

SAVE THE DATE | Wednesday, April 11, 2018

Please join us at our 9th Annual **Envision the Future Oklahoma City Luncheon** to hear testimonials from our staff and clients about NewView Oklahoma's life-changing programs. Learn how you can help make a difference in the lives of others with your support and donations!

Wednesday, April 11, 2018 | 12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.
St. Luke's United Methodist Church | 222 NW 15th St, Oklahoma City

To RSVP, or if you are interested in hosting a table, please contact Tiffany Henley at thenley@newviewoklahoma.org.

Holiday Tips for Seniors

The holiday season means gifts, gatherings and memories to make. In addition to the fun, this time of year is often stressful, and can be a particularly challenging time of year for the blind and visually impaired. Here are some tips that might ease the stress of the season for friends and family with visual impairment.

- Give the visually impaired extra notice of holiday events so they can personally prepare. This could mean making advance travel plans or preparing for a new environment.
 - When decorating for the holidays, do not rearrange major furniture or household items. Visually impaired individuals rely on their knowledge of a home's layout in order to safely navigate rooms.
 - For family dinners or holiday events, use contrasting colors in your place settings so people who are visually impaired can more easily differentiate between objects. This can also work for food, to more easily distinguish where items are on the plate.
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- Use larger labels on gifts. Address labels can be printed in large font where TO and FROM are easier to read. You can also add puffy paint on the labels or directly on packages to add a tactile element to the gifts.
 - If you have planned stops at airports, hotels or restaurants, call ahead to make sure you can get assistance if needed. You can also identify luggage with brightly colored stickers or tags to make them easier to find.

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New Lenses Bring New Perspective

When Dale Shawn came to work at NewView Oklahoma last summer, he started as a lineman in the hose manufacturing department, but was quickly recognized for his leadership potential. Dale was asked to train for the department lead of hoses, and as with all NewView employees, was encouraged to make an appointment at the Low Vision Clinic in Oklahoma City.

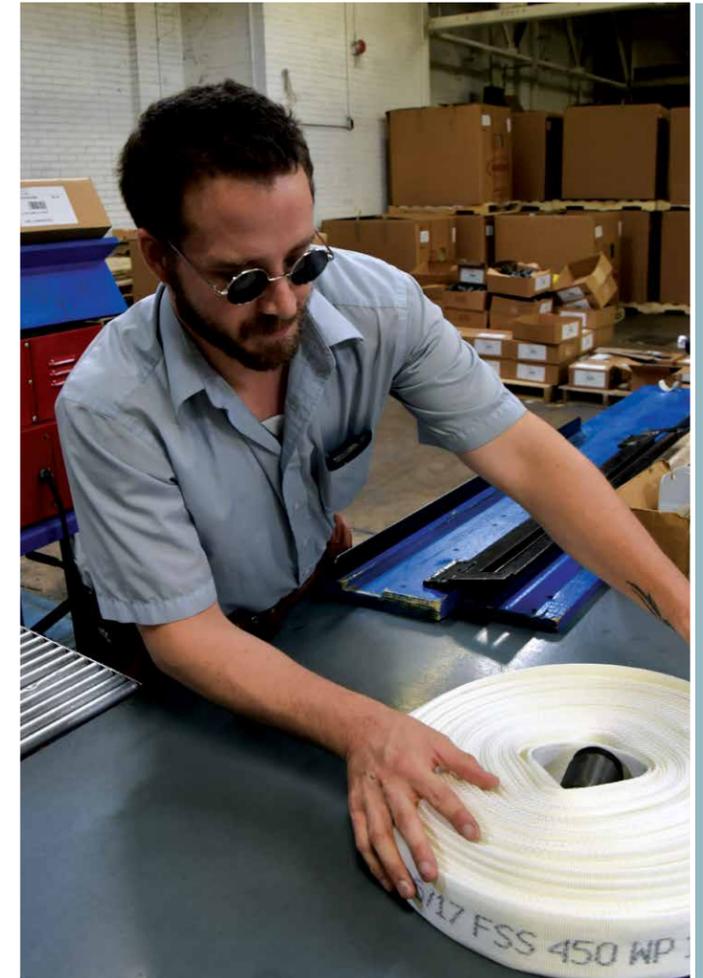
"I figured I'd get adaptive technology, stuff to help me do my job better," Dale said. "But this turned into an opportunity I didn't think was possible."

Dale visited Dr. Roach at the Low Vision clinic who suggested he try lenses to aid his visual impairment caused by retinopathy. Dale stopped wearing glasses several years ago because the glasses were so thick they caused headaches and eventually didn't improve his vision. But Dr. Roach conducted a thorough and extensive exam, and Dale came out of the appointment with new glasses – and a whole new perspective.

"I walked out to the car and I could actually see my wife for the first time. Then I looked in the backseat and saw my son smiling, and my daughter making faces at me – which she can't do now that I can see better," Dale said laughing. "It was like the world opened up again."

Dale has lived his adult life with limited vision, seeing only light and color, and his cataracts will eventually progress to the point that he won't benefit from glasses. So, he says that he's "enjoying the view while he can."

"The biggest plus has been being able to see my family. I never thought I'd be able to do that," Dale said. "But I'm thankful for the time I didn't have glasses because it made me much more aware of what's around me and much more capable."



While his glasses are helpful in his new role as department lead of hoses, Dale says that he is not dependent on wearing glasses.

"When you grow up blind, you think you have limitations," said Dale. "But NewView Oklahoma teaches you that there aren't any limits if you have the right methods and tools. They take away the excuse that, 'I'm blind and can't do it' and teach that we can be successful and prosperous in what we do. We're not just the blind and visually impaired. We are productive, and necessary individuals."



EMBARC OKC and NewView Oklahoma Recognize White Cane Safety Day

EMBARC OKC and NewView recognized White Cane Safety Day on Friday, October 13th, to call attention to travel safety for the blind and visually impaired independently navigating the transit system. NewView employees rode the bus throughout the day to highlight the significance of the white cane as a tool of independence and mobility for people who are blind or visually impaired.

“The safety of our customers is the top priority at EMBARK. Traveling safely depends a great deal on visual cues or signals between other drivers, cyclists and pedestrians,” said Jason Ferbrache, administrator of EMBARK. “Making our community safer and more accessible means calling attention to the white cane and what it represents for our visually disabled friends, neighbors and colleagues. We want to help ensure that everyone can confidently and safely travel throughout Oklahoma City.”

The International White Cane Day, established on the initiative of the World Federation of the Blind, is celebrated worldwide annually on October 15th with the mission to educate the world about blindness and how the visually impaired can live and work independently with the aid of the white cane. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate how the visually impaired give back to their communities, celebrate the abilities and successes achieved by blind people in a sighted world and honor the many contributions made by the visually impaired.

“The white cane gives the blind and visually impaired the freedom to travel independently to participate more fully in the life of their communities,” said Lauren Branch, NewView president and CEO. “With Orientation and mobility training, people using the white cane can enjoy greater mobility and safety by determining the location of curbs, steps, uneven pavement, and other physical obstacles in their way.”

NewView has been awarded a 5 year accreditation certification through the National Accreditation Council (NAC), the only international accrediting body devoted to serving organizations that provide programs for blind and low vision consumers. Achieved through a comprehensive evaluation process guided by contemporary industry standards, this designation recognizes NewView nationally as an organization that delivers the highest quality rehabilitation, employment and education services for people who are blind or have low vision.

Holiday Tips for Kids

For children, the holiday season can be magical and full of special delights. It also brings an array of new sensory information for children who are blind or visually impaired – more lights, new sounds and smells, distant relatives and new places. We compiled various holiday tips for the little people in your life with vision loss.

- When wrapping gifts, use bags rather than wrapping paper. Wrapped gifts can be challenging to open (and bags are less of a mess to clean up).
- If you do choose wrapping paper, be consistent with the child’s gifts, using one easily distinguishable paper with high contrast or texture for them to identify their gifts.
- Remove toys from packaging before wrapping so they are more easily identified when opened.
- When putting up a Christmas tree or decorating around the house, use brighter and multi-colored lights so they can more easily navigate around the house. Use as many live or natural artifacts as possible. The objects will be more interesting for a visually impaired child to touch and smell.
- Check for decorations that could be hazardous for those with low vision, such as candles that could be knocked over or cords that can be tripped on.
- Give a “tour” of any newly arranged rooms so they have safer mobility, especially navigating around a tree.
- When traveling, make sure the child has all identification information with them at all times, or memorized if possible, in case they get separated from family and need help.



Gift Ideas

- Braille playing cards, bingo or dice
- Tactile toys or those with sounds for younger children
- Building blocks or legos (make sure they are size appropriate for the child’s age in terms of dexterity and choking hazards)
- Play dough or silly puddy
- Check out familyconnect.org for other great gift ideas!

Activity Ideas

- Rice krispie treats are a wonderfully tactile activity
- Make various shaped sugar cookies
- Involve children in wrapping – from bagging gifts to adding bows to packages



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