



Following The Dream For a Life of Independence

Taylor Durrett is applying for a job at the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth even though she is still working towards her degree at the University of North Texas and is not ready to go to work. She will graduate in December 2017 with a degree in Rehabilitation Services and a double minor in Religious Studies and Recreation & Leisure.

When asked what she hoped to be doing in ten years, Taylor quickly responded, "I would love to be working alongside other Client Services employees at the Lighthouse."

She is also open to having her own practice. Her overall long term professional goal is to work with adults who have disabilities, assisting any and all to flourish in society.

Taylor's first experience with the Lighthouse was when she attended the annual Stock Show & Rodeo Day for blind students hosted jointly by the AT&T Pioneers and the Lighthouse. As an older teen, she attended Camp Lighthouse @ the Y. She

returned in 2014 as a teaching assistant. She is a founding member of the Visionaries in Action Young Adult Council. As a leader in the council, Taylor is instrumental in planning the annual

Valentine Dinner and Dance and facilitating other community and advocacy activities with the goal of bringing together older youth and young

adults who are blind in a positive outreach. Taylor credits the Lighthouse for fueling her desire to serve others, to graduate from

college, and to possibly land a job one day at the Lighthouse.

Born with the eye condition of optic nerve hypoplasia (ONH), Taylor has been blind since birth. The oldest of three siblings, she grew up in Ponder, Texas. She has a love for the outdoors because of spending time with her dad fishing, bird hunting, and swimming. Her mom is a teacher for the visually impaired and is inspired by her daughter every



day. Taylor describes her brothers as typical fun-loving boys who love her and treat her as an equal in all aspects of their relationship.

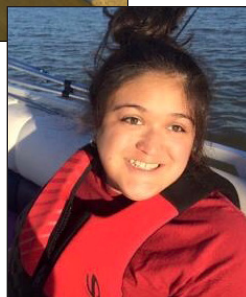
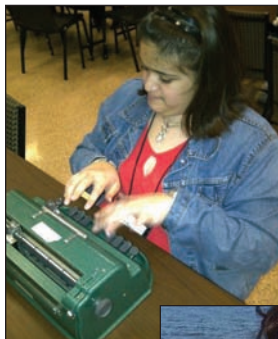
When not studying or attending classes on the UNT campus, she loves being on the lake or just being outside on

the front porch swing listening to birds singing, feeling the sun on her face and reading a book on her iPad.

Taylor has a number of role models in her life but considers her parents, Mike and Tammy Durrett, the most influential in her life. "My dad is so down-to-earth with his words; he doesn't sugarcoat anything and, as they say, he will give it to you straight, with no frills. Mom is a role model because she is a self-sufficient, strong-willed woman who beat colon cancer, with the help of prayer and a little chemotherapy." Taylor's parents have been her biggest cheerleaders when it comes to following her academic dreams.

Knowing that she can be a source of inspiration to other youth who are blind, she shared these words of wisdom, "I would like to tell all high school and

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FOR THE BLIND
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President's Message

"The only thing that is constant is change."

Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher who lived around 500 BC, is credited with developing the theory of constant change. It happens within our bodies, the leaves on a tree, and the rivers across our lands. Change is not only constant, it is necessary.

Some people fear change. For some, the thought that today's routine will be different tomorrow is terrifying. At the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth, we embrace and welcome change. It is one of the pillars of my leadership philosophy. We must change the way that we think, the way that we act, the way that we make decisions; all to ensure that we have the opportunity to provide competitive jobs and the best in class services to people who are blind.

We recently decided to close down our machining operations. Does that mean that we failed? Absolutely not. We learned that we can teach a person who is blind to effectively and efficiently operate CNC machines and maintain tolerances. While the economics were not sustainable, the experience gained by our employees will last a lifetime. How many blind machinists do you know? Change is necessary.

In the coming months we will start up two new production lines. One sonically welds plastic components to create our oral fluids and urine based tests for drugs of abuse. The second is an optical lab where we will cut and assemble eyeglasses. New opportunities through necessary change.

We are also changing the name of our Rehabilitation Services department to Client Services. What's in a name? Well, let me tell you, with a name like Platt – quite a bit. Client Services better reflects our total service offering to people who are blind and the people that support them. Rehabilitation is still a big part of what we provide, but there is so much more. We serve the whole person: body, mind, and spirit. Client Services encompasses our efforts to empower independence for the whole person.

Change is the only constant. Let's make the best of it, together.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Platt".

Platt Allen, III



Platt Allen, III

A Game Changer!

It goes without saying that technology in the way of smart phones, smart tablets, the web, and social media has profound effects on today's society. Another exciting aspect to technology is the impact that it has on individuals who are blind! It is a game-changer!



tion with YMCA Camp Carter and the fifth year for the generous funding support from the Alcon Foundation.

Along with learning basic operations, campers also learned about apps that will be pertinent in the classroom and in daily life; apps such as

An iPad serves as a multi-functional tool for anyone who is blind or has low vision in the way of reading or listening to books, conducting research, recording of lectures, calendaring and more. In the past, a student utilized several different pieces of equipment such as video magnifiers, note taking devices, digital books, or screen readers to learn or connect. Today the iPad can provide these same functions in a single compact device because



of the voice over and other accessibility features along with a vast array of blind friendly apps.

Eleven Texas youth who are blind or are significantly vision impaired had the opportunity to hone their technology skills in late July when they attended a weeklong stay at Camp Lighthouse @ the Y. This was the 5th year for this successful collabora-



the knfbReader, Docs to Go for generating Word or Excel documents, Color ID for identifying color of clothing or objects or the LookTel Money Reader for identifying currency. In addition to hands-on learning, campers had



the opportunity to interact with other campers—sight-impaired and sighted, meet adult mentors who were visually impaired, and participate in and enjoy other true “camp experiences” including archery, arts and crafts, swimming, and target shooting.

Sighted campers had the unique experience of playing beep baseball with their fellow blind campers. Beep baseball is a popular sport within the blind community that has similar characteristics to baseball as many of us know it, but allows for accommodations in the way of beeping baseballs and beeping bases.

The camp finale was celebrated with parents, family members, and funders. Campers demonstrated new skills learned and talked about their personal camp experience via three short films developed and produced by the campers through the iMovie app. The 2016 camp ended on a high note when each camper was presented their very own iPad to keep.

2016 Shot in the Dark

More than just about playing a fun game of night golf or enjoying a delicious wine dinner.

Photography by Jim Byrd

The evening weather could not have been more perfect on October 7th for the sixth annual Shot in the Dark Night Golf Tournament and Wine Dinner when 88 golfers and 102 wine diners showed up at River Crest Country Club. Guests were greeted and directed into the reception by both two legged and four legged members of the Lone Star Guide Dog Raisers – Fort Worth.

Following welcoming remarks by Master of Ceremonies Jeff Jamison of CBS 11, guests enjoyed perusing the silent auction while enjoying appetizers and cocktails. Golfers ventured outside for early practice where they also enjoyed *Dinner on the Green* before teeing off at sunset.

Wine diners were treated to a gourmet dinner paired with wines from the Stags' Leap Winery. Fran Baker joined Jamison to describe each wine. A highlight of the dinner came when Lighthouse consumer Kay Littlejohn shared her personal story and heartfelt feelings as to how the Lighthouse has impacted her life. She summed it up this way, "I never thought I would be here at this moment, travelling independently, smiling, feeling good about me, and enjoying the company of other people. When I lost my sight, I thought my life was over. Thanks to the train-



Special congratulations to the teams representing Texas Capital Bank and Frost Bank for having best scores of the evening.



ing by the Lighthouse, I enjoy each day and have hope for my future."

Golfers rejoined the wine dinner guests for dessert, close of the silent auction and the awarding of trophies. Special congratulations to the teams representing Texas Capi-

tal Bank and Frost Bank for having best scores of the evening.

An event of this magnitude requires the support and efforts of many. The Lighthouse would like to express a heartfelt thanks to the sponsors, auction donors and volunteers.

We also acknowledge and thank the hardworking committee, several of who have been involved for five and six years. Special thanks to Ann Allan and Marian Frymire, co-chairs and to committee members Callie Clarke, Regina Cross, Mark Cundiff, David Garcia, Subie Green, Amy James, Cindy Linkenhoger, Will McLaughlin, Bric Shelton and Bridget Shelton.

Participation in the 2016 Shot in the Dark is more than just about donating an item or playing a fun game of golf or enjoying a delicious dinner entree with a nice glass of wine; it is about making a difference to someone who is blind by providing them the means to acquire the skills, support and confidence that will empower them to lead an independent, successful life. Net proceeds directly benefit local children, youth and adults who are blind or have low vision—individuals like Kay Littlejohn. Again, we thank all who participated and hope to see you again in 2017.

SHOT *in the* DARK

October 7, 2016

Photos by Jim Byrd



Beacons of Hope Gifts Received Between June 1, 2016 – October 31, 2016

Because of the kind gesture of the following, Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth is proudly providing jobs, services and independence.

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~ Jan Smith
In Honor of Ben Thaden Pierce
~ Denise Kahn
In Honor of Shawn Keen
~ Betty Keen

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In Memory of Latova Ferguson
~ Jessica Bruccolier
~ Dan Barrett
~ Cathy & Jim Bane
~ Beverly Closner
~ Helen H. Lockett
~ Wanda Ozee
~ Kimberly Smith
In Memory of Nelda M. Jackson
~ Susan Jackson Davis, Jackson Family Foundation

In Memory of Sue Mahan
~ Lucille Staten
In Memory of Maudie L. Pope
~ Marcia L. Reed
In Memory of Wayne Pound
~ Dr. James H. Atkinson
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~ Dr. Irvin Robinson
In Memory of Bill Ryan
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In Memory of Dorothy Shepherd
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2016 Shot in the Dark

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Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth strives to accurately reflect all of those who generously support our mission. If an error has occurred, please accept our sincerest apologies and let us know of our mistake by contacting us at 817-332-3341, ext. 7782.



The Best Gift This Holiday Season...

A Simple Act by You is the Best Gift of All!

During this time of the year, many of us get wrapped up in the physical beauty of the season – the festive lights, the pretty packages, the glittery decorations. For the estimated 37,000 Tarrant County residents who are significantly visually impaired, they do not experience this holiday delight as you see it.

When you visit the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth and meet our hard-working employees and our consumers who are being empowered through Client Services, you are reminded that one doesn't need to actually view colorful holiday trimmings or receive material gifts to experience and celebrate the true essence of this special time of year.

The gift of independence in the way of employment, rehabilitation, fellowship and opportunities to contribute back to their community result in a joyful heart and spirit that is inspiring and infectious, and truly what the holiday should be about.

Your continued interest and support makes that gift possible. Thanks to **you** the Lighthouse is

fulfilling our mission of providing hope, opportunities and independence to men, women and children who are blind or have low vision.

As you contemplate your year-end giving, please consider making a life-changing gift to the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth.

To make a gift online with a credit card, visit our website at www.lighthousefw.org/ donate.

If you have questions or need additional assistance, please call Nancy Fisher at 817-529-7782.

This is also a perfect time to say **THANK YOU** for your generous support and interest. Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth's holiday wish for you is that the **spirit** of the season brings you **PEACE**; the **gladness** of the season gives you **HOPE**, and the **warmth** of the season fills you with **JOY**.



Let us help YOU....

The Lighthouse wants to help you with your holiday gift giving or holiday card mailing. When you make a Tribute Gift in honor or in memory of loved ones or dear friends, you give a gift that has a lasting effect not only on the recipient but will also touch the lives of individuals who are visually impaired. The Lighthouse will send out warm holiday wishes and greetings on your behalf. To insure timely gift notification by Christmas Eve, the donation and the recipient's name with mailing address must be received in the Lighthouse office by December 19th.

Mail to:

Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth
Attention: Community Development
912 W. Broadway
Fort Worth, TX 76104

We've Got a New Look!

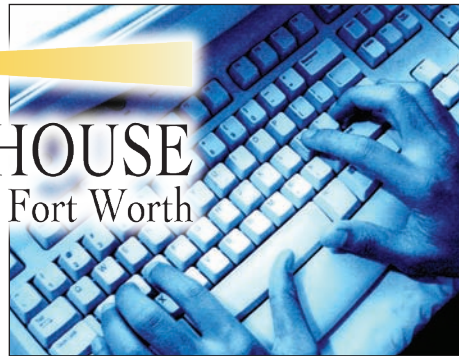
Check Out Our New and Improved Website

Thanks to generous funding from the Amon G. Carter Foundation and the Ryan Foundation, the Lighthouse has recently updated and refreshed our website. In recent years, it became obvious that we were not “practicing what we preached” when it came to our presence on the worldwide web. We were often called out by our own blind consumers who tried to navigate our website.

Along with making the new



LIGHTHOUSE
for the Blind of Fort Worth



and improved website fully accessible, other new features include a more in-depth products page and the opportunity to purchase some of the Lighthouse products online. The website now also allows for more

descriptive information on available services, provides a historic timeline on the Lighthouse, depicts various eye conditions on a vision simulator and details Lighthouse and Lighthouse-related community activities on a calendar. Check out our new look by visiting www.lighthousefw.org.



Community Outreach



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Independent Living Training



Community Partners

LoneStar RoadRunners Hit it Out of the Park

By Katie Hervey, Frank Mathenia and Graham Mathenia

In 1978, the Telco Pioneers donated some beepballs to the Tarrant County Lighthouse for the Blind for a recreation night. Pioneers Jim Chestnut and Don Holliman went to the 1978 Beep Baseball World Series and were talked into sponsoring a competitive team.

Early players included Lighthouse employees Pete Parra, Ivry Walker, Leonard Walker, Jerry Burns, Roy Eubanks, and other players were Scott Hudson and Jerry Cuck-erell. The efforts of the Lighthouse's Wayne Pound were a mainstay for the RoadRunners



for the next 22 years.

After a third place in the Pioneers first Beep Baseball World Series in 1979, the RoadRunners reached the championship game eight times and won three in 1980, 1983, and 1991. The team was inactive from 2002 until winter of 2009 when player Sam McKinzie contacted Graham Mathenia, and asked if he would be interested in pitching with some of the players for batting practice.

From 2010-2013, the team would go as a team or play with other teams like Austin Black-hawks and Colorado Storm. Since 2014, the team has been able to send consecutive teams to the world series and continues

its determination to attend each World Series.

Current RoadRunner players now include Lighthouse for the Blind employees Andrew Bernet, Ozzy Calamaco, Anivar "Pedro" Garcia, Dennis Lynch, and Josh Perry. Besides playing, the players recruit players and volunteers, participate at events like the Annual Sports Extravaganza, speak with organizations like Camp Abilities and Camp Carter, share the sport by attending meetings with organizations like Lion's Club, and even play against others like this past October, when they played the Dallas Baptist University baseball team.

The goal of the team is to not only play a game that they love and attend its world series, but to share their stories and show that nothing is impossible.

Learn more about the team: <https://www.facebook.com/Lstar-Beepball>

Learn more about the game of beep baseball: <http://www.nbba.org/>

EMPOWERING INDEPENDENCE

Serving Tarrant and adjacent counties since 1935, Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth stands ready to freely provide life changing orientation and mobility training, competitive & meaningful employment, and independent living skills training to anyone, any age, whose life has been altered by blindness or significant low vision.



912 W. Broadway
Fort Worth, Texas 76104
817-332-3341
www.lighthousefw.org
 [lighthousefw](https://www.facebook.com/lighthousefw)

Taylor Durett— continued from page one

college students to go for your calling, whatever it may be, even if that means changing paths every once in a while. Always try your best in school, but don't let the rigors of your schoolwork discourage you to the point of quitting! Take life one step at a time. Stay true to who you are."

Often described by her parents as being "wise beyond her years," Taylor takes a simple

approach to life. Others see her as being authentic, caring, compassionate, and giving—attributes that speak to her future career path of serving others. Here at the Lighthouse, we hope that we will continue to be a part of Taylor's life and a benefactor of her wisdom, talents and experience as she pursues her dream career and her life of independence.

New Faces at the Lighthouse

In the last few months, several talented individuals have joined the Lighthouse team.

The heart and soul of any organization is the people and that is certainly the case for the Lighthouse. We take pride in that so many of our Lighthouse employees have been here for many years. However, we also acknowledge that there are always opportunities to enhance the quality of our services and production with the addition of new employees. In the last few months, several talented individuals have joined the Lighthouse team.

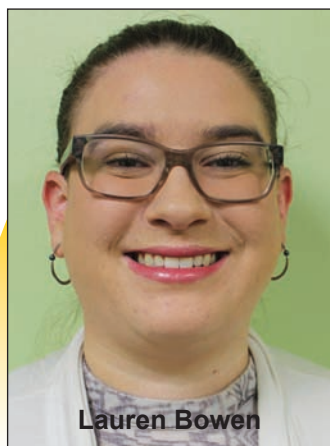
April Harris has been hired to head Client Services, formerly known as Rehabilitation Services. April has worked in the Tarrant County nonprofit field for the last 20 years, starting out in direct client care and eventually moving into leadership positions. She is a lifelong resident of Arlington and is the proud mother of Grace, 18, and Jake, 14. April graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1995 and then obtained her MBA from Texas Christian University in 2012. She is very excited to be a part of the mission of Lighthouse for the Blind by empowering people who are blind so they can lead successful, independent lives.



April Harris

...there are always opportunities to enhance the quality of our services and production with the addition of new employees. In the last few months, several talented individuals have joined the Lighthouse team.

Lauren Bowen works in Client Services as an Orientation and Mobility Specialist. This is a perfect job for Lauren since she has been on the move her entire life. Growing up, she lived in San Francisco, Plano, St. Louis, and finally landed in Houston. She attended Stephen F. Austin State University where she earned a Bachelors in Orientation and Mobility. After graduation, Lauren left Texas to start her career as an Orientation and Mobility Specialist in Miami Florida. She gained experience working with children up to seniors in mobility, advocacy, and independent living. When not working, Lauren is a certified scuba diver and loves being outside. She continues to be on the move having recently traveled to South Amer-



Lauren Bowen

ica. Traveling is a passion for Lauren. She enjoys experiencing new cultures and believes that each travel opportunity is helping her grow as a person and a professional.

Rebecca Smith has joined the Sales team as the Customer Service Representative. She comes to the Lighthouse with a ton of customer service experience and a great attitude to help our customers. She is also responsible for helping bring our new website to life. After months of behind the scenes work, her efforts have paid off when we finally launched our new Lighthouse Product's Page.



Rebecca Smith

Thanks to Becky, you can now officially buy our products online! Outside of work, Becky has a four year old daughter, Trinity, that keeps her busy. Trinity is following in her mom's footsteps and becoming quite the cheerleader.

When Becky can find some free time, she enjoys being on Eagle Mountain Lake with friends and family.

In addition, we are proud to welcome the following:

Juan Davila— Production Line
Kevin Gonzalez— Warehouse Associate I

Donald Jacobs— Warehouse Associate I

Alexa Owens— Production Line
Jessica Reynolds— Production Line

Client Services: A New Name but the Same Mission

Greetings from April Harris, Head of Client Services



As the newest set of eyes here at Lighthouse for the Blind, I see a wonderful vision for our clients and our organization and am so excited to be a part of it.

My department has historically been known as Rehabilitation Services which, technically, is literally what we do. But at the Lighthouse we do so much more. Not only is my team filled with experts in the fields of orientation and mobility, independent living skills, and adaptive technology, they also have a kind ear for listening, a voice for encouragement, a wealth of community resource knowledge, and amazing examples of empowerment for our clients. This team serves our clients in more ways than the title of Rehabilitation can convey. Moving forward, we will be referred to as the Client Services Department, which we all feel just fits us better.

We will still pro-

vide those all-important rehabilitation services but we will also focus on and acknowledge the



Moving forward, we will be referred to as the Client Services Department, which we all feel just fits us better.

importance of taking a holistic approach to assisting our clients as they experience what

are often the most trying times of their lives. We will be a presence in the community, educating medical professionals, school administrators, and social workers as well as reaching clients in rural areas with our upcoming mobile clinic program. We will make an already successful support group into one that will meet even more

needs of more people. We will deepen our knowledge in the areas we are already subject matter experts and expand our horizons into that which

we don't yet know. Lighthouse for the Blind walks the walk, sometimes with a cane, to support our clients as they adapt to self-sufficiency and continue right on to thriving success and I am thrilled to join in that walk.

April Harris, Client Services



One of our true joys this holiday season is the opportunity to say
Thank You
and to wish you the very best in the New Year.

May your holidays sparkle with moments of joy, laughter and grace and may the coming year be filled with love, peace and warm memories.

Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth

SHOT^{in the} DARK[®]

GOLF TOURNAMENT & WINE DINNER

Benefitting Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth

Thanks to all who made our evening a night to remember!

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