s journey has been a regenerating experience for me, and it is truly an honor and a pleasure to work with her,” next to a portrait of Terry Frankenberger.

## Nooria Shares about Her Journey with Volunteers

Volunteers are here to support clients at every step of their journey. Nooria works with three volunteers, one of whom is Terry Frankenberger. An Afghan refugee, she arrived in the United States in 1991 with glaucoma, which she had developed as a child. Although controlled with medication, she knew that she might have to live as a person with low vision one day.

**“I’m very appreciative of all the supportive volunteer services, and Terry is wonderful and very generous with his time.”**

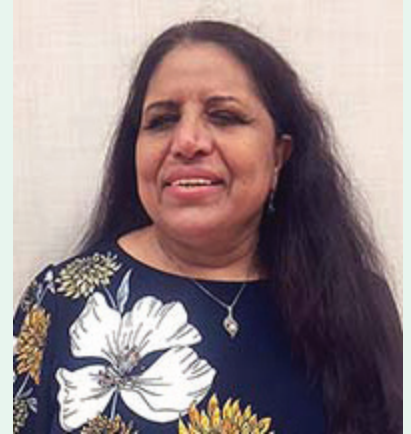


Photo: Quote “I’m very appreciative of all the supportive volunteer services, and Terry is wonderful and very generous with his time,” next to a portrait of Nooria.

Nooria was able to come to Lighthouse Guild for help. Volunteer readers assisted her with her English as a Second Language class assignment so she could improve her English skills. Once her English improved sufficiently, she returned here to study for her high school equivalency exam.

Then one day, she was randomly attacked by a stranger. The violent incident caused a retina to detach, leaving her totally blind overnight. Adjusting to blindness was difficult. Nooria returned to us for mobility and independent living skills lessons. In 2004, she ran her first of 16 marathons. When she decided to get her Master’s degree, she took advanced technology classes at Lighthouse Guild.

Nooria is extremely grateful to the teachers and volunteers she has worked with. They bolstered her self-esteem and self-development. “If it wasn’t for them, I wouldn’t be here,” she says.

She founded the Afghanistan International Foundation for the Blind. The Taliban’s takeover of Afghanistan in 2021 has limited the organization’s services, but it is working with immigration authorities to send 15 families with blind and visually impaired members to different countries.

Nooria’s own volunteer efforts created an interest in her to become a social worker. Currently, Nooria’s focus is preparing for her social work licensing exam, which she will take in 2024.

None of this would have been possible, Nooria says, without the help of her Lighthouse Guild volunteers. One volunteer, Terry, is “my supporter, my helper, my angel.” Her other cherished volunteers are Sandra and Sheila. Terry’s comfort with technology is especially valuable. Among other online tasks, he helps her locate the test preparation materials she needs for the social work exam: books, practice exams, and answer sheets.

Read more about Nooria’s story on our [website](#).

## Innovations in Intraocular Pressure and Closed Loop Drug Delivery Systems

We explore the intersection between innovation and resilience in the latest episode of **“On Tech & Vision with Dr. Cal Roberts.”** With a focus on out-of-the-box thinking, I talk to Max Ostermeier, CEO and Founder of Implants Ophthalmic Products about the challenges of complying with protocols like the need to monitor eye pressure for diseases like glaucoma. And the new technology that can help patients better manage glaucoma and possibly evolve into better treatment delivery options in the future.

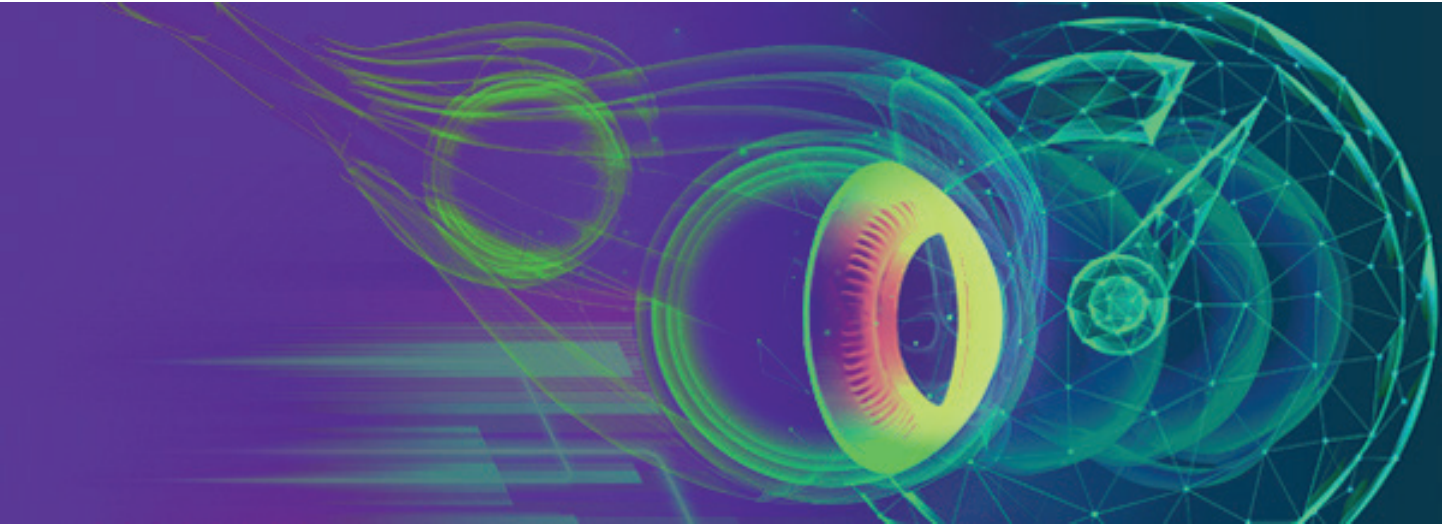


Illustration of the side of an eyeball next to a pressure gage.

## We Need Your Help Testing an Innovative App!

At Lighthouse Guild, we are all about supporting the latest innovation that will help people who are visually impaired get to where they want to go. We are a testing site for the NaviLens app, which allows users to interact more easily and accessible with their environment in places such as subway stations, bus stops and museums or public buildings. The MTA and the Transit Innovation Partnership have just launched a pilot program to also test this smartphone app at bus stops on New York City's M23 bus route. The app enables bus riders who are blind and low vision to use their smartphones to find bus stops and learn of arrival times. We are asking people who are visually impaired to help the MTA and Transit Innovation Partnership in this initiative by testing the NaviLens app on your smartphones and providing feedback. Your participation and input are vital! For more information and to – most importantly – fill out a feedback survey, visit the [MTA website](#).

## A Song of Support

Lighthouse Guild welcomed almost 100 supporters to the legendary club Feinstein's/54 Below in New York City for an evening of cabaret with performer Seth Sikes. Seth spoke about the meaningful work of Lighthouse Guild's programs. With his talented band backing him, Seth belted a set of favorites from the Great American Songbook like Billie Holiday's "I'll Be Seeing You." Proceeds from the event will support our mission of providing exceptional services to help people who are visually impaired attain their goals.

With your support of time, talent and donations, Lighthouse Guild can work towards a world where no person is limited by their visual capacity. Please consider supporting our mission by **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

**Donate:** [lighthouseguild.org/donate/](https://lighthouseguild.org/donate/)

**Volunteer:** [lighthouseguild.org/volunteer/](https://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](https://lighthouseguild.org)