



Second Sense
Beyond vision loss

Because of you... Mary-Anne chooses her path, pg 1

Angie tackles sewing, pg 2

Pierre prepares for the LSAT, pg 4

Summer 2019

Perspectives

Every Client Creates Their Own Path to Independence



Mary-Anne is learning a wide range of skills to prepare herself to return to the workforce.

Mary-Anne has a degree in biology. She has done high level research and headed quality assurance for a national corporation.

When her most recent position was eliminated, she assumed she would just have to find another job. It was something she had done before.

One month later she lost the sight in her right eye. Glaucoma, something she didn't even know she had.

Then it struck again, taking the vision in her left eye just four months later.

The financial burden of being out of work overwhelmed her for quite a while. She had to work through the red tape to qualify for Social Security Disability Insurance.

A few years went by before Mary-Anne sought out help to regain her independence.

This is a common thread that runs through many of our clients' stories. They don't know about vision rehabilitation training, so they don't seek it out. **They assume blindness brings dependence, so they accept it.**

Until they don't. Something — or someone — awakens a need to regain their independence. To rediscover a sense of who they are and who they are meant to be.

For Mary-Anne, a low vision specialist started her on a new path. It was the first time she heard about vision rehabilitation and the first time anyone gave her resources that could help.

The list of resources included Second Sense. She came to us knowing she wanted to be more independent, to get back to work. But, she didn't know the path that would take her there.

"I found Second Sense to be spectacular. **All the staff talk to me, not at me.** The training is all hands-on. Everyone is very encouraging. It has made a huge difference in

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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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Crossing State Lines to Learn a New Skill



Angie spent her first lessons getting used to the feel of the foot pedal, sewing a simple seam and learning to thread the sewing machine.

“It all started when my daughter showed me a rip in her new backpack,” Angie explained. “It was a gift from her dad. And, I thought, if only I could use a sewing machine this would be simple to fix.”

Angie lives in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Getting to training near her is difficult and would take a really long time with public transit.

Since she previously lived in Chicago, **she felt comfortable coming here on the train.** So she did some research, called Second Sense, and a few weeks later came down for her first sewing lesson.

Angie was so excited to have the opportunity to learn this skill, she went out and

purchased a new sewing machine so she could get to work right away!

So far, she’s learned the basics. How to thread the machine was one of the first steps. This can be quite complicated even when you can see all the hooks and levers you have to snake the thread through!

Now she is learning to control the foot pedal. Angie says she has “a bit of a lead foot,” so she has to focus on finding a speed she is comfortable with and that allows her to maintain control of the fabric and stitching. And keeps her fingers safe.

Soon she will reach her goal of sewing independently! ●

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

Your Impact on Clients' Lives

97 clients received *individual* tech training

100% use it every day



Clients report using tech many ways in their daily lives: shopping and banking online, communicating by email and text, getting directions, and managing appointments

68 adults received *individual* mobility training



clients achieved **95%** of their goals

100% use their mobility skills in their daily lives



204

Clients received *individual* training in their homes and our office to cook, clean, organize, track appointments and complete other daily tasks

These clients learned to safely and efficiently perform

89%

of the skills they set as goals

Clients served and outcomes from 2018

Path to Independence

continued from page 1

"All the staff talk to me, not at me. The training is all hands-on. Everyone is very encouraging. It has made a huge difference in how I feel."

how I feel."

Mary Anne started with computer training and basic sewing lessons. She joined our sewing class and quickly picked up the skills. She brought in a favorite riding jacket that had a small rip in it. Mary-Anne was able to patch it up. Instant confidence boost!

Learning to use computers without vision is a skill Mary-Anne will need to find employment.

She started by learning to use the keyboard by touch. She is already on lesson 26, with 19 more to go.

Once complete, she will begin training to use a screen-reading program, operating the computer with audio cues and keystrokes.

When sewing class ended, Mary-Anne began working with our technology instructor to **learn to use her iPhone with Voiceover**, Apple's built-in accessibility option. She has already learned the gestures and will focus on using email next and then move on to the apps.

Learning all of this wasn't enough. When Mary-Anne mentioned that she wasn't an auditory learner, we asked if

she was interested in learning braille.

She decided to give it a try.

Six months later, she has learned all the letters and is now working on contractions (single braille cells that represent common words and letter combinations, like "er," "ing" and "you").

This learning path is unique to Mary-Anne. Others choose different goals and learn different skills. **Thanks to your support, we can tailor our training to each client's unique needs.** ●

Making Connections



*"The law gives you a way to advocate for vulnerable people."
~ Pierre*

Pierre has wanted to be a lawyer since he was a teenager. He remembers reading about Thurgood Marshall and F. Lee Bailey.

"I thought it would be a good profession for me. The law can lead to the resolution of conflict. It governs behavior. The law gives you a way to advocate for vulnerable people."

But, Pierre was not sure he could take the LSAT, make it through law school and be a successful lawyer as a blind man.

Because your support allows us to work individually with each client, we heard Pierre's concerns.

We were able to connect him with a lawyer who is totally blind, like Pierre. Michael, who is also a Second Sense client, recently graduated from law school and just passed the bar exam.

Pierre felt more confident of achieving his goal after talking with Michael. "He told me that they now permit blind people to use a computer when they take the LSAT. There was a class

action law suit that argued blind people were at a disadvantage when taking the logic portion of the test.

"Sighted people could draw charts and use them to solve the complex problems. But, blind people couldn't.

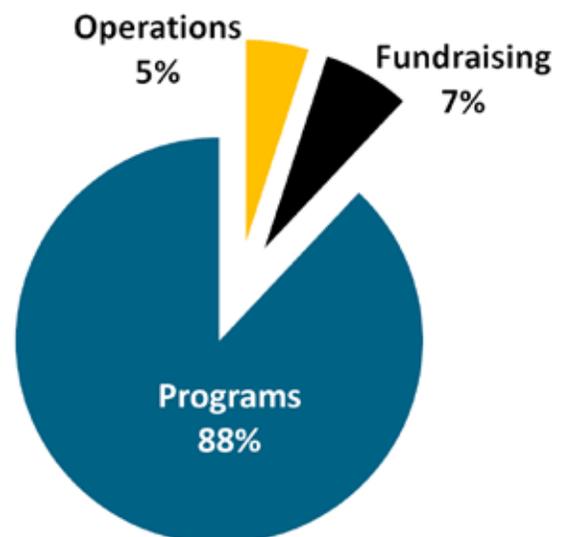
"He told me he used Excel to track, sort and compare the information to solve these problems."

So, Pierre is continuing his computer training with an additional focus on Excel.

He recently started braille instruction to improve his speed when reading and writing braille.

"My grandfather always said, 'If you write something down, it will make it harder to forget.'" **Pierre wants to make sure he has all the tools he needs to succeed in school and his career.** ●

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Figures from our Fiscal Year 2018 audit