



Second Sense
Beyond vision loss

Because of you... Iwona explores her options, pg 1 | , pg 2

Rosa travels on her own, pg 4

Summer 2018

Perspectives

Iwona Is Newly Blind, Again

"This is the 5th time I have gone blind."



Iwona is completing computer classes in August and will start on her next goal.

"I had vision until last October," Iwona explains.

"My vision has gone up and down. I have surgeries and can see again. My last surgery was in 2008 — I could see for nine years. But, then I had a very bad infection and now I am blind."

Iwona is from Poland. She has spent much of her time living and working within the Polish community here in Chicago. With her latest vision loss, Iwona decided she needed to find help outside her community, outside her comfort zone.

"Coming to Second Sense has been a big experience. For me, it is new to be with a group of people who understand. It is so nice to listen to them tell their stories and talk about their struggles."

Iwona started computer training in May, coming faithfully to class three days each week. She is "doing very well in class," David, our computer instructor reports. "She picks up skills quickly and is not afraid to ask questions. Iwona's confidence has grown by leaps and bounds."

"My English is not that good," Iwona shares. "But, I have improved a lot in the last two years. Learning the computer is like learning a new language. So I find it easier to operate the computer in English and not think about Polish."

Iwona knows she can use her new skills to find information on the Internet — something that would have helped her when she was looking for resources

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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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Teaching Seniors Skills They Choose



Roy uses his phone independently.

“I was ready to give my phone back. But now, with Cody’s help, I’m not afraid of it any more.”

Roy wasn’t looking for intensive vision rehabilitation. He didn’t want mobility training. He wasn’t interested in learning to use a computer. He just wanted to use his new phone.

When his old phone stopped working, Roy was told it couldn’t be fixed. It was too

old. So Roy got a smart phone. He tried to use it, but the touch screen was just too hard for him to see.

After a couple of lessons with Cody, Roy is now able to use the phone independently. He is even using some of the apps.

“I use the one that gives directions to help me find where I am going. And the one that tells me what restaurants are around. I like to eat!”

Roy is just one of 298 seniors Cody has worked with in the last year. Each client decides what their goals are and where they need training most.

Clients who focus on one skill at a time are often less anxious and gain confidence more quickly.

And, once that first skill is mastered they are eager to learn what else they can do! ●

298 Seniors Received In-Home Training in the Last 12 Months

274

seniors learned daily living skills



52

seniors can travel safely and independently



120

seniors now use technology in their daily lives



298

seniors are more confident, less depressed and living more independently

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



Iwona and her classmates, from left to right: Calvin, Iwona, Howard, Charlotte, Margaret and Michael.

Iwona

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“You don’t know me, but you have made a big difference in my life.”

~ Iwona

for vision loss. “No one in my community knew where I could get help. I had to do all the research myself. It took me a long time, but I just kept going.”

“I am doing this to improve myself. Even though I lost my vision, I still can do the things I used to do. I don’t have to sit at home and cry, ‘Why did this happen to me?’ I can go ahead with my life.”

Iwona’s classmates are encouraging her to use her new skills to help others in community. “I am sure there are more Polish people who

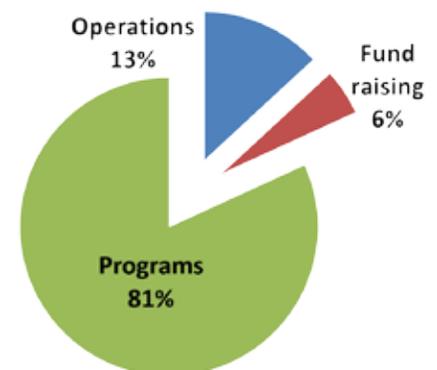
have vision loss and don’t know where to turn. I wish I could help them,” Iwona explains.

Finding employment is also a goal. “If someone will give me a chance, I know I can push myself to learn the job.”

“I appreciate all the people who support Second Sense. You don’t know me, but you have made a big difference in my life. All the programs you make possible have given me the skills and knowledge to improve myself and increase my independence.” ●

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Now, your donation does even more! A foundation is matching all new and increased donations up to \$50,000 — dollar for dollar. Double your gift and double the impact.



Nothing Can Stop Rosa Now!



Rosa walks confidently down the busy Chicago sidewalk outside our office while Rachael watches her technique.

Rosa has a new companion that goes everywhere she goes — her white cane.

She calls her cane “novio,” or “boyfriend” in Spanish.

Rosa worked with Rachael, our mobility instructor, to learn to use her cane to travel independently. She also learned to use her other senses to interpret all the other clues the

environment she travels in gives her to help find her destination. ***And get there safely.***

Rachael, who is fluent in Spanish, is able to provide this vital training to our Spanish-speaking clients in their native tongue. This can make the learning process less stressful. And, less stress is important when you are teaching someone to cross major intersections

when they can't see the cars.

Rosa and Rachael worked together for 21 hours learning how to hold the cane, sweep the cane in an arc and match the cane movement to Rosa's stride. Rosa learned to walk in a straight line, determine where curbs and crosswalks are, and listen for traffic patterns. She learned to cross streets safely and to take public transit.

Now, Rosa is walking to the grocery store to shop for her family. She asks for assistance to find the items she needs — all without being dependent on someone being available to give her a ride.

She is taking the bus again to get where she want to go. She even came downtown alone for the first time in years!

Rosa and Rachael are excited about their next collaboration — a support group for Spanish-speaking people with vision loss. Second Sense will launch this in November to reach people who are not being served. People who are sitting at home, who don't know about all the training available to them.

Training you make possible.
Lives you will change. ●

Check out Angela's story of how she fell of the 'L' platform and why she went back. Go to our website, second-sense.org, and click on our blog: *Second Opinions*.