Impact Report
2018 - 2019

Celebrating!
Lighthouse Vision Loss Education Center, based in Sarasota, Florida, is the only nationally accredited, private, non-profit agency providing rehabilitation training to blind and visually impaired individuals residing in a five county region including Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte, DeSoto and Highlands.

When a person loses their sight, it can be debilitating, but Lighthouse is here to assist them on a journey of self-reflection, hope and empowerment. Since the founding of the Lighthouse, we have used collaborative interview and assessment methods that create personalized rehabilitative services for thousands of blind or visually impaired children, youth, adults and seniors. Our services instruct adaptive techniques for everyday living, job skills training, access to technology and other tools that maintain their independence and quality of life.

In 1985, Mana-Sota Lighthouse for the Blind was created to provide crucially needed services to the blind and visually impaired in our community. The Lighthouse was officially established by a group of devoted individuals, who themselves were visually impaired. Together, with the support of area eye specialists and community donors, these volunteers spent countless hours to secure funding and 501(c)(3) status. Since our inception, more than 35 years ago, the Lighthouse continues to expand our services and programs. In 2019, we rebranded ourselves as Lighthouse Vision Loss Education Center.

Our Mission
To educate and empower those affected by vision loss so they may enjoy happy, healthy and independent lives.

Accreditation & Membership
Lighthouse is fully accredited by The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) and is a member of the Florida Agencies Serving the Blind (FASB).
Dear Friends,

Hope and empowerment are two powerful words. To an individual living with vision loss, those words carry a much heavier weight. When one hears from their eye doctor that their vision is slipping away and can’t be saved, despair sets in and one desperately needs to feel hope that their life will be normal again.

For 35 years, Lighthouse Vision Loss Education Center has been here to give visually impaired individuals hope that they can live a normal life after vision loss. With the tools and techniques gained in training, they feel empowered to return to a life of independence with confidence.

Because of the generous support of our community, the Lighthouse has grown tremendously in recent years - including our new name! We are thankful for your continued belief that every visually impaired individual deserves an opportunity to reach their desired potential.

By investing in the Lighthouse, you are helping to ensure we will continue to be a source of hope and empowerment for many decades to come. As you read through the following pages, we hope you find this report to be informative, and leave you feeling that your investment changes lives.

With much gratitude,

Angela Abrams
President, Board of Directors

Lisa J. Howard, CFRE
Chief Executive Officer
Each year, Lighthouse provides training that promotes self-sufficiency and independence in the lives of our clients throughout our service areas.

We pride ourselves in hiring compassionate instructors trained and/or certified in the field of vision. We also collaborate with our clients, who provide insightful feedback that allows us to evaluate, enhance and design more dynamic programming that continues to improve the lives of those we serve at home, in the workplace and in their community.

2019 By the Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clients</th>
<th>Youngest</th>
<th>Oldest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>511</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>101</td>
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Total number of clients (by age):
- Infants to 5 years: 24
- 6-13 years: 18
- 14-22 years: 27
- 23-54 years: 54
- 55 and over: 413

Total client participation in each program:
- Early Childhood: 26
- Children’s Program: 16
- Young Adults: 22
- Vocational Rehabilitation: 61
- Independent Living: 411

Service hours for each program:
- Early Childhood: 541
- Children’s Program: 1,133
- Young Adults: 2,092
- Vocational Rehabilitation: 1,197
- Independent Living: 4,783

Service hours by county:
- Manatee: 3,746
- Sarasota: 3,582
- DeSoto: 176
- Charlotte: 1,614
- Highlands: 608

9,746 Total service hours
27,606 Total travel time hours
Children’s Program
Designed to supplement services provided by Teachers of the Visually Impaired, Lighthouse certified instructors provide individualized assessments and instruction to blind and visually impaired students, from five to 13 years. While working towards their educational, social and personal goals, each child and their family learn specialized skills that help accomplish the same tasks as their sighted peers. This program prepares them for a successful transition to our Young Adults Program.

Early Childhood Program
For children from birth to five years with visual impairments and their families, our Early Childhood Program provides comprehensive intervention services, in the home or preschool, by certified Teachers of the Visually Impaired.

Programs for Children

To maximize the child’s abilities and prepare them for independence and education, our teachers provide hands-on training focused on developing mobility, sensory, motor, cognitive and social skills and assessment of functional vision to help them explore their environment.

Teachers also provide parents with information and strategies to encourage personal interaction that builds an intimate connection with their child. This collaborative training further promotes a smooth transition to preschool and kindergarten.

At the young age of three, Millie lost all vision in her left eye and has no peripheral vision in her right eye, but that hasn’t stopped this vivacious 10-year-old from enjoying her best life. She takes ballroom dance lessons from dance coach Xander at Sara Bay Dance Club, Bradenton.
Our Young Adult Program provides year-round services to blind and visually impaired students, ages 14-22. They will gain invaluable training, skills and confidence as they transition from school to post-secondary education or the workforce.

The Pre-employment Transition and Vocational Rehabilitation services teach important life skills and practical job readiness skills. Students work with certified instructors to learn job exploration, work-based learning experiences, workplace readiness training, age-appropriate career readiness, career exploration activities, completing job applications, interviewing techniques and creating resumes and instruction in self-advocacy.

Students meet weekly, during the school year, to participate in educational, social and recreational activities aimed at developing and strengthening independent living skills and exploring their community.

Receiving instruction in orientation and mobility, social skills, activities of daily living and use of accessible technologies help them gain the needed confidence to navigate a changing world.

Students also attend camp and employment internships during the summer, which gives them a chance to bond with others while taking part in paid work experiences. Lighthouse instructors are here to identify skills, talents and special interests as a guideline to begin the process of achieving their goals.

Kyra, who suffers from optic nerve hypoplasia and nystagmus, started services at the Lighthouse in June 2019. She enjoys being a part of the Young Adult Program and hanging out with the other students. The rising freshman is a budding artist and looks forward to starting classes in the fall.
Whether you're new or returning to the workforce, our certified instructors guide clients through individual and group learning experiences, beginning with an assessment of needs and ending with employment. The Vocational Rehabilitation program provides the tools and strategies for job readiness and job placement to visually impaired and blind adults to access, maintain or return to employment. Individuals in this program work at their own pace to achieve employment goals.

Those seeking employment go through a meticulous program that comprises resume preparation, mock interviews, time management and accessing transportation to help attain employment. We also provide job exploration, career paths, work-based learning experience, learning transferable job skills, job shadowing, internship, workshops, expert speakers and mentorships to fortify traits that will enhance employability leading to an optimal placement in the workforce.

Tom began losing his sight due to a brain tumor, and by the age of 18, he was completely blind. He began services at the Lighthouse in 1996 taking mobility training, assistive technology classes and job coaching. Tom proves that losing one's sight does not stop you from living. As an employee at Goodwill Industries for the past seven years, Tom proves that losing his sight hasn't stopped him from being self-sufficient.
Simple tasks can be overwhelming and challenging, but with low vision aids and specialized training, blind and visually impaired individuals can take back their lives with renewed confidence and independence.

The Independent Living Program provides comprehensive rehabilitation instruction and guidance to help clients maintain and manage their daily living skills. Clients will successfully navigate everyday tasks in their homes, communities and workplace with a maximum degree of self-direction taught in our Orientation & Mobility, Adjustment to Vision Loss and Assistive Technology courses.

Through our initial assessment, certified instructors provide counseling and guidance in individual or group settings, helping them and their family members cope with the psychological and social issues related to vision loss.

"I'm so thankful for Lighthouse. The training and careful attention will enable me to live life to its fullest potential. Even in blindness the future looks bright." ~ Bill after diagnosis with Retinitis Pigmentosa.

Independent Living Program

Adjustment to Vision Loss

Adaptive methods and techniques become powerful tools in performing everyday tasks. During this six-week course, clients work collaboratively with others as they learn to navigate their new normal, after vision loss.

Certified instructors provide clients the “how to” in going about their daily activities, such as personal and home management, time and money management, use of appliances, meal preparation, grooming, dressing, medication management and more.
Assistive Technology

Whether you are getting started with your first smartphone, want to increase your computer skills or learn how to access books and newspapers, Assistive Technology training enables individuals who are blind or visually impaired to access technology built into many mobile devices and to use computer technology in the home, school and workplace and is designed to improve these functional capabilities.

Certified instructors provide comprehensive training and support in computers, mobile computing and related technologies. Learn to use magnifying or screen-reading software, email and access the internet to stay in touch with others. This training accesses specialized technology to increase the opportunity for advancement in the workplace, increased personal independence and technological literacy.

Orientation & Mobility

Mobility training, taught by a certified instructor, is provided in the home and in the community. Learning safe travel techniques, concepts and skills to move safely, efficiently, confidently and independently within familiar and unfamiliar environments is the goal of O&M training.

This course is personalized to each individual and provides safety activities that include the effective use of a white cane, crossing intersections, accessing public transportation or paratransit services, sensory awareness and search techniques allowing individuals to familiarize themselves as they travel.
March 1985 - Terri Blessing and Charles Rhein, both of whom had vision loss, saw the need to establish a local education and training center. They began conversations with Doctors Kingham, Pope and Rutkowsky, the Division of Blind Services and other concerned citizens, and soon a task force was formed to establish a center for the blind.

With significant financial support from the Palmetto Lions Club, the President of Tropicana, and the Aurora Foundation - the new organization was temporarily titled Center for the Education and Training of the Blind and Visually Impaired.

October 1985 - Mana-Sota Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired was incorporated in the State of Florida

1986 - First training classes started at Happiness House

1987 - Entered first contract with Division of Blind Services

1988 - Welcomed first Executive Director, Leslie Neese

1989 - Purchased current location at 7318 North Tamiami Trail, Sarasota

1988 – Name changed to Mana-Sota Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.

1989 – National Accreditation Council awards 5-year accreditation

1990

1994 - National Accreditation Council awards 5-year accreditation

1995 - Endowment fund established

1995 - Established the Dr. James Morrish Sr. Golf Tournament

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2000 - Computer lab created and classes begin

2001 - ZoomText magnification classes added in computer lab

2001 – Name changed to Lighthouse of Manasota

2009 – Launched the Transition Program for students ages 14 to 22

2011 – Expanded services in Charlotte, DeSoto and Highlands Counties

2014 – Retired the Dr. James Morrish Sr. Memorial Golf Tournament after 19 events raised $1 Million. Jim Morrish, David Cruikshank and Tom Morrish thank participants in 2013.

2015 – Purchased fleet of new vehicles with grant from The Selby Foundation

2009 – Launched the Transition Program for students ages 14 to 22

2011 – Expanded services in Charlotte, DeSoto and Highlands Counties

2016 – Participated in Margin & Mission Ignition Initiative to allow remodel and branding of the new Peepers Low Vision Store

2018 – Lighthouse is early adopter of online Vision Refer for patient referrals, receiving the first referral in the State

2019 – AER awards 5-year Accreditation renewal

2019 – Name change and rebranding to Lighthouse Vision Loss Education Center

2020 – Lighthouse meets the challenges of the coronavirus head on by putting all instruction online

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Community Outreach

Our Outreach Program actively engages the community by raising awareness of those with low vision. Our presentations help identify challenges that low vision may present in the lives of those we serve, and offer information about the prevention of blindness.

Lighthouse participates in community events, and is available to present to organizations, groups, schools and houses of worship in the communities in which we serve.

“The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.”
-Helen Keller

Volunteers

Our small but mighty and dedicated group of volunteers contribute their hours doing everything from teaching ballroom dancing for the teens to calling out bingo numbers for our seniors.

Just a few hours of your time means so much to those we serve. Please consider volunteering with a variety of programs the Lighthouse has to offer.

“...is never to say I can’t. Instead I say, how can I? With the help of Lighthouse, anyone can turn I can’t into, Oh yes I can!”

Debbi became a Lighthouse client in 2018. After completing training, she became a volunteer to do outreach presentations and motivate others to help them adjust to their vision loss.

A total of 12,550 individuals were reached by

35 Volunteers contributed 1,096 hours
30 health fairs
54 networking events
39 presentations
Thank You, Supporters

You make it possible to provide better service, to more people!

Giving Amount $1,000 to $4,999

St. Armands Key Lutheran Church
Blalock Walters, P.A.
Aviva-A Campus for Senior Life
Choice Diagnostic Imaging
Coastal Eye Institute
Community Eye Center
Mr. & Dr. Martin & Wilhelmine
Wiese Rometsch
Sarasota Retina Institute
Community Foundation of Sarasota County
Mr. & Mrs. William Lawson
Boscia Family Foundation
Drs. John & Arysol Soltero Niffenegger
The Huisking Foundation, Inc.
Venice Golf & Country Club Foundation
Baxter International Foundation
Retina Associates of Sarasota P.A.
The Plantation Community Foundation
Sarasota Alumnae Chapter Delta Gamma
Dr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Davis
The Eye Associates
Bradenton Lions Foundation, Inc.
Florida Blue
Gulf Coast Community Foundation
Kitchner Benefits
Mr. Bernard Friedland
Ms. Mary Yoder
Sarasota County Aging Network
Ms. Kimberly Tocci
Ms. Carolyne Smith & Ms. Barbara Cruikshank

Giving Amount $5,000+

The McCune Family Foundation
Bank of America Client Foundation
Ms. Pauline Becker & H.E. and P.S. Becker Charitable Foundation
Emily F. Kuster Foundation
May K. Houck Foundation
Barbara Ries Trust
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Beckstein
SunTrust Foundation
Wilson-Wood Foundation, Inc.
Mrs. Virginia Morrish
Harold E. and Ruth M. Niles Fund
Paddock Charitable Foundation
Casimir Mallek Endowment Fund
D.R. Long Foundation, Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. David Cruikshank
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Howze

Giving Amount $1,000 to $4,999

St. Armands Key Lutheran Church
Blalock Walters, P.A.
Aviva-A Campus for Senior Life
Choice Diagnostic Imaging
Coastal Eye Institute
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Gulf Coast Community Foundation
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Mr. Bernard Friedland
Ms. Mary Yoder
Sarasota County Aging Network
Ms. Kimberly Tocci
Ms. Carolyne Smith & Ms. Barbara Cruikshank

Giving Amount $500 to $999

Network For Good
Mr. Andre Duboi
Mr. Mitchell Zerwin
Ms. Roberta Johnston
Painting With A Twist Fundraiser
Mr. & Mrs. William Lyons
Lakehouse West Residents’ Association
Bradenton Lodge 1511 BPOE USA Inc.
Dr. & Mrs. Daniel Pope
Elam K. Hertzler Fund
Golf Lakes Women’s Club
Janet Hyman Fund
Mr. & Mrs. William Dean
Mr. Daniel Denton
Mr. Jerald Price
Mr. Mark Wells
Mrs. Cynthia Newell
Mrs. Kerri Dowdell
Ms. Diane Ventimiglia
Ms. Martha Michals
Ms. Mary Swartz
Ms. Suzanne MacVaugh
Star Asset Managers LLC

*Donors with gifts of $500+ listed.
## Revenue

- Federal and State Contracts $936,199
- County Contracts $19,850
- Philanthropic Giving $167,524
- Endowment Income $118,699
- Grants $105,134
- Peepers $88,383
- Special Events (net) $86,645

**Total Revenue**

$1,522,434

## Financials

## Expenses

- Programs & Services $1,318,225
- Administration $131,236
- Fundraising $119,761

**Total Expenses**

$1,569,222

2018-2019 Audited Financial Statements were prepared by Cavanaugh & Co., LLP. A copy is available upon request.
Coming Soon!
Peepers Store is Going ONLINE!
Check our website for updates.

Peepers Online Store will open soon to our new and existing customers. Once opened, our customers will have the option to purchase a unique selection of the most needed low vision products designed to assist individuals with everyday tasks and improve their quality of life.

Order online with a credit card and the items will be shipped directly to your doorstep. Items available online will include all of your favorite and most needed low vision aids.

What's New!
Demonstrations and tutorial videos will be available on our website for online shopping.

Lighthouse is proud to have been selected to participate in the 18-month consultation process Margin & Mission Ignition, an initiative of The Patterson Foundation, and facilitated by No Margin, No Mission. This initiative was designed to boost nonprofit mission impact through the development and implementation of earned-income strategies.