

Keeping you  
"in THE"  
know.



---

**1/29/21**

## **February is Low Vision Awareness Month:**

-Low vision can make it hard to do things like reading, shopping, cooking or writing. Vision rehabilitation can help people with low vision stay independent and maximize remaining vision. During February, which is Low Vision Awareness Month, help raise awareness about low vision and spread the word about Cleveland Sight Center and vision rehabilitation services. Follow CSC messaging via "In The Know," social media channels and the agency's website throughout the month for tips, tools and techniques about vision health, contrast, lighting, minimizing your risk for vision loss and more.

## **Educating the Community:**

-The Outreach team talked with 26 2nd grade students and staff at St. Christopher School in Rocky River earlier this week. The students were divided equally into two classrooms that were equipped with cameras and monitors. Teacher Robin Seedhouse and her assistant had students ask questions about being blind and having low vision after Tom Sawyer and Alicia Howerton talked about blindness awareness. The Outreach team provided some activity materials to the class in advance of the program for the students to complete, which included writing their name under blindfold with a signature guide and filling out a "braille by sight" activity sheet. Cathy Javorsky did a phenomenal job with guide dog Rogue's outreach debut, as they presented a "Myths and Facts" session about guide dogs to the class. The kids loved Rogue's close-up shots with our second camera.

-Outreach also continued their efforts to promote CSC and with an interview on the "Our Aging World" radio program for the Lake County Council on Aging. The Outreach team will be appearing quarterly in 2021 on the radio program to promote programs and services and recruit possible clients.

-Upcoming dates and topics for the Children & Young Adult Services (CYAS) upcoming sessions on Cortical Vision Impairment (CVI) are listed below and are open to CYAS staff, CYAS families, outside therapists and teachers. For more information, contact Monica Owen ([mowen@clevelandsightcenter.org](mailto:mowen@clevelandsightcenter.org) or x8776).

February 18th: Featured Family: A Guided Interview with a Family of a Child with CVI

March 18th: CVI Range Report: "I have this report, now what do I do?"

April 15th: DIY: Adapting Toys, Activities and Spaces for CVI Needs

May 20th: CVI & Communication Needs (May 20th).

## Client Success: Stacia's Story

"I noticed something was wrong with Stacia's vision when she started sitting closer and closer to the TV. I knew that no child should [have to sit that close] just to be able to see," said Carole, grandmother of Stacia.

Stacia was born sighted, but at the age of eight, her vision began to deteriorate. After 10 eye surgeries and frequent visits to the doctor, she lost vision in her right eye and has 20/400 remaining vision in her left eye due to multiple eye diseases.

Carole, a retired geriatric nurse, referred many of her patients with visual impairments to Cleveland Sight Center and that is exactly what she and her daughter, Stephanie did with Stacia.

"I referred many of my clients to Cleveland Sight Center never knowing that I would need [their services] also in my own family," she said.

Stephanie, Stacia's mom, passed away in 2019 in a fatal car accident and Carole has become Stacia's main caretaker. Carole said that Stephanie was very involved in Stacia's care and loved how Cleveland Sight Center could help her daughter.

Now, at age 12 and in seventh grade, Stacia is learning to adapt and thrive despite her vision loss. She describes her remaining vision as needing to be two feet away from a person to be able to read their shirt if there are words on it.

Stacia works with Kristen, a case manager from the Children & Young Adult Services Department who helps connect her with services, tools and technology to help maximize her remaining vision. She uses a closed circuit television (CCTV), provided through the agency's Empowerment Fund, to help her access her homework and textbooks by magnifying the print onto a large monitor.

When virtual classes began because of COVID-19, she used a small computer monitor to attend her classes. Due to the small size of the screen, she was struggling to see. Kristen recognized this and loaned her a large screen so she could succeed in her classes with the right tools and technology. Additionally, Kristen played a large role in supporting Stacia when she lost her mom in 2019.

"[Cleveland Sight Center] is a great place of acceptance. It supports you and has all the things that you need. You don't have to pretend or fake your sadness or fears. You can be vulnerable. They don't judge you and it's very supportive. They have a lot of materials that help you make friends," Boyd said.

Since becoming involved with CSC, Stacia has attended summer camp at Highbrook Lodge and various other recreation opportunities that have allowed her to make new friends.

"My favorite part about Cleveland Sight Center is the people there and the sense of self [I have gained]. I gained a sense that I had friends with the same disability as me. And it wasn't just me. I wasn't the only one picked to have this disability," Boyd said. "I have learned to accept that my disability is a part of me."

## **What's Happening at CSC:**

-What a busy first month of 2021 for students in Bright Futures Preschool! They marked the last school day of the month on their January calendars on Thursday and also wrapped up their learning unit on bread. This week the students learned how to make bread, reviewed the letters B (bread), P (pizza) and S (snowflake, snowman, sandwich), listened to an adapted story about the Little Red Hen, learned the song "This Is the Way We Make Our Bread" and they baked bread! Each family received a "Bread in the Bag" project as well as a recording and print out with directions. The class shared their final products – baked bread – during Thursday's online session. They also made a snowman from playdough that Preschool Teacher Ms. Melissa made for each student. And what a nice surprise and cooperation from Mother Nature as it was snowing the whole morning as they completed the activity.

-The programming calendar for February for Leisure & Lifestyle Services includes:

### **Weekly Activities**

#### **Mondays:**

10am Stretching (no session on 2/15)

6pm Health and Wellness Chat (2/1, 2/15) OR Happy Hour Social (2/8, 2/22)

#### **Tuesdays:**

10:30am Ballroom Dance (2/2, 2/16)

11:30am Meditation

5pm Yoga

#### **Wednesdays:**

10am Coffee Chat

2pm Improv (2/3, 2/17) OR Jam Session (2/10, 2/24)

#### **Thursdays:**

10am Activities Vary

2pm Poetry w/ Katie Daley (2/4, 2/18)

Fridays:

10am Fun Friday

2pm Trivia

### Additional Programs

February 9th:

12pm Book Discussion (on The New Jim Crow)

6:45pm Music Group

February 12th:

6pm Valentine's Talent Show

February 15th:

2pm President's Day Trivia (hosted by Volunteer and Former Highbrook Lodge Staff Member Stefan)

February 17th:

5pm Sing It Out (notice that this is an hour earlier than it has been held in the past)

February 20th:

10am-6pm Highbrook Virtual Winter "Weekend"

February 22nd:

1:30pm Poetry w/ Shayna Sharpe

February 25th:

10am Speaker Series: South Asian Art

### Program Highlights

Highbrook Virtual Winter "Weekend"

February 20th

Leisure and Lifestyle Services is happy to announce that we are taking Winter Weekend virtual for 2021! Join us on February 20th for a fun-filled day of your favorite camp activities—from Arts & Crafts, to Sports & Rec, Music & Drama, to our first BONDfire of the new year! Activities will begin at 10am, 12pm, 4pm, and 6pm respectively. Please RSVP with Recreation Specialist Bobbie Szabo at 216-658-4597 or [bszabo@clevelandsightcenter.org](mailto:bszabo@clevelandsightcenter.org) by February 12th to attend. We will be dropping off/mailling materials corresponding to the activities to participants prior to the day-of.

Speaker Series: South Asian Art

February 25th at 10am

Your steps are heavy. Sweat covers your brow. But each step brings you closer to your ultimate goal. Join Leisure & Lifestyle Services for an exciting new sensory experience! Dr. Ariana Maki—an Art Historian, Fulbright Scholar, and the Associate Director of the Bhutan Initiative and Tibet Center at the University of Virginia—will be taking us through a virtual pilgrimage to one of the most famous monasteries in the world, as well as talking about South Asian Art and religious iconography.

#### Log-In Information:

From computer:

<https://zoom.us/j/3929667319>

2-Step from a phone:

Call: 1 646 558 8656

Press #

Input Meeting ID: 392 966 7319

1 Step from a phone:

Call: +16465588656,,3929667319##

For additional information about the Leisure & Lifestyle Services program offerings, please call the Recreation Information Line at 216 658 4600 or contact Recreation Specialist Bobbie Szabo at 216 658 4597 or [bszabo@clevelandsightcenter.org](mailto:bszabo@clevelandsightcenter.org).

-Is one of your 2021 resolutions to live a healthier, more well-balanced lifestyle? The Leisure and Lifestyle Services Department (LLS) has the program for you! Join us and Case Western Reserve School of Medicine student Michael Foster for presentations and discussions about how we can all live our best lives! From tips and tricks for proper nutrition, to how to integrate exercise you actually enjoy into your life, to conversations about mental health and coping with stress, we hope to give you the tools you need to enhance your overall well-being. These Health & Wellness chats will be held over Zoom on the first and third Mondays of the month at 6:00 p.m. For information on how to log-on, please contact Recreation Specialist Bobbie Szabo at [bszabo@clevelandsightcenter.org](mailto:bszabo@clevelandsightcenter.org) or 216-658-4597 or call the Recreation Information Line at 216-658-4600.

-Book Discussion Group will be reading *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics* by Daniel Brown in advance of their March meeting date.

-Meet the members of CSC's Volunteer Engagement Team! Formed to welcome support, and engage volunteers and volunteer programs at Cleveland Sight Center, this team seeks to promote diverse and meaningful volunteer experiences in CSC's community. The team focuses on producing content to engage volunteers, as well as supporting strategic engagement initiatives. We are so excited to have Anoushka, Sandy and Sally on board in this capacity!



## Image and description of new Volunteer Engagement Team members Anoushka, Sandy and Sally

**Anoushka Gidh** is a second-year pre-medical student studying biology at Case Western Reserve University. As a young girl, she developed an interest in ophthalmology and eye research after her own eye trauma occurred. After conducting research at the Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia, she decided to volunteer at Cleveland Sight Center during college to explore the volunteering aspect of the field. As a co-author, Anoushka recently published an article about Conjunctival Squamous Cell Carcinoma. She is also involved in several clubs on campus, enjoys playing tennis, loves meeting new people, and eating sushi. As a part of the Volunteer Engagement Team, Anoushka hopes to meet new faces at CSC as well as expand our volunteer community while maintaining an inclusive environment for all.



**Sandy Huynh** is a third-year pre-health/optometry student studying English and Nutritional Biochemistry & Metabolism at Case Western Reserve University. She first became involved with CSC in high school, when she had the opportunity to intern with CSC's Volunteer Team. After her bright experience as an intern at CSC, Sandy has since continued to volunteer with the agency in a variety of roles. In her spare time, she is also a virtual volunteer Crisis Counselor and enjoys reading, writing, watching movies, and spending time with her family and friends—particularly with her two sisters, one of whom is her identical twin, Mandy. Sandy is especially excited to be a part of the Volunteer Engagement Team and is committed to amplifying the voice of CSC's vibrant volunteering community.



**Sally Suren** has been volunteering at Cleveland Sight Center as a Radio Reader since September 2019. She is a retired nurse who also volunteers for the Cleveland Metroparks, the Tinker's Creek Watershed water monitoring program, and for Traumatic Players of Cleveland, a group that assists with the training of first responders. Collectively with her volunteer commitments, Sally brings years of volunteer experience to the Volunteer Engagement Team. Aside from volunteering, Sally is a community theater actress and has played parts in over 100 productions. By being on this committee, she hopes to help others enjoy their volunteer experience.



## Items of Note:

-Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-05) and Rep. Mike Kelly (PA-16) announced the reintroduction of the Access Technology Affordability Act, a bill to ensure that blind people can afford the high-cost access technology that helps them participate in the workforce. The bill creates a refundable tax credit for blind individuals to buy things like screen readers and Braille embossers which are not normally covered by insurance that individuals need to participate in every day workplace tasks. To read more, click here: <http://bit.ly/36lxn9m>

-Vispero is offering an Assistive Technology and Accessibility Showcase on February 9th and 10th from 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. each day. Representatives will cover the latest and greatest from some of these brands: Freedom Scientific, Enhanced Vision, Optelec, and The Paciello Group.

Session Topics will include training, software updates, licensing options, hardware for users who are blind or who have low vision and digital accessibility tools and solutions. The seminar is free and open to anyone, especially vocational rehab agency employees, university disability services and state agency consultants and trainers. The event will offer Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals (ACVREP) credits. For more information, click here: <http://bit.ly/2My4znk>

-Cleveland Sight Center will continue the Friday main building closure through the end of March. This means that on Fridays, the main building will not be open to staff, clients or walk-ins. Remember, masks on and six feet everyone!

## **Did you Know:**

-Did you know The Eiffel Tower in Paris, France gets repainted every seven years? The iconic structure has changed colors, too. According to the experts over at History, when it originally opened in 1889, the tower was a reddish-brown color. About ten years later, it was coated in yellow paint. Ever since 1968, however, it's been recoated in a specially mixed hue known as "Eiffel Tower brown," which tower painters go through 60 tons of every seven years.