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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **LIGHTHOUSE WORKS EARNS 2016 EMPLOYMENT GROWTH AWARD FROM NATIONAL INDUSTRIES FOR THE BLIND**

*Award Honors Success in Sustaining and Increasing Employment for People Who are Blind*

February 17, 2016 - ORLANDO, FL - Lighthouse Works, a subsidiary company of vision rehab agency, Lighthouse Central Florida, was recently honored by National Industries for the Blind (NIB), the nation's largest employment resource for people who are blind, with the 2015 Employment Growth Award. The award recognizes Lighthouse's efforts to increase employment retention, growth and upward mobility for people who are blind.

"At Lighthouse Works our mission is 'Empowerment through Employment', and it permeates everything that we do," said Lee Nasehi, President & CEO, Lighthouse Central Florida & Lighthouse Works. "Five years ago we set out to create competitive employment opportunities for the many working-aged blind and visually impaired adults throughout Central Florida; and drive real business, for real customers, and generate re-deployable net revenue to support and grow Lighthouse's critical, vision specific services in Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties."

Employment Growth Award recipients receive a cash payment from a fund created to recognize and encourage NIB associated nonprofit agencies that grow or sustain employment for people who are blind. Emphasis is also placed on efforts to increase upward mobility in the workplace and job placements.

Lighthouse Central Florida and Lighthouse Works together employ a total of 43 staff that are blind or visually impaired, out of 80 total employees.

In 2011, Lighthouse Works was launched and housed at the agency's administrative offices in Lake Eola Heights. Founded on a social enterprise model, Lighthouse Works was incorporated as a revenue generating subsidiary company which exists to advance the "earning" component of the Lighthouse mission.

In 2015, with the help of city and county grants, along with private contributions, Lighthouse was able to secure a larger building in the SODO section of Orlando to house the new Lighthouse Works Business Center. This past October was the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony.

(more)

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A centerpiece of the Lighthouse Works initiative is the 4Sight360 Powered by FENERO division which focuses on providing clients, from various industries, world-class business solutions including call center customer relations services. Their sourcing solutions and fulfillment division recently won the Defense Logistic Agency's (DLA) Outstanding AbilityOne Program Vendor for its consistently high satisfaction ratings. The division regularly executes multi-million dollar contracts for local, state and federal government. Among the products supplied to the U.S. military by Lighthouse Works, include a Combat Lifesaver kit for the Army and FirstAid/Aircrew1200 for the Air Force.

Lighthouse Works just inked a distribution deal with LED lighting manufacturers, Forest Lighting and Lighting & Energy Designs Inc. The partnership positions Lighthouse Works to become the largest distributor of commercial LED lighting in Central Florida.

## **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 are able to provide job training, employment and career opportunities for the advancement of 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 has served generations with comprehensive vision rehabilitation and employment services. Lighthouse Works is affiliated with the National Industries for the Blind (NIB)—the nation's largest employment resource for people who are blind. Additionally, Lighthouse Works operates in partnership with the AbilityOne Program to secure quality product services to the federal government at fair market prices. To learn more, please visit: [www.lighthouseworks.org](http://www.lighthouseworks.org).

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