



# The Spotlight

[www.lighthousefortheblind.org](http://www.lighthousefortheblind.org)

Summer 2016

## Losing Sight But Not Slowing Down



In 2005 when Lighthouse employee Manuel Zavala decided to move his family to Texas, he never dreamed his life would take an unexpected turn. "I woke up one day and it appeared to look like a spider was in my eye."

After consulting a doctor, he was diagnosed with diabetic retinopathy—a condition that can cause blood vessels in the retina to leak fluid or hemorrhage, destroying vision—and he now suffers

from macular degeneration, which will cause him to gradually lose his eyesight. "Hearing those words from a doctor is pretty life changing. Now what happens? Learning to live with my condition required me to make many adjustments, one of the most challenging aspects of losing my vision is not being able to drive." Texas law states a person with 20/50 vision is prohibited from driving without special aids and Manuel's vision is 20/400.

A construction worker by trade, Manuel was concerned how he would support his family. After a period of depression and frustration, he contacted Division for Blind Services in San Angelo.

He started working at the Base Supply Store at Goodfellow as a cashier, but as his eyesight deteriorated he was having trouble operating the cash register and took a job at the Lighthouse to work on the production floor.

# Manuel's story continued

Manuel worked on the production floor in hand assembly. He excelled in this position and was promoted to material handler.

When a position became available for a product development assistant, Manuel was selected. He was nervous because he had never had an office job before.

Manuel enrolled in Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Hadley provides distance education programs for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. He enrolled in basic office classes: typing, Excel and other programs.

The Lighthouse is very passionate about upward mobility so with our encouragement, Manuel enrolled online and in December graduated with a high school diploma.

"This was a great accomplishment for me, I never thought I would have the opportunity to graduate from high school." He is currently enrolled in



*Manuel Zavala (middle) meeting customers at the Base Supply Center, Goodfellow AFB vendor show.*

Howard College and working on a degree in business and plans to finish his degree at Angelo State University. He wants to continue to work at the Lighthouse and use the skills he has learned to help the Lighthouse to continue to be successful.

Despite his eyesight remaining stable over the last few years, he understands the real possibility of losing more of his sight as he gets older. "I

don't want to say I am prepared, I don't want to lie to you, no one is prepared to go blind, but I do realize it's something that can eventually happen. That's why I live my life to the fullest now."

"I live happy. I have a great wife and kids that are very supportive of me. I love my job at the Lighthouse and want to continue to help make it a success."

## Employees Provide Computer Training



Two of our employees, Allen Adamson and Manuel Zavala started a computer class at the Lighthouse. They wanted to give blind and visually impaired people an opportunity to learn to use a computer.

Their first two students were Brenda Herridge and Marilyn Parsons. They both completed the class and did well. They are now ready to use their computers and keep learning.

Allen and Manuel did a great job teaching and should be very proud of the people they trained.

Brenda and Marilyn received their certificates for completing the course.

From left to right, Allen Adamson, Brenda Herridge, Marilyn Parsons and Dave Wells. Not pictured: Manuel Zavala.

# Longtime Lighthouse Employee Retires

June 2nd was a happy and sad day for the West Texas Lighthouse. Long time employee John McCarthy retired with over 35 years of service.

John always had a great attitude, was good at his job and was a wonderful example to fellow employees. He will truly be missed. We all wish you the best!

The top right picture is of John receiving a gift from all the employees of the Lighthouse. It is a wireless speaker system, so he can enjoy his music anywhere he goes!

The bottom right picture is John and his wife Listene.

John, we hope you will come by and visit us whenever you get a chance. Enjoy your retirement!



## Local KIDY/FOX TV Visits Lighthouse



Our local Fox Channel (KIDY) filmed a segment called Rob on the Job. Their reporter, Rob Harris, came to our Lighthouse and worked with Marilyn Parsons to see what her job is like.

Marilyn gave a quick tutorial on lanyard assembly and then Rob donned a blindfold. His task was to assemble lanyards. On any given day, she'll assemble hundreds of a given product, relying on her sense of touch to guide her through the intricate process. "I on the other hand, struggled to put one together

right. With a lot of guidance, I did eventually complete my lanyard; but the lessons from Marilyn and her coworkers reached much further than the assembly line" states Rob Harris, KIDY reporter.

We enjoyed having Rob at the Lighthouse and tours are available Monday-Friday, 9:00–3:00.

The airing was on May 3rd, and it is still available online at [myfoxzone.com](http://myfoxzone.com).

## Office Products Made Easy!

We would like to thank all the local businesses that have supported our new office products business by purchasing from LighthouseOffice-Supply.com. We are proud to be part of such a supportive community. Lighthouse Office Supply customers get great products at a competitive price, and every purchase helps us to continue to add job opportunities for people who are blind in our community.

We offer over 50,000+ products at low competitive prices with next-day delivery on most items. Our website is easy to use and when you call for customer service, you reach a real person in San Angelo. This person is Canyon Sullivan. He is totally blind and with the use of adaptive equipment he is able to take good care of our customers. By purchasing from Lighthouse Office Supply, you are making it possible for Canyon to work, and for us to continue creating new jobs for people who are blind.

Order online anytime-anywhere or give us a call 325-653-4231 or 844-496-3367.

# Service Awards



Top Row:  
Left—Canyon Sullivan—Two Years  
Middle—Corie Thompson—Two Years  
Right—John Sloan—Two Years

Bottom Row Left to Right:  
Rose Najera, Alexis Wilson and  
Herminio Coronado—Two Years



# Employee of the Month



Top Row:  
Left—January-Romy Saldaña  
Middle—February-Kevin Brown  
Right—March-John McCarthy

Bottom Row:  
Left—April-Mary Ferguson  
Right—May-Justin Unger

Three Opportunities—Supporting West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind—Every Purchase Creates Jobs



**LIGHTHOUSE  
OFFICE SUPPLY.com**

[www.LighthouseForTheBlind.org](http://www.LighthouseForTheBlind.org)

[www.LighthouseOfficeSupply.com](http://www.LighthouseOfficeSupply.com)

**LANYARDS  
EXPRESS**

[www.LanyardsXpress.com](http://www.LanyardsXpress.com)