

1905-2025 - Celebrating 120
years!

the

Iris
network
Vision with no limits.

Celebrating
120

1905

2025

YEARS

www.theiris.org

The image above is the black and white version of The Iris Network
120th Anniversary logo, 1905-2025.

Hello Summer! We are glad you are here! There are many things happening at the agency, here are a few highlights!

In April, on a sunny and breezy day, The Iris Network staff members enjoyed some time together at Pineland Farms where they made ice cream, saw lots of farm animals, and had lunch in the cafe.

The photo below is of 3 Iris Network staff in front of a white fence, smiling at the camera. A cow can be seen behind the fence and a road behind the group leads to more farm buildings.



The photo below is of 6 Iris Network staff members looking into a farm pen with animals behind it. Their backs are to the camera as they observe the animals.



The photo below is three Iris Network staff members, all wearing sunglasses and smiling at the camera under a blue sky. There is a parking lot and a farm building in the background.



The photo below shows three members of The Iris Network staff; one staff is helping to stir the homemade ice cream ingredients in a large bowl placed on a picnic table, and two staff are watching. The background shows green lawns and a white fence.



The photo below on the left shows 2 Iris Network staff smiling and enjoying the sunshine in front of a white fence that has cows grazing in the grass behind it.

The photo below on the right shows a group of Iris Network staff listening to instructions on making homemade ice cream with a staff member from Pineland Farms. There is a picnic table in the foreground and a parking lot, a silo and another brick building in the background.



The photo below on the left is a Pineland Farms staff member displaying homemade vanilla ice cream in a large bucket.

The photo below on the right shows three Iris Network staff sitting at a picnic table outside with a white silo and a brick building in the background. The staff are all wearing sunglasses and have jackets on.



The photo below on the left shows 2 Iris Network staff standing in front of a white fence with cows behind them. The staff are both smiling.

The photo below on the right is a large group of Iris Network staff walking down a blacktop road towards white farm buildings. Two staff are turned towards the camera and are pointing their fingers and the rest of the staff have their backs to the camera.



The photo below is an Iris Network staff member helping to put ingredients into a bowl that has been placed on a picnic table to make homemade ice cream. There are other staff members in the background watching and a Pineland Farms staff member giving instructions.



REMINDER to like and follow us on all of our social media platforms! Lots of great information and pictures are updated weekly on our posts!

Facebook -

<https://www.facebook.com/TheIrisNetwork/>

Instagram -

<https://www.instagram.com/theirisnetworkme/>

Linkedin -

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-iris-network-maine/>

And The Iris Network website is

<https://www.theiris.org>

The Iris Network Employees of the Month!

**Our agency is pleased to announce the
following employees who have been
nominated by their peers!**

January - Amber

February - Barry

March - Mike

April - Tyler

**Thank you for your hard work and
dedication to our agency and
programs! We all appreciate you!**

Meet Fran

Fran has been at The Iris Apartments since 1991, moving from New Hampshire because there were better services in Maine. She had cataracts as a child and a diagnosis of glaucoma at 25, along with cerebral palsy and epilepsy. Despite these diagnoses, Fran chooses to keep busy. She has worked at Goodwill for 25 years, and is a wonderful volunteer for the Iris Network, helping with shredding documents and stuffing envelopes for the annual appeals. "I like to help as much as I can," she states. Fran also participates in The White Cane Walk every year, helping raise awareness for individuals who use a white cane to navigate their environment.

Fran loves where she lives and the friends she has made over the years. She appreciates the meals that are served, and thanks Mike for being a great chef. She is able to explore the campus and her community with her white cane because of her training with an Orientation and Mobility Specialist. She is comfortable walking on her own to her bank and The Holy Donut in good weather.

Fran likes to treat herself once in a while with a meal out, and is looking forward to going to Pine Tree Camp for a week in July with some of her friends. At camp, she will participate in many activities both indoors and outdoors.

Meet Fran, page 2

Fran loves the exercise program at The Iris Park Apartments led by Fitness Instructor Kyle, and enjoys listening to the newspaper being read out loud as well as the opportunity to do arts and crafts with agency volunteers. "I like to know what is happening in my community."

Thank you, Fran, for all you do!



The picture to the left is of Fran in the dining area of The Iris Park Apartments. She is wearing a red White Cane Walk t-shirt and is smiling.

Meet Sarah

Sarah came to The Iris Park Apartments in 2006 after growing up in Scarborough and graduating third in her high school class. Sarah has spastic cerebral palsy and is legally blind in her right eye, but she does not let any of this stop her! She started using a wheelchair in her early 20's, and in 2012, Sarah won Miss Wheelchair America for the State of Maine and went on to the Nationals in Rhode Island. Her platform was accessible transportation.

Sarah met her husband, Rob, when she was younger and went to Pine Tree Camp, but lost track of him over the next several years. On her 25th birthday, Iris Park residents went to the Great Lost Bear to celebrate and someone told Rob to ask her out. They dated for years and in 2013 they were married. Rob, who is also in a wheelchair, is able to drive their specialized van so he and Sarah can get to their appointments and travel together.

Sarah enjoys living at the Iris Park Apartments, it is a great location and she can get to her pharmacy, the Seadogs, Hannaford and Deering Oaks in good weather. Sarah states the staff at The Iris Network are helpful and she loves her friends and community there, she enjoys participating in the exercise group, arts and crafts and continues to look for employment. She wants everyone to remember, "people with disabilities are a lot more capable than others think."

Below is a picture of Sarah, she is sitting in her wheelchair in the community living room of the Iris Park Apartments. She is wearing a red Portland Seadogs sweatshirt and is smiling.





The photo above is a client of The Iris Network who has Retinitis Pigmentosa and is learning to type on a Perkins Braillewriter so she can continue to communicate as her vision gets worse.



In the photo above, Sara, a Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist from The Iris Network helps a client choose and use a magnifier to help her with reading text and looking at pictures. Our CVRTs go to a client's home, school, work or out in the community to help them maintain their independence.



In the photo above, Sara, an Iris Network CVRT, works with a client in her home and helps her learn to use an Ipad to read emails and use social media.



In the photo above a client chooses anti-glare glasses that work best for her to better navigate her living facility. Ensuring clients are safe and enjoying daily activities is essential to our services and programs.

Annual White Cane Walk and Family Fun Day

Saturday, October 4th

10 a.m.

The Iris Network

189 Park Avenue

Portland

Food, fun for kids and families, awareness walk, tours of The Iris Network, demonstrations. Free for all, see you there! More info on registering and purchasing White Cane Walk t-shirts will be coming soon. See you there!

Meet Denis, Manual Arts Instructor

Denis discovered he had Retinitis Pigmentosa at the age of 35, and was told to get a white cane when he was 50 years old. Denis came to The Iris Network at 60 to get a white cane, but he never used it. As an avid walker and hiker, he decided to make his own walking sticks with white reflective tape and some small "boots" to go onto the end of the sticks.

In 2015, after giving up his driving license, he came to The Iris Network again to get some mobility guidance and also worked with a Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist to help with his computer skills. He had his own business as a wood turner and he wanted to develop his website.

In 2023, Denis started working with visually impaired and blind students in the Manual Arts program and he has been working at The Iris Network one day per week ever since. He helps students learn home management and repair skills, and "works with hand tools and battery operated tools to help people feel their bodies as they are using the tools."

Denis believes helping students build a project encourages them to use skills they will need for a job, such as planning, learning, using a process and analyzing.

Denis can be seen at The Iris Network workshop making large cribbage boards for residents and clients, and he loves to be inventive with other games as well, making them accessible for all. Denis donates to The Iris Network through his wood turning, if anyone is interested in finding out more information, please connect with Amy Whitmore at awhitmore@theiris.org.

Thank you, Denis, for bringing your skills to our students and encouraging them to explore manual arts and home maintenance.



The photo to the left is of Denis, the Manual Arts Instructor at The Iris Network. He is wearing a cap and a woodworking shop apron, has a white beard and is smiling inside of the Manual Arts classroom at The Iris Network.



THE FIRST ANNUAL

CHARLES E. PRINN III MEMORIAL

INDOOR GOLF TOURNAMENT

SEPTEMBER 17, 2025

X-GOLF, 101 YORK ST.

PORTLAND, MAINE

STARTING AT 3 PM

TOURNAMENT WILL
FEATURE A
"DRIVE IN THE
DARK" CHALLENGE

4 Member Scramble
Team is \$250

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

\$5K - HOLE IN ONE SPONSOR

\$2,500 - EAGLE SPONSOR

\$1,500 - DRIVE IN THE DARK CHALLENGE SPONSOR

\$1,000 - BIRDIE SPONSOR

\$500 - PAR SPONSOR

ALL PROCEEDS TO
BENEFIT
THE IRIS NETWORK
A NONPROFIT AGENCY FOR
THOSE WITH VISUAL
IMPAIRMENTS OR
BLINDNESS

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO
REGISTER YOUR TEAM OR SUBMIT A
SPONSORSHIP,
PLEASE VISIT WWW.THEIRIS.ORG
OR CALL AMY WHITMORE AT 207-
838-2177

Our Spring Appeal is here, and you have a chance to donate to our agency and its programs. To make a donation in support of our life-changing services, please send a check made out to The Iris Network to:

**Amy Whitmore, Director of Development and Communications
The Iris Network
189 Park Avenue
Portland, Maine 04104**

or use the link below

<https://form-renderer-app.donorperfect.io/give/the-iris-network/website-donation>

For questions or more information about our programs and services, please email info@theiris.org or call 207-774-6273

AS ALWAYS, THANK YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT!



The Iris Network's Community Services, Rehab Center, and CATIS Services are provided in collaboration with the Maine Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Department of Labor.

