

Furlong Vision Corrections' Gift of Sight Program Improves Quality of Life for Local Nonprofit Recipients

In August, ten HOPE Services' clients and instructors received the opportunity for free vision correction services as part of Furlong Vision Correction's (FVC) *Gift of Sight* program for nonprofit agencies. HOPE Services, located in Santa Clara, California, provides programs and services to 3,000 individuals with developmental disabilities such as mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism and other conditions closely related to mental retardation and requiring similar programming. Providing a comprehensive array of quality services, HOPE Services enables infants, young people, adults and seniors to live and participate in their communities.

The ten lucky recipients were chosen by a lottery system and their ability to sustain eye procedures. "We are delighted to be recipients of FVC's *Gift of Sight*," said Dr. Joe Campbell, CEO of HOPE Services. "For the general public, vision correction procedures are elective, but for our clients and instructors it means a great deal more. HOPE Services clients and staff cannot afford vision correction procedures and have had issues with not being able to see well due to scratched lenses, infected eyes, broken glasses or having their glasses knocked off on the job. FVC's generosity will greatly enhance their daily lives, self esteem and ability to perform their jobs."

The *Gift of Sight* program was launched in 2002 by **DR. MICHAEL FURLONG**, Furlong Vision's Medical Director, to assist those not able to afford corrective services. Furlong Vision Correction is located in Campbell, California.

"The surgeries were a success and the appreciation we have received from the HOPE Services' clients and patients makes this a very rewarding endeavor," said Dr. Furlong. "We not only helped HOPE Services' instructors and clients better perform their jobs without cumbersome glasses or contacts, but also improved the quality of life for these deserving patients. We feel privileged that we could provide our services to those who could not otherwise afford to have their eyesight corrected."

Four HOPE Services patient profiles:



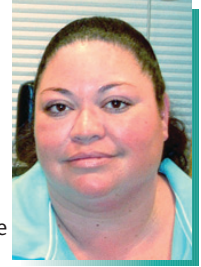
Andrea and Dr. Michael Furlong, MD.

Andrea Cabello was one of HOPE Services lucky 10 recipients of the Furlong Vision Correction *Gift of Sight* program. She is a job coach for HOPE Services, teaching basic job skills to individuals with developmental disabilities, including corralling shopping carts,

busing tables, serving food, stocking shelves and helping customers. For many HOPE Services' clients, the chance to earn a wage, be independent and have a full time job is a personal goal and a coveted accomplishment. Andrea's training programs take place in the loading docks or warehouses of grocery stores, hardware stores, electronic assembly companies and fast food restaurants. Wearing glasses was a hindrance, with clients accidentally knocking them off or lenses getting scratched by the dust of the workplace. Eliminating the need to wear glasses was a dream come true for Andrea, and it greatly improved her ability to perform her job.

Angela Landin is an independent living skills trainer for HOPE Services and a single mother of four. As part of her job, she helps clients with necessary daily skills such as developing good hygiene, financing and budgeting, and domestic chores. Angela's biggest reward is helping her clients feel secure in

new environments. One of her most rewarding days was when she helped one of her clients take the escalator for the first time. Angela helps HOPE Services clients conquer seemingly simple tasks, which are often the biggest achievements of their lives. In the past couple of years, Angela's sight had been gradually declining, making her job more challenging. She was not able to afford the vision correction procedure she really needed. She was thrilled to be one of the recipients of the *Gift of Sight* program, which helps her better serve her clients as well as seeing when she drives at night.



Jack Pomposo has been a HOPE Services instructor for 20 years. A father of two boys, Jack loves his work and taking HOPE Services' clients out into the community, especially to watch sporting events. Jack uses the outings as a way for his clients to understand the importance of keeping fit – they walk roughly two miles to the park and their reward is to watch kids and adults play sports. For Jack, there are many

benefits to his work, but the most rewarding is to see how much joy his clients get out of the simple things in life, including going to the park for the first time in their lives and then recognizing friends each time they return. Jack's job includes providing physical assistance to his clients and having to wear glasses was often a hindrance. He was ecstatic to be one of the winners of the *Gift of Sight* program, which has greatly improved his overall quality of life.

Katrina Nash is a HOPE Services instructor and a single mother of three. She teaches educational developmental tactics to acquire or regain lost or undeveloped skills to HOPE Services' clients with severe physical disabilities. She loves her job and is greatly rewarded by the affection of her patients. However, her job does not come without challenges. Many times her patients with spasticity would knock off her glasses as she was lifting them or helping them move. She could not remember a time when her lenses were not scratched or her frames bent. Economically, Katrina also had a difficult time coming up with the resources to pay for new glasses or contact lenses. When she learned that she was a recipient of the *Gift of Sight* program, she was overwhelmed by delight and can now spend more time caring for her clients and worrying less about her damaged glasses.



Other HOPE Services' clients and patients include Scott Miranda, a Supported Living Client from Capitola who broke his glasses and could not afford another pair; Matt Suhr, a Supported Living Client who has higher self esteem thanks to not having to wear glasses; Sheila Davidson, a job coach in Salinas who teaches landscaping and places and trains clients to work at major retail stores; Yolanda Ocampo, an instructor who works with clients with severe physical disabilities; and Tyler Fong and John Jerry, supervisor specialists who no longer live with the stigma of wearing glasses.

For more information on Furlong Vision and the *Gift of Sight* program, please visit www.furlongvision.com.