

## The Iris Network

- helps people who are visually impaired or blind attain independence and community integration.
- has programs for people who want to live independently, prepare for their first job, keep their existing job, or find a new career.



**Your support is very much appreciated!**

**Here's how you can help:**

**Donate** online or by mail

**Attend or Sponsor** our White Cane Walk for Independence

**Volunteer** with our residents at Iris Park Apartments (non-medical support)

**Learn** to work with people who have dual sensory loss (hearing/vision)

the  
**Iris**  
network

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[www.theiris.org](http://www.theiris.org)**

The Iris Network is a community-based, Maine nonprofit 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation. Our vision is to build a world where no person is limited by visual impairment or blindness. The Iris Network is accredited by the National Accreditation Council for Blindness and Low Vision Services.

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*Your gift helps individuals and families handle the challenges of blindness or visual impairment.*



***Serving people with  
vision loss since 1905***

**Macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and glaucoma are the leading causes of vision loss.** They can make it hard for someone to read, drive a car, recognize faces, follow instructions on their prescription medication, pay bills, or see other fine objects. And because our population is aging, more and more families will be affected by vision loss, which may be accompanied by hearing loss and other disabilities. Families and individuals often don't know where to turn for help and support.

**But thanks to the generosity of people like you,** The Iris Network is able to offer solutions that improve the quality of life for those experiencing vision loss. People with low vision or blindness learn new ways to do activities of daily living so they can remain in their homes and avoid unnecessary and costly nursing home care. They are introduced to magnifiers, Braille and labeling techniques, and devices that turn text into audible speech.

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. With your support, The Iris Network can help.

People with visual impairment or blindness learn relevant job skills using adaptive technology and techniques. We also assist employers in making appropriate accommodations such as screen reading or magnification computer software, lighting modifications, and glare reduction. We have a Low Vision Clinic in Portland that serves the community.

**How your donations help families:** Jean and John learned about The Iris Network through a friend. "By the time my husband discovered he had macular degeneration, it was really too late to save his vision," said Jean. "It was extremely helpful to go to the group workshops to know we weren't

alone. The instructor showed John practical techniques to do everyday tasks. She even came to our home and made safety suggestions. We couldn't have managed without it."

As John's vision continued to deteriorate over the years, a mobility instructor from The Iris Network showed him how to use a white cane so he could navigate his neighborhood safely.

John loved to read. "When the weather was lousy, he'd spend hours listening to books from the talking book library," she said. He also learned to use screen-reading software on his computer and had an accessible calculator.

"We are so grateful for the many years of support we received. The Iris Network is a wonderful service," Jean said.



*Jean and John Chiquoine*

