

JULY

newVIEW  
OKLAHOMA

2021

NEWSLETTER

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: JOHN DAVIDSON

NewView's Enrichment Coordinator, John Davidson, has always been an artist. He attended visual arts school in New York and says going to the Museum of Modern Art in New York City was like "going to grandma's." When his vision started failing in the 70's, he knew it wouldn't stop him from creating. Now, he has lost full vision in one eye and uses a white cane to navigate. He describes his remaining vision as being like a foggy morning, with the clarity depending on the lighting in his environment.

John's favorite medium used to be photography, including collages, which he says he created to represent his fractionated vision. However, as his vision loss progressed, he pivoted to painting. He loves the feeling of loading his brush and "just beginning." Painting also allows him to adjust the lighting around him to best utilize his existing vision, making it more accessible. As his remaining sight continues to deteriorate, John plans to venture into more tactile art. John is a passionate artist who says he will never stop creating.

John found NewView through the Department of Rehabilitative Services years ago when he began receiving services, but just joined the team about 6 months ago. Initially, John says he struggled to accept his diagnosis. With the help of NewView, he's now much more comfortable with his diagnosis, as his ability to navigate the world using skills gained from NewView's clinic and rehab team.



As enrichment coordinator, John works with MOVE and WSB students helping them accomplish their goals. He is also an outlet for them to voice their frustrations with their vision impairments. He does this through group work. They talk through positive affirmations and the ways in which they are resilient. John is going to be doing a series over the next couple of weeks on being confident. These group gatherings are a great way for the students to check in, voice their frustrations, and get the tools they need to work through their struggles as someone who is blind or has low vision.

*WHAT'S NEXT FOR JOHN?* – John is inspired to bring together a community to showcase BVI art and is using his relationship with NewView to make it come together. Stay tuned for updates.

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## PROJECT READable LAUNCHES AT NEWVIEW

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We are excited to announce the launch of a new branch of NewView! Project READable is a team of IT and accessibility experts who are committed to helping public and private entities evaluate their online presence and make it accessible. This will allow NewView to train and promote Oklahomans with low vision and other disabilities into IT roles, which is a high growth industry with huge potential for upward mobility. This team is made up of individuals who have a variety of disabilities and depend on assistive technology

to access information themselves. Without it they could not live, work, or contribute to their community. READable team members use a combination of technology tools to identify and evaluate accessibility problems for clients. Using automation and personal document testing, our team of experts offer our customers reliable, cost-effective digital communication mediation solutions in accordance with industry-best practices (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines), while also working in meaningful, integrated, and competitive IT positions.

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## SECRETARY MUELLER'S VISIT

Oklahoma's Secretary of Commerce and Workforce Development, Scott Mueller, came for a tour of our Douglas facility. It was great to talk with him about what NewView does and how we impact Oklahomans with low vision and the community around us.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

We hope to restart the VITAL (Veterans Independence Through Adaptive Living) support group in the fall, depending on the status of COVID. To learn more, email Andrea Hamen at [ahamen@newviewoklahoma.org](mailto:ahamen@newviewoklahoma.org) for up-to-date information.

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## GIFTS IN ACTION

### *DONOR SPOTLIGHT:*

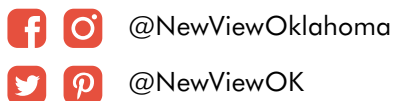
The NewView statewide fundraising team has met our match. A special grant match, that is. Last year, The Carl C. Anderson Sr. & Marie Jo Anderson Charitable Foundation awarded NewView up to \$15,000, if we could secure the same in new monthly donors, or Visionary donations. Despite the significant challenges of the pandemic, we reached the goal. Thank you, to Anderson Foundation, and to our amazing Visionary donors!

### *DONOR HIGHLIGHTS:*

NewView expresses humble thanks for gifts received recently from: Arvest Foundation, Ascension St. John, Express Employment International, Sarah and John Graves, The Oklahoma Innovation Expansion Program, The Anne & Henry Zarrow Foundation, and the Maxine & Jack Zarrow Family Foundation.

### *IN MEMORIAL:*

NewView expresses our reverence and sympathy with the recent passing of Ms. Maxine Zarrow. We lift up her life and legacy and celebrate her as a dear friend to our entire community.



Lauren Branch, PRESIDENT AND CEO

[NVoklahoma.org](http://NVoklahoma.org)



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## VETERANS CORNER

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Are you a Veteran, or do you know a Veteran who is not currently being served by the VA vision department? Through a grant generously provided by Boeing, **NewView can provide our services at no cost**, including:

- Low Vision Optometry assessment
- Low Vision Occupational Therapy assessment
- Daily living skills training
- Orientation and Mobility training
- Assistive Technology training
- And free devices based on recommendations from NewView's low vision professionals.

We hope to restart the VITAL (Veterans Independence Through Adaptive Living) support group in the fall, depending on the status of COVID.

To learn more information, email Andrea Hamen at

[ahamen@newviewoklahoma.org](mailto:ahamen@newviewoklahoma.org).



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## AREAWIDE AGING AGENCY

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We recently announced that NewView is the recipient of an incredibly generous grant from Areawide Aging Agency. It has helped us provide free vision care services to qualifying older adults in the Oklahoma City Area. As of the end of June, we are thrilled to announce that we have provided about \$58,000 of services to almost 170 individuals. We are so fortunate to be working with the Areawide Aging Agency to better the quality of life of these individuals.

Oklahomans 60 years or older who are residents of Canadian, Cleveland, Logan, and Oklahoma counties may qualify for free services regardless of insurance or health coverage, including transportation, exam, rehab plan, home assessment, in-home training, and other devices like magnifiers, canes, and lamps. If you might qualify, or know someone who might qualify, and want more information, contact us at **(405) 286-9699**.

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918.779.7772

■ NewView Oklahoma Center  
for Low Vision and Blindness – OKC  
4301 N. Classen Blvd. OKC, OK 73118  
855.811.9699

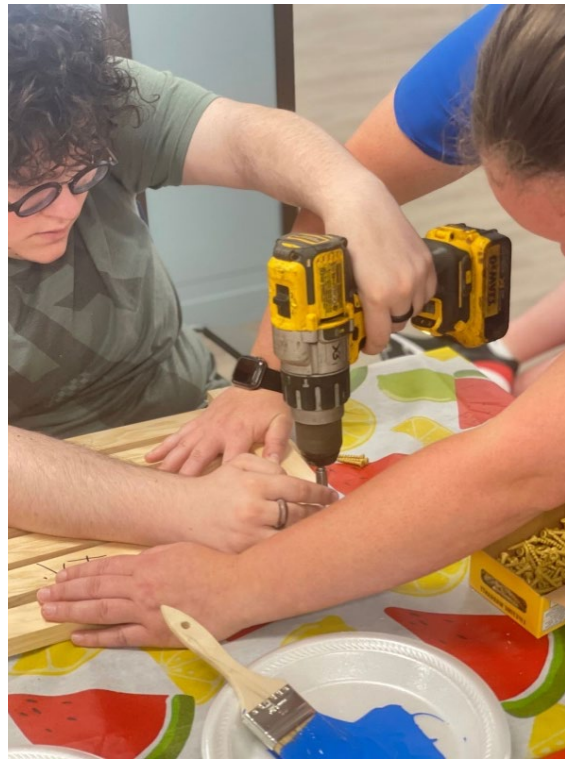
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## KEYS TO WORK

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From budgeting to mock interviews, grocery shopping, public transit, and even power tools, Keys to Work camp gives young adults with vision impairments the life skills that they will need to live independent and fulfilling lives. Many of them are experiencing independence and the confidence that comes with it for the first time in their lives. Many of our campers experience huge perspective shifts as they work with our rehabilitation team to learn essential skills. Many of them leave with the confidence to consider a fulfilling future with a level of independence they had never thought possible.



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## BACK TO SCHOOL TIPS

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Parents of blind or low vision children, is your school-aged kiddo about to head back to school? Being in a public space is becoming more and more normal, and it's very exciting for these kids to get the chance to make new friends and get out of the house. Here are some tips we have to ensure they do their best this school year!

- **GO TO BACK-TO-SCHOOL NIGHT** – Back-to-School night, Meet the Teacher, or any type of open house their school hosts before the school year begins, is a great opportunity for your kiddo to explore their school at their own pace. It's also a great way to chat with their teacher about any specific tips to help your kiddo have their best school year, like not having a seat near a window or having additional lighting depending on their vision needs.
- **MOVING SCHOOLS?** – if you are starting at a new school, or this is your child's first year in school, be sure to take your child's eye report to the administration office and ask to speak with the special education director. Let them know that your child is starting school in their district and has visual needs. If they don't know, they can't help. They will help notify your child's school and teacher of your child's needs prior to the start of the school year.
- **COUNT ON US** – NewView has one of the best rehab and clinic teams in the state for a reason. If you encounter new struggles as your child grows and changes or are interested in trying out a new aid before purchasing one, reach out to us! We have loaner devices from magnifiers to special Assistive Technology devices, and a whole team of people who are excited to help your child be their best.
- **LOCKERS** - Prior to school, they will assign lockers to students. Lockers in the middle of a long hallway may be hard to locate. Before school starts, call and talk to your school's administration. Let them know about your child's vision and ask if your son/daughter can have a locker on the end. This can help them locate their locker more easily.

For more back-to-school tips and other feel-good stories, check out our blog at [nvoklahoma.org/blog](http://nvoklahoma.org/blog)

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IT'S NOT WHAT YOU CAN SEE IT'S WHAT YOU CAN BE

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