



**Second Sense**  
Beyond vision loss

*Because of you...* Chris learns braille, pg 1

Sumaya finds her passion, pg 2

Madhu and Anil's team approach, pg 4

Fall 2018

# Perspectives

## Chris Makes Learning Braille a Family Project



*Chris loves learning braille and Polly loves teaching it -- together they make quite a team!*

Chris was born with low vision. As a child with special needs, he received lots of support during his school years. Chris could read print and learned sign language to aid in communicating with others.

Then, Chris lost all his vision as an adult. He turned to his dad for answers. When Larry couldn't answer, Chris went to church. He told his dad, "God said it was going to be okay." And he never looked back.

But, as an adult the support was harder to find. His father, Larry, had to learn to advocate for Chris. Like any father, Larry wants to make sure Chris has a quality life.

"Chris loves to learn," Larry proudly shared. "He always want to improve and get better." So, when a friend gave him a phone with braille on the numbers, Chris wanted to

learn braille.

Larry put together a list of organizations to call. And one by one, he was turned away. As soon as they found out that Chris had special needs, they said they couldn't teach him braille.

Then Larry called Second Sense and talked to Polly.

Because of your generous support, Polly is able to work individually with each client to address any unique needs they have.

And she knew working with Chris would stretch her teaching muscles — making her a better instructor.

So, Chris is coming in every week to learn braille. And, his dad joins him. They are learning together, doing their homework together and working on the lessons together.

Chris says this is one of the things he likes best about braille class, learning with his dad.

*continued on page 3 >>*

**Second Sense uses your donation wisely. See how on page 3.**

Walking out their door. Jotting down a phone number. Sending an email.

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## Sumaya Found Her Passion



*Sumaya volunteers as a technology tutor in our open computer classroom. She brings special skills on braille notetakers to our clients.*

Sumaya came to Second Sense to work as a volunteer. Because of you, she got so much more.

“It felt so good to know I could help, that people could learn from me. I found that it comes naturally to me. And, I feel passionate about it.”

“I couldn’t believe it was a career choice. Knowing that, gave me direction.”

Sumaya will start at Northeastern University earning her bachelors in January. From there she plans to attend NIU to earn a masters degree in Vision Rehabilitation.

“I would like to work with teens. Middle school is tough

enough — everyone is trying to find out who they are and where they fit in. It is so much harder when you are blind, because you often don’t fit in.”

Sumaya has taken advantage of our training while she volunteers. She completed our 1Touch® self-defense class to boost her confidence when traveling alone.

She is also starting mobility training. Sumaya already has solid cane and travel skills. But, she would like training to orient herself to her new college campus. This training will make sure she gets across campus safely and on time for all her classes.

“Every day I am here I learn something new. I never leave without learning something.”

“Meeting my fellow technology tutors Jose and Marv has been a wonderful experience. I love finding out about all the new technology.”

“Second Sense is the best organization I have been to. It is so comfortable, so genuine. I feel welcome every time I walk through the door.” ●

Finding a job. Living an active, independent life. Because of you.

## Because of You — So far this year:

**186** clients learned to use technology

**80** seniors received in-home technology training

**122** clients are using smart phones as tools of independence



**84** adults learned to travel safely with a white cane

**30** adults learned the 1Touch® self-defense technique

**100%** use their mobility skills in their daily lives



**121**

Seniors received training in their own homes to cook, clean, organize, track appointments and complete other daily chores



**446**

people learned the skills they need to live independent lives — active and engaged in their families and communities

## Chris

*continued from page 1*

*"I like learning braille with Polly."*

*~ Chris*

When Polly and Larry talked about the goal for Chris, they decided to focus on using braille in an activity, like playing cards.

This would give Chris a sense of accomplishment, a new skill to be proud of, and a new way to interact with others.

To encourage this idea and keep learning fun, Polly developed a game to use during class. She uses a basketball that has bells inside so Chris can hear it coming. She, Chris and Larry sit around a table and roll the ball to each other. The person rolling the ball calls out

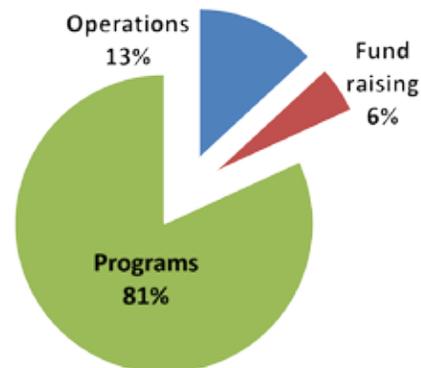
a letter of the alphabet. The person who catches the ball has to call out the braille dots that make up that letter.

Chris especially enjoyed when his dad got the answer wrong and he could correct him.

Both Chris and Polly are finding this training rewarding.

"From a teaching aspect, it has been so much fun. Chris is so unique and motivated to learn. I am finding that the activities I develop for him could be adapted to use with my other students." ●

## How Your Donations are Wisely Used:



## Madhu and Anil Take a Team Approach



*Madhu and Anil are working together to make sure they get as much as they can out of the training.*

Madhu has been losing her vision slowly for over 20 years.

“I always knew I had a deteriorating condition, but didn’t know the path it would take.”

Madhu feels blessed that she was able to raise her two daughters without too much impact from vision loss. But now, she is finding it’s having a greater impact on her daily life.

Years ago, Madhu volunteered at Second Sense. So it was natural for her to call

and see if we knew where she could get help.

Because of your support, we added in-home training for adults 55 and older two years ago. Training that includes mobility and daily living skills. Just the kind of training Madhu wants!

“I had my own way of doing things, of getting by. But, what Cody and Rachael teach me is so much better.”

“These are all simple things. Cody is teaching me to use my

iPhone more efficiently. Rachael is teaching me and Anil to travel more gracefully as a team.”

“I was having trouble getting in the car. Anil would hold the door open, but I didn’t know which way the car was facing. So, I didn’t know whether to put my right or left leg in.”

“Rachael gave us a simple solution. She suggested that Anil help me find the handle and let me open the door. That way, I will know which way the car is facing and which way to get in. So simple!”

“There are also some things I am not quite using yet. Rachael is teaching me to go up and down the stairs using the cane. I am using a blindfold, because if you are seeing, you are not really absorbing it all.”

“But, I am not quite ready to use the cane in public. It is a little bit ego, but more that I don’t want anyone to pity me.”

“Anil is taking notes during training. We can use those when I am ready.”

“I know it is a journey, a personal journey. And I will get there. Cody and Rachael don’t rush you at all, they are extremely patient.”

“Both are amazing. You feel their sincerity and integrity. It is not just a job for them.” ●