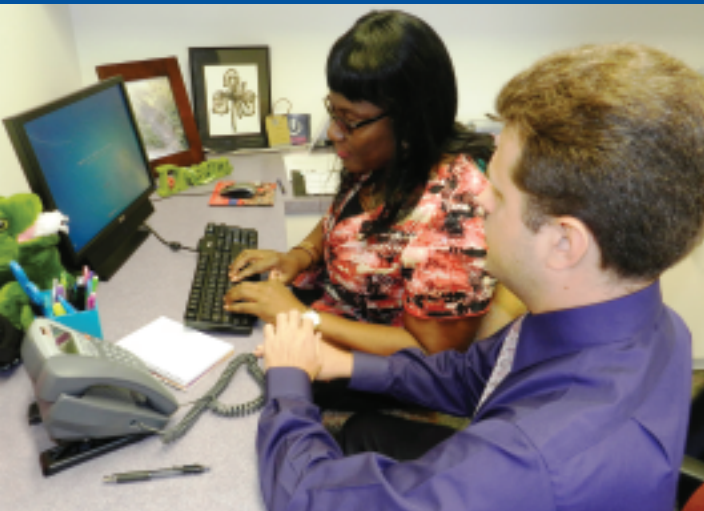


Job Readiness Training Program



*Our motto:
"It's possible to see
without sight™"*



Dear Prospective Employer,

As the totally blind President and CEO of Miami Lighthouse, I encourage you to give our Job Readiness clients the opportunity to prove that a blind person can do anything a sighted person does – we just have to have the proper training and assistive technology equipment to empower us to succeed in a sighted world.

I was a successful financial executive at Purdue University, where I served as financial advisor to the President and Provost, when I experienced gradual vision loss caused by retinitis pigmentosa. I came to Miami Lighthouse in 2001 for vision rehabilitation and regained my computer skills by learning to use screen reading software in conjunction with Microsoft applications. The training I received at Miami Lighthouse changed my life, and our Job Readiness training is opening the door for other blind and visually impaired people to overcome the challenges of visual impairment and participate in the workforce as productive and dedicated employees.

You can make a difference in someone's life by opening the door of your organization for a graduate of our Job Readiness Program.

Sincerely,



Virginia A. Jacko
President & CEO



EDUCATE



Switchboard of Miami employee and Miami Lighthouse client receiving additional computer technology training from Job Readiness Instructor Specialist Brendan Gibson

EDUCATE: JOB TRAINING

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program at Miami Lighthouse for the Blind & Visually Impaired helps Miami Lighthouse clients obtain employment and educational opportunities the same as their sighted peers.

Participants receive state-of-the-art training in computer access using auditory screen reading and large print magnification devices based on their vision impairment. A career plan geared towards achieving sustainable employment is developed in collaboration with the Job Readiness instructor.

They acquire skills such as effective resume writing, telephone techniques and job search tips as well as interviewing and customer service skills which are taught and practiced with expert volunteer coaches.



EMPOWER

EMPOWER: JOB PLACEMENT

Miami Lighthouse Job Readiness Program participants have experience in a variety of sectors such as teaching, administration, social work, medicine, retail, accounting, banking, call centers operations, information technology, management, culinary, sound engineering, and the arts. The Job Readiness training they receive prepares them to adapt their existing skills to meet new job responsibilities.

All clients are personally interviewed by the Job Developer to review prior work experience and volunteer experience that could provide additional skill sets. Participants are taught how to apply for jobs online. Follow up is provided to keep the clients motivated so that they continue to search and apply. Clients are also made aware of Job Fairs and provided additional job search assistance by the Florida Division of Blind Services.

Once employed, if additional training is needed in computer skills or special equipment is required, the Miami Lighthouse and the Florida Division of Blind Services will assist in obtaining these necessary tools. After employment, contact is maintained with the client and the employer to ensure successful job performance.



*Recent program graduates with Job Readiness Instructor Specialist
Brendan Gibson, second from left*

EMPLOY

EMPLOY: THE MANY BENEFITS OF HIRING A VISUALLY IMPAIRED PERSON

Research demonstrates that employees with disabilities consistently meet or exceed performance expectations. Visually impaired individuals add diversity and social responsibility to the labor force of a company or organization by offering fresh perspectives and ideas on how to accomplish tasks and implement strategies. They bring loyalty, experience and a lower than average rate of turnover which soon prove to be a “return on investment” for an employer.

A recent poll by the University of Massachusetts found that 97% of Americans surveyed said they prefer to patronize businesses that hire people with disabilities.

Employers may also qualify for IRS tax credits and deductions such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and the Disabled Access Credit as well as training incentives from South Florida WorkForce. In addition, if a Miami Lighthouse Job Readiness Program employee requires specially designed computer equipment, the software cost may be paid in full by the Florida Division of Blind Services. They also are eligible for transportation by Miami-Dade Special Transportation Services (STS) to ensure on-time arrival at the workplace.

Some companies provide internship opportunities to disabled persons. The person may receive a paid internship for a number of weeks in a specific or various departments to learn the requirements of a job and, upon completion of the internship, has the opportunity to apply for a full-time position.

Baptist Health Center is now partnering with the Miami Lighthouse to offer internship opportunities to our clients. Other companies that are providing job opportunities to Miami Lighthouse clients include Marriott International, Hyatt Hotels, Loews Hotels, Perez Art Museum, Miami Science Museum, Miami Micro Data, Switchboard Miami, WorkSquare, Miami International Airport, Bank United, Inktel, Perry Ellis and others.

To inquire how your organization can partner with us, please call 305.856.2288.

Miami Lighthouse has been continuously accredited by the National Accreditation Council for Blind and Low Vision Services since 1978. This accreditation demonstrates our agency's leadership in the field of vision rehabilitation and dedication to improving the quality of life for people with vision loss.



The Job Readiness Program at Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired is partially underwritten by funding from The Able Trust and the Florida Division of Blind Services.



Because people want to work



The Able Trust, also known as the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation, is a 501(c)(3) public-private partnership foundation established by the Florida Legislature in 1990. Its mission is to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. Since its establishment, The Able Trust has awarded more than \$30 million throughout Florida, enabling approximately 2,000 Florida citizens with disabilities to enter the workforce each year. For more information on the employment grants and the youth programs of The Able Trust visit www.abletrust.org.

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Inc.

601 SW 8th Avenue

Miami, Florida 33130

305.856.2288 • Fax 305.285.6967

www.miamilighthouse.org