



Congratulations to our 2011 Employees of the Year!

Congratulations to Production Worker, Sr. Jeff Kuebler and Production and Injection Mold Manager Linda Elliott who were named as The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.'s 2011 Employees of the Year!

These awards are given for leadership in the blindness field to visually impaired employees who display outstanding personal and professional qualities. They will both travel to Baltimore, MD for the National Industries for the Blind (NIB) National Conference and Expo in October. Linda Elliott will compete as an indirect labor representative for the *Milton J. Samuelson Award* and Jeff Kuebler will compete as a direct labor representative for the *Peter J. Salmon Award*.



Production Worker, Sr. Jeff Kuebler

Jeff Kuebler

Jeff Kuebler was 25 years old when he fully lost his vision to Retinitis Pigmentosa, a condition he had since birth. Going to school had become increasingly difficult as his vision deteriorated, and many of the assistive technologies used by people who are blind today were not readily available back then. "[Finding work] was very difficult. I did a variety of manual labor-type jobs because I still had some vision, but it kept getting harder and harder as I was losing my sight," Jeff remembers.

After graduating high school, Jeff spent two years at Bellevue Community College taking general studies. He found out about The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. through the Washington State Department of Services for the Blind, and in 1988 came

in for an assessment of his skills. "I wanted to work at the Lighthouse because I'd always worked my whole life, and I knew that the Lighthouse was one of the only

"I've learned how to work as a team with other people. Helping co-workers out, them helping me... it's all under a group effort."
– Jeff Kuebler, Production Worker, Sr. –

places that would hire me at the time," he notes. "In March of 1989, they hired me on as a Production Worker and I've been here ever since."

Jeff has spent much time cross training in various production positions at the Lighthouse, from assembly and machine operation, to his current work in the

Injection Mold shop. "I've learned how to work as a team with other people. Helping co-workers out, them helping me... it's all a group effort."

When Jeff is not busy with his responsibilities at the Lighthouse, he enjoys being active in his church, taking his guide dog Polo out for walks, exercising, and cross-country skiing.

Discover more news, employee stories, read our blog, and learn about upcoming events by visiting us online: www.seattlelighthouse.org

You can also follow us on Twitter @Lighthouse_Inc and become a fan on Facebook!



continued on inside flap...

JOBS. INDEPENDENCE. EMPOWERMENT.

Our Mission: To create and enhance opportunities for independence and self-sufficiency of people who are blind, Deaf-Blind, and blind with other disabilities.



Production and Injection Mold Shop Manager Linda Elliott

Linda Elliott

"The Lighthouse mission is my passion," says Injection Mold Shop and Production Manager Linda Elliott. "For the last 28 years I've lived the mission. I'm a person who is legally blind, who has been provided opportunities to further my independence and self-sufficiency here at the Lighthouse. As a manager and supervisor now of others who are blind, Deaf-Blind, and blind with other disabilities, I consider it my turn to pass those opportunities forward by encouraging and supporting the efforts of those I supervise in expanding their own opportunities"

Linda became visually impaired in 1974 as a result of Histoplasmosis, which caused her to lose her central vision. As a result, she was no longer able to drive her car. This was the hardest adjustment of all as it took away her independence at that time. "Due to my vision, I lost my job at the Fence Company where I worked, and was forced to go on Supplemental

Security Income (SSI)," Linda recalls. "I had a landlord who owned a lot of houses. He let me work for him part time, mucking out and helping him fix up his rentals. In the mean time, I was adjusting to my blindness and working with Washington

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State Department of Services for the Blind (DSB). At the end of 1982, DSB told me about the Lighthouse, and arrangements were made for me to be evaluated. Finally because of the Lighthouse and its mission, I received a new lease on life."

Linda began as a Production Worker back in 1983, and during her tenure has advanced to Set-Up Machinist, Lead, Supervisor, and eventually to her current role as Production Manager. Linda is well known for her superior leadership skills, and many of her production staff have eventually advanced into indirect labor positions. "Everything I've accomplished at the Lighthouse is because I've had management support and employees willing to try new things, learn, and get the product out the door for the customer. Without the employees' contribution, I would not be as successful. They make me look good."

When not busily managing the Lighthouse's production areas, Linda's life revolves around her husband Ed, her two daughters Robyn and Hannah, her two grandchildren Katy and Robert, and being involved in her church and community.



Message from President & CEO Kirk Adams

When I have the opportunity to bring someone to The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. for the first time, I always realize how much there is to talk about. Ours is a unique organization, serving two important “bottom lines” as we continually work to achieve the best possible results from our businesses – and at the same time, strive to enhance the lives of individuals who are blind, Deaf-Blind, and blind with other disabilities.

For someone who is being introduced to the Lighthouse, there is a lot to take in. There are the complexities of manufacturing. There is the rich history of the Lighthouse, with over 90 years of serving our community. There is the breadth and depth of the services and technologies that make it possible for employees to succeed here. There is the growing geographical scope of our work, ranging from our operation in Seattle to our Spokane facility to our Base Supply Centers and Contract Management Services team.

As we head into the challenges and opportunities of 2012, I want you to share the excitement I feel when I get to describe these aspects of the Lighthouse – even if you are well aware of our strategic goals and operations.

We’re building on some exceptional occurrences from just the past few months. We had an inspiring visit to the National Industries for the Blind Conference in New Orleans in October with the 2011 Employees of the Year Chris Loomis and Nelly Barnett, giving them the opportunity to expand their leadership skills and knowledge of blindness-related industries. And we are proud to have two more wonderful employees chosen for that honor this year, as you have read in the preceding pages.

We finalized plans for additional plastic injection molding capability, which will expand the kinds of products we can provide to aerospace customers – while at the same time, securing other manufacturing contracts that will result in more jobs for individuals who are blind.

The demand for office products has resulted in increasing the number of employees at our Inland Northwest Lighthouse (INL) in Spokane.

Continually exploring new opportunities for expanding our service business has resulted in a new partnership to provide customer service through our Contact Center.

We’re also working diligently to improve accessibility for employees. Toward that end, I’m glad we were able to bring Julie Brannon into her new role as our Employee Support Services Manager this past fall. With her years of experience as our braille instructor, Julie will apply her energy and expertise to bringing all the supports necessary for the Lighthouse to continue to be a thriving work environment.

Our employees created awareness of safe travel and accessibility to the general public in a number of ways in the past few months. In Seattle, our employees participated in a “Flash Mob” in October, marking National White Can Safety Day with a choreographed dance routine. This fall at INL, Kevin Daniel lent his voice to a City of Spokane initiative to improve sidewalk safety. And at the beginning of 2012, INL hosted a visit by Congresswoman Cathy McMorris-Rodgers who wanted to learn more about the challenges that employees had faced dealing with their vision loss and their search for meaningful employment.

These are important examples of the Lighthouse providing leadership on safety and accessibility issues to our employees as well as to decision-makers and members of the general community.

We’re always striving towards the goals of ensuring opportunities for our employees. For someone new to the organization, it might be hard to understand how plastics and customer service relate to blindness, or how a broken sidewalk can be a serious barrier to a meaningful job. But it’s my pleasure to explain how our ongoing growth, success and focus on accessibility result in employment and self-sufficiency for people who are blind, Deaf-Blind, and blind with other disabilities.

Thank you for your support in creating those successes – I look forward to sharing more of them with you as we proceed through the year.

Sincerely

Kirk Adams
President & CEO

Upcoming Lighthouse Events

2012 Redefining Vision Luncheon

May 23rd, 2012, noon-1:30pm
The Westin Seattle Hotel, 1900 5th Ave., Seattle, WA 98101

You're invited to our annual signature fundraising event where the community supports and celebrates our mission of creating and enhancing opportunities for people who are blind, Deaf-Blind, and blind with other disabilities. For more information or to let us know you'd like to attend, go to seattlelighthouse.org/events or call 206-436-2253.

Second Annual Spokane Braille Rally

June 9th, 2012
Inland Northwest Lighthouse, 6405 North Addison St., Spokane, WA 99208

Our second Spokane Braille Rally will again feature a contest in which a blind or visually impaired “navigator” provides clues to a sighted driver in a timed driving contest. Check for details as they develop at spokanebraillerally.org.

Welcome Kirk Laughlin!

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.'s Communications Department welcomes Development Director Kirk W. Laughlin. Kirk has worked in public affairs, communications, and fundraising for nonprofits in the Northwest since 1994. He holds an Executive Master of Not-for-Profit Leadership from Seattle University (where he attended with our President and CEO Kirk Adams!) and is on the board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals-Washington.

Kirk previously led fund development efforts for Pacific Science Center, Northwest Children's Home (in Lewiston, ID), Youth Eastside Services (in Bellevue), and The Children's Museum in Seattle.

He's a native of Spokane, WA and lives in North Seattle with his wife and three sons.



Development Director Kirk Laughlin



Production Worker John Drane (left) and Senior Director of Employee and Community Services Amy Koehl (right) check out the Braille Reading Library

What does BRL stand for?

Braille readers know what "BRL" means – those letters stand for the word "braille." The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. also uses it as an acronym for our Braille Reading Library.

In addition to the weekly braille classes offered there, employees are also free to visit the Braille Reading Library during weekly open hours and to check out brailled books and periodicals.

The BRL is featured in many of our tours, which includes a discussion with Employee Support Services Manager Julie Brannon on the history of braille. To schedule a tour of the Braille Reading Library as part of your visit to the Lighthouse, see the "Be Our Guest" section in this issue of Horizons.

Be Our Guest

We would be delighted to welcome you as our guest at either of our Seattle or Spokane locations so you can learn more about how we are creating opportunities for the independence and self-sufficiency of people who are blind in our community. To schedule a tour, please contact Development Assistant Keri Brent at kbrent@seattlelh.org, or by phone at 206-436-2134 with at least three weeks advance notice.

Become a Member with a Lasting Legacy

Lighthouse Legacy Society Members hold a special place in our community, as they provide long-term support for our mission and programs. To become a member, the only requirement is to notify the Lighthouse in writing that you have made some type of planned gift to our organization. The planned gift can be an annuity, the naming of the Lighthouse in a will, or designating the organization as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. Please contact Development Director Kirk Laughlin with questions at 206-436-2253 or email klaughlin@seattlelh.org.

Upcoming Seattle Lighthouse Tours

February

Tuesday	2/21	1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Wednesday	2/22	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Thursday	2/23	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

March

Tuesday	3/6	1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Wednesday	3/7	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Tuesday	3/20	1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Wednesday	3/21	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Thursday	3/22	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.



Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind Foundation President Tom Kuebler

Message from the Foundation Board President

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as President of the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind Foundation. In March, I will be handing the position over to Howie Dickerman, who will bring passion, special skills, and unique resources to enhance the mission of the Foundation. My tenure in this position – and the successes in the past year in particular – have been important and moving.

One of my proudest accomplishments has been building up our organization's Legacy Society. Planned gifts provide an ongoing and meaningful commitment for donors and their families, as well as for Lighthouse employees as it supports our Employee and Community Services.

I cannot emphasize enough the impact of planned gifts – a significant bequest gift this past year resulted in our organization having one of its best years ever in terms of charitable funds raised. Our mission also benefitted from successful special events, growth in our major donor base,

and the ongoing support of companies and foundations.

In addition to volunteering as a leader for the Lighthouse, I am also a member of the Legacy Society. I hope you will remember that to become a Lighthouse Legacy Society member, all that's necessary is to indicate that you've named the Seattle Lighthouse Foundation as a beneficiary in a will or annuity. This year we are planning additional seminars on planned giving that will be educational and informative in helping you plan your estate.

The importance of forward-looking donors and of our mission was underscored at our recent Holiday Breakfast event honoring our friends and supporters. Our guest speaker was Cyrus Habib of the law firm Perkins Coie. Cyrus is an attorney who lost his sight at an early age, –and who is an inspiration. His advocacy includes landmark efforts to make US currency accessible to blind individuals. As a child entering a new school, teachers stopped Cyrus from climbing up onto

the playground equipment – they were concerned that he would hurt himself because of his blindness. His mother advocated for him by saying this to the school administrators: "I can fix a broken arm. But I can't fix a broken spirit."

Not everyone has a great advocate like Cyrus' mother – but thanks to the long-term support of our annual donors, our institutional funders, and our Legacy Society members, we are able to keep spirits strong for our community of employees who are blind, Deaf-Blind, or blind with other disabilities.

Thank you for partnering with me and the rest of the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind Foundation Board in making our important work possible.

Sincerely,

Tom Kuebler

Tom Kuebler

President, Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind Foundation



Congratulations to our 2011 Employees of the Year, Jeff Kuebler and Linda Elliott!

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