



Today we want to share a beautiful account on how the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches and our clients themselves are making an impact.

### **Meet the Gardners:**

Iris and Larry Gardner sat quietly in the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches waiting room, their hands entwined. Their shared experience of vision loss had deepened their bond, and today, they were here for a check-up.

Nearby, an elderly woman spoke, frustration in her voice. "DBS won't cover the glasses I need, and I can't afford them. What's the point of having partial vision if I can't make the most of it?"



Without hesitation, Larry squeezed Iris's hand. They had been fortunate to receive life-changing low vision services, and now, they had a chance to help someone else.

"Excuse me, ma'am," Iris said softly. "We overheard you, and we'd like to pay for your glasses."

The woman hesitated. "Oh, I couldn't possibly—"

"Please," Larry interjected gently. "We understand, and we want to help. You deserve to see as clearly as you can."

Tears welled in her eyes. "Why? Why would you do this for me?"

Iris smiled warmly. "Because we've been where you are. No one should have to choose between their vision and living fully."

Overcome with emotion, the woman clutched her chest. "You've given me more than glasses. You've given me hope."

As their appointment was called, Iris and Larry walked hand in hand, their hearts full. In that moment, the world had never looked clearer.

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**Lighthouse Expands Services to the Treasure Coast and Okeechobee County**

We're excited to share that Lighthouse is now reaching even more people with the launch of our new services for the Treasure Coast and Okeechobee County. Director of Development Joan Friedman is leading the way, building strong connections and bringing vital support to the area. With our mobile team, virtual programs, and new community partnerships, we're making it easier than ever for those who need our services to get help right where they are.

This exciting expansion allows us to provide essential support to individuals who are blind or visually impaired in St. Lucie, Martin, Indian River, and Okeechobee Counties. From independent living skills training to orientation and mobility instruction, we are committed to delivering high-quality services wherever they are needed.

As part of this initiative, we're proud to partner with Indian River State College to launch a new in-person Independent Living Skills class starting April 1st at the Pruitt Campus in Port St. Lucie. This class will be led by experienced Vision Rehabilitation Therapist Ashley Nieuwendam.

**Services available to residents include:**

- Independent living skills training
- Orientation and mobility instruction
- Assistive technology support
- Virtual and in-person programs for all ages

If you or a loved one could benefit from our services, or if you'd like to learn more, please call us at 561-586-5600 or visit [www.lhpb.org](http://www.lhpb.org). Together, we're building brighter futures and empowering more individuals to live independent, fulfilling lives.

Thank you for supporting our mission!

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## **Celebrating Our Extraordinary Volunteers!**

This month, during our Palm Beach Focus Club, we had the honor of celebrating our incredible volunteers who make such a positive impact in our community. It is volunteers like you who truly make the world a brighter and better place for everyone.

Your dedication, kindness, and generosity are at the heart of what makes the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches such a special organization. We are deeply grateful for all your contributions and for being a cherished friend of the Lighthouse.

Thank you for everything you do! You inspire us every day, and we are so fortunate to have you as part of our family.



Get Tickets or  
Sponsor!

### *Lighthouse for the Blind expansion brings essential services to visually impaired here*

Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches is expanding its reach with the launch of a new satellite presence: Lighthouse for the Blind of the Treasure Coast and Okeechobee. While the new mailing address is located at 9126 S U.S. 1, Port St. Lucie, services are primarily delivered through a mobile team, virtual programs and strategic community partnerships.

This expansion aims to bring essential services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired in St. Lucie, Martin, Indi-



collaboration with Indian River State College, the organization is launching a new in-person Independent Living Skills group class starting April 1st at the col-

lege's Pruitt Campus in Port St. Lucie. The class will be led by Ashley Nieuwendam, one of Lighthouse's experienced Vision Rehabilitation Therapists.

Services available to residents include:

- Independent living skills training.
- Orientation and mobility instruction.
- Assistive technology support.
- Virtual and in-person programs.

Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches is a nonprofit organization dedi-

cated to empowering individuals of all ages who are blind or visually impaired. Through personalized training, education and support services, Lighthouse helps individuals overcome barriers, achieve independence, and reach their fullest potential. Serving five counties in Southeast Florida, Lighthouse is committed to fostering inclusion and providing the resources needed for a more accessible future. For service inquiries or to learn how Lighthouse can help, call 561-586-5600 or visit [lfbp.org](http://lfbp.org). ■

—CONTRIBUTED

Exciting news! Check out the latest article in the St. Lucie Voice featuring the wonderful work of the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches. Discover how we're making a difference in the lives of visually impaired individuals in our community! Check it out on page B14 below.

Read the Article

## **Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches Installs RightHear Accessibility System**

We are excited to announce a major step forward in accessibility and inclusivity at our West Palm Beach location with the installation of the RightHear Accessibility System! This innovative system ensures that our facilities are now fully accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired, reaffirming our commitment to creating an equitable and independent experience for all visitors.

The RightHear system empowers individuals with visual impairments to navigate and engage with their surroundings seamlessly. By using the RightHear mobile app, available on both iOS and Android, visitors can access real-time audio guidance and directions to key points of interest in our office. The system even supports up to 26 languages, making it a versatile solution for our diverse community.

**Key features of the RightHear system include:**

- **Real-Time Audio Assistance:** Provides users with immediate audio guidance and information about their surroundings.
- **Orientation Assistance:** Helps users locate important areas and better understand their environment, enhancing independence.
- **Event and Service Information:** Delivers detailed updates about upcoming events and announcements, ensuring visitors stay informed.

“We are thrilled to collaborate with Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches in their commitment to accessibility and inclusion,” said Idan Meir, Co-Founder and CEO of RightHear. “By embracing innovative solutions like RightHear, organizations can create welcoming environments that cater to diverse visitor needs. Our mission is to make the world more accessible, one building at a time, and thanks to partners like the Lighthouse, we’re making great progress.”

We invite you to see RightHear in action and learn more about how we’re making everyday life more accessible for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Visit us at our West Palm Beach location or contact us at 561-586-5600 for more information.

See RightHear in Action!

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## **Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches Featured in Palm Beach Society**

We are proud to share that Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches is the cover story of the March 14-20 edition of [Palm Beach Society](#)! The article, "Empowering Vision, Inspiring Independence," highlights the life-changing work we do to support individuals who are blind or visually impaired (B/VI) across Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River, and Okeechobee counties.

### **A Beacon of Hope in the B/VI Community**

Since 1946, Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches has been a steadfast resource, providing essential services, education, and training to people of all ages—ranging from babies to seniors. As the only private, nonprofit organization of its kind in West Palm Beach, we are proud to empower individuals who are blind or visually impaired to live full and independent lives.

Our work extends beyond individuals—we also provide training for families, caregivers, and institutions to foster inclusive environments for the B/VI community. Supported almost entirely by charitable donations, we are fully accredited by the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER), ensuring the highest quality of services.

## **Spotlighting Our Programs and Achievements**

The Palm Beach Society feature shines a spotlight on some of our most impactful programs, including:

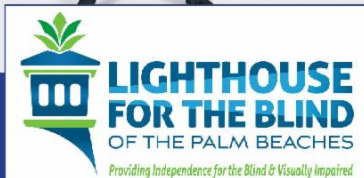
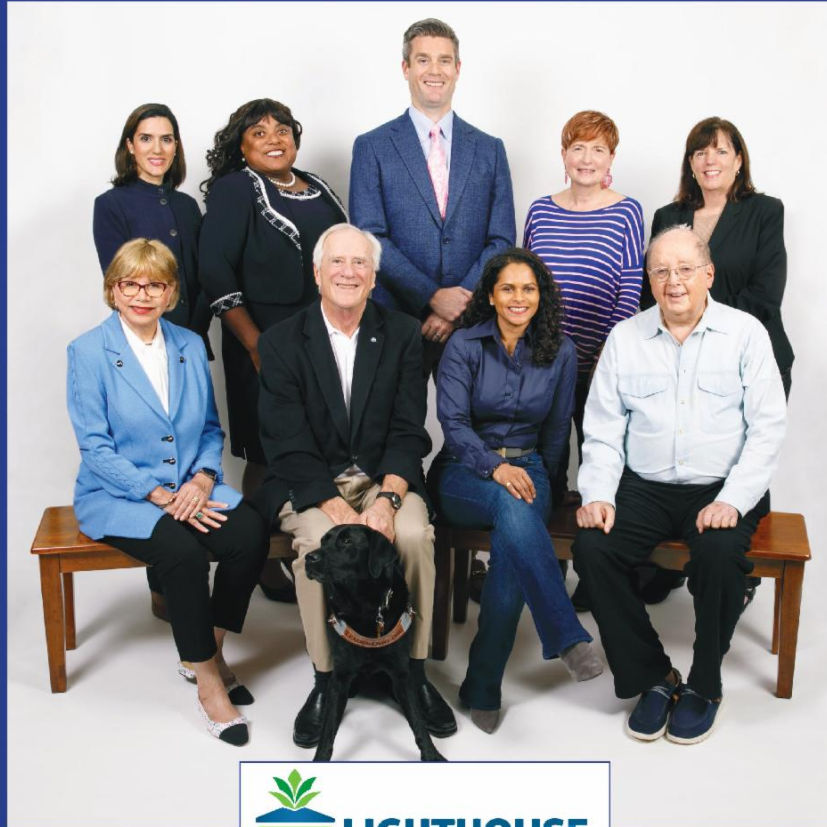
- The Youth Program: Offering early intervention vision screenings and helping children develop essential life skills.
- Technology Training: Teaching clients to access education, employment, and daily life with confidence using assistive technology.
- Well-Being and Independent Living for Adults Program: Empowering adults to regain independence through mobility training, education, and hands-on activities.
- The article also celebrates several key achievements from the past year: White Cane Awareness Proclamation: In October 2024, West Palm Beach Mayor Keith James issued a proclamation recognizing White Cane Day, celebrating the accomplishments of the B/VI community.
- Culinary Certification Program: Six clients graduated from our Recipes for Success program, gaining confidence to pursue careers in the culinary arts.
- Fashion and Inclusion: In preparation for our Annual EnVision Luncheon, we partnered with Anne Fontaine to feature B/VI models in a special video celebrating empowerment and inclusivity.

### **Inspiring Independence**

Our clients' stories are the heart of everything we do. From a professor returning to the classroom after vision loss to seniors navigating age-related changes, their resilience reminds us why we are here. Their journeys inspire us to continue breaking down barriers and helping individuals achieve their dreams. We're honored to be featured in Palm Beach Society and grateful for the opportunity to share the incredible work happening at Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches. To learn more about our programs and services, visit [www.lhpb.org](http://www.lhpb.org) or call 561-586-5600. Together, we're empowering vision and inspiring independence!

# PALM BEACH *Society*

MARCH 14-20, 2025



**EMPOWERING VISION,  
INSPIRING INDEPENDENCE**

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## Our Programs

Fun times and strikes! On March 22nd, our kids program clients enjoyed a day of bowling and delicious pizza afterward. Smiles, laughter, and memories were made!



Check out these amazing moments from our students' overnight trip! Our Transition and Children's clients had an unforgettable time bonding and learning together. We love seeing the progress that they make from these overnight trips!



On March 20th, the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches team completed a 3-hour Heart Saver CPR-AED First Aid Training! It was an educational and empowering experience, leaving us more confident to respond

in a medical emergency.



What an unforgettable time! The energy, the music, and the incredible spirit of our attendees made this St. Patrick's Day celebration truly special. A huge thank you to the Elevar Foundation for bringing the magic to life and to everyone who joined us for the fun! Happy St. Patrick's Day!



Lighthouse is thrilled to introduce our new Golf Club! Thanks to support and collaboration with First Tee of the Palm Beaches we are offering classes that teach the skills needed to transition from the driving range to the putting green! Our first group completed a six-week session and created great memories together!



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## NEWSWORTHY



The Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches has been selected as a finalist for the 2025 Health & Human Services Organization of the Year Award. The winner will be announced during the 2025 Business Awards which will be held on Friday, May 23, 2025 from 7:30 AM – 9:00 AM. We are so excited to be

recognized by the Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches for the work we do in our community!



Joan Friedman, Director of Development at Lighthouse, was featured on this week's Treasure Coast Insider with host Anna from White Glove Moving. Joan shared her passion for community outreach and gave listeners a behind-the-scenes look at Lighthouse's growing impact. The episode also spotlights exciting event highlights—from raffle prizes to local sponsors, plus a preview of the food and fashion guests can look forward to. [Catch the full episode](#) and grab your tickets today!

### **Lighthouse Clients Featured in Video for Anne Fontaine!**





## Lighthouse Featured in INNOVATE South Florida

We're honored to be featured in the INNOVATE South Florida ebook (page 148)! This spotlight celebrates our work empowering individuals who are blind or visually impaired across five counties.

Thank you to our team, volunteers, and supporters who help make this impact possible.

[Read the eBook Here](#)

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## EVENTS

Our very own Executive Director, Lisa Stella, is on the committee for the upcoming Talk Derby to Me event benefiting Recipes for Success, a great organization that has enabled many of our clients to start a new vocation after successfully completing the class and obtaining SERV Safe Culinary Certification! Scan the QR code for tickets to what is sure to be a fantastic time.



An evening of dinner, drinks, dancing - and Derby!!  
Wear your cocktail finest and your fanciest hat.  
Enjoy luxury live and silent auction items and  
support Extraordinary Charities' programs.



Scan for tickets!

SATURDAY, MAY 3  
6:00 PM  
NATIONAL CROQUET CENTER  
700 FLORIDA MANGO ROAD  
WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33406



**2025 Committee:** Lisa Stella, Kate McGoff, Ashleigh McDonald, Collin Adams, Rhonda Rogers, Chef Greg Schiff, Christine Pitts, Judith Willson, Christine Harasz, Victoria Jackson, Executive Director Christine Raymond, Committee Chair Beth Fishel, Taylor Materio. Not pictured: Jenn Gowdy  
Photo by Capehart



**2025 Honorary Chairs:**  
Eddie Schmidt and Ozzie Medeiros  
Photo by Capehart



### **Ongoing: First Wednesday of Every Month “Let’s Chat” on Zoom**

The Transition students enjoy an interactive monthly virtual meetup specifically designed for enrolled students.

### **Independent Living Skills Class**

Dates: April 1st, 2025 – May 13th, 2025 (Dates of classes are subject to change)

Location: Indian River State College-Pruitt campus

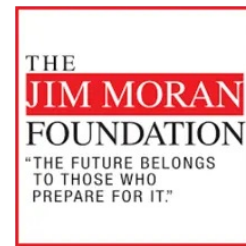
Address: 500 NW California Blvd, Port St. Lucie FL, 34986

Time: 10:00 am-1:00 pm

Vision Rehabilitation Therapist: Ashley Nieuwendam - 561-933-1396 (calls only) or text message 813-210-6221

Lighthouse Telephone: 561-586-5600

Funders:



Accredited by:



Members of:



Community Partners:



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Learn more about the Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches and support our efforts to assist the blind and visually impaired below:

Learn  
More

## Follow Us on Social Media



With gratitude and best wishes for a wonderful 2025,  
Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches

Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches | 5601 Corporate Way Suite #210 | West Palm  
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