



ENVISION THE FUTURE

The Chicago Lighthouse Endowment Campaign



For over 110 years, The Chicago Lighthouse has helped people who are blind, visually impaired, disabled and Veterans build self-sufficient and successful lives. Our programs cover every life stage, providing educational, social and employment opportunities for these historically underserved communities.

Since our beginning in 1906, The Chicago Lighthouse has championed access and inclusion for all. From providing jobs to people who were blind or visually impaired in the early 20th century to having broad representation of Veterans and people with disabilities among our staff today, The Chicago Lighthouse has always believed that by providing meaningful opportunities for our clients, they can lead more independent, fulfilling lives.

To continue to offer these vitally important services for today's generation and generations to come, The Chicago Lighthouse needs your help. Our *Envision the Future* Endowment Campaign will ensure we will remain **the premier** organization for those most in need of our critical services.

For more than a century, The Chicago Lighthouse has served as a beacon for Chicago's underserved communities. We began in 1906 by providing clothes, food and employment services to people who were blind or visually impaired. Over the years, we expanded our programming to include children, Seniors and adults with visual impairments and additional disabilities. Seeing a need for additional services in our community, we broadened our mission in 2014 to include services for Veterans and people who are otherwise disabled.

With 40 programs, proudly serving 67,000 people annually, The Chicago Lighthouse sets the benchmark as one of the most comprehensive social service agencies in the country. We never turn away a client based on an inability to pay.

Throughout our history, we have followed one simple principle: All people, regardless of ability, deserve an opportunity to achieve their highest potential. Whether helping a toddler who is visually impaired take her first tentative steps in a world built for the sighted, providing gainful employment for someone who had lost hope, or outfitting a young man with the latest in visual-assistance technology so he can continue to follow his dream of being a pharmaceutical technician, we want everyone to have a chance to live the life they envision, now and long into the future.

And so, we are proud to introduce our *Envision the Future* Endowment Campaign. In the following pages, you will see how we have changed countless lives with our education, employment services and research and rehabilitation programs. Only with a healthy endowment can The Chicago Lighthouse continue providing our services to the people who need them the most—today, tomorrow and for generations to come!

With much appreciation in advance,



Janet P. Szlyk

Janet P. Szlyk, Ph.D.
President & CEO
The Chicago Lighthouse



Caroline Grossinger

Caroline Grossinger
Envision the Future
Endowment Campaign Chair



A History of Innovation, Access and Inclusion

- 1906 A group of women comes together as the Improvement Association for Blind People to collect food and clothing for people who are blind. This group eventually becomes The Chicago Lighthouse.
- 1920 The Chicago Lighthouse begins a job placement program focused on finding employment for people who are blind or visually impaired.
- 1954 The Chicago Lighthouse establishes the **first Low Vision Clinic** in the Midwest.
- 1955 Helen Keller dedicates The Chicago Lighthouse's building on Chicago's West Side.
- 1969 The Chicago Lighthouse's **Eleanor Palmer Development Center** begins serving children who are blind and visually impaired—and have additional disabilities—for whom mainstream school is not an option.
- 1974 The Chicago Lighthouse establishes one of America's first **Early Intervention Programs** to help infants and toddlers with visual impairments reach crucial developmental milestones.
- 1977 The Chicago Lighthouse begins manufacturing clocks as an exclusive contractor with the U.S. Government through the AbilityOne Program.
- 1996 The William Strickfaden **Assistive Devices Store** opens, providing a model for The Chicago Lighthouse's current **Tools for Living™** stores.
- 2003 The **Illinois Instructional Materials Center**, which provides textbooks and other adaptive materials to students who are blind throughout Illinois, moves to The Chicago Lighthouse.

- 2005 **Chicagoland Radio Information Service** (CRIS), a news reading and information service, becomes a part of The Chicago Lighthouse.
- 2010 **The Pangere Center for Inherited Retinal Diseases** opens, attracting patients from all over the world with its pioneering research on congenital retinal diseases.
- 2010 **The Sandy & Rick Forsythe Center for Comprehensive Vision Care** is established, offering vision care, occupational therapy and psychological counseling to people with vision impairments.
- 2012 **The Chicago Lighthouse North** in Glenview opens, offering low-vision care and a Tools for Living™ store. It now includes **The Sandy Forsythe Assistive Technology Center**.
- 2012 The Chicago Lighthouse lands its first **Customer Care Center** contract.
- 2013 Doors open at the **Judy and Ray McCaskey Preschool**, where sighted children and those who are blind or visually impaired learn side-by-side.
- 2014 The Chicago Lighthouse broadens its service mission to **include people who are disabled and Veterans**, in addition to those who are blind or visually impaired.
- 2016 After the State of Illinois ends its TransVision program, The Chicago Lighthouse creates the **Youth Transition Program** to help adolescents who are blind or visually impaired learn independent living skills.
- 2017 **The Beatrice Cummings Mayer Senior Center** launches, giving older adults with vision impairments a place to learn new skills and build a community.
- 2020 The Chicago Lighthouse launches a partnership with the American Foundation for the Blind to develop a knowledge-based jobs program for people who are blind or visually impaired.
- 2020 The Chicago Lighthouse opens the nation's first **Center for Prosthetic Vision Rehabilitation**, working with world-renowned partners on new vision restoration therapies and devices.



A woman with dark hair and a headband is smiling warmly at a young boy. The boy is wearing blue-rimmed glasses and a brown fuzzy vest over a tan shirt. He is holding a blue pen and looking up at the woman. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a social setting.

education

SHAPING THE FUTURE

EDUCATION IS THE CORNERSTONE OF INDEPENDENCE. OUR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR INFANTS, CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS GIVE KIDS THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO BUILD MEANINGFUL LIVES. OUR PROGRAMS HAVE HELPED THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN SEE A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES RATHER THAN LIMITS.

When Anna reached out to our Birth-to-Three Early Intervention Program, she felt overwhelmed. Already juggling the chaos of newborn triplets, one of her babies, Luca, had been diagnosed with retinopathy of prematurity. Like many of our Early Intervention children, Luca had an additional diagnosis of cerebral palsy, which affected his muscle control. While Lighthouse teachers worked with Luca on his developmental challenges, the young family attended group ses-

sions where they met other families with whom they could share resources and experiences. Connecting with that group helped Anna start the process of accepting her new life.

“The Chicago Lighthouse’s Birth-to-Three Parent Group was the first time I felt comfortable opening up about how I felt as a parent of a child with a disability. It helped me meet other parents who could say, ‘I understand. I’m with you,’” Anna says.

Diagnosed with Stargardt disease at a young age, Jim feared the day when his vision would decline to the point where he could no longer contribute meaningfully to the success of an employer. In 2015, facing a rapid and unexpected loss in vision, Jim became a patient of world-renowned ophthalmologist Dr. Gerald Fishman, who not only treated Jim's physical condition but heard his professional concerns as well. With Dr. Fishman's assistance, Jim interviewed for the role of Call Center Supervisor. He is now The Lighthouse's Director of Call Center Planning and Analytics, overseeing operations and reporting for our Customer Care Centers.

"As a visually impaired person, it is intimidating to enter the workforce where you're not sure how your disability is going to be perceived. The Lighthouse provided solutions that eliminated barriers I was worried about, so I can focus on doing my job. And, thanks to The Lighthouse, I now have a very fulfilling job," Jim says.

employment

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES



HAVING A JOB IS MORE THAN COLLECTING A PAYCHECK. IT CREATES A SENSE OF PURPOSE. PROVIDING JOB OPPORTUNITIES HAS BEEN A CORE TENET OF THE CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE'S MISSION SINCE ITS FOUNDING. OUR EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM HELPS PEOPLE LIVE THE MOST FULFILLING AND MEANINGFUL LIVES POSSIBLE.

A photograph of two female researchers in white lab coats. The researcher on the left is smiling and looking towards the camera. The researcher on the right is wearing glasses and holding a small, white, rectangular device that is glowing with a blue light. They are in a laboratory setting with various bottles and equipment visible in the background.

research and

LEADING INNOVATION

VISION CARE IS ALWAYS PROGRESSING. THE CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE'S WORLD-CLASS RESEARCHERS WORK WITH LEADING COMPANIES AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS ON CUTTING-EDGE MEDICAL AND TECHNOLOGY TRIALS. OUR SPECIALIZED CARE TEAMS DEVELOP SOLUTIONS THAT ENABLE PATIENTS TO LIVE THE LIVES THEY ENVISION.

nd rehabilitation



As a violinist in the first violin section of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Alison Dalton relied on her sight. If she could not read music, or see her conductor, her career would come to an end. Diagnosed with a central scotoma, Alison was losing hope, until she came to the Pangere Center for Inherited Retinal Diseases.

Dr. Gerald Fishman, a world-renowned ophthalmologist, and our Assistive Technology team created a unique, first-of-its-kind tool that enabled Alison to read sheet music and keep her dream job. She continues to receive low vision services through The Sandy & Rick Forsythe Center for Comprehensive Vision Care.

“When I walked through the doors at The Chicago Lighthouse, I felt that they would take care of me. I had been to 40 doctors who had no solutions,” Alison says.

The Chicago Lighthouse by the Numbers

40
PROGRAMS
serving **67,000**
annually



**YOUTH
TRANSITION**

Our Youth Transition Program has **helped over 400 teens and young adults develop independent living skills** since 2016.

BIRTH-to-THREE

Since 1974, our Birth-to-Three Early Intervention Program has helped thousands of infants and toddlers with blindness or visual impairment reach crucial developmental milestones.



70%
of people who
are blind or
visually impaired
are not employed

The Chicago Lighthouse creates opportunities for people to work.

Provides over
\$2 MILLION
in low-vision
CHARITABLE CARE
every year



CREATED 3,000 JOBS

since opening our first Customer Care Center in 2012. Many of our employees are blind, visually impaired, disabled, Veterans, or come from underserved communities.

Ways to Give

A gift to the *Envision the Future* Endowment Campaign will enable The Chicago Lighthouse to continue its legacy of opening doors to help people live independent, fulfilling lives long into the future.

Help us raise \$7 million for our Endowment with a gift of:

- Cash
- Publicly traded stock
- Planned gifts from wills and trusts

Special naming opportunities are also available.

Your donation is an investment to ensure people who are blind, visually impaired, disabled and Veterans receive the services they need for generations to come. Your support is invaluable. Contributions can be made all at once or over a three-year period.



A campaign to **ensure** The Chicago Lighthouse
will continue to provide our essential **services**
to people who are blind, visually impaired,
disabled and Veterans **for years to come.**

For more information or to make a gift to the Endowment Campaign,
please call or write us at:

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The Chicago
Lighthouse

www.chicagolighthouse.org