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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HIRING FOR GOOD: LIGHTHOUSE EXECUTIVE MAKES CASE FOR UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF AN OVERLOOKED WORKFORCE**

ORLANDO, FL. (October 26, 2018) — During a recent TEDx Orlando Salon event, Lighthouse Central Florida/Lighthouse Works executive, Kyle Johnson, delivered an impassioned speech extolling the often overlooked virtues of hiring individuals who live with disabilities.

Through a series of personal anecdotes and citing compelling statistical data, Johnson, who serves as Vice President, Chief Sales & Marketing Officer at Lighthouse, challenged those in attendance to rethink their perceptions about what individuals, who live with disabilities, can bring to a workforce if given the opportunity and right accommodation.

Underscoring the theme of this year's National Disability Employment Awareness Month, "America's Workforce: Empowering All," Johnson focused on the growth and early successes of Lighthouse Works—the social enterprise nonprofit affiliated with the National Industries of the Blind, the nation's largest employment resource for people who are blind.

During his 14 minute address, Johnson illustrated the competitive advantage brought by qualified individuals who live with vision loss and are employed through the business lines at Lighthouse Works. These include a commercial contact center with an attrition rate well below industry standard; a logistics/supply division boasting a satisfaction rating of 100 percent since 2014 - its second year in full operation; a tech services division anchored by a software developer who is visually impaired, and most recently a contract close out division.

Watch the entire TEDx Talk here: <https://bit.ly/2ELNRfH>

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## **ABOUT LIGHTHOUSE WORKS**

Lighthouse Works is a social enterprise non-profit, which means its businesses exist to forward and fund our mission of living, learning and earning with vision loss. Through our wide range of businesses, we provide job training, employment and career opportunities to help advance people who are visually impaired. Lighthouse Works operates as a subsidiary of Lighthouse Central Florida—Central Florida's only private, non-profit agency offering a comprehensive range of services to people living with sight impairment in Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties. Established in 1976, Lighthouse Works has served generations of Floridians with comprehensive vision rehabilitation and employment services. Lighthouse Works is affiliated with the National Industries for the Blind, the nation's largest employment resource for people who are blind.

Additionally, Lighthouse Works operates in partnership with the AbilityOne Program to secure quality products and services to the federal government at fair market prices. To learn more, please visit [www.lighthouseworks.org](http://www.lighthouseworks.org).

## **ABOUT TEDx OrlandoSalon**

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TEDTalks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized (subject to certain rules and regulations).

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