



Dallas Lighthouse
for the Blind
focus on opportunity

For Immediate Release

Contact: Maria MacMullin

mmacmullin@dallaslighthouse.org

(214) 420-6574

Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind launches Aira - new assistive technology that promotes independence and employment for people who are blind.

DALLAS (February 22, 2018) – Leadership at the [Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind \(DLB\)](#), a leading non-profit employing and providing resources for visually impaired individuals, today announced it is now offering [Aira technology](#) – or “live” visual assistance via smart glasses – to both the organization’s employees and the seeing impaired community-at-large who visit the facility. The Dallas Lighthouse will be the first of 61 lighthouses for the blind in the country to utilize the technology.

Aira, pronounced EYE-Rah, is an assistive technology that connects people who are blind with a network of certified, live agents via wearable smart glasses and a smartphone app. The technology includes an augmented reality dashboard, accompanied by real-time video, allowing agents to be the source of visual cues for a user (AKA Explorer) on-demand. Agents, serving as visual interpreters, help Explorers accomplish a wide range of daily tasks and activities –such as reading, shopping, social interactions, and job seeking.

As part of the Aira Employer Network, the new partnership with the Dallas Lighthouse enables Aira Explorers to have unlimited access to the Aira service at any of their three facilities.

“Together Aira and the Dallas Lighthouse will be able to improve mobility, independence and even job productivity for people who are blind,” says Hugh McElroy, CEO of the Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind. “Having Aira enabled at all three Dallas Lighthouse locations literally puts us on the map as a premier employer for people who are blind as well as a provider of cutting edge assistive technology.”

McElroy adds that with more than 100 blind or visually impaired employees working in the Dallas Lighthouse textiles and manufacturing programs, Aira provides an extra pair of eyes that can make the difference when sewing a straight stitch or creating a perfect fold, for example.

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As smart cities continue to evolve, Aira Networks will expand to more locations, including workplaces, such as the Dallas Lighthouse, as well as schools, and transportation hubs.

"More than 25% of Aira sessions are work-related tasks. In the workplace, it's all about employee efficiency, and having access to the tools and technologies that increase efficiency and reduce uncertainty is the secret sauce for successful employers," said Suman Kanuganti, CEO of Aira. "The Dallas Lighthouse has always stood for expanding work opportunities for people who are blind or low vision, and we are truly proud to call them part of the Aira Employer Network."

"Thanks to the generous support of a private donor," says McElroy, "we are able to include Aira in our service line for both employees and the community. With agents across the country, Aira is making us better and expanding our reach as an organization, bringing new people to our doorstep. And we exist to serve them."

For more information about Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind visit DallasLighthouse.org.

About Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind

Founded in 1931, Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind, the leading North Texas nonprofit employing and providing resources for visually impaired individuals, focuses on improving and enhancing the lives and opportunities of individuals in North Texas affected by blindness, and currently serves 11 counties with more than 150,000 blind and visually impaired people. Our guiding principle is the belief that with knowledge, training and motivation, people with visual impairments can succeed and thrive in any workplace, live productive and meaningful lives, and be important contributors to their communities. For more information, visit www.dallaslighthouse.org.

About AIRA

Aira is AI + AR for the blind. Aira combines the power of Artificial Intelligence and Augmented Reality with wearable technologies, plus the interaction of its network of trained remote human assistants, to provide the 300 million blind and low vision people around the globe immediate access to information and assistance. Aira's technology not only greatly enhances independence and mobility for those with vision loss, but also forms the basis of its endeavor to create smart cities that are accessible for all. Learn more at aira.io.

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