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A Writer's Blessing

Tom, a published writer who has battled vision issues for over a decade, recently shared an emotional message with our program manager, Sarah. He is overwhelmed with gratitude as he prepares for his cataract surgery at the Virginia Eye Institute, seeing it as a blessing that will allow him to continue his work. Tom is excited about publishing his baseball book and the preservation of his cultural journal about Virginia's Chesapeake Bay, which is archived at the Library of Virginia. His journey has been filled with challenges, including emergency retina surgery and cataract surgeries, but he never lets these setbacks hinder his creative drive. Despite these struggles, he published 30 issues of his magazine over 10 years, a project that was critically acclaimed but ultimately folded due to declining readership. Tom's work may not have made him prosperous, but it has left an important cultural legacy. He recognizes how essential his vision is to his well-being and his ability to contribute as a writer. Tom expressed his deep thanks for the Foundation's role in restoring the gift of sight, which will empower him to continue his passion. He's truly grateful for the opportunity to share his journey.



Frank's Newfound Independence

Frank, the proud owner of a local Jacksonville frame shop, had been struggling with advanced cataracts in both eyes, which left him nearly blind. The heartbreaking reality was that he was unable to afford the surgery he needed. The challenges he faced were more than just a physical struggle; they threatened to rob him of his livelihood. But then,



a compassionate patron who noticed the toll his vision problems were taking on his work, handed him the card of Dr. Jeffrey Levenson. Thanks to Dr. Levenson and the volunteer efforts of Operation Sight, Frank was able to have cataract surgery on both eyes. Today, Frank is once again able to move

around his shop with ease, something that was once a significant challenge. He's regained his confidence, independence, and is deeply thankful for this second chance.

Glenn's New Vision

Glenn had been living with severe cataracts, and he feared going blind in both eyes, which he thought might lead to an early death. His world was blurry and monochromatic, making everyday tasks nearly impossible—he couldn't read emails or books, shop without help, or even walk upstairs safely for fear of falling. His interactions with others were limited to his immediate family, and he couldn't enjoy simple activities like watching TV or videos. After cataract surgery on February 20th, performed by Dr. Aaron Cohn, Glenn's life was transformed. The results were immediate and profound. His best friend recalls how, for the first time in over a year, Glenn was smiling and laughing with joy as he marveled at the world around him. Today, Glenn can read again, watch TV, send emails, shop on his own, and navigate stairs without fear. His vision has been restored and so has his optimism for life. Glenn is deeply grateful for Operation Sight and Dr. Cohn's skill and compassion.

"I know there are some colleagues out there that aren't satisfied as ophthalmologists, and I would just guess it's because we lost our true north... We are not seeing that patient the way that we did when we were a wide-eyed medical student. Operation Sight is the kind of thing that can help remind us of why we do this in the first place." —John Berdahl, MD

"Operation Sight is there to help the most vulnerable patients get back their most important sense in an efficient, effective and structured way that makes it easy for surgeons to do it in their own facilities in the typical flow or their typical practice." —John Berdahl, MD

"When our team rallies around those patients in that moment of time...the vulnerability that borders on desperation. That's the kind of thing that binds us together." —John Berdahl, MD

"I participate in operation sight because it gets to the core of why I became a physician, to help those in need." —Vance Thompson, MD

"It's a great honor to work alongside the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery and Operation Sight. The infrastructure you've built has made all of this possible. Thank you for the tremendous work you do behind the scenes—work that often goes unrecognized, while surgeons like me get the credit. But truly, we're just a small piece of the puzzle." —Omar Shakir, MD



"The doctor told me that my eyesight was already very bad, and only surgery could improve it. I knew that such surgery was very expensive. He said his operation would have no cost. I said, no cost? I couldn't believe it!" —Maria, Operation Sight Patient

"After the surgery, I started to open my eyes, and I started to see...now I see everything! That wall is dirty and there's dirt on the floor! Now I must worry more about the house." If you don't have the means to pay for it, and these programs exist. There's no other word for it. It's just a blessing. It's a miracle. I see it as a miracle!" —Maria, Operation Sight Patient

"Operation Sight allows our practice to spread joy and provide service to patients in our community in need. Many of them have been suffering with their vision and for them to feel like they have hope...it's life changing." —Kelly, Staff Member, Vance Thompson Vision

"We naturally want to give back to our community. This is a great way for us to take advantage of the calling we have in ophthalmology. To also be able to serve these patients in our local communities." —Janet, Staff Member, Vance Thompson Vision

"These are patients that maybe felt helpless or didn't feel like they could have any improvement with their vision... And felt like this was the way their life was going to have to be. It feels good to know that we're able to make an impact that is so life changing for them." —Janet, Staff Member, Vance Thompson Vision

Short Videos – in both full 4K as well as HD: <https://spaces.hightail.com/receive/djX92LzhWL>

These stories are just a glimpse of the incredible impact that Operation Sight has on individuals who would otherwise be left without care. The gratitude and joy these patients feel reminds us why this work is so essential. Thank you for your continued support in making these life-changing surgeries possible.