

the perspective

fall 2018

In this issue:

What is Orientation and Mobility?

Page 2

A message from our President and CEO

Page 2

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

A longtime volunteer gives back, and receives

Page 3

TECHNOLOGY CORNER

Help others with the app Be My Eyes

Page 4

I Want to Give Back

If you needed to describe Akeelah Cade with just one word, it would have to be “inspirational.”

This single mother of four lost her sight two years ago due to complications from encephalitis. She spent several months in the hospital, lost her job in the medical field, and her family was evicted from their Fairfield apartment. “We lived in a hotel for three months,” Akeelah recalls. “It was a rough time for my kids and me.”

Akeelah’s extended family rallied to support her. A cousin found them a home in Cincinnati, and her mother moved in to help. Other family members helped furnish the house. One of Akeelah’s best gifts was advice from her brother who told her, “Whatever you had planned on doing before this, you keep doing it. Don’t you give up.”

Akeelah doesn’t want blindness to be an obstacle, and she has worked hard to learn the basics all over again. “I see now by touch. I still clean, and I use my iron skillet to fry fish. Last week we made chicken fried rice for dinner, and each of my children had a job. I like to make it fun for us, to bring us all together.”

She admits that it was tough, particularly in the beginning. “My kids were worried about me, and I was worried about them. I had to teach



Akeelah heads out with Marshá Gerton to learn how to navigate her neighborhood.

them that even though I was different, I was still me. And it hurt because so many of our friends left us. They just walked away.”

Akeelah’s goal is to give back and help others. “I want to educate the sighted about blindness. A lot of people think we can’t get around. I can walk with anyone by holding their elbow, and I still like to go to movies and concerts! The only difference is that now I can’t drive.”

“I’m living life instead of existing.”

“I can’t complain about anything. This has taught me so much. I was physically able to see before, but was blind to the world. Now that I’m blind, I see clearly.”



From our President and CEO

It is hard to imagine losing your sight—the many ways your world would change and how even the simplest tasks could become overwhelming.

In this issue of *The Perspective*, we meet two individuals who have faced that challenge and are learning to rebuild their lives. Neither of them did it alone. They relied on help from friends and family—and from you.

Your gifts help provide the resources and tools so people like Akeelah and Ann can remain in their homes and be self-sufficient. And your generosity helps a high school boy play basketball with his friends, rather than sitting on the sidelines because he can't see like he used to.

We are so grateful that your support gives us the opportunity to partner with organizations like Cincinnati Children's Hospital, so children with permanent and uncorrectable vision loss can get low vision rehabilitation services that give them the tools to adapt at school and home.

Thank you for helping build brighter futures for so many men, women and children in our community who have lost all or part of their vision.

Christopher Faust

Christopher Faust,
President and CEO

What is Orientation and Mobility?



Mike Horn learns to navigate Findlay Market and public transportation with Marshá's assistance.

Marshá Gerton wanted to be a teacher, but she didn't like standing at the front of the class. "I'm more of a free spirit—the world is my classroom." As a teacher's assistant, she found that she preferred working one on one with the disabled. So Marshá went back to school and in 2013 became a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

Orientation and Mobility or O&M, focuses on instructing individuals who are blind or visually impaired with safe and effective travel through their environment. The most well-known tool is the white cane. Over 50 white canes of all sizes line the wall in Marshá's office at Clovernook. "There are many clues that I teach individuals learning to navigate with a white cane. When you are walking down a hallway, the sounds change as you pass an open door. Outside, you can feel the coolness of shade as you walk past a tree, and you can hear whether traffic is coming toward you or moving away."

Marshá works with adults as well as children of all ages. "I particularly like working with older kids, because they will tell you what they need. I helped one high school boy keep playing basketball even though his peripheral vision had narrowed drastically. It was as simple as having his teammates call out his name when they passed the ball to him, so he would know it was coming."

Marshá serves on the interdisciplinary team at Clovernook's Pediatric Low Vision Clinic along with a pediatrician from Cincinnati Children's Hospital, a TVI (Teacher of the Visually Impaired) and an OT (Occupational Therapist). "We do a full assessment of every child and provide them with specialized aids like magnifiers, ocular sunglasses or white canes. They leave with new information and techniques to navigate their world and be successful."

"I love what I do. Losing your independence is very hard for the visually impaired, and it is so fulfilling to help them regain their independence and dignity."

A Longtime Volunteer Gives Back, and Receives

Ann Braam has been deeply involved with Clovernook Center for more than twenty years. When she retired in 1998, her husband Gordon was already a longtime volunteer at Clovernook. Ann began volunteering in the Fund Development Department, helping with mailings and keeping the database up-to-date.



Anna enjoys caring for her roses

Ann and Gordon met David Grimes when he moved to Cincinnati and joined Clovernook's Braille Transcription Department. They offered to help him settle into his new apartment. The three became fast friends and, from that time on, David was a frequent guest of the Braams. Even after David married and moved to another part of the city, they remained close friends.

As part of their estate planning, Ann and Gordon made the decision to honor Clovernook Center with a planned gift. "We wanted to ensure that Clovernook Center could provide services and be strong advocates for those with low vision for years to come."

"I always knew Clovernook was a wonderful organization full of caring people. I'm grateful for how they have helped me and so many others with vision loss."

Over a number of years, Ann's right eye had become severely limited to only her peripheral vision. Then in late 2003, Ann woke to find that she could barely see out of her left eye. Specialists diagnosed it as Central Retinal Vein Occlusion, and over time macular

degeneration also affected that eye. She relied on Gordon to help her navigate until four years ago when he passed away. Ever resilient, Ann turned to Clovernook again, this time as a consumer.

Ann reached out to Clovernook's orientation and mobility services to find out how to get around Cincinnati by herself. She learned how to access Lyft and Uber with the service GoGoGrandparent. Today Ann enjoys staying active with family and friends, going to the Ensemble Theatre, and swimming as often as she can.

"I always knew Clovernook was a wonderful organization full of caring people. Now I've seen it from a different perspective, and I'm grateful for how they have helped me and so many others with vision loss."



Anna pays a visit to Clovernook and her friend David

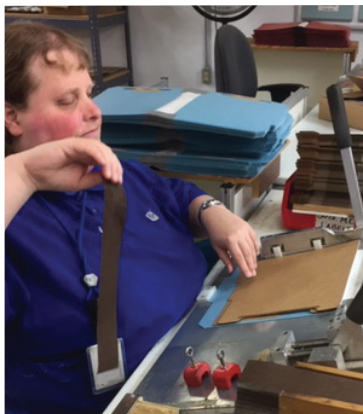
Earlier this year, Ann paid a visit to Clovernook. She hadn't seen her friend David in a couple of years and wanted to surprise him. As she approached his office, he was busy at work checking braille copy for errors in front of his computer and refreshable braille display. "Hi, David!" she said with a big smile on her face.

"Ann!" David immediately recognized her voice. He jumped up from his chair and gave her a big hug. A lively conversation ensued, with David and Ann laughing and talking as old friends do, like they had never been apart.

To learn more about how you can include Clovernook Center in your will or estate plan, please contact Rhonda Curtis, rcurtis@clovernook.org or 513-728-6288.

Be My Eyes

There is a revolution happening in technology for the blind, starting with smart phones. One popular app, Be My Eyes, links visually impaired people to sighted volunteers. Through the phone's camera, the blind person is able to show a sighted individual what they are looking at in the real world. Then the volunteer can assist them.



Melissa Hoppe assembling folders at Clovernook

Melissa Hoppe, who works in Clovernook's Social Enterprises department, loves using Be My Eyes. "When I bought a new TV, I had a volunteer walk me through the TV menu to set up the accessibility features, and another time I got help setting up my Amazon Fire Stick. Once I just needed to tell the difference between two boxes of breakfast bars!" Most calls take less than five minutes.

The feature that Melissa likes best about Be My Eyes is that it is free. That's because the person on the other end is a volunteer. And volunteering is easy! You can just download the app onto your smart phone and follow the simple instructions to sign up. When your assistance is needed, a notification will pop up on your phone. Tap to accept the request, and you will be connected to someone who, because of you, is able to be a little more independent as they move through their day.



Be My Eyes



Clovernook Historical Calendar

Our historical calendar features etchings of scenes from Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (est. 1903) and quotations from the works of the Cary sisters. Using a combination of Braille and printed text, it is accessible to people who are visually impaired and who are sighted. QR codes throughout can be scanned with a smartphone to access audio descriptions of the monthly scenes.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone to hear words and sounds that define each etching.

Inspiring quotes and monthly grid calendar pages are brailled and in easy to read large print text.

JANUARY 2019						
Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Yes, I want to help the blind and visually impaired be full participants in our community.

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of:

☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ Other \$ _____

☐ I commit to a monthly gift of \$ _____. My first gift is enclosed.

☐ I would like more information on including Clovernook in my will, trust, retirement account or life insurance policy.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

Please make your gift payable to: Clovernook Center for the Blind
7000 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45231 / 513.522.3860

DONATE NOW

Your online gift will be put to work quickly. Please visit our website: clovernook.org
Your gifts change lives!



Please charge my gift on my credit card:

☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX ☐ DISC

CARD NUMBER _____

EXP. DATE _____

NAME ON ACCOUNT _____

SECURITY # _____

SIGNATURE _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL _____

Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law.
We will send you a receipt for your records