



Keeping You “In the Know...” 9/20/19

Over \$55,000 Raised for the Empowerment Fund at Spellbound!

-CSC’s annual fundraising gala, Spellbound, was held last Friday at the Intercontinental Hotel at the Cleveland Clinic. The theme for Spellbound was “Do You Believe: Myths, Facts, Superstitions and Possibilities” and featured a wonderfully engaging performance by Magician and Illusionist Rick Smith Jr. and an empowering video of client success. Over 220 guests enjoyed this motivating evening of excitement, entertainment and empowerment and came away with a tremendous belief in Cleveland Sight Center.

Guests were treated to a great evening featuring cocktail hour, fantastic food and beverage and the silent auction which raised \$10,760! The Grasselli Committee was recognized for the 65 years of volunteering at CSC and providing social and recreation activities and events for CSC clients. An inspiring video featuring friends of CSC Ron Crenshaw and Cassadi Hanley, along with staff members Randy Knapp and Erin St. Denis, moved those in the room into a spirit of giving as over \$55,000 was raised for the Empowerment Fund through the fund-a-need! The Empowerment Fund provides essential financial assistance to clients in need for the purchase of adaptive technology devices, training and other programs and services at CSC. To view the video, visit [CSC's YouTube page](#) or [click here](#) for the direct link.

Many thanks to the Spellbound Committee, led by Board Trustee Sara Parish and Board Trustee Erin Ploucha, for their commitment and hard work in preparation of this year’s event: Board Trustee Mary Bookman, Volunteer Susan Harnden, Board Trustee Lynn Heiligenthal-Showalter and Board Trustee Marilyn Tsivitse. Thanks to all staff members that had a part in the

planning of the event and those who worked that evening to make it such an inspirational and unforgettable night.



Board Chair Howard Lichtig thanks CSC staff in attendance



President and CEO Larry Benders speaks to the importance of the Empowerment Fund



Magician and Illusionist Rick Smith Jr. performs a trick with five audience members



Board Trustee Erin Ploucha raises her bid number during the fund-a-need for the Empowerment Fund

Strengthening Partnerships and Educating the Community:

-Cleveland Sight Center and the Aspire program at Cuyahoga Community College are partnering for two Braille classes this year. Cuyahoga Community College has provided the funding for Braille literacy for two classes: one for Beginning Braille and one for Contracted Braille. There are 20 students between both classes!

Through private pay and financial assistance of CSC, a third class of three students is focusing on Advanced Contracted Braille. There is one student who is deaf-blind receiving beginning Braille instruction with a help of an interpreter, so in total there are four classes with a total of 24 students receiving Braille instruction at CSC! In addition, CSC is hosting one student for Braille reading training paid through Ohio's Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired...making a grand total of 25 students receiving Braille instruction this fall. The programs will be complete in May 2020.

Each student received a Braille assessment in the PREP area by Annette Jakse prior to the classes to make sure students have the tactual sensitivity to feel the Braille dots and can understand the concept of the six-dot cell for all letters, numbers and punctuation. Per Annette, this may be a historic event in that during her 30 years working at the agency, there has never been this many students receiving Braille instruction at one time!

-CSC's Rehabilitation Services team has engaged six-week groups for Activities of Daily Living as Taylor Volrich has been working with a group at Franciscan Village Retirement in Cleveland and Bryan Manthey is hosting groups at Hamlet in Chagrin Falls and Anna Maria in Aurora.

-The Cleveland Sight Center Visionaries, the young professional group of the Cleveland Sight Center, are hosting a Happy Hour event at Masthead Brewing Company on Wednesday, September 25th from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Masthead Brewing Co. is located at 1261 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44114. The event is family friendly and will be a great opportunity to meet and interact with the Visionaries while supporting the Cleveland Sight Center. If we "beat the clock" by getting 50 people to attend and buy a drink between 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Masthead Brewing Co. has generously agreed to donate a portion of the sale proceeds to Cleveland Sight Center. For more information, contact Karen Hiller (216-791-8118).

-Melissa Mauk attended a workshop hosted by the Forum for Volunteer Administrators titled "Developing Essential Materials and Resources," a workshop designed for volunteer professionals. During the training, various topics were reviewed such as change management related to volunteers, volunteer engagement, and maximizing volunteer impact.

-CSC partners with the City of Cleveland Department of Aging for their annual Disability Awareness Day luncheon on Tuesday, October 15th at Fairhill Partners. For more information about attending, contact the CSC Outreach Team of Alicia Howerton and Tom Sawyer. In addition, October 15th marks White Cane Awareness Day. For more information on White Cane Awareness Day, [click here](#).

-Be sure to check out and spread the word about CSC's social media pages:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/clevelandsightcenter/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ClevelandSight>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cleveland-sight-center>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/ClevelandSightCenter>

What's Happening at CSC:

-Cleveland Sight Center hosted a Question and Answer Forum for the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) this week. Nearly 40 attendees participated as RTA representatives answered questions about Paratransit, fixed route buses, trains and other public transportation questions.



Attendees listen to the RTA panelists

-The school year is off to an exciting start at CSC's Bright Futures Preschool! Students remembered that 9/11 was a Patriot Day, had their first visit from Rangers of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, visited Wade Oval Park to see the chalk art from the Chalk Festival and had the opportunity to visit the Eyedea Shop, Low Vision Clinic and meet CSC President and CEO Larry Benders and Officer Adam Gilmore as they learned who else works at CSC's main building and what do they do. The class had lots of play time and made new friends as well!



The class remembering Patriot Day

-Party in the playhouse! CSC Bright Futures Preschool welcomes Peg Walker back for another year of learning and fun in the classroom! A Volunteer Preschool Vision Screener since 2016, Peg has been involved as an Early Intervention and Preschool Volunteer since she started at CSC, helping as a volunteer for four years in various volunteer roles for the Children & Young Adult Services (CYAS) department. This year, students kicked off the year welcoming Miss Peg by singing songs and making delicious pretend cakes in the outdoor playhouse!



Preschoolers peer out the window of the playhouse



Miss Peg chats with a smiling preschooler in the playhouse

-Cleveland Sight Center is currently recruiting volunteers! Know someone who would make a great tutor, who enjoys reading or is passionate about connecting individuals to opportunities such as employment? Refer those you know to Cleveland Sight Center [Volunteer Services](#) so they can learn more about being involved with CSC. For questions or more information, contact Melissa Mauk (216-791-8118). To learn more about specific volunteer roles CSC is recruiting for, click [here](#).

-The leaves are starting to change at Highbrook Lodge - and that can only mean one thing - Fall Weekend is right around the corner! Volunteers for Fall Weekend at Highbrook Lodge (October 11 – 13) are needed...contact Camp Manager Jenny Schaeffer at 216-658-4596 for more information!



Image is of the autumn sun setting over Highbrook Lodge

Eyedeas Shop's Featured Product of the Week: Illuminated Pocket Magnifier

-The Eyedeas Shop has a new magnifier from Echenbach, a German optics company. It is the Illuminated Pocket Magnifier in either 4X or 7X strength. It has an LED light which can be used in those low-lit restaurants or to read the thermostat at 3:00 a.m. It comes with a lanyard to access easily while shopping or doing any other activity. Map reading, labels and instructions on the mac and cheese box are just a few uses for this handy compact magnifier. The price for both strengths is \$65.00 each. Stop by the Eyedeas Shop and check it out!

Items of Note:

-LEGO recently launched LEGO Audio and Braille Instructions. For a Facebook video on the new product, [click here](#).

-Last year, New York Times columnist Frank Bruni woke up one day to find his vision in his right eye was completely blurred. Bruni saw a doctor, and he learned that he was going blind in that eye — and there was a 20% chance he could lose sight on the other side as well. “I remember that

morning so well. I thought, 'Oh you know, I just have some gunk in my eye, or ... I haven't caffeinated enough,' ” Bruni says. “And over the course of several hours, I kept on not understanding why the vision in that eye would not de-fog. And that ended up sending me on this long medical odyssey.” It turns out Bruni’s condition is very rare — only affecting one in 10,000 people — and it usually happens overnight when blood flow is reduced to the optic nerve. Sometimes doctors can determine the cause, but in Bruni’s case, they don’t know why he lost his vision. Being a reporter, Bruni dove into the work of other writers who were blind or vision-impaired, such as James Joyce, John Milton and James Thurber. He is now working on a book about his own experience. To read more about his story, [click here](#).

-A scientific breakthrough may eventually allow many blind people to see. A handful of volunteers are already seeing the promise of a new device, about 18 months into a five-year clinical study. At the University of California Los Angeles, Dr. Nader Pouratian leads the study of an experimental device called the Orion. Here's how it works. Using a camera attached to a pair of sunglasses, Orion captures images a person would see and then sends the data through a handheld device to an implant that's been surgically inserted into the visual part of the brain. The implant then turns those images into dots of light the patient can see. To read more about Orion, [click here](#).

-An article titled “11 Habits of Supremely Happy People” was recently posted on LinkedIn and featured various habits including staying positive, slowing down to appreciate life’s little pleasures, exercise, getting enough sleep and surrounding themselves with the right people. For the full article, [click here](#).

-Area alumnae of Delta Gamma are hosting their annual celebrity bartending event at Around the Corner in Lakewood on Thursday, October 24th from 6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.