Many programs
One vision
In 2014, Lighthouse Guild reached more lives than ever before and served more people with vision loss than any other organization in the country. Our comprehensive vision + health approach uniquely positions us to serve as a model of excellence that benefits people across the country and around the world.

Lighthouse Guild has many programs with one vision. We address the needs of people who are blind and visually impaired, including those with multiple disabilities or chronic medical conditions so they can lead productive, dignified and fulfilling lives.

With leadership comes responsibility. We are committed to expanding our efforts while assuring that the programs and services we provide are both impactful and sustainable. There is also a growing need for advocacy, for sharing knowledge and for research that can provide the foundation for program development and innovation.

As you read this report, you will understand how Lighthouse Guild’s approach delivers a continuum of care for our clients:

- We teach children with vision loss to read and communicate effectively;
- We support college-bound students as they prepare to fulfill a lifelong dream;
- We teach people to safely navigate New York streets and other places they need to go;
- We provide technology resources to help people of all ages overcome their vision challenges;
- We help people with diabetes manage their health to prevent vision loss;
- We provide behavioral health therapy so people who have anxiety, depression or difficulty adjusting to vision loss can develop coping skills; and
- We manage healthcare so people with chronic conditions, including vision loss, can remain in their homes as long as possible.
For more than a century, we have provided quality services for people with vision loss and that remains paramount. Each day, more people are losing their vision because they are unaware of resources or lack access to needed services.

**The growing need**

We are addressing the extraordinary and growing need for vision loss prevention for people of all ages. This includes prenatal education, implementing more effective, widespread and uniform vision evaluations for preschoolers, educating seniors about preventing vision loss and a myriad of issues which will reduce preventable vision loss.

While we have accomplished much, we know we can – and must – do more, including:

- Integrating vision care more completely into healthcare;
- Encouraging the development and use of adaptive technologies;
- Advocating for programs that provide early identification of vision disorders and their treatment;
- Strengthening and standardizing training in low vision rehabilitation for ophthalmology residents; and
- Expanding and sharing our specialized knowledge.

**New possibilities**

Advancements in care, treatment and technologies continue to open a world of new possibilities. As a result, our many programs with one vision continue to unleash the potential for people with vision loss to lead productive, dignified and fulfilling lives.

On behalf of all the people we are privileged to serve, thank you for your continued interest, support and commitment to making a difference for those in need.

James M. Dubin  
*Chairman*

Alan R. Morse, JD, PhD  
*President & CEO*
Integrating Vision + Healthcare

GuildNet offers Health Plans that provide managed long term care services for more than 18,000 people 18 and older with chronic medical conditions. A care management team works with members and their doctors to develop a plan that helps members remain safely in their homes.

Our Vision Rehabilitation services help people regain function and maximize their usable vision to develop skills and strategies to remain safe, independent and active. This includes learning to use the latest adaptive computer technology, training in new techniques for daily tasks and mobility training.

Behavioral Health services help people with vision loss and their families address the concerns and anxiety often experienced when losing vision and help them develop healthy coping skills. Our day treatment programs help people with developmental disabilities or psychiatric diagnoses remain in their communities.

Our Adult Day Health Care program offers people with health and vision problems comprehensive health care such as nursing, therapies, medication assistance, and personal care as well as meals and transportation.

Our Education programs improve the lives of children with vision impairment and other disabilities through highly specialized schools, including a preschool, a school for students with multiple disabilities and the only community music school in the U.S. for people with vision loss, as well as support for parents of children with visual impairments and scholarships for legally blind students.

Our Professional Training programs promote improved care and well being for people with vision loss as well as those at risk. We provide low vision rehabilitation training to prepare healthcare professionals in all settings to recognize and address vision problems.

Our Advocacy raises awareness of the need for access to vision rehabilitation services and builds support for appropriate legislative responses to issues that affect people with vision loss.

We recognize and reward Research in vision science that leads to breakthroughs in vision loss and vision care.
Improving care for people who are visually impaired, blind and multi-disabled
Recognizing vision science and vision care research
Advancing public policy that helps people with vision loss
Providing managed long term care for people with chronic medical conditions
Offering multidisciplinary services for people who are visually impaired, blind and multi-disabled
Vision Rehabilitation
Behavioral Health
Medical Services
Adult Day Health Care
Education
For Subhia and Mayy Ahmad, Lighthouse Guild’s Heilbrunn School has become much more than just a school – it’s become an extended family. The sisters, Mayy, age 7 and Subhia, age 18, share a rare condition which leads to acute vision loss and significant physical challenges that affect balance and coordination.

“I was hoping that school would prepare them for a full life. That’s all that any parent wants. In my case, I needed help to achieve that,” says Wadra Ahmad, Subhia and Mayy’s mother. “They are learning all the things that many take for granted: friendships, relationships, and doing things for yourself.”

After learning to walk unassisted, speak, read, write and develop life skills, Subhia will graduate in a few years. “Graduation is going to be very emotional,” predicts Wadra. “Subhia’s life has already changed so much.”

“This school is a Godsend. My children have so many opportunities.”
Edythe Heyman’s progressive vision loss has prevented her from reading anymore. But at 92 years-old, she is living proof that there is no age barrier to learning new technology.

“Now I can access my New York Times, listen to the latest books, and use email,” explains Edythe.

The increased availability of smart phones, tablets and computers can be life changing for people with vision loss. At Lighthouse Guild’s Grunwald Technology Center, clients like Edythe are learning how to use technology to stay informed and in touch.

“I wanted to be able to do email to keep in touch with my two sons,” says Edythe. “It seems like we’re always emailing now.”

But Edythe isn’t done discovering new ways that technology can make her life easier. “I know my iPad is capable of doing many things. I’d like to learn even more.”

“Without technology, I’d be slowly sinking into depression.”
Sixty-three year-old Noemi Melendez lives in a busy household that includes her daughter and two small grandchildren. Facing challenges from multiple chronic conditions including vision loss, she relies on a GuildNet managed long term care plan for an array of services so she can continue to live safely at home.

For Noemi, GuildNet provides a personal care aide, our adult day health care program, a personal emergency response system and ongoing wellness education.

“I have a care manager to call whenever I have a problem,” says Noemi. Her care manager coordinates nurse visits to manage her many daily medications and collaborates with her doctors to ensure that she gets consistent care.

“The GuildNet staff are beautiful people,” she says. “They help me a lot.”
Daily living can be challenging for people adjusting to vision loss. But with the help of Lighthouse Guild’s behavioral health programs, they learn healthy coping skills so they can move forward and change their lives.

“Vision loss impacts everything else in your life,” explains Lighthouse Guild clinical social worker Adrienne Wexler. “It often leads to anxiety, depression and isolation, which can compound other challenges such as substance abuse, homelessness and even domestic violence.”

Our individual and group therapies help clients regain confidence and develop a supportive social network. “Our goal is to help clients understand that we understand their challenges,” says Adrienne, “so they can begin their journey toward healing.”
When 86 year-old Arnold Riback, who already had severe vision loss in his right eye, experienced a hemorrhage in his left eye, he was unsure whether he’d ever see again. The long-time owner of a financial business and a once avid bridge player, he required a full-time health aide to remain safely at home.

“I was at a point where I could not function,” explained Arnold. “When I came to Lighthouse Guild, I could see almost nothing. But now I have a quality of life again. I can’t believe it.”

Lighthouse Guild’s Vision Rehabilitation services are helping Arnold regain function and maximize his usable vision. He is developing skills and strategies to remain independent and active.

“For a long time I did not see my father smile much at all,” said his son, Philip. “Not only did you bring back his vision, but you brought back his smile.”

“What you have done for me is remarkable.”
Brooklyn resident Jennine Wallace hasn’t let vision impairment and cerebral palsy get in the way of her love for music. A student at our Filomen M. D’Agostino Greenberg Music School, Lighthouse Guild is helping her use music technology to unleash her creativity and gain independence.

“When I was younger, I would have to ask someone to write down the notes I wanted in pencil. Now with the computer, I can compose, record, mix and even print music without relying on anyone else,” explains Jennine.

For more than a century, our Music School has been a resource for educators and performers nationwide as the leading provider of accessible music instruction.

“I’d like to teach music someday,” says Jennine.
When Stephanie Jefferson first came to Light-house Guild, her life was at a crossroads. She was losing her sight, preparing to go back to college, and afraid.

“When I first walked through these doors I thought my life was coming to an end because I was losing my sight,” remembers Stephanie. But with college preparatory assistance from our Adaptive Technology Center, she embarked on a new journey at Lehman College in the Bronx.

With renewed energy, Stephanie graduated summa cum laude with a degree in social work and set out to inspire others. Now, more than a decade after her first visit, Stephanie has returned for more training – to learn how to navigate the web, and improve her computer skills.

“Here, I’ve been embraced by people who care,” explains Stephanie. “They’ve always given me the courage to take each step forward.”
Milagros Linares, who was born with vision loss, began attending our Ethel and Samuel J. LeFrak School two years ago.

Our classrooms allow visually impaired students to learn alongside their sighted peers. That helps students like Milagros and their families manage the challenges associated with vision loss, and gain greater independence.

“The integrated classrooms help Milagros because every child is unique, and they can all learn from each other,” explains Ana, her mother. “The teachers understand her, and can help her in ways that I am not able to.”

To facilitate child development, The LeFrak School offers specialized therapy, Braille lessons, as well as creative and fun activities, and fosters friendships.

“Milagros is always talking about her friends,” says Ana. “She shows me all the work she does at school, and it’s beautiful to see her creations.”

“My daughter is learning how to be more independent.”
Just a few years ago, McDonald Reid, a Bronx native, was faced with a life or death decision: learn to manage his diabetes or risk succumbing to the disease.

“I’m 42 years-old,” McDonald explained, “I want to be 43 and to live to see 100, like George Burns did. Without Lighthouse Guild, I wouldn’t have the vital information I need to manage my diabetes.”

For McDonald, who is also legally blind, Lighthouse Guild’s comprehensive diabetes education, medical and self-management services are enabling him to take control over his disease. By learning proper nutrition, getting physical therapy and visiting the podiatrist in the clinic, he is improving his quality of life.

“Without access to the health or nutrition resources I need, I’d still be in the same place. I’d still be in the danger zone.”
Selected 2014 Highlights

We celebrated the merger of Jewish Guild Healthcare and Lighthouse International with a week of events in the community in Spring 2014, which highlighted low vision and diabetes awareness.

Our low vision rehabilitation training programs for healthcare professionals reached ophthalmology residents, nurses, physician assistants, occupational therapists, social workers, and ophthalmic technicians in a variety of health care settings. Through live workshops, online courses, webinars and instructional materials, we are giving health professionals the tools to identify functional vision problems, the means to address vision issues in the care setting and the ability to know when to refer their patients to low vision services.

1. A Registered Dietitian/Certified Diabetes Educator explains the importance of paying attention to portion sizes at a diabetes awareness program hosted by Lighthouse Guild at a New York City community center as part of the merger celebration.

2. Executive Vice President & COO Mark G. Ackermann, Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer, President & CEO Alan R. Morse, JD, PhD, Chairman James M. Dubin, NYS Senator Liz Krueger, and NYS Assemblyman Richard N. Gottfried at an event held at 15 West 65th Street during the weeklong series of events as part of the merger celebration.

3. An Occupational Therapist instructs a workshop attendee how to enlarge print using a CCTV.

Continued on next page
GuildNet expanded its health plans to include a managed care plan that combines all of the benefits of Medicare and Medicaid, helping members to live safely and comfortably in their own homes. GuildNet’s President, Wanda Figueroa-Kilroy, RN, MSN, was honored by El Diario, as part of their annual Mujeres Destacadas celebration.

We honored deserving individuals for their achievements in the vision care field, including the recipient of The Bressler Prize in Vision Science, Emily Y. Chew, MD, for her work in advancing the understanding of retinal diseases. The Pisart Award in Vision Science was awarded to Pawan Sinha, PhD, for the impact of his research, where his findings have significantly influenced the understanding of the human brain and vision development. The Oberdorfer Award in Low Vision, created in partnership with the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO), was awarded to David B. Rein, PhD, for his research in economic and cost effective methods of care in the area of vision impairment. The Grunwald Award for Public Service was awarded to Norman Pearlstine, Executive Vice President and Chief Content Officer of Time Inc. for his work to advance public awareness of vision impairment and vision rehabilitation.

Lighthouse Guild awarded 23 scholarships throughout 12 different states across the country to high school and college students who are blind.

Our Filomen M. D’Agostino Greenberg Music School performed its annual concert at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The musical selections, which emphasized nature and its impact on music, featured soloists of all ages, and adult and youth ensembles.

Over the past year, The Ethel and Samuel J. LeFrak School and The Harriet and Robert Heilbrunn School have been developing overlapping components, allowing professional staff expertise from one program to enrich teaching in the other.
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We are grateful for the generosity and support of the many individuals and organizations that believe in the mission of Lighthouse Guild. To continue meeting the challenges faced by the ever-growing population of visually impaired and multi-disabled people, please partner with us to bring independence, dignity, and hope to thousands of men, women, and children in New York and beyond.

For further information on how you can directly impact the lives of Lighthouse Guild’s clients, patients and students, please contact:

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## Legacies

We honor the memory of the men and women whose bequests were received by Lighthouse Guild during 2014. They have helped assure continuity of services to people who are blind and visually impaired.

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