



CONTACT

Amy Turner
Community Relations Coordinator
Lighthouse of SWFL
(239) 997-7797 ext. 218 – office
(239) 462-2039 - cell
aturner@lighthouseswfl.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Prom Night for Visually Impaired Teens Brings out the Community

(North Fort Myers, FL) – On December 16, 2017, Lighthouse of SWFL and its Transition Teen Program will host “A Night with the Stars” prom open to teens with blindness and vision impairment living in Lee, Hendry, Glades, Charlotte, Collier, Manatee, and Sarasota counties. The free event will be held at Lighthouse of SWFL 35 W. Mariana Ave. N. Fort Myers, FL 33903 and available for teens between the ages of 14 and 22 with blindness or vision impairment and one guest. Reservations are a must and may be made by calling (239) 997-7797.

The “Hollywood” themed idea, complete with a red carpet and paparazzi, was an immediate hit with the visually-impaired students, who will be receiving the royal treatment that evening. “Planning the event and finding ways to make the students feel important has been half the fun!” said Jeremy Rosauer, chair of the Prom Committee and a member of the 4-H Trail Blazers club, a youth leadership club which volunteers for service projects at the Lighthouse. Rosauer continued, “We are working to make the prom experience special and inclusive for every youth, from the food to the photography, decorations, and even the dancing.”

Transition teens from Lighthouse of SWFL have been practicing their dancing skills with the 4-H kids, to help them learn how to dance with a student who has blindness or uses a wheelchair. “Dancing, like music or kindness, is a universal language,” said Amy Turner, Community Relations Coordinator at Lighthouse of SWFL and 4-H leader, “Providing an opportunity for youth to connect, have fun and accept one another is the heart of this community event.”

Debby Marsh, owner of Studio RK, a local hair salon and the event’s premier sponsor, recognized early on the potential impact of the prom to help foster the teens’ sense of self-esteem and well-being. Through their employee-giving program, Marsh and her Studio RK co-owners and stylists, generously donated prom dresses, jewelry, and the seed money to get the event off the ground for the teens. PACE Center for Girls followed suit and provided prom dresses and a special “shopping day”. Black Tie Tuxedos provided tuxedos to the boys at a substantial discount. Star Limo will be providing a limousine ride for the students to arrive at the event and “walk the red carpet”. North Fort Myers High School Student Government Association is loaning Hollywood-themed decorations from their

homecoming dance. If you would like to be a sponsor for the event, please contact Amy Turner, Community Relations Coordinator of Lighthouse of SWFL at (239) 997-7797 or aturner@lighthouseswfl.org.

The Transition Teen Program prepares young adults, ages fourteen through twenty-two with visual impairments, to live as independently as possible as they transition from high school onto the next stage of their adult life. Skills taught include vocational rehabilitation, resume writing and interview skills, community integration, and job shadowing and training.

Lighthouse of SWFL is a non-profit, vision rehabilitation agency, whose mission is to enable people of all ages living with a visual impairment or blindness to remain independent, active and productive in society. Lighthouse of SWFL currently serves individuals in Lee, Hendry, and Glades counties. Classes include safe cooking, Braille, orientation and mobility, technology using iPhones, art, ballroom dance, and more.

For more information, visit www.lighthouseswfl.org, email aturner@lighthouseswfl.org or call 239-997-7797.

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