

NJ Foundation for the Blind

Helping adults with vision loss live a full and meaningful life: adjust to vision loss, acquire independent living skills, and regain physical and mental wellness.

Update

EMBRACING LIFE AFTER VISION LOSS

New Independent Living Program Provides Real Life Solutions

This fall, NJFFB is excited to launch its redesigned Independent Living Skills program called *A Simple Solution*. It is specifically designed for individuals whose vision loss has reduced their ability to perform daily tasks independently and safely.

In *A Simple Solution*, adults who have lost vision due to eye conditions including macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and cataracts, can acquire strategies and skills that will aid them in performing tasks they might have assumed too difficult or impossible with low vision. With the right skills, individuals with vision loss are better able to manage routine activities on their own, remain in their own homes, and reduce falls and injuries.

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Dear Friend,

October 1, 2015, marked the anniversary of my first year with NJFFB. It has been a truly exciting year and the future is unfolding with so much to look forward to at every level of the organization.

We are settled into our new Denville location and the fall term is underway. It is inspiring to come to work every day and see our participants practicing independent living skills, learning to use iPads and iPhones, and enjoying drumming, painting, yoga, many other activities. Everyone is working towards a common goal - living an independent life after vision loss.

What I have come to learn as Executive Director is just how many caring and compassionate people contribute to making this organization as unique and powerful as it is. To a few, we said farewell this year and happily welcomed new faces to the NJFFB family. **Iris Torres** retired as Chair of the Board and **Sally Hudson** began her tenure. Two new members were elected to the Board of Trustees: **Rich Grebe** of Mountain Lakes and **Henry Levy** of Englewood. We also want to thank **Gail Hicks** and **Jane Greenwald** for their service on the NJFFB Board. Long time staff member **Kathy Caviston** retired, and soon after we were joined by **Nina McCormack** as the new Director of Development and Communications.

For 72 years, NJFFB has continued to show resilience and commitment to the spirit of our founders. Today, more than 100,000 people over age 40 in New Jersey are either blind or have profound vision loss, and that number continues to grow. Looking forward, our new strategic plan will help guide decisions over the next five years as we manage the growing need for services, and build awareness of this greatly underserved population. Additionally, one of our key goals is to expand and improve program accessibility to all individuals in New Jersey living with profound vision loss.

As we transition to reflect the changing needs of our participants, we rededicate ourselves steadfastly to the goals of improving quality of life, inspiring personal triumph, building confidence and increasing independence among those with profound vision loss.

We are very grateful, and thank you for your past and current support. Exciting times are ahead for us, so stay tuned!

Sincerely,

Kris Marino
Executive Director

SUPPORT **NJFFB**

Help those learning to help themselves.
Donate online at www.njffb.org

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"To ease participants into the learning process, we have redesigned our independent living skills program into smaller classes over a shorter time span," explains NJFFB Program Manager, Linda Groszew. "It's a more accommodating approach for individuals starting their journey," she added. "Saying 'yes' to help is a big step."

With the right skills, individuals with vision loss are better able to manage routine activities on their own, remain in their own homes, and reduce falls and injuries.

A Simple Solution provides individualized classes in six weekly sessions that improve mobility skills, teach adaptive kitchen skills, and explore strategies for daily tasks. Each class day includes a peer support group which gives everyone a chance to share their frustrations, fears, and accomplishments. These discussions can promote confidence, increase emotional health, and reduce the sense of isolation that often comes with vision loss.



For the first time, participants can look forward to group presentations and demonstrations on topics of high interest like iPad and iPhone technologies, magnifiers and other popular independent living aids.

To learn more about *A Simple Solution* and other classes that are offered at NJFFB, call (973) 627-0055, ext. 312, or email student_services@njffb.org.



The old farmhouse near the pond on Diamond Spring Road in Denville was the site of the first camp programs held by NJ Foundation for the Blind.

The Early Years

NJFFB was founded in 1943 in Newark NJ to serve the needs of the blind. In 1955, with an anonymous donation from one of the founding members, NJFFB opened the state's first residential summer camp for blind women at Diamond Spring Lodge in Denville. For decades, NJFFB has been a beloved institution which has continued to grow to help individuals with vision loss with both training programs and recreational activities.

Thank you to Adams Super Food Store!

On September 22, 2015, Adams Super Food Store held its annual golf outing and donated the proceeds to NJFFB!



Bob Tobio, Adams Super Food Store; Bob Fiore and Mark Schenking, Guida Dairy; Ken Pratt, Adams Super Food Store.



Mark Gadoury, Adams Super Food Store; Kye Hovenstine, Frito Lay; Joe Ferrara, Adams Super Food Store; Keith Coppins, Star Beverages.

TRIBUTES

Pro Bono Partnership deserves our appreciation for their pro bono legal advice regarding many aspects of NJFFB's move to the new Denville location at 155 Morris Avenue.

Church of the Savior (COTS) warrants a warm thank you for providing assistance and support during site renovations to the adjacent NJFFB program location and offices.

Celebrate the Children merits a thank you for their considerations during our transition period. We know Diamond Spring Lodge will flourish under their stewardship.

NJFFB Programs

Essential Low Vision One Day Program



In just a few hours, adults who are blind or vision impaired will acquire numerous techniques that will increase home safety, improve functioning in daily tasks, and provide understanding of assistive technologies. A friend or family member is encouraged to participate.

Better Health and Wellness Program



This weekly program provides healing arts classes to improve physical and emotional well-being as well as provide a full day of social interaction. Popular classes include yoga; fitness and movement; group drumming; horticulture; healthy options; as well as art and pottery.

Technology Programs



This class teaches participants with iPads/iPhones how to use the accessibility features, practical functions and specialized apps to stay organized, informed and connected. Training is available at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels.

Independent Living Skills



A Simple Solution is a six-week independent living skills program that provides the foundational skills needed to regain and maintain an independent life style especially among those with recent or worsening vision loss

For more information about NJFFB programs including program fees and dates, please contact the Program Manager at (973) 627-0055, ext. 312 or email student_services@njffb.org.

NJFFB extends condolences to the family and friends of **Helen Hill**, a longtime volunteer at NJFFB. She will be missed.

Denise Oyola Has an Appetite for Helping



You could say Denise is a main ingredient in our popular Healthy Options class. Not only does she work directly with participants in the NJFFB training kitchen under the supervision of ADL instructor, Jerilyn Higgins, she also works behind the scenes handling all the grocery shopping.

Most would run to the most convenient market, but not Denise. She is determined to find the freshest foods at the best prices, so she "shops" each ingredient and delights in finding a bargain.

"Nonprofits need to watch the bottom line, so it's important to me to be a smart shopper," Denise explained.

According to Denise, students put a lot of time into food preparation, learning to measure ingredients and safely use a knife, box grater, food chopper, vegetable peeler and other appliances and utensils.

"We also teach alternative ways of cooking using the microwave, counter-top grill and toaster oven," stated Denise. "Whatever they cook is fantastic, really restaurant quality."

Since Healthy Options is part of the Better Health and Wellness program, participants are learning to be food smart which is especially important if they are also facing health challenges like diabetes. Every class contains a nutrition segment on the health benefits of eating right and the negative effects of bad food choices.

"At the end of the day, I feel very satisfied," said Denise. "I've learned how much our participants want their independence and to do more for themselves. When I offered to walk a student to his next class, he said he'll never figure it out on his own if I lead him."

"That was my ah-ha moment!"

"I've learned how much our participants want their independence and to do more for themselves."

—Denise

For more information on NJFFB's Better Health and Wellness program, call (973) 627-0055, ext. 312, or email student_services@njffb.org

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Find us on  

or visit at njffb.org for more information!

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SAVE THE DATE!



A benefit concert for
NJ Foundation for the Blind

Featuring Justin Kauflin

Friday, May 20, 2016

The Bickford Theater at Morris Museum



NJFFB LOCATIONS

Morris County – We've Moved!

NJFFB Programs and
Administrative Offices:
155 Morris Avenue, Suite 2
Denville, NJ 07834
Phone: (973) 627-0055
Email: info@njffb.org
Website: www.njffb.org

Additional Program Locations:

Bergen County – Ridgewood, NJ
Essex County – Montclair, NJ
Sussex County – Sparta, NJ

Call (973) 627-0055, or email
student_services@njffb.org
for more information
or to register for a class.