

insights

Winter 2023

VisionCorps

News for donors and friends of VisionCorps

For more information on services for you or someone you know, please call 866-876-6550.

*Serving Adams, Chester, Lancaster,
Lebanon and York Counties*

STEPPING UP!

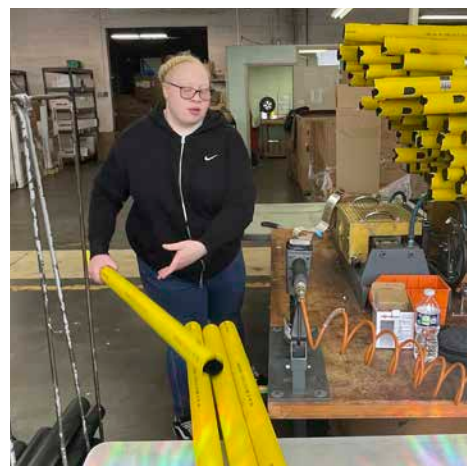
Thanks to the kind hearts of VisionCorps donors, local people who are blind or vision impaired have found a supportive work environment where they can thrive.

Eighteen-year-old Taleah Williams is set to graduate this spring, but she is already well on her way toward building the skills she will need to live independently as an adult. Taleah was born with oculocutaneous albinism (OCA) which affected her vision.

Like most teens, Taleah's introduction to employment was working for fast-food chains, but she hated it. Her vocational rehabilitation counselor suggested she apply for a paid internship through VisionCorps' Student Transition to Employment Preparation Program (STEP), and she did so.

"I took a tour of the Lancaster headquarters, and got to see the rehabilitation programs and meet the CEO," Taleah said. "It was kind of cool." Upon meeting CEO Dennis Steiner, she immediately asked if she could have a job at VisionCorps after her internship. He encouraged her to apply.

Any employer would welcome a worker with Taleah's attitude and enthusiasm. She used her internship to prove that her intentions were serious. "I'm not here to be on my phone all the time. That's not who I am," she said. "I want to be seen as a professional when I come to work." She began calling and calling to make sure she would be the one chosen to fill the next job opening. Her efforts paid off. "I just hit my 90-day-mark in December!" she exclaimed.



As soon as she gets out of her half-day of school, Taleah rides paratransit to her job in the manufacturing facility. "If they say, 'We need you over here today,' I'm there! I work on different lines, for example, removing stickers from cassette tapes so books can be recorded, or preparing traffic delineator posts – whatever contracts we have to fulfill. I really love the support and resources that VisionCorps offers to its employees. These are opportunities that aren't often available to people with disabilities or vision impairments. I'm so proud to work here."



244 N Queen St, Lancaster, PA 17603 • (717) 393-5894 • info@VisionCorps.net



VisionCorps, is a 501(c)(3) exempt organization. A copy of our financial statement is available upon request by contacting VisionCorps at 244 N Queen Street, Suite 301, Lancaster, PA 17603 or calling 1-717-205-4115. A copy of the official registration and financial information of VisionCorps may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Greetings,

We hope your 2023 is off to a great start and that you and your family had a good holiday season. Here at VisionCorps, we like to use the new year as a reminder to schedule your yearly eye exam if you have not yet done so! Annual eye exams are the best way to ensure you maintain your vision, and are the best chance at correcting any vision issues that may arise – even before you may notice your vision is impacted.



Did you know we have a program to pay for eye exams and basic eyeglass frames and lenses? We are grateful for our partnership with the Pennsylvania Vision Foundation who provides vouchers for this service. If you or someone you know is unable to afford an eye exam, please contact us by calling 866-876-8550 then press 1 (for rehabilitation services) to determine eligibility for this program. And, spread the word. We never want financial hardship to get in the way of eye health.

Speaking of the new year, if you make resolutions – do any of them include conquering a fear of heights?! Or getting more involved in the community in a unique way?! If so, please read our article in the newsletter about our signature annual fundraising event, the Eye Drop. This rappelling event is going on its fourth year and we are excited it continues to be successful and raise funds for the community.

Lastly, if you are involved in a club – whether it be social, service, church, etc. – and you are looking for speakers for this year, please keep VisionCorps in mind! We can tailor our presentation to meet the needs of your club and are available to speak in person or virtually. Call 717-205-4116 to schedule a speaker, or email info@visioncorps.net. You also can fill out a speaker request form on our website at www.visioncorps.net!

Thank you for your continued support of your friends and neighbors living with vision loss!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Megan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Megan Sofilka Tomscheck
VP | CDO

Winter Weather Request

When the weather turns and snow is covering the ground, please be mindful of clearing sidewalks and public thoroughfares to accommodate your neighbors living with vision loss. Navigating sidewalks can be especially challenging in the winter months through ice and snow, but if we all do our part to keep pathways clear it will make a big difference!

WHY I GIVE

GINA TOOTH

Atop the roof of the Lancaster Holiday Inn, the 2022 VisionCorps Eye Drop event participants got ready to rappel over the side. Volunteer Gina Tooth could sense their nervous energy while helping them buckle into their safety harnesses. Guiding each person over the edge, she leaned in close to say, “Thank you! What you are doing means everything to me and my son. He has a vision impairment.”

Gina’s son is 16 and is preparing to start his senior year of high school. He has low vision due to albinism and an underdeveloped optic nerve, and must protect his eyes and sensitive skin from the sun’s glare and harsh rays. “He is my only child and the love of my life. VisionCorps helped me understand his needs and advocate for him.” She describes herself as a mama bear in that regard.

“I come from a big family on Long Island. I moved to this area when my son was about 3, and we immediately connected with VisionCorps’ services,” Gina said. “The support has been amazing: daycare, preschool and afterschool programs, cooking and art classes, summer camps, and beep baseball games. It’s been wonderful. I’ve enjoyed meeting other parents and people with vision impairments. They’ve become like a second family to me.”



Caption

In 2021, Gina did her first Eye Drop rappel. “I’ve always been a bit of a daredevil; it’s in my blood. I take after my four brothers. I enjoy skiing, scuba diving, and really love cycling.” It brings her joy to support nonprofits through event activities such as relay races and bowl-a-thons. She is proud to have completed two 100-mile Leukemia Society cycling challenges in honor and in memory of friends with the disease. She’s also involved with the National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation (NOAH). “After doing the Eye Drop, I knew I wanted to get even more involved with VisionCorps. It was so much fun. When they invited me to join the Eye Drop Committee, I didn’t hesitate.”

In addition to her professional work at Kozloff Stoudt and the Warehouse Hotel, Gina finds volunteering her talents to VisionCorps has its own rewards. “There is the family you’re born into, and the family you create. Since my family is six hours away, my ‘Lancaster family’ includes my friends and co-workers and all the wonderful folks at VisionCorps. I hope to start a team and attract a sponsorship for this year’s Eye Drop fundraising event. I’m looking forward to having a new group of adventure-seekers and daredevils to join me on the roof!”

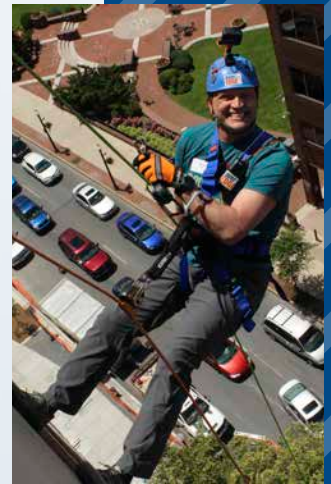
EYE DROP 2023: A Rappelling Event to Raise Funds for Visioncorps

On Friday, June 9, for the fourth time, VisionCorps will be hosting the Eye Drop Rappelling Event to raise funds for VisionCorps services. Every year, VisionCorps provides \$1.5 million worth of services to the community which is funded through donations – including those from the Eye Drop! There are many ways for the community to get involved. Please consider contributing your time, talent or treasure from the ways outlined below!

- **Rappel:** Looking for an adrenaline rush? Join the nearly 100 individuals committing to raise at least \$1000 for the opportunity to rappel 125' from the roof of Holiday Inn Lancaster! As a participant, you will be provided a personal webpage to share with friends and family who can donate to get you to your goal. We also offer team options – a great way to promote team spirit among your work or service club peers colleagues?! Use promo code INSIGHTS for FREE registration (a savings of \$50).
- **Volunteer:** We need many volunteers to help the event run smoothly! Most importantly, we need Ropes Volunteers. These volunteers help rappellers put on their gear, get them prepared to go over the edge on the roof, and assist them when they reach the ground. These positions require training on the afternoon of Thursday, June 8, and a full day of volunteering on Friday, June 9.
- **Sponsor:** We are looking for sponsors to offset the cost of coordinating the event so every dollar raised by rappellers goes to the mission. Sponsorships starting at \$250. Visit www.eyedrop2023.org to see our sponsorship brochure and consider how your business may want to get involved!
- **Donate:** visit to support them in reaching their goal! Every dollar goes to support your friends and neighbors living with vision loss, and by supporting rappellers you are helping them to fulfil their personal goals.

Lastly, be sure to follow VisionCorps on social media – especially Facebook – and share our posts to help promote the event! You never know might see your posts and be interested in getting involved.

If you have any questions about getting involved, please contact Angela Lauer by dialing 717-925-7101 or email ALauer@visioncorps.net. We hope to see you on the roof this June!



insights

News for donors and friends of VisionCorps

 @visioncorpspa  @visioncorps  @sabvipa

Insights is a publication of VisionCorps
Dennis Steiner, President

Questions?

Please contact **Megan Tomscheck**, VP & Chief Development Officer at **717-205-4115** or email megan@visioncorps.net

Please notify us if your contact information has changed.
717-393-5894 or email linda@visioncorps.net