

HORIZONS

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The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.

Expanding Manufacturing Capabilities and Creating Employment Opportunities

With the addition of three new Okuma Vertical CNC Machining Centers and a robotic finishing cell, The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. continues to expand its machining capabilities to create opportunities for employment for people who are blind, Deaf-Blind, and blind with other disabilities.



Seattle Lighthouse Production Worker Steve Allen works on the robotic finishing cell that helps produce the entrenching tool (E-tool)

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.'s machine shop activities began over 60 years ago when the Lighthouse did its first small job for The Boeing Company. After half a century of focusing on regular, machine-shop-type manufacturing, employees now operate in a modern facility with a battery of equipment running the gamut from hand tools to advanced Okuma CNC (Computer Numerically Controlled) Machining Centers. Currently, over 70 blind and Deaf-Blind employees work in the Lighthouse's machine shop producing and assembling aircraft parts at workstations that are adapted to be completely accessible to all employees. At Seattle Lighthouse you will find the same equipment used by comparable manufacturing companies, the only difference being some modifications for accessibility.

In April, Seattle Lighthouse continued to expand its machining capabilities with the installation of three new Okuma CNC Machining Centers, bringing the total number of Okuma machines installed at the Seattle facility to ten. Since 2007, Okuma America Corporation and Gosiger Northwest have partnered

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with the Lighthouse to increase the accessibility of machining equipment, playing an active role in creating and enhancing employment opportunities

for individuals who are blind, Deaf-Blind, and blind with other disabilities. They have provided generous financial support, consistent partnership, and a commitment to the Lighthouse mission. CNC machines continue to provide Seattle Lighthouse the opportunity to add value for their customers, such as The Boeing Company and Triumph Composites, by making the Lighthouse more price competitive and enabling them to meet quality and delivery requirements, while providing high-paid jobs to blind and Deaf-Blind individuals.

In addition to manufacturing aerospace parts, the Lighthouse also produces products for the Federal Government under the AbilityOne Program. Last year, the Lighthouse began production on the E-tool (or

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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.

EXPANDING MANUFACTURING
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entrenching tool), a collapsible shovel that is used by members of the U.S. Military. An integral part of the Lighthouse's ongoing success with E-tool production is the utilization of an advanced robotic finishing cell, operated entirely by employees who are blind or visually impaired. The robotic finishing cell is equipped with audio output and enhanced visual monitors that help Lighthouse employees maintain productivity and top quality in the grinding and finishing stages of production. "The



The robotic finishing cell at Seattle Lighthouse grinds blades for the E-tool. Using voicing technology and large print buttons, employees who are blind are able to program and operate the cell to increase production



Set-up Specialist Christopher Loomis operates one of several Okuma CNC Machining Centers at Seattle Lighthouse

"The new robotic cell helps ensure our profitability, product quality, and helps us deliver products on time, while being very user-friendly for blind and visually impaired employees,"

– Douglas Hintz, Special Projects Coordinator –

new robotic cell helps ensure our profitability, product quality, and helps us deliver products on time, while being very user-friendly for blind and visually impaired employees," said Douglas Hintz, Special Projects Coordinator for The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. As a result of E-tool production, the Lighthouse has created 20 jobs for people who are blind in such areas as machining, small parts assembly, and final assembly.

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

November

Wednesday	11/02	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Tuesday	11/15	1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Wednesday	11/16	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Thursday	11/17	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

December

Tuesday	12/06	1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Wednesday	12/07	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Tuesday	12/20	1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Wednesday	12/21	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Thursday	12/22	10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Tours of Inland Northwest Lighthouse (INL) are open every Tuesday from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.



Message from President & CEO Kirk Adams

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. experiences the same uncertainties in our community and our national economy as you do in your organization or personal household. Companies and government agencies sometimes have no choice but to react cautiously to falling revenue and changing financial markets.

However, there are constants for the Lighthouse that don't change, such as: hundreds of thousands of unemployed blind adults nationwide. A 90% braille illiteracy rate among blind adults. An

unemployment rate of over 70% for blind individuals and over 80% for Deaf-Blind individuals.

These constants make it impossible for the Lighthouse to waver from its goal of doubling our employment of people who are blind, Deaf-Blind, or are blind with other disabilities by the end of 2016.

I want to tell you how we're continuing to work toward that goal as guided by our Strategic Plan. Being a force for change isn't something we do only when times are good – in fact, turbulent economic times underscore how badly-needed the Lighthouse' mission is. Recent accomplishments include:

- Continued growth of our capacity at Inland Northwest Lighthouse in Spokane, where office wallboard sales increased this year.
- Careful management of our internal resources — as we project that sales to the Federal Government will decline, we are making plans to redeploy resources to meet the needs of growing aerospace sales.
- Stage-setting for new revenue sources through participation in the CONNECT Supply Chain, a partnership between non-profit social enterprises. CONNECT agencies are all focused on creating job opportunities for people with barriers to employment due to a variety of disabilities, including developmental delays, physical limitations, and visual disabilities.
- Capitalizing on new opportunities, such as our Contract Management Support (CMS) initiative, which just concluded its first successful year.

In this issue of *Horizons*, you'll read in more detail about the Lighthouse's expanded capabilities and opportunities for your support. All these examples underscore why community investment is so important. Without the charitable support provided by our community, we would not be able to:

- Provide adaptive technology that make over 240 jobs accessible for blind and Deaf-Blind individuals.
- Offer braille training – braille literacy in the U.S. has decreased dramatically in recent years, but it creates so many opportunities for people who know it.
- Staffing of American Sign Language (ASL) and tactile interpreters who provide communication access our employees.
- Holding our internationally renowned Deaf-Blind Retreat.

Reaching our goal of 500 livable wage jobs for people who are blind by 2016 requires three things: The success of our social enterprise business model. The dedication of our employees. And the support from friends like you. Through ambitious and careful leadership and the development of a positive employee culture, the Lighthouse can create the first two elements. I hope you will join us by providing the third element.

Thank you for your commitment to the blind and Deaf-Blind communities – and for your support.

Sincerely,

Kirk Adams
President & CEO,
The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.

Upcoming Lighthouse Events

INL Wine Taste Challenge

November 3rd, 2011, 6:30 – 9:00 pm
Glover Mansion, 321 West 8th Avenue, Spokane, WA 99208

You're invited to support Inland Northwest Lighthouse at our Wine Taste Challenge! The evening includes wine, four stations of heavy hors d'oeuvres, a "wine ring toss", live music – and the opportunity for wine taste challenge participants to taste and attempt to identify great local wines using only their palate and sense of smell. General admission for this entertaining evening is \$25.00. To enter the wine taste challenge, admission is \$50.00. Go to inlandlh.org for more information and to register online.

Plan for the Future During Uncertain Times

November 16th, 2011, noon to 1:30pm
Seattle Lighthouse, 2501 S. Plum St., Seattle, WA 98144

We're hosting a lunchtime presentation on how individuals can plan for their financial future while supporting the good work of charitable organizations, such as The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. Commitments you make now can support our community beyond your lifetime. Information will be shared on such planned giving opportunities as the 401-K Charitable Rollover and Bequests. To learn more about this informational session, contact Kirk Laughlin at klaughlin@seattlelh.org or at 206-436-2253.

Annual Holiday Breakfast

December 8th, 2011, 8:00 to 9:00am
The Harbor Club, The Norton Building 801, 2nd Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104

Each year, we invite donors and friends for a festive Holiday Breakfast to honor their generosity and their commitment to our mission. This special gathering allows the Lighthouse to share with you the results of the support from our community. For information on the Breakfast, contact Kirk Laughlin at klaughlin@seattlelh.org or at 206-436-2253.



The Lighthouse CMS team from left to right: Travis Cowsert, Contract Close-out Specialist (CCS); Mike Fox, CCS; Joyce Cozart, Contract Close-out Supervisor; Mike Eden, CCS; Jillian Delrosario, Clerk; Robyn Dunn, CCS; Tamara Airhart, CCS; Robyn's Guide Dog Ms. Wanda (bottom)

Contract Management Support (CMS)

Last year, the Lighthouse began providing Contract Management Support (CMS) services for Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) in San Diego. CMS provides contract closeout services to Federal Government contracting offices, like FISC, and new employment opportunities for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. In alignment with the Lighthouse's Strategic Plan, CMS creates high-growth career opportunities for blind and visually impaired individuals, while providing training and increasing job skills. Recently renewed to continue into its second year, the program is allowing the Lighthouse to continue pursuing new service business opportunities and provide increased employment opportunities, moving us closer to our strategic goal of 500 livable wage jobs by 2016.

Through the AbilityOne Program, the Lighthouse is providing critical support to government contracting offices by freeing up time for the contracting workforce to address more mission-critical and inherently-governmental functions, while facilitating the return of unused obligated contract funds to the government. Blind and visually impaired CMS employees gain much needed employment opportunities in a career-oriented, upwardly-mobile professional field. With low attrition, deep tenure, and exceptional customer service capabilities, the Lighthouse's highly-skilled CMS team consists of seven individuals that close out contracts every day.

Make a Difference with Planned Giving

Did you know that you can support the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind Foundation and our mission while achieving tax benefits – and extending your personal commitment beyond your lifetime? By putting a planned gift in effect to help create opportunities for people who are blind, Deaf-Blind, or blind with other disabilities, you can plan for your future while making a difference in our community. There are many options for a planned gift:

The IRA Charitable Rollover was first enacted in 2006 and has been reinstated for 2011. Taxpayers at retirement age are required to make annual distributions and through the IRA Charitable Rollover they can make donations directly to eligible charitable organizations from their IRAs while achieving a tax benefit.

Bequests can take many forms, and often require just an addition to your existing will. Some donors choose to leave a certain amount of cash or property to a charitable organization, while structuring their bequest in way that meets the needs of their heirs. It's also important to note that bequests can be modified at any time, based on your circumstances or life goals.

Charitable Gift Annuities are also offered by the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind Foundation, in partnership with The Greater Tacoma Community Foundation. With a gift annuity, a donor gives cash or other assets to the Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind Foundation and, in exchange, **the donor receives fixed income payments** in quarterly installments. Especially in these uncertain times, gift annuities are ideal for providing supplemental retirement income which are unaffected by interest rates or fluctuating stock prices.

To learn more about ways you can support our mission, please visit: seattlelighthouse.org/ways-to-give

There are many other options that you can employ to support the Lighthouse, including Charitable Remainder Trusts or naming the Lighthouse as the beneficiary of a retirement fund or a life insurance policy. For more information, we encourage you to contact Kirk Laughlin in our Development Department at 206-436-2253 or consult your financial advisor.

By notifying our office that you have named the Lighthouse as a beneficiary of planned gift, you become a member of the Lighthouse Legacy Society which entitles you to an invitation to our annual Holiday Breakfast among other honors (see the previous page for more information).

Best of all, these gifts allow you to have a meaningful impact on the future ability of the Lighthouse to serve our community.



INL Production Worker Lark Braun

Employee Spotlight: Lark Braun

Production Worker - Inland Northwest Lighthouse

Born sighted, Lark Braun became visually impaired when she was five years old as the result of brain cancer; her optic nerve detached from her retinas. Lark attended the Washington State School for the Blind beginning when she was seven years old. Her education there included vocational studies, and she graduated with her high school diploma when she was 21 years old. From there, it was her goal to work at Inland Northwest Lighthouse (INL).

"I pretty much knew I wanted to work at INL right out of school," she states. She applied in July 2009, and she began work at the Spokane facility in March 2010. But when she started, it wasn't as though she was walking into her new work environment knowing no one. Lark knew President and CEO Kirk Adams from chapter meetings of the National Federation of the Blind in Spokane. Two of her childhood friends also worked in production at INL, and Director of Recruiting Don Hesel visited her school to talk about job opportunities.

At INL, Lark works on both the wallboard and easel production lines. "I like it all. It's busy work, and I like to be busy. I like the socializing, and I love to build stuff." When asked about how the Lighthouse has benefited her, Lark says, "It's helped to improve my self-confidence and gave me more encouragement and hope in finding work being a blind individual."

Thank You for Supporting the Annual Deaf-Blind Retreat!

For the 33rd year, the Lighthouse hosted an accessible, week-long retreat designed expressly for Deaf-Blind adults. Over sixty Deaf-Blind individuals attended the retreat, supported by over 110 sign language interpreting volunteers. Held in Seabeck, WA on the shores of Hood Canal, the retreat provides Deaf-Blind adults with an opportunity to learn new skills towards independence, experience new activities, network with peers and service providers, and establish friendships that will provide peer support throughout the year. Participants came from near and far to attend the retreat in August, with more than half of attendees traveling from across the country and globe.

While ordinary daily life presents barriers for Deaf-Blind individuals, the retreat offers a welcoming community of peers and friends who truly understand the experience of living with a dual disability. This year's retreat attendees enjoyed recreational activities including early morning swims, dance and culture of Hawaii, support groups, tactile and fragrant arts and crafts workshops, tandem bicycling, tours of local area interest and education, a popular health spa, a seven seat bike!, community dances and much, much more. Attendees joined workshops that addressed federal telecommunication developments for Deaf-Blind people, the latest research on Usher's syndrome (a common cause of deaf-blindness), the latest innovations in tactile communication, and new assistive technologies that are providing breakthroughs in communication and information access for Deaf-Blind people. Participants have opportunities to expand their awareness and experience on so many levels; we even had one participant this year who was unfamiliar with the ADA, and the extent that it could protect her in her place of



2011 Deaf-Blind Retreat Participants

employment. She now has information she can use to improve her work environment and her value to her employer.

The retreat is an essential part of the Lighthouse's mission to serve the needs of people with visual disabilities who are also Deaf or hard of hearing. Our annual retreat is part of our nationally recognized Deaf-Blind program that has provided employment, services, and support to Deaf-Blind individuals for the past 35 years. There is no other organization in the Pacific Northwest, providing these comprehensive services to Deaf-Blind persons.

We rely on members of the community to help fund critical costs that make our Deaf-Blind Retreat accessible to all participants. Thank you to our donors for your support, covering scholarship funds, transportation costs, costs to support our volunteers, and helping to ensure that all of our Deaf-Blind participants were able to be a part of this year's retreat. We could not do it without you!



The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.
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photo courtesy of Dana Hubanks

To commemorate this year's National White Cane Safety Day, on October 15th the Lighthouse orchestrated a flash mob at McGraw Square in downtown Seattle to raise awareness for independent travel and mobility for people who are blind and Deaf-Blind.

