



# Perspectives

## How Technology and Chance Break Down a Language Barrier



*Theodore uses his new mobility skills to exit the elevator safely.*

Theodore was born in Benin, a country in West Africa. It is one of the countries where the vodun religion, or “voodoo,” originated.

When we asked Theodore what caused his blindness, he replied, “Inside I do not feel like a blind person.” He strongly believes that his blindness was caused by witchcraft and that some day God will give him his sight back.

We don’t believe there should be any barriers to our clients receiving the training

they need. Not religion, income, sexual orientation or race.

Theodore presented a new barrier. His native language is French and he spoke little English. Certainly not enough to learn complex skills like mobility and technology.

Your support allowed us to chip away at this barrier one step at a time.

Rachael speaks Spanish and has been teaching mobility skills to several Spanish-speaking clients. But, French brought a new challenge. She determined that using a translation app on her iPhone would allow her to teach Theodore mobility.

“I was pleased with the cane training. I can now move myself from one place to another,” Theodore reported.

Polly brings the chance to Theodore’s story. Polly speaks French and worked with Theodore on his communication skills.

They started with braille, but Theodore soon realized that would not help him in the way he wanted.

Theodore wants to work. He “knows that people can get work using a computer.”

Theodore worked at a cigarette import company for 20 years in Benin. Then, a law was passed that outlawed the sale of

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**Second Sense uses your donations wisely. See what we accomplished on page 3.**

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

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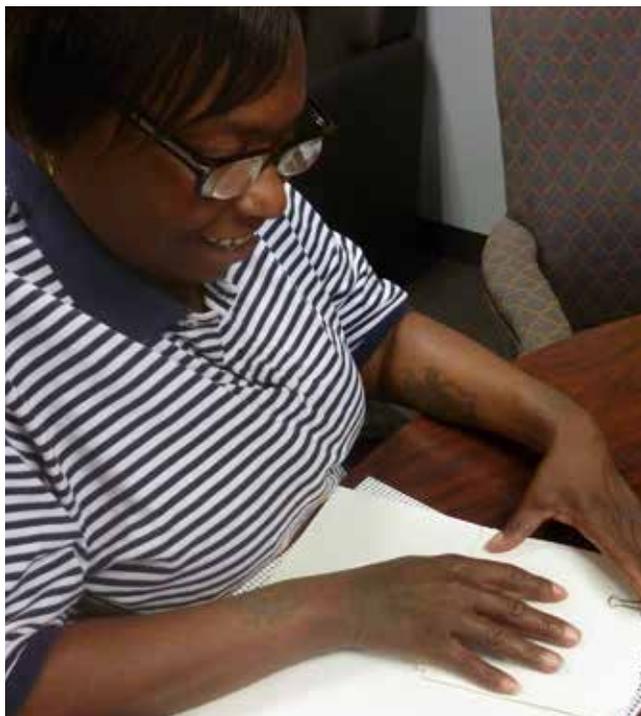
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## Reading Braille Requires the Right Touch



*Mandy has a breakthrough in her braille lesson. "I was able to feel each letter individually. The way Polly has showed me to move across the page makes such a difference!"*

Mandy first noticed problems with her vision when she turned 21.

"I was told I had terrible eyes. Then after my dad died, my eyes turned bright red for months on end."

"I was in my third year of college. I still went to class every day. It was a great struggle."

Mandy was diagnosed with bilateral uveitis. With shots in my eyes, Mandy says, "I was able to maintain my vision until five years ago. Then my vision started to decrease at an accelerated rate."

Mandy worked as a rehabilitation counselor and is current in school full time seeking a Masters degree.

"Honestly, I like working." But, her vision loss was interfering with her ability to perform her job.

She came to Second Sense to learn to use technology with speech. She completed our training with outstanding success.

Mandy had been getting braille lessons for a year through another service provider. But, she didn't feel she was progressing. So she decided to try lessons at Second Sense with Polly.

"I didn't want to give up on braille. What if one day I wake up and cannot see anything?"

"My last instructor taught me to scrub each letter — it just didn't work. Now I just go across the page, and I can feel the shape of the letter!"

"The way Polly teaches braille — her patience, the tips she gives — makes all the difference." ●

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

## Because of You — In 2018:

**186** clients learned to use technology

and

**77%** use it every day



**89** 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

Clients report using tech in many different ways in their daily lives, from work to school, shopping online to communicating by email, and from online banking to managing medications



**184**

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



**511**

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

## Language Barrier

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***Theodore lost his vision "two years and four months ago. If I had stayed in Benin, there would have been no services."***

cigarettes. He lost his job and shortly thereafter, his vision.

If you can't see the computer screen, a mouse is useless. Instead all the commands are done with the keyboard. This requires solid keyboarding skills.

So, our clients start with a typing tutorial to gain these skills. But, our tutorial is in English.

Polly did some research and found a typing tutorial in French that Theodore could use to learn the keyboard.

To break down the language barrier further, Polly and Rachael welcomed the man who is teaching Theodore English to attend the training sessions. This is giving him a foundation in the skills Theodore is learning so he can teach Theodore the terminology in English.

All of this training is going to help Theodore provide support for his wife, 9 year-old daughter and 14 year-old son.

Your support gives us this flexibility to not only serve

anyone who walks through our door, but to work with them to make sure the training we provide is the training they need to reach their goals. ●

# You Helped Rose Choose to Own Her Destiny



out my phone, my shoulders no longer slumped. I felt like I grew two inches.”

Rose learned how to sew with Polly. “Sewing is therapeutic. When you have low vision, there are lots of things you can still do.”

Rose also wanted to learn to use a computer.

“David taught me how to use ZoomText. This allowed me to keep my job.

“David made me accept that I was the owner of my own destiny. I like to write. The first personal thing I wrote at the computer was an obituary for my mom.

“Now I follow my passion. I write skits. I work part-time at a grammar school, working with kids performing the skits I write.

“I love what I do. Lots of the kids have a disability and performing skits teaches them to make eye contact and builds their confidence.

“You have to trust someone to get here. It is very scary.

“Second Sense teaches you the skills that last you a lifetime. They help you stay in the world with the rest of the people. Make you fit in.” ●

*“I am humble in every way. I refuse to give up who I am.”*

~ Rose

Rose was a social worker. She was used to helping others, not seeking help for herself.

“One day when I was sitting in my office I noticed my vision wasn’t as good. I didn’t tell anyone — I just wanted to keep doing my job.

“I went to see Dr. Tracy Matchinski, a low vision optometrist. She told me about the state services for people with vision loss.

“My state counselor gave me two choices. The state training

center or Second Sense. I immediately saw Second Sense as a place I could grow.”

Rose started working with Cody. “He did a thorough assessment. He made sure he understood me, my needs, my fears and my goals.

“I explained that I felt vulnerable because I could no longer operate my phone. I couldn’t even call for help if I needed it.

“Cody made my phone work for me. The next time I pulled