Mission Statement

Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches assists persons with visual impairments to develop their capabilities to the fullest and to utilize them in the pursuits of life, which are the right and privilege of all.
Dear Friend,

Thank you for your continued support of Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches! Serving Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee counties, we take great pride in reporting to you that our vision services were extended to more than 3,000 persons who are blind or visually impaired in 2017.

Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches assists persons with visual impairments to develop their capabilities to the fullest and to utilize them in the pursuits of life, which are the right and privilege of all. This is our mission statement, which is the core of our successes on a daily basis as an organization accredited by the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving People with Blindness or Visual Impairment (NAC) with professionally trained, tenured and accredited staff.

With more than 10 programs and services -- including early intervention for blind babies, children’s vision screenings, orientation and mobility, and assistive technology training -- the organization’s staff receives accolades from state and local agencies for their work. Staff, leadership and board members are also routinely met with warm smiles and words of gratitude from the clients whose lives have been changed by virtue of the services, programs and training they have received through the Lighthouse.

Whether your support has come to Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches by way of planned giving, memorial gifts, or annual financial contributions, we thank you. With your valued support, we continue to accomplish all we do while keeping our administrative costs below 10 percent!

Again, thank you for helping us achieve these great successes on behalf of the blind and visually impaired persons who have entrusted us with their care. You are an extension of these successes and we understand we could not achieve these results without you.

Marvin A. Tanck
President

Donte’ Mickens
Chairman of the Board
2017 Financials
Unaudited

Revenue

- Public support: 65%
- Contracted services: 21%
- Other: 8%

Expenses

- Program & Vision Services: 90%
- Administration: 9%
- Fundraising: 1%
Become a part of the Lighthouse Legacy Society

The Lighthouse Legacy Society recognizes those who have chosen to remember the Lighthouse in their wills so that our services may be perpetuated far into the future for anyone who will someday need our help coping with vision loss.

To learn more, please visit lighthousepalmbeaches.org.

We thank you!

Your continued support is very much appreciated and makes our work possible.

Together, we can continue to light the way for persons with visual impairments.

You can extend your support by

- Attending or sponsoring events
- Giving online through a financial contribution
- Making a planned gift
- Becoming an organization sponsor

We are grateful for the support of our donors, sponsors and partners. Your generosity allows us to continue our legacy of making a difference to those in our community who are blind or visually impaired. Please visit lighthousepalmbeaches.org for listings of those who have helped us light the way in 2017.
Preventing blindness in children

Lighthouse staff conducted more than 2,200 screenings on children birth to five years of age at preschools, daycares and community events in 2017.

Children who are not treated early in life can develop permanent vision loss that can’t be corrected later in childhood or as adults. Catching a visual impairment early makes a world of difference. Even young children and babies can have eye problems that can and should be corrected. The earlier the treatment, the better the results.

Lighthouse Children’s Services Coordinator Jennifer Breitinger and Board Member David B. Cano, MD, perform vision screenings on special guests Raphael and Michelangelo at the West Palm Beach Our Kids World event August 26 & 27, 2017. More than 320 children received vision screenings at the event and more than 50 of those were recommended to see an eye care professional.
Lighthouse client Harold O'Flaherty expressed his heartfelt thanks to the lighthouse via this voicemail message that we transcribed:

“Diane, how are you? Harold O'Flaherty.

I wanted to tell you, everything you’ve brought me, I’ve used. With the watch, Saturday night, it didn’t skip over, and so I didn’t panic. I put it in a different window, which may be more western. And, Sunday night, last night, it worked beautifully. The clock, we got it reset to daylight saving time and I used the timer to cook a small roast.

So, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I thank the organization for all that was done. But I just love and appreciate you, your kindness, your understanding, your empathy and your commitment to excellence on behalf of those of us that do not see. God bless you. Have a glorious Monday evening.

And call me when you have a chance. I just want to say thank you.

Harold O'Flaherty, Professor and Director of Blab”
Hi Mary,

I just wanted you to know that we are so appreciative of Lighthouse Services.

Diane and Rosemary in particular have been so helpful to my Mom. Her entire disposition has changed dramatically. She is energized and enthusiastic about learning alternate ways of doing things accommodating her declining vision situation.

Everyone has been so responsive and professional. The encouragement for my Mom is overwhelming.

Your organization has exceeded all our expectations … on every level.

Many thanks,
Eileen Devine

Marvalyn’s story:

With a “never say never” attitude, Marvalyn has explored a wealth of new technology at the Lighthouse during her recovery after experiencing a stroke while in her early forties. The stroke, 15 years ago, left her in a coma for many months. When she started coming out of the coma, it was discovered she was blind, had lost the use of her legs and hands, and had impaired speech.

Marvalyn moved in with her elderly mother and began to receive intensive physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy. She was also referred to the Lighthouse for vision therapy.

In the early days of receiving services at the Lighthouse, Marvalyn used a device called the Parrot to make phone calls. With the inability to use her hands, the Parrot was not always helpful or reliable.

Marvalyn next used the Talking Book Service. With this option being more user-friendly, she was able to push the buttons of the player using her chin.

As the years passed, technology continued to evolve. Still using her chin to press buttons, but with the added feature of being able to use her voice, Marvalyn was able to successfully make phone calls using the Vocally Voice Dialer.
More than technology changed for Marvalyn throughout the years since she began working with the Lighthouse. Marvalyn’s mother passed away, requiring Marvalyn to live in a nursing home and then a few congregate living facilities. Most recently, she lives in an apartment complex. At each move, she received orientation training from Lighthouse staff to learn how to get around in her new environment.

Marvalyn still isn't able to walk more than a few steps at a time, but she gets around well in her wheelchair. Each morning, her aide assists with personal hygiene, dressing and meal preparation. The remainder of each of her days is fairly lonely. She cannot participate in activities in her apartment complex and has limited interaction with friends and family.

But, once again, technology takes its place in Marvalyn’s life. After using her iPad’s Hey SIRI to communicate with others through text and email and her voice controlled television remote, she moved on to use the Amazon Echo, provided to her by the Lighthouse, which included set up assistance and training.

The Echo has been a most useful tool -- helping to enhance her leisure time, assist with mundane tasks and even as a form of speech therapy. In just the first week, using the Alexa app, she became quite familiar with the Echo’s many features.

She uses it to play music, trivia and Jeopardy, and asks for a daily joke. She also gets weather and news updates, and uses the device’s time-related features, such as clock, timer and stopwatch. When she's ready for some down time, she uses it to play relaxing beach sounds.

Marvalyn is excited about her next planned steps with the Echo: Checking out free Audible books and online shopping. While she will continue to use her iPad and Hey SIRI for some tasks, her dated iPad can’t keep up with the advancement of her Echo’s Alexa.

Marvalyn has expressed sincere gratitude for the assistance she has received from the Lighthouse throughout the past many years as her life has had its twists and turns.
3,569 people received the following support from Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches in 2017

- Assistive technology: Smart phone and computer instruction
- Independent living skills training: Personal and home management
- Orientation and mobility instruction: Travel training and long cane skills
- Adjustment-to-blindness counseling: Individual counseling and support groups
- Transition Program: Community integration, college preparation and career exploration for children, ages 14 through graduation
- Summer camp and year-round programming for children, ages six to 13
- Vision screenings at area pre-schools and daycares
- Early intervention services for babies, birth to age five
- Low-vision clinic and services: Prescription of magnifiers and optical devices
- Social services/information and referral
- Community education and training
- Socialization opportunities
- Aids and Appliance Store
- Equipment Grant Program