





JUST BECAUSE A MAN LACKS
THE USE OF HIS EYES **DOESN'T**
MEAN HE LACKS VISION.

—STEVIE WONDER



REDEFINING 20/20 VISION

20/20 vision: what is it, really? It's not "perfect." And it's really not all that "normal." In fact, only about 35 percent of the U.S. population sees with 20/20 visual acuity, unaided by corrective lenses or LASIK surgery.*

This imperfect measure is something so many people take for granted. But it's only one way we humans can perceive our world.

Vision is so much more than eyesight.

That's why, in this overview of 2019, we're showcasing some of the ways The Lighthouse and our vibrant community are redefining the concept of "20/20."

You'll learn how inclusive programs and care are creating new possibilities for people who are blind, visually impaired, disabled and Veterans... and how groundbreaking research and technology are leveling the playing field for those we serve.

Along the way, we'll share **what's new right now, and what's next for The Lighthouse**—and how, with your help, our organization can continue to be a life-changing community of care for generations to come.

*For more about visual acuity, see p. 14.





ON THE COVER: Artwork by Alisa Singer contains layers of words and phrases such as “SEE,” “20/20,” “VISION,” “Vision is so much more than perfect eyesight,” and “INCLUSION.” The words appear obscured and unclear, alluding to the fact that the majority of people do not have perfect eyesight.

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RE-DEFINING 20/20

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For large print or Braille versions of the Annual Report, call: (312) 666-1331 ext. 3358, or email: publications@chicagolighthouse.org



DEAR FRIENDS,

In 2019, we made remarkable strides toward a world of greater accessibility and inclusion for the people we serve.

But as we reflect on that progress, our hearts are with everyone in our community and around the world who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We're particularly thankful for the heroic efforts of healthcare workers working tirelessly to save lives every day.

This crisis is unlike anything that we have lived through. We are in uncharted territory, and we are all doing the best we can, with the resources we have, to take care of ourselves and the ones we love.

Imagine facing this crisis without vision. This is where The Chicago Lighthouse has stepped in to allay fears and provide the support needed to the blind community.

Our commitment to providing excellent care and game-changing opportunities remains steadfast. As you browse these pages, we hope you'll agree that our mission is more important than ever.

Through the extraordinary generosity of our donors and the tireless efforts of our staff, clinicians and volunteers, we change lives every day. We share the stories of our clients and patients with profound gratitude—and abundant hope for the future of our organization.

As we face a new set of challenges in a rapidly changing world, we know that partnerships are crucial.

Last spring, we renewed our contract with UI Health and opened a brand-new, state-of-the-art customer care center—the latest expansion of our social enterprise operations. We're able to employ more people and show other organizations that an inclusive, accessible workplace is not just possible, but profitable. This idea appears to be catching on.¹

We're working together at every level of government and business to advocate for our community—and to celebrate it, too.

In September, we hosted Center Stage, a free, accessible concert at Navy Pier that featured brilliant entertainers with and

¹ www.tinyurl.com/NYT-disabledemployees

without disabilities from Chicago and around the country. Their performances exemplified our message of how access and inclusion enriches us all.

These are just a few of the highlights from 2019 you'll read about here.

However, we also experienced great loss in the past year. We mourn the passing of several dear friends whose investments in The Lighthouse have helped build our organization into the vibrant community of care it is today. The legacies of Larry Broutman and Bill Conaghan, as well as Charles and Margery Barancik, will be felt in our halls and in our hearts for many years to come.

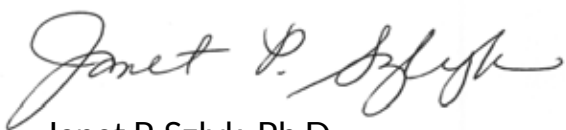
Moving forward, we see The Lighthouse as a center for reinvention. In this report, we're sharing how we're redefining possibility through inclusive opportunities and care—and even redefining what it means to be blind, visually impaired or disabled through technology and research that level the playing field for our community.

On behalf of our team and all those we serve, thank you for your support and for your commitment to help sustain our mission in 2020 and beyond.

Wishing you all health and safety,



Gary Rich
Chair, Board of Directors



Janet P. Szlyk, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer

A Labor of Love: Gary Rich Steps Down as Board Chair



When Gary Rich visited The Lighthouse for the first time, he knew it was special. "I saw that it was a happy place," he says.

Since then, our organization has been close to his heart—and it's grown stronger through his hands-on, passionate leadership.

Gary first got involved with The Lighthouse when his longtime friend, Dr. Janet Szlyk, asked if he'd consider volunteering the services of his handyman company to help with renovations at our headquarters.

He was particularly touched by how his crew of service technicians interacted with Lighthouse clients. "We were all emotionally moved," says Gary. "Later, I learned how this is a place that changes lives every day."

Shortly after Gary sold his business, he put his wide-ranging entrepreneurial experience to work for us as a Board member.

He began by leading a marketing committee focused on promoting services at our Glenview location. **Then he helped launch the Poker and Casino Night fundraiser, which was a smashing success.** Now, it's a highly anticipated annual event.

Gary has always been as generous with his connections as he has been with his support. He introduced us to "Chicago Treasure" Larry Broutman and, along with his wife Michelle, became a champion of our Scholarship Program.

Though he plans to step down from his current position in June, he will stay on the Board and take on a new role as Scholarship Program co-chair.

"It's been an honor to watch The Lighthouse mature," he says. **"For a long time, I was so busy with my career, but I wanted to do something when I retired. This has given me purpose."**



MY FIELD OF DREAMS

by Kalari Girtley-Jackson

I always say that my life is split into two halves: before I lost my vision and after my world went dark.

Until I was six years old, my life was almost perfect. One day, I was in my first grade classroom, following a lesson on the board, and all of a sudden ... I couldn't see anything. Surprisingly, I wasn't scared. I thought my mom could fix it. Mothers were magical figures who could fix anything.

Unfortunately, she couldn't.

Soon, we learned why. As an infant, doctors diagnosed me with hydrocephalus, which causes water to build up, putting pressure on the brain. When I was three months old, they corrected it with a device called a shunt.

My sudden vision loss was the result of the shunt's malfunction. It damaged my optic nerve, and I lost 90 percent of my vision.

Because I was just six years old, I was confused. Why was everyone so sad? Why were they babying me? They said I was blind, but I could still see some things. I wasn't allowed to run and play with my friends anymore. My parents wanted me to stay inside.

Finally, my dad sat me down and explained that my life had changed. My vision loss meant I could never be average: I'd always need to stay ahead to succeed.

But I still resented my blindness. I had violent outbursts, lashing out at my siblings and cousins. I lashed out at God, too: why did he take away my vision?

It was this way for three years—until the Chicago Park District came to my school and taught us how to play beep baseball, a modified version of America’s pastime for people with visual impairments, using an electronic ball that beeps.

It was as if I was able to breathe again.

I could soar across the field, swing a bat, tackle a base and release my anger in a constructive way. I could be a kid once more, not just a kid who was visually impaired—but an athlete. Beep baseball saved my life.

It’s been my passion ever since. I’m a proud member of the Chicago Comets, a National Beep Baseball League Team. The sport has even taken me to Barcelona, Spain, on a trip sponsored by OrCam, Inc, a company that makes assistive technologies. Beep baseball has propelled me to channel my talents into opportunity.

The confidence I acquired on the field carried me through college at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where I earned a degree in journalism. Later, I earned a master’s in media management from Columbia College Chicago. I was often the only person in class with a visual impair-



Kalari smiles alongside her three children, who she calls her “heartbeats.”

ment. But I persevered, meeting deadlines alongside my sighted classmates.

In spite of my education, skills and work ethic, I’ve been overlooked or rejected by employers for years. **But that changed when I landed a job at The Chicago Lighthouse.**

After working in the UI Health Customer Care Center for five years, I’m branching out into The Lighthouse’s marketing department, where I can use my writing skills. I feel as if I am alive again. My creativity is flowing and I love it.

When I’m not on the beep baseball field or fighting for workplace inclusion for individuals with disabilities, I’m with my three beautiful children—two 12-year-olds and a 2-year-old—and my wonderful husband, Christopher. He and I are blind, but our children are sighted. This is a blessing and a challenge. They’re my proudest achievements—my heartbeats.

I’ve been blessed throughout my life. It’s been a constant process of adapting and advancing. And my father’s words still resonate with me. I’ll never be “average.” Failure isn’t an option. I know I’ll always land on my feet.



◀ Kalari (far right) outside Barcelona’s Sagrada Família with Dr. Szlyk (near right), Lauren Annese (center) and friends.

CENTER STAGE

FOR ACCESS AND INCLUSION

“ALL IN,” ROCK OUT CENTER STAGE AT NAVY PIER SPOTLIGHTS PERFORMERS OF EVERY ABILITY

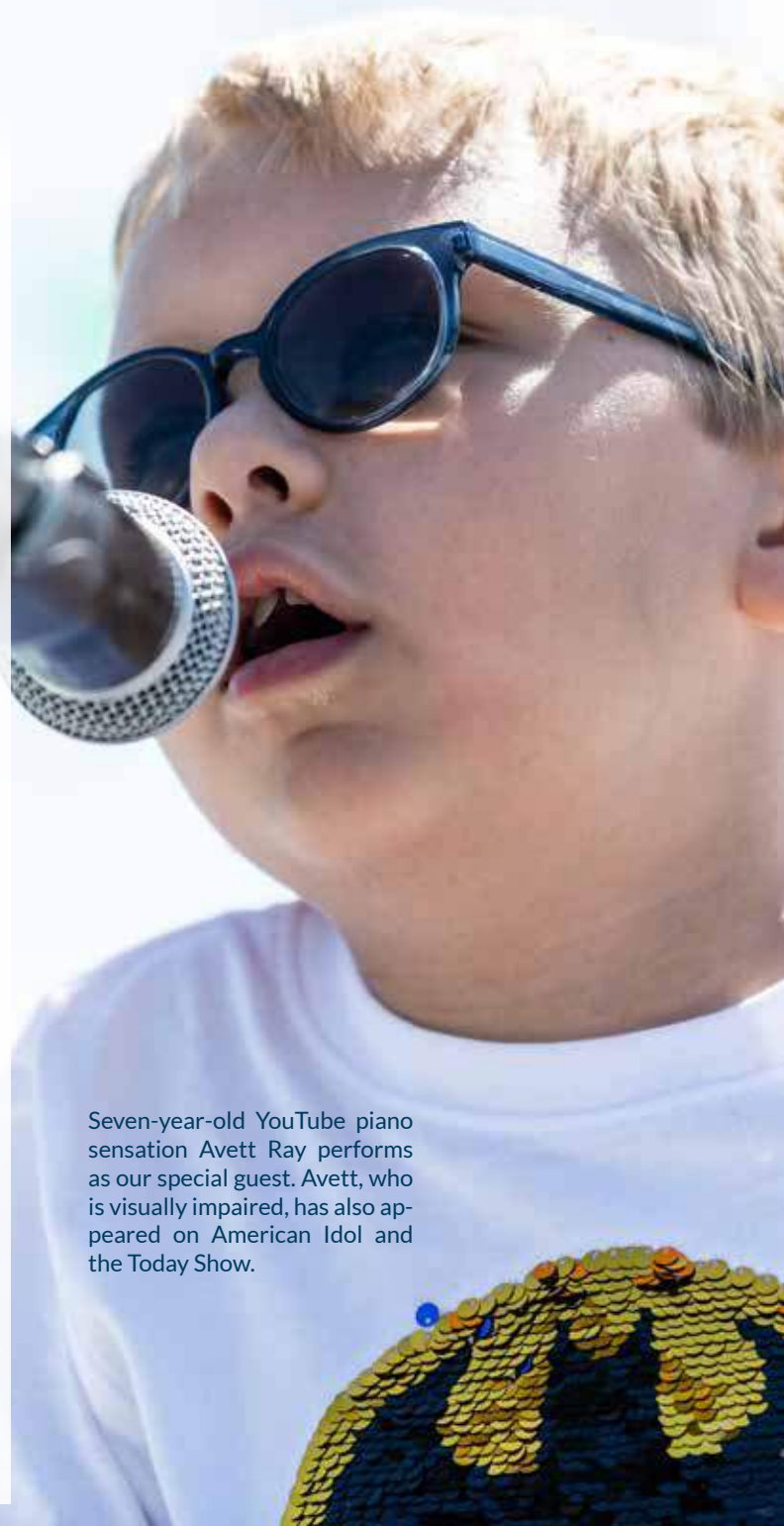
As the most popular tourist attraction in Chicago, the “People’s Pier” was the ideal place for us to pump up the volume.

Last September, The Lighthouse brought its message of access and inclusion out for a beautiful day by the lake. Center Stage, a free public concert, showcased multi-talented performers with and without disabilities from Chicagoland and beyond.

The show, emceed by WGCI Radio personality Leon Rogers, drew more than 800 pier-goers over three hours. The audience was enthralled by a lineup of eclectic performances, including music, dance and comedy—and inspired to give nearly \$10,000 to support our programs.

Center Stage represented “the best of what Chicago is: a proud Great Lakes city, showcasing people of all abilities creating art, music and laughter,” says Julie Stark, Vice Chair of The Lighthouse Board of Directors.

The infectious energy of the entertainers was matched only by their message: let’s go **“all in”** for access and inclusion for everyone. When we do, extraordinary things happen.



Seven-year-old YouTube piano sensation Avett Ray performs as our special guest. Avett, who is visually impaired, has also appeared on American Idol and the Today Show.





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PHOTOS (clockwise beginning far left): Avett Ray wows the audience with his rendition of “Bohemian Rhapsody.” | Navy Pier’s bustling crowds have all eyes on Center Stage. | Center Stage emcee Leon Rogers of WGCI smiles alongside Lighthouse Vice Board Chair Julie Stark (far left), Marketing Director Angela D’Antonio (second from right), and Lighthouse President and CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk (far right). | Joyful performances spark spontaneous dancing in the audience.

For more photos, visit: chicagolighthouse.org/event-photo-gallery

To see the full Center Stage lineup, visit:
chicagolighthouse.org/centerstage/lineup



LEARNING WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

“When you see obstacles, create opportunities. When you see adversity, find a way,” says Michelle Henton, one of the keynote speakers at our 2019 scholarship awards ceremony.

After a car accident left her quadriplegic, Michelle didn’t let it stop her from pursuing her educational aspirations. She obtained associate and bachelor’s degrees before earning a master’s in clinical psychology from Roosevelt University.

She now works as a guidance counselor at COMPSYCH, the world’s largest provider of employee assistance programs, after receiving job placement assistance from The Lighthouse.

Established in 2004, our Scholarship Program breaks barriers to education and creates new possibilities for post-secondary students who are blind, visually impaired, disabled or Veterans so they can pursue the careers of their dreams.



Scholarship Coordinator Maureen Reid and her guide dog Gaston smile alongside a scholar during our annual scholarship ceremony.

“Some of our students may not be as competitive for traditional scholarships because of limitations they face—like accessing the accommodations they need to participate in extracurricular activities or excel academically,” says Maureen Reid, who coordinates the Scholarship Program at The Lighthouse. “Our funding is crucial to their success.”

But what makes our Scholarship Program extraordinary is that it helps cover critical expenses beyond tuition, including assistive technology and adapted educational materials. Plus, our scholars can access internship and career development opportunities, like Michelle did.

To date, we’ve awarded over 750 scholarships, totaling over \$1 million.

In 2019 alone, The Lighthouse awarded a total of \$70,000 to 31 outstanding students, who earned, on average, a 3.6 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

They’re poised to innovate—and inspire other students with disabilities—in a wide

range of fields, including education, law, physics, nursing, the arts, aerospace engineering and computer information systems.

The 2019 class of scholarship recipients is enrolled at Northwestern University, John Marshall School of Law, Michigan State University and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, to name a few.

We were pleased to welcome five-time scholarship recipient Preston Radtke as another keynote speaker at last year's ceremony.

Preston, who is blind, first became involved with The Lighthouse as a child. He participated in many of our events and competitions, including the Braille Challenge.

He graduated from Ball State University with a bachelor's in public relations and creative writing, as well as a master's in emerging media design and development—all while working in the school's adaptive technology lab.



Each year our scholarship recipients represent a diverse range of backgrounds, fields of study and career aspirations. Preston Radtke (above with his dog) served as a keynote speaker.

Today, he's a web accessibility specialist at Rutgers University and a part-time lecturer in its School of Communication and Information. There, he uses his expertise to advocate for students with disabilities.

Our Scholarship Program would not be possible without the support of our generous donors,

including Dr. Joel Kaplan, Marv Lader and Gary Rich.

"Never regret searching for the truth and expanding your knowledge because it always pays off in the long run," says Lighthouse scholar Daniela Estrada, who attends the Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law. "Pursue your education as fiercely and persistently as you possibly can."



OPERATION: HOMECOMING

Helping Hands for a Marine Vet

When Marine Corporal Colt Stovall left Walter Reed Medical Center last fall, it wasn't for the first time. But hopefully it was the last.

The Lighthouse is proud to have helped his family prepare for his long-awaited, unforgettable homecoming.

The support our Veterans services provided, together with Illinois Joining Forces (IJF) partners, was invaluable



Marine Corporal Colt Stovall is touched and amazed as he navigates the new accessible features of his home.



IT REALLY MADE ME FEEL LIKE I WAS NOT ALONE.

—TRACIE STOVALL



for Colt's wife Tracie and their five kids.

"It really made me feel like I was not alone. I could turn to any of them for support, for help, or just to vent," she says.

The Stovall family has been through a lot over the years.

In 2006, Colt was serving in Iraq when a roadside bomb exploded near his Hum-vee. He suffered massive head trauma, a burned esophagus and severe injuries to his right leg. After emergency care in Iraq and Germany, he began a new journey at Walter Reed.

Since then, he has traveled between Bethesda and his home near Normal, Illinois, for dozens of surgeries and extensive rehabilitation in efforts to save his leg. But last year, doctors determined that amputation was the best course of action. A long period of pain management and therapy followed.

While Colt recovered, Tracie became the family's sole earner—while managing Colt's ongoing care.

Colt took his first steps on a prosthetic leg at the end of July. But he needed the use of a wheelchair as well. Before he came home from Walter Reed, their home needed renovations—like wider doorways, smooth floors and a ramp—to make it accessible.

Tracie reached out to Michael Smith, a customer care representative for IJF at The Lighthouse.

"Michael was absolutely amazing," she says.

Michael, a Navy Veteran, tapped The Lighthouse's extensive network of agencies, nonprofits and other resources that could help. Whatever Tracie needed, he found a way to make it happen. But most importantly, he was a lifeline.

"What I really appreciated was that on the phone, he could hear if I was upset or anxious or just overwhelmed," says Tracie. "He'd calm me down, talk me through ... that was helpful beyond words."

To watch a video of Colt's homecoming, visit tinyurl.com/IJF-Colt.

FULL CIRCLE AND FULL SPEED AHEAD

Today, Marina Salman is an intern in our financial development department, where she works with a team of grant writers to help secure funding for crucial programs.

But she first came to The Lighthouse when she was just 10 years old. Her primary eye doctor noticed that there was "something different" about her vision, and referred her to Dr. Gerald Fishman at the Pangere Center for Inherited Retinal Diseases.

It was there that Marina was diagnosed with progressive retinitis pigmentosa (RP), which causes gradual vision loss.

"It was both the best and worst of times," Marina says. Her parents, who immigrated from Jordan, refused to believe that her vision would deteriorate. "And so did I," she says. "What else is a kid supposed to think? We follow what our parents tell us."

Eleven years later, she returned to The Lighthouse as a scholarship recipient. It wasn't until Marina and her father arrived for the ceremony that her father realized it was the same place where she received her diagnosis. It was "definitely surreal at first," she says. But later, her father told her that "maybe it was meant to be to come back to The Lighthouse."

That was unequivocally true.

Marina went on to earn three more Lighthouse scholarships, which were crucial to her educational journey. She earned a bachelor's degree in clinical and counseling psychology from Saint Xavier University before going on to complete a master's degree in counseling, specialized in sport and health psychology, from Adler University.



In her free time, Marina is training for the 2020 Chicago Marathon.

“

I BRING A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE BECAUSE... I UNDERSTAND THE CHALLENGES MY COMMUNITY FACES

—MARINA SALMAN

”

After grad school, she returned to The Lighthouse yet again—this time, to the employment services program.

Despite her education and extensive clinical experience, "obtaining employment has definitely been one of my biggest challenges," says Marina. "But interning here has forced me to face some hard truths about myself. One of them was not being willing to openly discuss my disabilities during job interviews."

Marina, who has speech dysarthria and uses a manual wheelchair, says that The Lighthouse has helped build the confidence she needs on the job market.

"It has made all the difference," she says.

As an intern, Marina helps conduct research on prospective foundations and corporations that might make a good match as funding sources for The Lighthouse's programs.

"I bring a unique perspective because—after all—I am living with disabilities, and I understand the challenges my community faces," she says. Grant writing takes on a different meaning for me. I am humbled by the support of the financial development team for allowing me to share my voice—on behalf of my community."

To learn more about Marina and her plans to participate in the 2020 Chicago Marathon, visit: chicagolighthouse.org/news/meetmarina.

UNCOMMON SENSE

Research at The Lighthouse Tests Groundbreaking Technology



Dr. Grant trains a client to use the BrainPort while walking outside.

It's been called an "electronic lollipop." That's because the BrainPort makes it possible to "see" with one's tongue.

The BrainPort device is on the market today in part because of critical research conducted at The Lighthouse.

"What we've thought about vision for so long—it's not the whole picture," says Senior Research Director Dr. Patricia Grant. "We're finding out so much more. In fact, scans have shown that while they're using the BrainPort, patients who are blind employ the visual parts of their brains.

Research at The Lighthouse, led jointly by Dr. Grant and her colleagues—Assistant Director of Low Vision Research Meesa Royster and Lighthouse President and CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk—was instrumental in FDA approval of the BrainPort.

The device employs a head-mounted video camera, which connects to a postage stamp-sized electrode array that sits atop the tongue. Users who have no usable vision can, with training, learn to interpret its signals to discern the shape, size, location and motion of objects in their environment.

The late neuroscientist Paul Bach-y-Rita, who invented the BrainPort, puts it this way: "You don't see with the eyes. You see with the brain."

The BrainPort has revolutionary potential, says Patricia, who previously served as the director of research for Middleton, Wisconsin-based Wicab, the company that developed it.

But what's especially cool about our clinical trial of the BrainPort—now in its second incarnation as the BrainPort Vision Pro—is that **Lighthouse clients who tested the device gave real-time feedback to its developers about the comfort of the device and how it performed in everyday life.**

"That information went straight back to the engineers," Dr. Grant says.

The engineers could then make small modifications and adjustments as they grew to understand users' experiences—"which is pretty rare to happen between a tech company and the end user," she adds.

“

YOU DON'T SEE WITH THE EYES. YOU SEE WITH THE BRAIN.

—PAUL BACH-Y-RITA ”



The new Hilton Center for Prosthetic Vision Rehabilitation is designed as a high-contrast environment to better support persons using sensory substitution and vision restoration technologies.

The BrainPort is just one of the cutting-edge technologies that The Lighthouse tests and drives forward.

And now, we're poised to do that more than ever.

Later this year, we'll open the Hilton Center for Prosthetic Vision Rehabilitation, funded by Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.

The center has a specific focus: to test, and train people to use, groundbreaking sensory substitution devices and vision restoration technologies.

The center was designed as a high-contrast environment that simulates the kinds of spaces and objects we encounter every day: sidewalks, street signs and rooms with furniture. Walls are painted dark, while windows and doors are emphasized with bright white framing. Bright dishes and utensils pop on a dark table.

Dr. Grant explains that high-contrast environments are more clearly perceived by people using vision restoration technologies. "This allows us to evaluate them in the most ideal setting," she says. "If the device is not effective in this environment, there's no way it's going to work outside it."

The first facility of its kind, the Hilton Center promises to advance the field of prosthetic vision in several key ways.

People learning to use devices have a safe environment in which to train. For example, **BrainPort users can discover what pathways feel like on their tongue before they ever step outside, where there's real traffic and other hazards.**

The Hilton Center team can develop curricula for training users—"we're born not understanding how to feel these things on our tongue," Dr. Grant says. They also plan to create best practices and methods for other researchers to use when evaluating prosthetic devices so that, over time, the research community can make better sense of their data.

"When I first started in the field 20 years ago, this field of research was really focused on how to help people utilize the remaining vision that they had, or how to help them adapt to lack of vision," Dr. Grant says.

"Now we're at a point where technology has advanced so much and so quickly that we're seeing people regain some vision, or gain visual perception. Who knew that the tongue could provide visual perception?"

"Engineers are out there striving to restore vision altogether. I don't know if I'll see that in my lifetime, but it's really exciting to be at the front of this."

AN EXPANDING UNIVERSE OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Elsewhere in The Lighthouse, a group of employees are using another game-changing device: the OrCam MyEye 2, named one of the best inventions of 2019 by Time. The MyEye 2 is a small, lightweight smart camera that attaches to virtually any eye-glass frame. It uses facial recognition and optical character recognition software to identify people and read text—instantly and discreetly.

The Lighthouse partnered with OrCam to provide MyEye 2 devices to 18 team members who are blind or visually impaired. Through their experiences, we hope to demonstrate its utility to insurance companies, employers and other organizations with purchasing power.

We're calling it an "OrCam Universe."

Employees in various departments, including the Tools for Living™ retail store, Lighthouse Industries, and Customer Care Centers, are using the devices at work and home.

There are many ways MyEye 2 makes everyday tasks more efficient, says Michelle Fiocchi, our Manager of Retail Operations and Rehabilitation Services.

"Everything's just incredibly quick with this device," she says.

Employees can scan bar codes, so shipping and organizing retail items is a snap. It can also be used to scan information on a computer screen, which is particularly helpful for call center agents.

Many employees report that the MyEye 2 is beneficial in group settings.

Previously, employees who are blind or visually impaired asked colleagues to read handouts (that were not provided in large print or Braille) to them at meetings. Now, they can read on their own and feel much more included.

"This might seem very small—it's something that sighted people take for granted, "but it's making a huge impact," says Senior Research Director Dr. Patricia Grant, who evaluates feedback from our test group.

The "OrCam universe" is just one way that research and technology can redefine what it means to be blind or visually impaired.

"Technology is moving so rapidly that what seemed impossible five years ago is already here," she says. **"We're always looking into the newest technologies our clients and patients can use. There are limitless possibilities."**

The OrCam MyEye 2 enables individuals who are blind or visually impaired to read text, recognize faces, and more...all packed into a tiny device the size of your finger!



DAX DELIVERS ACCESSIBILITY CONSULTING AS SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

It didn't exactly begin with a pizza, but like many great things, pizza was involved.

Earlier this year when the U.S. Supreme Court weighed in on Domino's Pizza v. Robles, big business took note. Web accessibility standards are vital, and they're here to stay.

The case was originally brought by Guillermo Robles, who is visually impaired. He claimed that Domino's violated the Americans with Disabilities Act because its web and phone apps weren't compatible with the screen readers he needs to access the internet.

The Supreme Court rejected Dominos' appeal of a lower court's ruling, and the case



Jose Martinez (standing) leads a team of IT professionals who are blind and helping to make websites more accessible. [See the NBC5 feature on this service at: www.tinyurl.com/DAXonNBC.]



DAX WILL PROVIDE THE LIGHTHOUSE WITH A PROFITABLE NEW SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN A RAPIDLY GROWING FIELD.

—PHIL YATVIN, Lighthouse Industries Business Development Manager

will now go to trial. Though its fate is uncertain, Robles' case is far from uncommon.

But that's changing, and we're here to help.

The Lighthouse recently launched DAX (Digital Accessible Experience) Consulting Services, which provides services to businesses and organizations that need assistance in improving their web and mobile user experience for people with disabilities. DAX is a partnership with the American Foundation for the Blind.

DAX is a new social enterprise led by IT specialist Jose Martinez, who came to The Lighthouse as a Customer Care Center representative before joining the IT team.

Jose, who was born blind, will work with three other analysts who have visual impairments to provide DAX clients with a range of services. These include usability testing and focus groups as well as audits to help ensure clients' platforms meet global accessibility standards.

"DAX will provide The Lighthouse with a profitable, new social enterprise in a rapidly growing field," says Phil Yatvin, Business Development Manager at Lighthouse Industries. "And it will also create new knowledge-based career pathways for our employees who are blind and visually impaired."

CARING FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

George Burns once said: “You can’t help getting older, but you don’t have to get old.”

That’s worth remembering as we look toward the year 2030, when the U.S. Census Bureau projects a huge demographic shift. That’s when the youngest Baby Boomers turn 65—and one out of every five Americans will be of retirement age. By 2035, older people are projected to outnumber children for the first time in U.S. history.

Because those of us with—*ahem*—more life experience may develop age-related eye diseases and conditions that can cause varying degrees of vision loss, **early referrals to Low Vision specialists (like those at The Chicago Lighthouse) are more important than ever.**

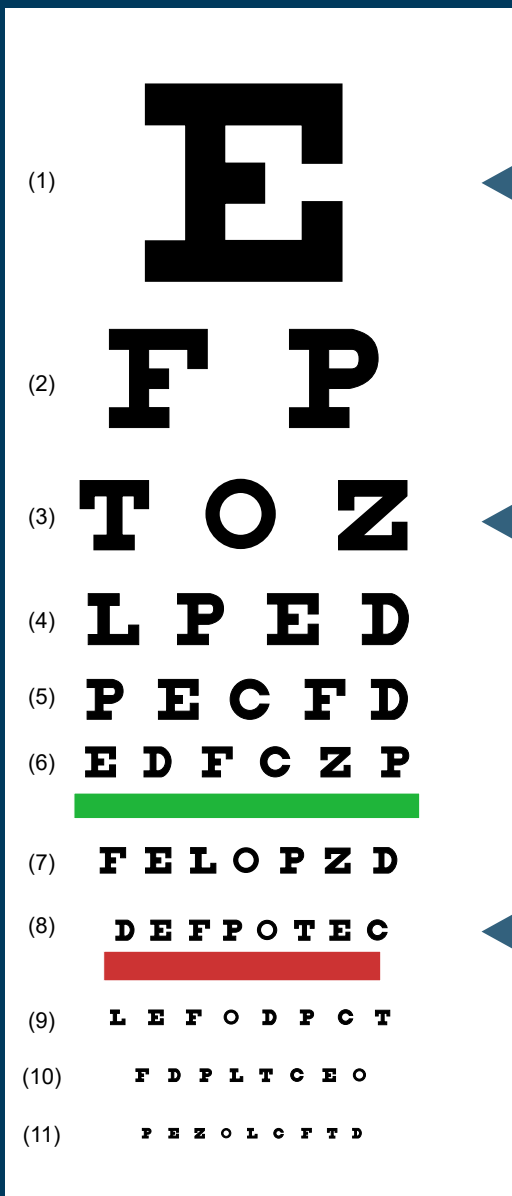
Macular degeneration is expected to affect twice as many Americans by 2050, rising from 9.1 million to 17.8 million people, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC also reports that diabetic retinopathy among people 65-plus will likely quadruple by 2050, rising from 2.5 million to 9.9 million. Age also increases the risk of glaucoma and cataracts.

So it’s crucial that our aging population can access vision care—to stay independent, productive, fulfilled ... and young at heart.

Dr. Kara Crumbliss, Vice President of Clinical Services at The Lighthouse, is ready to meet the challenge. When Dr. Janet Szlyk joined our organization 11 years ago, the aging population “was one of our first topics of discussion: how to meet the increasing need for vision rehabilitation,” says Dr. Crumbliss.

We’ve tackled that by redesigning and expanding our clinic space, hiring more doctors, increasing the breadth of service offerings and decreasing wait times at our clinics, she adds. And crucially, we’re working to “increase awareness among eye care practitioners and the healthcare community,” Dr. Crumbliss says, “of Low Vision rehabilitation as the standard of care.”





LEGALLY
BLIND
20/200*

VISUALLY
IMPAIRED
20/70*

"NORMAL"
SIGHTED
20/20

* corrected vision (with glasses) in one's best seeing eye

WHAT IS 20/20 VISION, ANYWAY?

Visual acuity refers to the sharpness or clarity of a person's vision. It's measured with a test that uses a standardized "eye chart," called a Snellen chart.

If you've had this kind of eye exam, this part should sound familiar: you're asked to stand or sit 20 feet from the eye chart and read it.

If you can read every letter on the eighth line without your glasses or contacts, you're part of a minority of people who naturally have "20/20" vision. Only about 35 percent of Americans see with this level of acuity, unaided by corrective lenses or LASIK surgery.

If the smallest print you can read is line 3, your vision is "20/70." That's because at 20 feet away, you can read what someone with 20/20 vision can read from a distance of 70 feet. If this was your best achievable vision with glasses or contacts, you would be considered *visually impaired*.

But it's important to note that Snellen acuity is just one measurement of vision. Another is the visual field (the total area an individual can see without moving the eyes from side to side). Legal blindness in the U.S. can include a visual field of 20 degrees or less (also called tunnel vision) in the better-seeing eye.

FUTURE FORWARD

As the premier organization serving people who are blind or visually impaired in the nation, we're poised to launch our next phase.

Over our 114-year history, The Lighthouse has changed countless lives. We've built a stellar team of talented leaders and advisors who guide us with vision and integrity. Our patients and clients can access dozens of programs and services under one roof.

There's something for every stage of life and every need: education; vision care; employment and training; assistive technology; independent living and social enterprise. We're a vibrant community where people with disabilities can achieve their dreams.

We conduct research crucial to the development and adoption of cutting-edge technologies for people who are blind or visually impaired. And we're continuing to innovate social enterprise ventures that provide revenue and incorporate our mission.

Now, we're ready to become a hub for thought leaders and practitioners who promote accessibility and inclusion ... a place to prepare future leaders who are blind and an incubator for talent of every ability.



“

WE HAVE A CLEAR VISION FOR WHAT WE CAN DO. **NOW OUR TASK IS TO ENSURE ONGOING SUPPORT FOR THAT VISION.**

—DR. SZLYK, Chicago Lighthouse President and CEO ”



Envision the Future is a campaign to ensure the Chicago Lighthouse will continue to serve people who are blind, visually impaired, disabled and Veterans for years to come.

Securing the future of The Lighthouse allows us the freedom to keep creating new opportunities for those we serve ... invest in new technologies that level the playing field and expand our horizons through advocacy for accessibility and inclusion.

Invest in our future by making a gift today.

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As the COVID-19 pandemic reshapes the lives of so many, the need for our compassion, expertise and advocacy is more critical than ever.

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For information about making a planned gift to The Chicago Lighthouse, please contact Jen Miller, Chief Development Officer, at (312) 997-3643 or email jennifer.miller@chicagolighthouse.org. If you have remembered us in your will or estate plan, please let us know so we can properly honor you.

VOLUNTEERS



A volunteer from Salesforce conducts a mock interview with a client from our Employment Services Program. Mock interviews help our clients with disabilities or who are Veterans to develop strategies for answering difficult questions and communicating their skills and qualifications.

The Chicago Lighthouse is grateful for the generous commitment of time from all of our volunteers. During the 2019 fiscal year, volunteers donated over 2,300 hours of their time. The Lighthouse would like to recognize the following companies and organizations that volunteered in FY19.

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The Corwith Hamill Society honors and recognizes our long-term donors. Gold is for twenty or more years of continuous giving; silver is for fifteen, and bronze is for ten.

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Corwith Hamill was The Lighthouse's longest continuous donor. When he passed away in 2013 at the age of 99, he had donated to The Lighthouse for the majority of his life. In recognition of Mr. Hamill and his generosity to us, we created a society named in his memory.

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IN MEMORIAM OUR TREASURED FRIENDS



Larry Broutman smiles with students of our Preschool who were showcased in his beautiful book “Chicago Treasure.”

LARRY BROUTMAN

We mourn the passing of longtime Board member Larry Broutman, who passed away in December 2019.

Mr. Broutman was a pioneer in materials engineering who, after a long and successful career, he went on to channel his creativity into a remarkable second act.

In retirement, Mr. Broutman researched, photographed and published five books, including “Chicago Treasure,” which casts kids with and without disabilities (some of whom were enrolled in the Lighthouse’s preschool, which he generously supported) as lead characters in beloved fairy tales.

Mr. Broutman, along with his wife Susanne, was instrumental in a number of Lighthouse programs and events, including introducing us to the American Blues Theatre, where the hit musical “The Buddy Holly Story” enjoyed a long run in 2018. We were thrilled to welcome several cast members to a “sock hop” in our caf-

eteria, where they jammed with our in-house band VisionQuest.

As in life, Mr. Broutman always looked to the future, providing that his books’ proceeds be donated to the Chicago Lighthouse.

BILL CONAGHAN

William L. Conaghan, who served as Board Chair from 2008 through 2010, passed away in March 2019.

“We will miss our wonderful friend and mentor,” says Lighthouse President and CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk.

Under his leadership, The Lighthouse completed an ambitious expansion and renovation project that added 12,000 square feet to our Chicago headquarters and allowed us to establish both the Sandy and Rick Forsythe Center for Comprehensive Vision Care and the Pangere Center for Inherited Retinal Diseases.

Mr. Conaghan continued to serve on the Board after his tenure as chair ended.

“Bill was an incredibly talented and kind man who generously shared his big heart and soul with The Chicago Lighthouse,” Dr. Szlyk says. “He was always an enthusiastic supporter of the employment of people who are blind.”



Bill Conaghan, former CLH Chairman of the Board.

CHARLES AND MARGERY BARANCIK

We are deeply saddened by the sudden loss of our friends Charles and Margery Barancik. The dedicated philanthropists, who passed away in December 2019, were longtime supporters of our organization.



Charles and Margery Barancik

The Baranciks were introduced to us after their friend Dr. Joel Kaplan, a member of the Lighthouse's Board, treated Mr. Barancik for vision trauma and saved his eyesight. They became strong advocates of our mission and gave a very substantial gift in honor of Dr. Kaplan, as well as more than \$100,000 in scholarship and gala support over the last ten years.

"They were the most warm and unassuming people that you could imagine," says Dr. Kaplan. "They were sincerely devoted to the enhancement of the lives of others."

A Decade of Opportunity with READER'S DIGEST PARTNERS FOR SIGHT

The Lighthouse and Reader's Digest Partners for Sight Foundation (RDPFS or Partners for Sight) recently celebrated ten years of partnership. During this time, RDPFS helped support one of the first Help Desks in the country for people who needed assistive technology assistance, staffed by a Lighthouse employee who was blind.

Most recently, RDPFS helped fund our Youth Transition Program, which serves young adults with visual impairments (often with additional disabilities), to ensure they have the tools they need for independence. This includes the *Summer in the City Program* and *First Jobs Program*. "I don't know how we would have been able to expand our Program without Partners for Sight's incredible support," says Jennifer Miller, Chief Development Officer. "After we debuted the Program, there was such a long waitlist for *Summer in the City*, we needed to offer two different weeks, to ensure that everyone who wanted to participate could do so. RDPFS helped us make this happen!"

"The Lighthouse offers strong, innovative programs for their clients," says Dianna Kelly-Naghizadeh, Grant Program Manager of RDPFS. "By offering the Youth Transition Program to youth who are blind and visually impaired, it sets up participants for future success as productive, independent members of society."



All Smiles: Our Summer in the City program helps youth build confidence and independence as they make new friends and enjoy unforgettable experiences.

A YEAR IN PICTURES

1. Daniel, a participant in our **Youth Transition Program** and a gifted violinist, performs during our annual Talent Show.
2. Thanks to the generosity of late Board member Larry Broutman, The Lighthouse's rhythm and blues band VisionQuest had the opportunity to perform with cast members from the hit musical **"The Buddy Holly Story."**
3. A young participant in our **Birth-to-Three Early Intervention Program** smiles with his family during our Halloween costume party at The Chicago Lighthouse North.
4. The Lighthouse's new mascot, **Ray L. Beacon**, makes his debut during a Blackhawks pre-skate event hosted at Fifth Third Arena in partnership with Lion Chris Coleman.
5. Employment and Rehabilitation Services Senior Vice President Martha Younger-White and her fellow Lighthouse employees march downtown during July's **Disability Pride Parade**.
6. Katie, of our Seniors Program, enjoys steering a boat on Lake Michigan during our annual **Sight Impaired Cruise** hosted in partnership with the Chicago Yacht Club.
7. Our **Preschool graduation ceremony** is always a joyous celebration. All of our graduates leave The Lighthouse with a 100% kindergarten readiness rate!
8. Chicago Lighthouse President and CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk presents a Blackhawks-themed lighthouse (donated by Board Vice Chair Julie Stark and her husband Rabbi Steven Lowenstein) to Chicago **Blackhawks owner Rocky Wirtz** to thank him and his organization for supporting access and inclusion for people with disabilities.
9. Our **Employment Services Program** launches careers for individuals with disabilities and Veterans by providing computer training, mock interviews, resume guidance and more.
10. Daniel and Hannah, participants in our **First Jobs Program**, enjoy the exciting opportunity to interview Illinois Governor JB Pritzker at his Chicago office.
11. Members of Lighthouse and UI Health leadership cut the ribbon for our new and expanded **UI Health Customer Care Center**, which employs over 100 individuals, many of whom have disabilities.
12. The **NFB BELL Academy**, hosted each summer at The Lighthouse, provides fun and memorable experiences for children who are blind or visually impaired. Participants enjoy taking field trips in the city and learning new skills like Braille reading and writing.





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SCREEN TIME

WHAT'S NEW AND NOW AT LIGHTHOUSE INDUSTRIES

Since 1977, the employees at Chicago Lighthouse Industries have proudly built more than six million clocks. As we enter a new decade, the Industries team is focused on diversifying its product offerings to reflect what today's marketplace demands.

“We're finding new products that keep our workforce busy and sustain us as customer preferences change,” says Rick Sullivan, Product Manager at Lighthouse Industries.

Those new products, offered to federal customers through the government's procurement catalog, include lens/screen cleaning kits and pneumatic computer monitor arms. Industries may also add disposable decontamination wipes for firefighters to the mix,

Meanwhile, high-quality, hand-assembled clocks remain our signature—with a twist. “We're expanding our lineup of digital clocks,” says Rick, “and we're putting added emphasis on personalized clocks.”

And you don't have to be a government agency to enjoy one, he adds: “You can upload your company logo to our website and order a custom clock with ease.”

Visit chicagolighthouseclocks.com to shop our catalog or personalize your own clock today.



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Our talented IT department is led by Ricardo Vilchez (center). In a moment's time, he and his staff were prepared to support many of our staff members as they adjusted to working remotely so that we could continue to serve our community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

REPRESENTATION MATTERS

Elected Officials Connect with The Lighthouse



ABOVE: Mayor Lori Lightfoot announces a plan to install new accessible pedestrian signals during a press conference at The Chicago Lighthouse. LEFT: Illinois Governor JB Pritzker smiles with leadership of The Lighthouse and the Illinois Tollway's Executive Director Jose Alvarez (far left). BELOW: U.S. Senator Richard Durbin meets employees of our UI Health Customer Care Center who are blind during his visit to The Lighthouse this February.

Here at The Lighthouse, we've been advocating for accessibility, inclusion and the rights of people with disabilities for more than 100 years. But we've never been able to do it alone.

That's why we're pleased to host our elected officials and provide them with an up-close look at our life-changing programs.

Last July, we welcomed **Chicago's new mayor, Lori Lightfoot**. She held a press conference at The Lighthouse to announce plans to install up to 100 new accessible pedestrian signals at intersections citywide. Her visit reinforced our partnership with the city in its mission to become "the most inclusive and accessible city in the nation," Mayor Lightfoot said.

In June, **Illinois Governor JB Pritzker** stopped by to learn about the critical services we provide for Veterans and people with disabilities. The governor toured our Preschool as well as the Illinois Tollway and UI Health Customer Care Centers. He also visited Lighthouse Industries, where we presented him with a personal clock made by employees who are blind.

U.S. Senator Dick Durbin visited us in February to learn about our employment programs for individu-



als with disabilities. We demonstrated the OrCam MyEye 2 and discussed its potential in the workplace. As its cost is prohibitive for many, we urged him to consider how federal subsidies for assistive technology could be a game-changer.

"These visits underscore our role as a vital partner with government," says President and CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk. "We look forward to working together to promote inclusion of individuals with disabilities in our community and beyond."

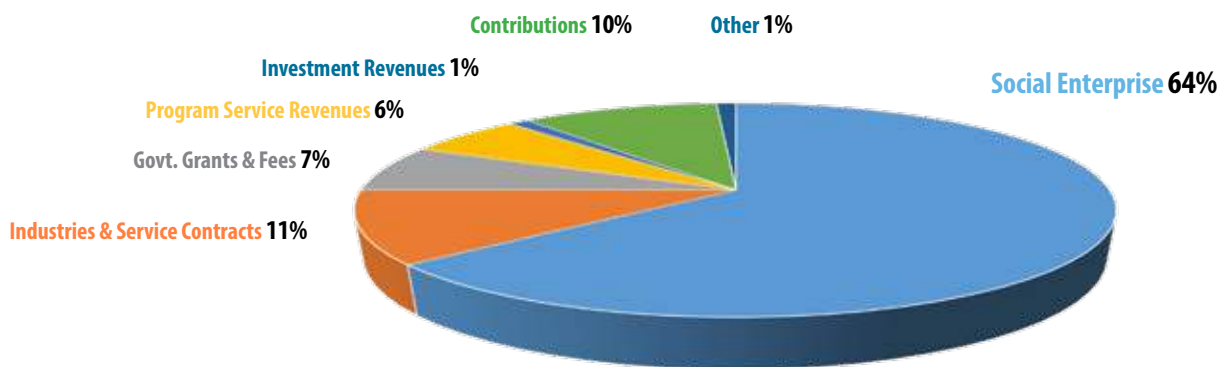
2018 - 2019 Financial Summary and Comparison

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

as of June 30

| ASSETS | | | |
|---|-----------|-------------------|----------------------|
| | | 2018 | 2019 |
| Cash | \$ | 613,513 | \$ 681,729 |
| Receivables, Net | | 6,263,978 | 7,828,693 |
| Inventories | | 646,424 | 966,048 |
| Investments | | 13,412,649 | 12,985,833 |
| Beneficial Interest in Perpetual Trusts | | 574,935 | 570,891 |
| Prepaid Expenses | | 189,422 | 191,368 |
| Land, Building and Equipment, Net | | 10,731,050 | 10,618,473 |
| Total Assets | \$ | 32,431,971 | \$ 33,843,035 |

| LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | | | |
|---|-----------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Liabilities | \$ | 7,413,404 | \$ 9,715,096 |
| Net Assets | | | |
| Unrestricted | | 9,469,420 | 8,094,888 |
| Unrestricted, Board Designated | | 10,070,604 | 9,683,739 |
| Temporarily Restricted | | 3,457,541 | 4,331,270 |
| Permanently Restricted | | 2,021,002 | 2,018,042 |
| Subtotal Net Assets | \$ | 25,018,567 | \$ 24,127,939 |
| Total Liabilities and Net Assets | \$ | 32,431,971 | \$ 33,843,035 |



REVENUE SOURCES

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

Period ended June 30

| REVENUES | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| | 2018 | | 2019 | |
| Contributions & Bequests | \$ | 4,884,734 | \$ | 4,968,552 |
| Lighthouse Industries Sales | | 3,692,326 | | 3,729,964 |
| Call Centers/Service Contracts | | 31,031,982 | | 32,389,339 |
| Program Revenues | | 5,777,101 | | 6,561,193 |
| Investment Income | | 309,677 | | 334,458 |
| Miscellaneous | | 284,681 | | 161,307 |
| Change in Value of Split-Interest Agreements | | 15,970 | | (12,798) |
| Net Realized Gain/(Loss) on Investments | | 430,508 | | 368,675 |
| Net Change in Unrealized Appreciation of Long Term Investments | | (202,651) | | (65,373) |
| Total Revenues | \$ | 46,224,328 | \$ | 48,435,317 |
| EXPENSES | | | | |
| Program Services | \$ | 39,674,480 | \$ | 42,126,934 |
| Management & General | | 5,468,127 | | 5,666,159 |
| Fundraising | | 1,065,475 | | 1,039,006 |
| Public Relations | | 455,746 | | 493,846 |
| Total Expenses | \$ | 46,663,828 | \$ | 49,325,945 |
| CHANGE IN NET ASSETS | | | | |
| Net Assets at Beginning of Year | \$ | 25,458,067 | \$ | 25,018,567 |
| Net Assets at End of Year | \$ | 25,018,567 | \$ | 24,127,939 |

THE CHICAGO SOCIALIGHT

See and be seen at one of The Chicago Lighthouse's unique and engaging events. Whether it's a poker and casino night, a fashion show, or an evening of decadent desserts, there's always something happening in support of The Lighthouse's mission.



1. 2018 FLAIR fashion show honoree Candace Jordan presents the FLAIR award to **2019 recipients** Cheryl Coleman and Ron Katz.
2. Junior Board member Lindsay Januszewski and her guests enjoy the **Sips for Sight** event.
3. Lighthouse President & CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk honors former Board Chair Linda Manning (1995-98), former Lighthouse President Paul Rink (1989-92) and current

- Board Chair Gary Rich at the **Seeing What's Possible Gala**.
4. Over 200 ladies from Chicago's North Shore enjoy an afternoon of Canasta, Mahjongg and Bridge at the Associate Board's **Games Galore**.
5. Guests of the Associate Board's **33rd Annual House & Garden Walk** admire a beautiful dining room chandelier during their tour.

Be part of the fun! See our UPCOMING EVENTS at chicagolighthouse.org/events



6. President and CEO Dr. Janet Szlyk celebrates **Jazz Night** with performers Nikki George and Lisa Hilton.
7. Board member Dr. Thomas Deutsch and friends dance the night away to the sounds of the Ron Bedal Orchestra at the **Seeing What's Possible Gala**.
8. Junior Board members Monica-Kaye Gamble and Debbie Chessick enjoy **Sweets for Sight** with friends.
9. Ten *lucky* players made it to the final table at our **Raising the Stakes for Vision: Poker & Casino Night!**
10. Cathy Bartholomay models a look from Frances Heffernan at the **FLAIR** fashion show.

You've seen where we've been.

But our journey is just beginning.

Unprecedented challenges—and new opportunities—emerge every day.

A gift to The Lighthouse endowment fund is an investment in our continued legacy. With your support, we can keep opening doors to help people live independent, fulfilling lives—long into the future.



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.**



The Chicago
Lighthouse

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