



OUR MISSION

Empowering people who are blind to achieve personal and economic independence by providing them with vocational rehabilitation and employment opportunities.

Helping the Blind Help Themselves Since 1935

OUR VISION

To create a world where blind and visually impaired individuals can feel empowered through meaningful employment while building a strong community together.

Manufacturing

Our 60,000+ sq. ft. facility in North Charlotte produces items for the U.S. Military, sewn and assembled with U.S. made materials by people who are blind and have visual impairments and their sighted peers.

Programs

Lions Services provides more than just employment for the blind and visually impaired. Through adaptive healthcare, assistive technology training, and access to social capital, we give the community a place to not just survive, but to thrive.

Community

Lions Services is not just a workplace. It is a community that encourages people who are blind to prosper. We are creating Charlotte's most accessible community- one where all can live their best lives, despite vision loss.

Dear Friends, Supporters, Employees,

A Note from our Board Chairman



As I reflect on the past year as Chairman of the Board for Lions Services Inc, I as well as the Board are filled with pride at the remarkable progress, we have made in advancing our mission to empower the blind and visually impaired community. The past year has been one of both challenges and triumphs. The “can do” culture and financial viability of the company continue to expand and grow in a positive direction which is a direct reflection of the excellent team we have. Looking ahead, we are excited about our future initiatives, including continued awareness and support in our local community. On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, I extend my deepest gratitude for your continued trust and support. Together, we are building a brighter, more resilient future for the blind and visually impaired community. Thank you for your participation and significant effort. The opportunities are endless.

With warm regards,

Rich Daudelin

Chairman, Board of Directors, Lions Service, Inc.

A Note from our President & CEO



Dear Friends,

For more than 90 years, Lions Services, Inc. has empowered individuals who are blind or visually impaired throughout Charlotte and surrounding communities. Through our Workforce Development Program, we provide meaningful employment, skills training, and the confidence to live independently after vision loss.

This year marked an exciting chapter in our continued growth and innovation.

We proudly launched the Lions DENN (Digital Equity Navigation Network) — a groundbreaking program providing accessible digital independence through adaptive technology training for people who are blind. This initiative is helping participants gain vital skills for today’s digital world, opening new doors to personal and professional opportunities.

We also expanded our manufacturing capabilities, launching a new production line for the IHPS Helmet Cover for the U.S. Army, further demonstrating the skill, precision, and dedication of our talented workforce. We’re proud to share that over 120 individuals who are blind found meaningful employment at Lions Services this year, continuing our mission of creating pathways to economic and personal independence.

Beyond our production floor, we strengthened community connections through a series of successful engagement events that celebrated ability, inclusion, and empowerment. These gatherings reminded us of the collective power of community and the importance of partnership in driving our mission forward. As you read this report, we hope you see the difference your support makes every day. Together, we are expanding opportunity, advancing inclusion, and building a future where independence and dignity shine for all. Stay connected. Stay inspired. Our work is possible because of you.

With gratitude,

Philip Murph,

President and CEO

AFFILIATIONS



WHO WE SERVE

There are over 16,000 people living in Charlotte with vision loss. The unemployment rate for working adults who are blind and visually impaired is 70%. Finding a job is extremely difficult. We provide competitive wages and benefits for all employees.

EMPLOYEE TESTIMONIALS



Raven Joiner

Raven joined Lions Services one year ago after she began experiencing vision loss in 2021 due to a medical condition that has progressed to total blindness. Raven works as a production assembler, in the the Cheesecloth Department, and is an Ambassador for Lions Services, and a Knight Emerging City Champion 2025 for the Charlotte Braille Trail project at Lions Services. Like many in the blind community, she faced major barriers in accessing technology and training. Through the Lions DENN, she gained the skills and confidence she needed to grow, provide for her family, and support others on their journey.

“The Lions DENN reminded me that I can add value to my life and help others like me. Thank you, Lions Services.” – Raven



John Ullman

John joined Lions services 18 years ago, he was born with glaucoma, and learned to navigate vision loss as a child. John has no vision in his right eye and only peripheral vision in his left. John is a Machine Operator, in the Molle 4K Department and has worked in various departments and jobs roles since joining Lions Services. A former high-speed production worker and an avid bowler with a remarkable 298 game, John also treasures time with his grandchildren.

“This job has provided me with independence to take care of my family for which I am very grateful” – John

Employee Quotes:

“I love my job!”– Bruce Gillard

“Through the training I have received in the Assistive Technology program, I’ve adjusted and regained my skills”– Robert Callendar

“My work sees possibility, not disability”– Melanie Dunston

“I discovered an entire community of individuals with vision loss like myself” – Norman Fairley (Blind Employee of the year)

IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

VOLUNTEERS AND OUTREACH

OUR DEDICATED GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTE THEIR TIME TO HELP COMPLETE MANY TASKS AROUND OUR FACILITY. JUST A FEW HOURS OF YOUR TIME MEANS SO MUCH TO THOSE WE SERVE.

394 VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTED 725 HOURS

2024-2025 Lions Services Employment By the Numbers

226

Employees

109

Employees who are
Blind or Visually
Impaired

11

Veterans Employed

7

Blind and Visually
Impaired
Ambassadors

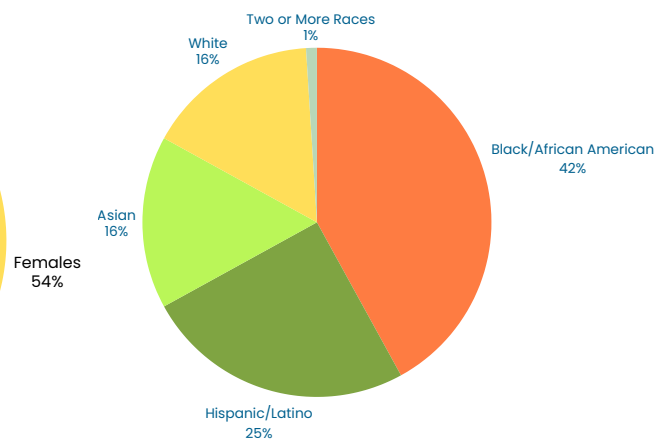
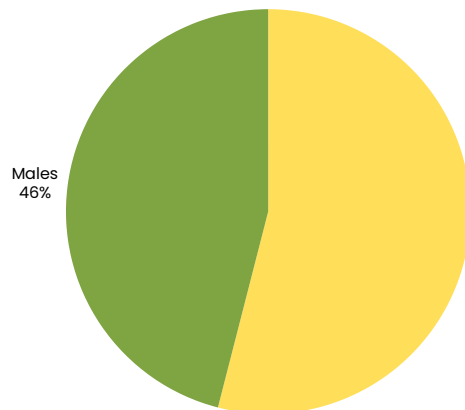
86

**Blind and Visually Impaired
Employees received accessible
devices through the Blind
Support Fund promoting
independence.**



Our demographics:

Lions Services employs a diverse segment of individuals through our Workforce Development Program.



SUSTAINABILITY

Lions Services is dedicated to fostering a sustainable future through four product lines, aiming to sustain employment opportunities for individuals who are blind and visually impaired. Revenue from Lions Services' social enterprise manufacturing program covers most Workforce Development expenses, with the remainder supported by grants and individual donors.

Progress and Advancement

Lions Services experiences steady growth year after year.

Monthly production requirements and daily production goals met :

Improved Retention Chin Strap: 34,000 monthly/1, 700 daily

HRS: 2,600 monthly/130 daily

Molle Hydration Carrier : 16,000 monthly/800 daily

Molle 4000 Ruck sack : 800 monthly/40 daily

Our Supporters

The generosity of donors, foundations , and friends has shaped Lions Services and will profoundly influence our future. Your gifts support essential programs and operations that impact the Lions Services experience for every blind and visually impaired employee, every day. Gifts of all sizes allow us to continue supporting our mission. THANK YOU for investing in this special place—you are making a difference in our ability to transform lives and build promising futures for the blind and visually impaired community.

Help support our programs : <https://lions-services.org/donate> .

To donate via check , mail to: Lions Services Inc. PO BOX 561987 Charlotte, NC 28256

PLAN

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Champion

Open Doors

2. Invite

others to be ENGAGED

3. Invest

with a MEANINGFUL
COMMITMENT

TODAY

Donate to
Lions Services
and ask your
friends to join
you.

Tag Lions
Services!

TOMORROW

Open doors for
Lions Services in
the community.

Who needs to
know about us?

BEYOND

Join us for one of our
upcoming Events





The Lions DENN is the city's first Assistive Technology Center of Excellence for individuals with vision loss.

The Lions DENN is a unique training center focusing on improving digital equity for those with vision loss and who otherwise have difficulty with access to technology. We have partnered with the Center for Digital Equity (CDE) to provide one-on-one Digital Navigator support for sighted students in both English and Spanish.

We provide devices and teach skills.

- 49 blind/visually impaired students trained by Laurie Ledwell (Teaching 167 hours)
- 50 sighted students taught by CDE Team (Teaching 287 hours)

Total Students: 98

Total Hours: 454

- Two learning pathways: independent living and workforce development



Let's Meet The Team

Laurie Ledwell

Meet our Assistive Technology Specialist!



"I lived in an era without Assistive Technology, and now with it we can live more independent lives."

"I can now use my smart phone and computer to do things independently and not have to depend on friends and family someone for assistance."

Challenges and Statistics on assistive technology.

Training gap for blind/low-vision users: In a study of 323 blind/low-vision adults, 20% had never received formal assistive technology (AT) training and 5% were entirely self-taught, despite using an average of 7 AT tools at work (81% used screen readers). – *The American Foundation for the Blind*. **Key barriers:** High cost, low awareness, limited availability, workforce capacity gaps, and insufficient AT skills—directly limiting employment opportunities.

LIONS DENN GRAND OPENING: DECEMBER 2024



Dana A. Draa, Director of Blind Programs and Outreach speaks at the grand opening of the LionsDENN in December 2024





Through LionsHEART, Lions Services is advancing whole person wellness with innovative, accessible solutions that support both physical and mental health for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Recognizing that 21% of people with vision loss also live with diabetes, Lions Services introduced the nation's first adaptive medical station designed specifically for individuals with vision loss. This groundbreaking resource removes barriers to care by enabling employees to independently manage chronic conditions using accessible health technologies, including audible glucometers, talking blood pressure monitors, accessible scales, and other adaptive tools. LionsHEART promotes independence, confidence, and long-term stability ensuring individuals have not only access to employment, but the support needed to thrive.

The need extends beyond physical health. 50.8% of individuals who are blind or low vision experience depression, compared to 21.3% of the non-vision impaired population, underscoring the profound emotional toll of vision loss. Through LionsHEART, we address this gap by fostering independence, confidence, and connection in the workplace. The desired outcome is not just improved health it is dignity, purpose, and the healing that comes from being truly seen.

Meet **WILLIE GOODSON**

Willie has been using the Adaptive Medical Station in the Lions HEART program every day for the past two years.

"It has truly changed my life. Having a private, accessible space to manage my health has made daily routines easier and more manageable. I use it to check my blood sugar levels, apply prescription eye drops to help preserve the limited vision I have, and administer my insulin. Thanks to the support and health education provided by the Lions HEART program, I've been able to lower my A1C, improve my eating habits, and lose over 100 pounds. It's even motivated me to start working out regularly."

DID YOU KNOW? People with vision loss are 3x more likely to have diabetes than their sighted peers.





The “Charlotte Braille Trail: Bridging Histories through Braille and Art on the Cross Charlotte Trail” project is a transformative initiative that directly addresses the need for more inclusive public spaces in Charlotte. By eliminating barriers to arts and culture participation it is creating a model for enhancing accessibility across the city and can be replicated in other areas. The project uniquely focuses on a critical gap in cultural access for individuals with disabilities and gives them a celebratory space to build towards additional inclusivity.

The Braille Trail is sponsored in part by:



Lions Services Inc is supported, in part, by the Infusion Fund and its generous donors.



Infusion Fund
A Partnership for Arts + Culture

**FOUNDATION FOR
THE CAROLINAS**

ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS



Lions Services is active in the community to advocate for the needs to blind individuals and spread awareness about what we do. Pictured: (left top) CEO Philip Murph meets with North Carolina Labor Commissioner Luke Farley, (right top) Ambassador Eric Strong represents LSI at Duke Energy's Power of Giving Fair, (bottom) LSI employees advocate for better, more equitable transportation options.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

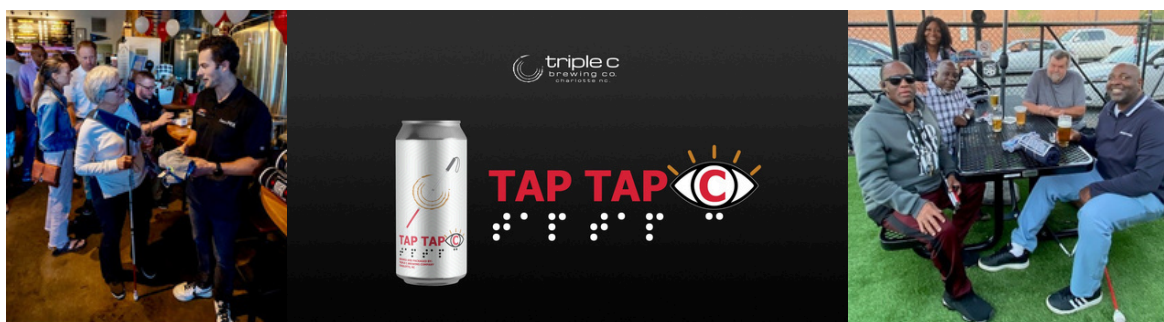
2nd Annual Braille Trail Walk for Independence

The Walk was held on Saturday, October 5, 2024, at the Eastway Regional Recreation Center. Thank you to everyone who came out to our 2nd Annual Walk For Blind Independence on Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024. It was a beautiful day, and we had a wonderful time! Over 200 participants joined to support the cause on beautiful, paved nature trails. Together, we raised \$32,000, thanks to the generous support of our Sponsors, donations, fundraising efforts, registrations for the walk, and wonderful volunteers.



Tap Tap C Beer Release

On October 10th, we celebrated White Cane Awareness Day with an Exclusive Launch Party at Triple C Brewing Company to highlight the beer release of Tap Tap C, we had a wonderful time with everyone that joined us! Triple C Brewing Company will be selling the Tap Tap C beer during the entire month of October. We had over 100 participants join to support the cause. A % of the sales will go towards Lions Services to support people who are blind and visually impaired live an independent life.



Xfinity Races with Connor Mosack

NASCAR Xfinity Connor Mosack proudly sported the Lions Services logo on his car. On Saturday, October 12, 2024, some of our Lions Services employees attended the NASCAR Xfinity Drive for the Cure 250, presented by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of NC, to cheer on Connor Mosack! Racing for JR Motorsports in the #88 car, Connor proudly sported the Lions Services logo on the back panel. It was an exciting day, and we were thrilled to support him as part of our ongoing mission to raise awareness for the blind and visually impaired community.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Game Night with Metrolina Association for the Blind

We teamed up with Metrolina Association for the Blind for two game nights featuring fun adaptive board games, and great fellowship!



Breakfast in the Dark

May's Breakfast in the Dark event, sponsored by A.E. Brown Associates was a great success. 25 guests gathered in our conference room for a blindfolded breakfast experience where they got to hear from people with vision loss and then tour our facility. Keep an eye on our website and social media to join us for the next one!





Lions Services celebrates 90 years of empowering the blind and low vision community through meaningful employment opportunities!



DONATE TODAY

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