

12061 Tech Road, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904 – 301-681-6636

[**https://washear.org/listener-newsletters**](https://washear.org/listener-newsletters)

February 27, 2025

Dear Listeners,

As technology evolves, more venues are providing new and innovative accessibility features. Check out the Renwick Gallery’s free assistive tech app for low vision visitors [**here**](#Renwick) and Walmart’s free visual assistance on-demand [**here**](#Walmart).

Cheers,

Sylvia

Here are the links to all the items below:

* [**Lighthouse Guild Highlights Assistive Technology**](#LGtech)
* [**Lighthouse Guild “On Tech and Vision” Podcast**](#LGpod)
* [**Free Virtual Trainings with VRCBVI in 2025**](#VRCBVI)
* [**Free Assistive Tech App for Visitors with Low Vision at the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery**](#Renwick)
* [**Walmart Offers Visual Assistance On-Demand**](#Walmart)
* [**Blind Industries and Services of Maryland (BISM) Summer Staffing Positions Open**](#BISM)
* **[Theater Update](#Theater)**
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	+ **[LPPD Event: Baltimore Clayworks](#Clay)**
	+ **[MWE – Ava’s Braille Writing Class – Are Your Affairs in Order?](#Ava)**
	+ **[All Access Book Club – The Book of Charlie by David Von Drehle](#Club)**
	+ **[LBPD TUG Virtual Meeting: Christine Ha to Share Insights](#Ha)**
	+ [**Free Resources Event for Federal Workers and Contractors**](#Event)
	+ **[Bloom at Good Hope Concert Series: BĒHELD](#Bloom)**
	+ **[Celebrating Elizabeth Catlett with Musicians from the Howard University Jazz Ensemble](#NGA)**
	+ [**Low Vision Support Group Virtual Meeting - Common Eye Challenges: Am I Ready for My Eye Exam and Focus Group Meeting on Eye Drops – Challenges with Taking Them**](#MedStar)
	+ [**Low Vision Awareness Group at Ashby Ponds Meeting - "Accessible Pharmacy"**](#Ashby)
	+ [**In Person Event: Peabody String Sinfonia @ LBPD!**](#Peabody)
	+ [**2025 ACB Leadership Conference**](#ACB)
	+ **[Friendship Heights Vision Resource Grou](#Apps)**[p -](#Apps) **[Powerful Smart Phone Apps that use Human and AI assistance](#Apps)**
	+ **[MWE – Blind Men’s Support Group – Are Your Affairs in Order?](#Men)**

###

**LIGHTHOUSE GUILD HIGHLIGHTS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLGY**

For individuals diagnosed with low vision, assistive technology can help maintain independence and utilize remaining vision. Here are some of the latest innovations making an impact:

**Eye6 by Eyedaptic**: A lightweight augmented reality smart glasses system that functions as both a wearable and handheld magnifier.

**Envision Glasses**: AI-powered smart glasses that can read text aloud, describe surroundings, recognize faces, and even make calls.

**Hable Easy**: An external, tactile keyboard for smartphones, designed for those who struggle with touchscreens.

Not all assistive technologies work the same for every person. "A device that works for someone with glaucoma may not work for someone with macular degeneration or someone with retinitis pigmentosa," explains Dr. Lin. "That's why a low vision exam and a personalized approach are essential."

For more information on Low Vision and how technology can assist, visit the Lighthouse Guild [**website**.](https://lighthouseguild.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=0498dc09f619cf957587ebb7f&id=911774cf36&e=d7c2dd5e52)

Disclaimer: The provision of products or resources by Lighthouse Guild to its clients is for educational, informational and research purposes only, and does not constitute an endorsement of any product, device, developer, vendor or manufacturer.

###

**LIGHTHOUSE GUILD “ON TECH AND VISION” PODCAST**

This podcast series on how technology can improve the lives of people with vision loss features Dr. Cal Roberts talking to people with big ideas about how technology can make life better for people with vision loss.

The latest episode **Remixing Existing Tech to Advance Accessibility, he**

speaks with Karthik Mahadevan, the founder and CEO of [**Envision,**](https://lighthouseguild.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=0498dc09f619cf957587ebb7f&id=d6e9f8e08a&e=d7c2dd5e52) about how his technology company leverages existing technologies, such as smartphones and smart glasses, to assist users with low vision. Envision's software utilizes artificial intelligence to recognize important visual cues in a user's environment and then communicates that information through computer-generated speech. Full details are at

[**https://lighthouseguild.org/technology/on-tech-and-vision-podcast/?mc\_cid=a68f0a89fe&mc\_eid=d7c2dd5e52**](https://lighthouseguild.org/technology/on-tech-and-vision-podcast/?mc_cid=a68f0a89fe&mc_eid=d7c2dd5e52).

###

**FREE VIRTUAL TRAININGS WITH VRCBVI IN 2025**

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| Get ready to boost your skills with the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired’s free virtual trainings. From tech tips to career readiness and independent living skills, their sessions cover it all. Held twice a month—on the first and third Tuesday—these sessions are perfect for anyone looking to learn and grow. Ready to dive in? Head to their website to see all the topics and sign at [**https://www.formrouter.net/forms@VRCB/2025VirtualTrainings.html?utm\_medium=email&utm\_source=govdelivery**](https://www.formrouter.net/forms%40VRCB/2025VirtualTrainings.html?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).###**FREE ASSISTIVE TECH APP FOR VISITORS WITH LOW VISION AT THE SMITHSONIAN AMERIAN ART MUSEUM’S RENWICK GALLERY**The ReBokeh mobile app leverages the real-time camera feed from a smartphone and allows users to overlay customized filters to adjust things like contrast, color hue, zoom, and lighting. The app is now available for free as a pilot project at the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C. Full details are at[**https://www.rebokeh.com/post/press-release-rebokeh-assistive-tech-app-now-available-for-free-at-the-smithsonian-american-art-mus**](https://www.rebokeh.com/post/press-release-rebokeh-assistive-tech-app-now-available-for-free-at-the-smithsonian-american-art-mus). ### |

**WALMART OFFERS VISUAL ASSISTANCE ON-DEMAND**

Walmart, like Target, is offering customers access to a live Aira agent while shopping in-store or online.

Read more at [**https://ophthalmicedge.org/patient/walmart-offers-visual-assistance-on-demand/?utm\_source=Newsletter&utm\_medium=email&utm\_content=Monthly%20Roundup&utm\_campaign=Monthly%20Roundup%20%7C%20February%202024**](https://ophthalmicedge.org/patient/walmart-offers-visual-assistance-on-demand/?utm_source=Newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Monthly%20Roundup&utm_campaign=Monthly%20Roundup%20%7C%20February%202024)**.**

###

**BLIND INDUSTRIES AND SERVICES OF MARYLAND (BISM) SUMMER STAFFING POSITIONS OPEN**

1. **Gold STAR 2025 Summer Program**

Program Dates: July 13th-August 8th, 2025

BISM is excited to continue the Gold STAR Program!

This 4- week, fully residential program aims to prepare participants to enter the work force and gain hands on skills and experience. Students reside in apartment style housing with their Blind peers while working in a professional environment and receiving job readiness skills training from competent Blind professionals. The work experience provides students with a first-hand perspective of professional environments and the responsibilities that come with a career. The job readiness skills (i.e. resume and cover letter writing, handshakes, elevator pitches, self-advocacy, etc.) introduce the students to a roadmap for professionalism and independence.

As a Gold STAR Program Staffer, your role will be to serve as an instructor, leader, and mentor to the students. **Applications should be submitted by March 28, 2025.** Interviews will be conducted via Zoom and are anticipated to take place in mid-April.

All offers of employment will be contingent upon a successful comprehensive background check.

Program location: Baltimore, Maryland (you do not need to reside in Maryland to apply as a staffer)

Program Dates: July 13th-August 8th, 2025 (including weekends)

Staff Training Dates: June 30-July 6th, 2025

NOTE: Staff will be required to arrive to the program location on July 11, 2025

Pay for 4-week staffing: $3,000 to $3,500

You can find the position responsibilities and additional details in [**the application link here**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https%3A//forms.gle/UdtpnG9MTopVypVWA%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery/1/0100019543b4b206-067b60e9-7dcb-4ef4-8586-3a37b0843ad8-000000/SLBjpUs5NW72KfNkMaKS4VlVyWV6Nig0iannM7nco4w%3D394).

1. **STAR 2025 Summer Program**

**Program Dates: June 22-July 18th, 2025**

The STAR (Students Training in Advocacy and Responsibility) Program is a 4-week, fully residential program that aids blind and low vision students in developing a true understanding of the career choices available to them. Through an experiential learning approach, they will be exposing students to a new industry each week, exploring the career options within the industry, attending job site tours, and completing real-life tasks and activities in that profession. The industries covered during the program are Healthcare, Engineering, Government and Law, and Sales and Marketing.

As a STAR Program Staffer, your role will be to serve as an instructor, leader, and mentor to the students. **Applications should be submitted by March 28, 2025.** Interviews will be conducted via Zoom and are anticipated to take place in mid-April.

All offers of employment will be contingent upon a successful comprehensive background check.

Program location: Baltimore, Maryland (you do not need to reside in Maryland to apply as a staffer)

Program Dates: June 22-July 18th, 2025

Staff Training Dates: June 16-June 21st, 2025

Pay for 4-week staffing: $3,000 to $3,500

You can find the position responsibilities and additional details [**in the application link here**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https%3A//forms.gle/UdtpnG9MTopVypVWA%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery/2/0100019543b4b206-067b60e9-7dcb-4ef4-8586-3a37b0843ad8-000000/0gg0-oXPWVylRWTFa_AHvYA4zOIFHk9wQNjNxCcMaBA%3D394).

With any questions or concerns, reach out to Juhi Narula at **JNarula@BISM.org** or Emma Meyer at **EMeyer@BISM.org**.

###

**THEATER UPDATE**

The following performances will be described by an MWE volunteer. Note that recorded program notes will be available at the theater just prior to the actual performance and on Dial-In before and after the performance at Publication 8, Category 10, Branch 11.

**Shucked**

National Theater – 1-800-514-3849

Described Saturday, March 1st at 2:00 pm and Sunday, March 2nd at 7:30 pm

**Waitress**

Olney Theatre Center – Roberts Mainstage 301-924-3400

Described Wednesday, March 5th at 7:30 pm

**The Bedwetter – A Musical – NEW DATE**

Arena Stage Kreeger at the Mead Center - 202-488-3300

Described Saturday, **March 8th** at 2:00 pm

**Kunene and The King**

Shakespeare: Klein Theatre: 202-547-1122

Described Saturday, March 8th at 2:00 pm

**The Age of Innocence**

Arena Stage Fichandler at the Mead Center - 202-488-3300

Described Saturday, March 22nd at 2:00 pm

###

**CALENDAR**

**Replay POB Events**

**Listen and watch replays of recent webinars and other POB events at**[**www.youreyes.org/replays**](https://youreyes.us14.list-manage.com/track/click?u=939b8acf4b5eb247b7120bcd9&id=21719989f4&e=59825d4dc8)

###

**LBPD Event: Baltimore Clayworks**

Friday, February 28th from 12:00 t0 3:00 pm

Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled

415 Park Avenue, Baltimore

Baltimore Clayworks will host a tactile educational experience for library patrons, including instruction on hand-building coils and pinch pots. Clayworks will supply all materials needed for instruction. The instructor will create a clay-based curriculum. Once completed, the work will be transported to Clayworks for firing and returned at the next session. Each participant will have the opportunity to explore the different stages of standard clay preparation (wet, bisque, glazed) and clay tools before making their own vessel using air-dry clay, a slump mold, and stamps. An Instructor representing Baltimore Clayworks will teach up to 20 students, ages 8 to Adult.

**A maximum of 20 people may attend. Registration is required.**

[**Click here to register!**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https%3A//marylandlibraries.libcal.com/calendar/ExternalCalendar/BaltmoreClayworks25%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery/1/01000195054e7886-f2b3cf5a-29e5-4f3a-acd4-8bf61b75bec3-000000/ohjuWYKiVp8LbKYMgva9HXDKn00A7vkJdYgJgxXbjys%3D392)

###

**MWE – Ava’s Braille Writing Class – Are Your Affairs in Order?**

Tuesday, March 4th at 10:00 am

12061 Tech Road, Silver Spring

Life is unpredictable. Make sure you and your loved ones are prepared.

Contact Janice Dyson-Ceasar at 301-681-6636.

###

**All Access Book Club – The Book of Charlie by David Von Drehle**

Thursday, March 6th at 11:00 am

When Von Drehle moved to the Midwest, his neighbor was Charlie White-- who was already a century old. In coming to know his neighbor, Von Drehle came to understand Charlie was a master in the art of thriving through times of dramatic change. Here he sets out to tell Charlie's secrets. The history that unfolds through Charlie's eyes reminds readers that the United States has always been a divided nation, a question nation, an inventive nation-- a nation of Charlies in the roller-coaster pursuit of a good and meaningful life. -- adapted from jacket. The Fairfax County Library’s All Access Book Club meets on the first Thursday of each month at 11:00 a.m. via free conference call.

To join the event:

* Call **703-324-1800**or toll-free number **1-877-862-8112**
* At the prompt, enter the code **389887#**

For more information, contact Access Services Library at 703-324-8380 or email **libas@fairfaxcounty.gov**.

###

**LBPD TUG Meeting: Christine Ha to Share Insights**

Saturday, March 8th at 10:00 am

MasterChef winner Christine Ha will share her story with the Technology User Group (TUG).  The chef extraordinaire who lost her vision from Neuromyelitis Optica Spectrum Disorder will talk about her blindness journey, competing on national television, and sharing the finer points of cooking and the technology gadgets she prefers.  Her book, *Recipes from My Home Kitchen: Asian and American Comfort Food from the Winner of MasterChef Season Three*, is available in both audio (DB 76676) and braille (BR 20085).  Patrons can also download the title from the NLS BARD website at [**https://nlsbard.loc.gov/**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https%3A//nlsbard.loc.gov/%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery/1/010001946a44a164-821c1ee4-60a0-49f6-89f9-30afbc4f63a7-000000/pKCl8ELKvjSfIR_eCbUSSGcNo5s76Qt55itz8_m0274%3D388).

Technology User Group (TUG) meetings can be joined either via Zoom:

[**https://marylandlibraries.zoom.us/j/6562037293**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https%3A//marylandlibraries.zoom.us/j/6562037293%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery/1/010001946a44a164-821c1ee4-60a0-49f6-89f9-30afbc4f63a7-000000/k4WS1Yoy1PpWhDQhgLy-If3EKM8jyxn6IRMlY_MXiOY%3D388)

Meeting ID: 656 203 7293

or

**One tap mobile**[**+13017158592,,6562037293#**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/tel%3A%2B13017158592%2C%2C6562037293%23/1/010001946a44a164-821c1ee4-60a0-49f6-89f9-30afbc4f63a7-000000/vN8ZdEYxbAIBu-xHyLxJnMM6JD7K5KSmiJzv7baDZ9c%3D388)

###

**Free Resources Event for Federal Workers and Contractors**

Saturday, March 8th from 12:00 to 05:00 pm

Wakefield High School, 1325 S. Dinwiddie Street, Arlington, VA, 22206

Congressman Don Beyer, in partnership with the City of Alexandria, the City of Falls Church, Arlington County and Fairfax County, invites you to attend a pop­up resource fair to access vital services.

Resources include unemployment assistance, mental health support, housing information, food aid, and information on federal workers rights.

###

**Bloom at Good Hope Concert Series: BĒHELD**

Beloved Pop & Soul Music sponsored by the Strathmore Music Center

Sat, March 8th at 5:00 pm

[**Good Hope Neighborhood Recreation Center**](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/rec/facilities/recreationcenters/goodhope.html)

14715 Good Hope Road. Silver Spring

Free / Pay What You Can

[**RSVP**](https://secure.strathmore.org/22366)

###

**Celebrating Elizabeth Catlett with Musicians from the Howard University Jazz Ensemble**

Sunday, March 9th from 1:00 pm to 1:45 pm and

3:30 pm to 4:15 pm

National Gallery of Art East Building, Concourse

4th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW

With outstanding performances in the United States, Europe, Latin America, China, Japan, Africa, and the Caribbean, HUJE is recognized as one of the foremost university jazz ensembles in the world. The group has been heard on radio, television, and in concert, with many of its members going on to become celebrated jazz artists. HUJE also performed at the 1992, 1996, and 2005 Kennedy Center Honors and has released 43 recordings in a distinguished series that began in 1976.

###

**Low Vision Support Group Virtual Meeting - Common Eye Challenges: Am I Ready for My Eye Exam and Focus Group Meeting on Eye Drops – Challenges with Taking Them**

Tuesday, March 11th from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm

The Washington National Eye Center

At MedStar Washington Hospital Center

Guest Speaker: Jessica Lee, MD, Ophthalmology Resident

VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING:

You can join via computer or phone or both—email Penny at

**penelope.a.helfgott@medstar.net** to receive an electronic link to the program.

Co-sponsored with the Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington, DC.

If you have any questions, please call Penny Helfgott at 202-877-5329 and leave a message or call the POB at 202-234-1010.

###

**Low Vision Awareness Group at Ashby Ponds Meeting - "Accessible Pharmacy"**

Wednesday, March 12th from 2:00 to 3:00 pm

Ashby Ponds Retirement Community

Great Oak Theatre

44755 Audubon Square, Ashburn VA

Forwarded by Sandy Neuzil

A live presentation by Andy Burstein, Chief Executive Officer of Accessible Pharmacy Services

This is an excellent opportunity to listen to and speak in person with one of the founders of this mail order pharmacy whose mission is to provide personalized service to those with special needs such as vision issues and other challenges.

This meeting is open to the public with ample seating.  Bring your family and friends.

Questions:  Carol Katchmark  703-898-2837 or

e-mail:**carolkatchmark@comcast.net**

###

**In Person Event: Peabody String Sinfonia @ LBPD!**

Wednesday, March 12th at 3:30 pm

Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled

415 Park Ave., Baltimore, MD

The Peabody String Sinfonia is a student-led, conductorless string orchestra with a mission to bring live music to people in the Baltimore community who often do not have access, including those going through cancer treatment, incarceration, homelessness, hospitalization, addiction, and hunger.

The programming for each performance is built with the audience in mind, evolving every semester. In a typical Sinfonia performance, works range from Tchaikovsky to Etta James to the Danish String Quartet.

**Event Information:**

**While registration is not required, it is recommended:**

[**https://marylandlibraries.libcal.com/calendar/ExternalCalendar/Sinfona25**](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https%3A//marylandlibraries.libcal.com/calendar/ExternalCalendar/Sinfona25%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery/1/0100019538ebbe50-678b98d6-7366-4221-864b-38148557f432-000000/xqMr5iZdbpQ-7DcbpvyXt9lMWYH24FzhEE_TWcPKt54%3D393)**.**

###

**2025 ACB Leadership Conference**

Friday, March 14th through Tuesday, March 18th

Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel in Arlington

The American Council of the Blind Leadership Conference will be a hybrid event. Full details are at [**2025 ACB Leadership Conference | American Council of the Blind**](https://www.acb.org/2025-acb-leadership-conference)**.**

###

**Friendship Heights Vision Resource Grou**p - **Powerful Smart Phone Apps that use Human and AI assistance**

Thursday March 20th from 11:00 am to 12:00 noon

Friendship Heights Village Center

4433 South Park Ave., Chevy Chase

The speaker will be Sandy Neuzil, Low Vision Community Outreach for the Prevention of Blindness Society.

Three free apps can connect you to human or AI assistance that can read text out loud, identify objects, and describe what you are looking at - in that instant! Learn how to download these apps and try them out on your iPhone, Android, or iPad.

Low Vision Resource meetings help you connect,

share ideas, and learn from each other.

For information and to register, please call **301-656-2797**

###

**MWE – Blind Men’s Support Group – Are Your Affairs in Order?**

Thursday, March 27th at 2:00 pm

12061 Tech Road, Silver Spring

Life is unpredictable. Make sure you and your loved ones are prepared.

Contact Janice Dyson-Ceasar at 301-681-6636/

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