

Focus



Vision
Australia

Blindness. Low Vision. Opportunity.

150+
years of vision

Issue 1, 2020



Thank you!

Because of you, Australians
who are blind or have
low vision can live
their best lives.



Welcome to 2020!



Ron Hooton,
CEO Vision Australia

A new year means a new start, and what better way than to share with you some stories of achievement and inspiration that have been made possible thanks to your generous support.

It often seems that the youngest people make the biggest impact.

Like Luna and Willow, who have overcome so many challenges already and will need continued support to help them keep up with their peers. And for teenagers like Emmanuel, who has been getting ready to start high school and needed help to gain his independence and navigate the new environment.

Your support is changing lives and helping give kids and adults who are blind or have low vision the skills they need to be independent and live the life they choose.

I hope you enjoy reading more about how your donations are making such an incredible difference.

Thank you!
Ron Hooton, CEO

Luna's steps to independence

At just three years old, Little Luna has her whole life ahead of her. Thanks to your generosity, her life looks much brighter than initially anticipated.

Luna has low vision. When she was first diagnosed, her mum, Sarah, said the family feared for Luna's future. They wanted nothing more than to see their daughter shine. And now, thanks to your kindness, in just a short time she has received specialised support and is learning to read and use a white cane.

Luna will need ongoing specialised help in the future and your donations are helping ensure this little star has all the training and care she requires to reach all her milestones.

*Thank you for making
Luna's success possible.*



Emmanuel takes on high school



Emmanuel is truly incredible. Blind in one eye and with low vision in the other, he certainly is no stranger to challenges. He has grown up so much from the little boy who walked shyly through the doors of Vision Australia. And now, he's ready for his next big challenge – high school!

When Emmanuel was younger he found school a difficult environment. He felt left behind and left out.

Thanks to your support, Emmanuel, together with his therapists, has been working really hard for many months to prepare him to start at his new school.

This detailed preparation has involved weekly training with his orientation and mobility specialist, Nicole, to ensure he'll be able to find his way around his large new campus and catch the bus on his own.

For most teenagers this kind of independence is just part of growing up, but for Emmanuel it means so much more.

For teenagers like Emmanuel, it is crucial to ensure education is accessible. Your remarkable kindness has helped him come so far already. Thank you!



Thank You

for supporting people with blindness or low vision so they can live the lives they choose.

The school holidays were packed full of fun for Catherine and this group of clients who enjoyed a guided horse ride and learned horse husbandry.



Catherine was among a group of clients who took to horseback in Caringbah.



Emily hanging around at the Wollongong school holiday rock climbing day.

What a fantastic time everyone had learning to rock climb and scale to new heights! Kids aged from six to 14, including Emily, loved this fun and challenging activity under the guidance of experienced staff.

If you love food, tune into Food for Thought, a weekly Vision Australia Radio program created by foodie Joy Nuske, who is blind. The show shines a spotlight on the food industry. You'll hear recipes, restaurant reviews, interviews and more. Tune in for a yummy time!

Head to www.radio.visionaustralia.org/foodforthought



Liz with foodie Joy cooking up a storm.



Rhonda, Kelvin and Amanda enjoying the day!

This walking group arrived as strangers and left as firm friends. The group of seven had a wonderful experience in the unique landscape, walking the 10 km trek across the Five Lands to Terrigal Beach in challenging terrain that included steep hills, stairs, dirt tracks and soft sand.

A chess set, pot planter and speaker box are just some of the projects this group are creating under the guidance of talented woodworkers.



Jane's talent shows through her beautiful jewelry box.

It's because of your support that these opportunities to have fun, get fit, build new interests and live life to the fullest are possible. Every day, your incredible generosity helps make a difference in the lives of Australians with blindness or low vision.

Jane's story

Hi there. I'm Jane. I'm deafblind with low vision and profound deafness in one ear.

In 2007, the pressure in my left, and only functioning, eye destabilised to the point where I needed surgery. At the same time, I was also undergoing testing to determine the cause of my migraines. It was a terrifying period of my life and one steeped in grief when I learnt I would eventually lose my vision completely.

Because of your support, my glasses and cane have not held me back from achieving my career goals.

I can still see myself so clearly on my first day in my new role. Dressed in my best professional clothes, I marched with purpose through the station to my train, alongside hundreds of others who were similarly dressed, beaming to myself because finally I was one of them. I was finally taking my place in the workforce. I finally belonged somewhere.

The honest truth is that I was also terrified. I held that inside though and tried to exude an air of confidence.

My time in the Vision Australia Graduate Program has not only fortified my belief that I am able to take on new challenges and thrive, it has also unexpectedly solidified my life's purpose for advocacy.

I will forever be grateful to you for your support that has enabled that experience.



A legacy for the future

Sadly, I've come to appreciate what it means to lose your eyesight. I'm 89 now, and I've lost all sight in my right eye and half the eyesight in my left. The older I get, the more I value my independence - my freedom - and I'm sure others must feel the same. I would hate to lose it, and it's important to me to help others keep theirs.

Now that I'm older, it's natural to think about the future and how I want to leave things when I go.

The one thing that's given me the greatest joy in my life is giving, so to be able to help future generations after I'm gone, is important.

- Nola



Nola's legacy, and others like her, will change the future for people who are blind or have low vision.

If you're thinking about the future and how you can truly make a difference, one of the best ways to have an impact is to consider a special gift in your Will. If you'd like to find out more about including Vision Australia in your Will, please contact us on 02 9334 3371.

Yes! I would like to make a life-changing gift of:

\$35 \$50 \$100 My choice \$.....

- OR -

My payment method:

Please debit my credit card (details below)

Card type: Visa MasterCard AMEX Diners

Card no: _____/_____/_____/_____

Expiry: ____/____

Name on card:

Signature:

- OR -

Please find enclosed my cheque/money order payable to Vision Australia

My Details:

Title:

First name:

Surname:

Phone:

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Address:

Suburb:

State: Postcode:

Reference number (if known):

Please complete this coupon and return to the below address.

Send to Vision Australia Reply Paid 92038 KOORYONG VIC 3144, call 1800 42 20 77 or donate at www.visionaustralia.org.au/donate

Occasionally we allow like-minded organisations to contact our supporters. This helps us reach additional generous Australians willing to support our cause. If you do not wish to receive communications from other organisations, please cross this box .

Your donation will help fund the services Vision Australia offers, helping people who are blind or have low vision to live the life they choose.

Please read our privacy statement overleaf. If you do not wish to receive further information about the work Vision Australia does in the community, please call 1800 42 20 77.

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 **Vision Australia**
Blindness. Low Vision. Opportunity.

Thank you for making a difference.
Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

ABN 67 108 391 831



Unstoppable Willow

Willow is a bright, busy, little girl who lets nothing get in her way – not even low vision. In fact, she's unstoppable!

Willow is determined, independent and especially loves taking on new challenges!

Willow has just started Kindergarten. Many hours of support from her orientation and mobility specialist were required to prepare her for this exciting new experience. Her specialist worked with the school to make the environment safe. All poles, windows and stairs were marked with fluorescent tape to help Willow see them. She's also had to learn all about levels, staircases, the playground and play equipment so she could navigate them safely and with confidence.

It's your vital support that's helping provide Willow with the support she needs to take on every new challenge despite her eye condition.

Willow has a very good sense of humour! On her last birthday, she told her mum she wanted to dress like Rapunzel, get a pet lizard, grow her hair long and move into a castle.

While this list certainly poses a few challenges for her and mum, given Willow's unstoppable nature she might just get it all done. She's definitely one to watch.

Thank you for giving Willow the confidence to do all the things she loves.

Your support truly changes lives!



Transform someone's life!

\$35 can help towards orientation and mobility training so children can navigate their world safely and independently.

\$50 can help improve literacy and educational outcomes for children by providing the resources they need.

\$100 can help provide specialist teachers to lead vital early intervention services.

PRIVACY STATEMENT:

Vision Australia respects your privacy and embraces the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs). We obtained your personal information from you directly. When you return this form to us, we collect your personal information so we can process your donation, and contact you again with information about us and our related entities, our services, our fundraising campaigns, and how you can support us again in the future. We may contact you by email, mail or telephone, and you can opt-out at any time.

You don't have to provide us with your personal information; however without it we are limited in how we interact with you.

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For more information call 1800 42 20 77 or visit www.visionaustralia.org/get-involved/ways-to-help