



BLINDNEWORLD

Perkins School for the Blind Launches BlindNewWorld, a Campaign Promoting Blind Inclusion in a Sighted World

Unprecedented campaign aims to end discomfort, pity, fear and stigma surrounding the blind and to inspire the sighted population to embrace the seven million visually impaired Americans

WATERTOWN, Mass. (May 5, 2016) – Today Perkins School for the Blind launched BlindNewWorld, a social change campaign aimed at helping the sighted population to be more inclusive of people who are blind and to make the world more accessible to them. The campaign was created by BrightMark Consulting and features two public service announcement mini films (PSAs) by award-winning commercial and film director Tom De Cerchio.

There are approximately seven million blind Americans who frequently find themselves excluded from society both socially and professionally. This contributes to massive unemployment, making it extremely challenging for people who are blind or visually impaired to achieve independence. BlindNewWorld aims to disrupt stereotypes and inspire the sighted population to open their eyes to the full social, professional and academic capabilities of this population.

Corinne Grousbeck, chair of the Perkins School for the Blind Board of Trustees, spearheaded the BlindNewWorld campaign after seeing her son, who is blind, face many misperceptions about his capabilities and independence. The PSAs, entitled "[The Drive](#)" and "[The Get Together](#)," feature actors who are blind. "The Drive" tells the story of a young, blind tech executive who helps his cab driver realize his own prejudices about those who are blind. "The Get Together" tackles the subject of romance when a sighted woman introduces herself to a blind man at a social gathering.

"Many people hold preconceived biases that the blind aren't capable of daily tasks and can't lead happy lives," said Grousbeck. "Even worse, people often fear blindness more than many terminal diseases. This stems from a lack of understanding and contact with the blind community. BlindNewWorld not only reveals that many blind people are happy and thriving, but also details how society can work to include the blind into their sighted world."

To gain an understanding of how the sighted population perceives the blind, Perkins School for the Blind conducted a national study which revealed the four barriers to blind inclusion: discomfort, pity, fear and stigma. (Note: See release entitled: "[Study: More than Half of all Americans are not Comfortable Around a Person Who is Blind](#)" issued separately today.) BlindNewWorld draws attention to the perceptual, emotional and physical obstacles that lead to marginalization and/or exclusion of the visually impaired



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population, and provides simple guidance anyone can follow to create a more blind-friendly world.

To help the nation see blind people for who they really are, BlindNewWorld is asking all blind, visually impaired and campaign supporters to share a selfie using #BlindNewWorld.

The [BlindNewWorld](#) website features compelling stories, simple tips and suggestions to help individuals understand the lives of people who are blind and how to create a more blind-friendly world. The campaign will run across donated media and social media (#BlindNewWorld) and is being amplified by dozens of supporting organizations.

Perkins School for the Blind, the leading international organization dedicated to advancing the lives of the young blind population through education, accessibility and innovation, is sponsoring the campaign.

For more information, visit [BlindNewWorld.org](#).

About BlindNewWorld

BlindNewWorld is a public service social change campaign sponsored by Perkins School for the Blind to demystify blindness and break down the barriers to inclusion – discomfort, pity, fear and stigma. Through provocative PSA mini films, new statistics on public attitudes, compelling stories and social dialogue, BlindNewWorld seeks to educate and inspire the sighted population to open their eyes to the full social, professional and academic capabilities of the blind. For more information, please visit [BlindNewWorld.org](#) and follow us @blindnewworld.

About Perkins School for the Blind

Perkins School for the Blind was founded in 1829 and is where Helen Keller challenged and dramatically changed society's perceptions of individuals with disabilities. Today, in addition to educating students on its Watertown campus and throughout Massachusetts, Perkins is the leading global enterprise dedicated to advancing the lives of the young blind population through education, accessibility and innovation. A renowned leader in deafblind education, the organization also manufactures the world's braille, provides accessibility solutions for organizations and educates all teachers on how to help blind children realize their full potential. Learn more at [Perkins.org](#).

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