

THANK YOU!

Each of us wants to be able to do things for ourselves, make our own choices, and set our own goals. We want to be in charge of our lives. We want to maintain a positive, hopeful outlook. And when we are connected to our families and communities, everyone benefits. **Thanks to donors like you**, The Iris Network is able to help.



Scan QR Code with your smartphone & make a gift today!

STAY CONNECTED



Stay updated on our calendar of events at theiris.org/news-events



Follow and like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/TheIrisNetwork](https://www.facebook.com/TheIrisNetwork)

We acknowledge with gratitude the sponsorship of a portion of the cost of production and distribution of this newsletter by Maine's Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

VIOLA continued from page 1

Viola also experienced memory loss, which made it difficult for her to remember what she was learning. **Thanks to you, The Iris Network was there for Viola and her family.**

"The Iris Network just kept trying!" Janice beams.

Janice and Viola tested many recommendations from The Iris Network. Some were successful, like a pair of glare-reducing glasses. Others were "great ideas, but didn't necessarily work for my mother's unique situation," Janice notes. **"Most importantly, Iris didn't give up. They kept a constant flow of new tools we could try to improve my mom's life."**

It was **technique training** that ultimately helped Viola the most. "The Iris Network gave us a PowerPoint presentation that really explained the effects of a stroke on vision. Together we learned to use simple flashcards and repetition.

“

My mother will be able to watch the birds again! It's all thanks to you and The Iris Network.

Janice Reynolds

It taught not only my mother, but myself and my siblings how to focus our vision on one specific thing," Janice recalls.

"My mother will be able to watch the birds again! It's all thanks to you and The Iris Network. I would recommend them to anyone—I only wish we'd found them sooner!"

Donors like you make it possible for The Iris Network to adapt to every individual with visual impairment—and to spread the word!

As Janice notes, "people don't realize that The Iris Network is out there, and that you don't have to live with the frustration of vision loss!"

IMPACT REPORT | SPRING 2019

THANKS TO YOU...



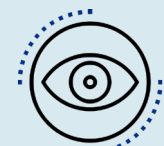
848
total people served in Fiscal Year 2018



31
graduates of the Rehabilitation Center



39
people served through Access Technology & Employment Services



601
people served through Vision Rehabilitation Services



35
residents provided with 24/7 supportive housing services at Iris Park Apartments



182
people helped at the Low Vision Clinic with 273 direct service hours for patients

You made all this possible and more at The Iris Network.

the **Iris network**
Vision with no limits.



Falmouth Lions Club Members Tony Hayes and others brave the elements parking cars to raise money for those with vision loss in our community! Read the full story on page 2

"You didn't give up on helping my mother!"

After her stroke, Viola Woodard's sudden vision loss made her unable to recognize her great grandchildren in photographs, or watch her beloved birds at the feeders.

"My mother loves birds, but by the time she got to the window and tried to focus, she just couldn't find them or see them," says Viola's daughter Janice Reynolds.



See **VIOLA** on page 4

the **Iris network**
WhiteCANE
WALK FOR INDEPENDENCE

SAVE THE DATE SATURDAY OCTOBER 12
WALK VOLUNTEER SPONSOR

Amber's Journey: From a client to the "dream job I never knew I always wanted!"

When a degenerative eye condition caused Amber Mooney's vision to considerably decline by age 25, she reached out to The Iris Network for help acclimating and finding a new job. Little did Amber know that before long she'd be back to Iris—this time as a staff member!

Recently Amber sat down with Lynda Adams, host of the *Living Life with Lynda Show* on 100.5 WLOB, to discuss her experiences with The Iris Network.

As a client, Amber was



so impressed with "all the angles" that Iris covered—from cooking, cleaning, and living at home, to safe navigation and walking with a white cane, to access technology for her job at an insurance company.

Six years ago, a job opened up at The Iris

Network and Amber jumped at the chance to become a Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (CVRT) and Manager of the Low Vision Center!

"It's the dream job I never knew I always wanted," Amber told Lynda. A number of staff at Iris are visually impaired themselves, so they truly understand what clients need.

She wants people to know that as a person with vision loss in Maine, "cases can always be reopened with changes. There

are always different adaptations and tools."

Programs that teach these essential adaptations—like the technology used to read or the skills needed to go back to work—are funded by the generosity of donors like you.

For the full interview and more about how your support helps The Iris Network improve the lives of our community members, head to successfulbalancedliving.com/listen.

Blind athletes awarded \$20,000 to participate in National Fitness Challenge

The National Fitness Challenge is an initiative founded by the United States Association of Blind Athletes and the parent Foundation of Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

The Iris Network is one of 17 organizations across the nation that is participating in the National Fitness Challenge, and is using grant funding to offer weekly exercise classes and sports and fitness



activities including yoga, snowshoeing, karate, and bowling that can maximize healthy lifestyles.

The various activities will be offered over the course of eight months to empower hundreds of visually impaired adults

residing at Iris Park Apartments to increase physical fitness levels and lead healthier lives.

Participants will have the opportunity to use a Fitbit to track their fitness goals and compare their progress to their peers and other participants nationwide. USABA provides the Fitbits, tracking software, t-shirts, prizes, etc. along with overall management of the grant program.

Lions Club roars in downtown Portland

If you've spotted any Lions by Hadlock Field, the William B. Troubh Ice Arena, and Fitzpatrick Stadium, no need to panic—these Lions are friendly!

The Falmouth Lions Club has been coordinating event parking in downtown Portland for two years now. **A whopping 75% of all money raised from parking fees is donated to The Iris Network!**

King Lion Marcus Therrien notes that among all the amazing work the Club does in the community, their focus has always been on helping the visually impaired. Partnering with The Iris Network was a no-brainer!

"We really enjoy it," Marcus says. "Rain or shine, we are doing it for people in our community. It's addictive. What better thing could we be doing when our number one goal is helping those with visual impairment?"

By breaking records and parking up to 201 cars at a single event, the Falmouth Lions are helping people with vision loss get the training, technology, and resources they need from The Iris Network to remain active members of our community.



PARKING VOLUNTEERS:

Tony Hayes (pictured above)	Bill Bennett
Dana Madison	John Winslow
Rick Lajoie	Bob Cheney
Diane Zglobicki	Paul Naseef
Margaret Schuler	Marcus Therrien
	... and others!



The more you do in the community, the more you want to do. When we're out parking cars, raising money for a good cause, it's easy to say, 'we aren't leaving until we fill this lot up one more time!'

Marcus Therrien

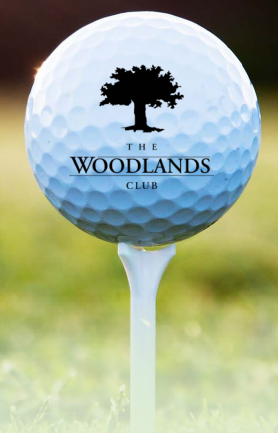
LEAVE YOUR LEGACY...

and give the gift of independence to generations to come.

Including The Iris Network in your planned giving strategy is an important opportunity to make a significant and lasting contribution to those coping with vision loss. To learn more about how you can benefit from a planned gift, please contact Regal Naseef, director of development at (207) 518-5016 or rnaseef@theiris.org.



Do you shop at Amazon.com? If you visit smile.amazon.com, you can designate The Iris Network to receive a contribution every time you make an eligible purchase, at no additional cost to you!



Maine's premier golf course presents

IRIS-LIONS CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monday, June 10
11 AM Shotgun Start

The Woodlands Club
Maine's Premier Golf Course
39 Woods Road, Falmouth

\$175 individuals
\$150 hole sponsorship

Tournament package includes
boxed lunch, cart & prizes



All proceeds benefit
the Iris network
Vision with no limits.

For more information to play or become a sponsor, contact Terri at (207) 518-5040 or ttomchak@theiris.org.