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News Release

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The Lighthouse earns National Industries for the Blind Award for increasing employment

TYLER, Texas – The East Texas Lighthouse was recently honored for its efforts to increase employment retention, growth, and upward mobility for people who are blind in 2010.

The award was presented by the National Industries for the Blind (NIB) in recognition of the East Texas Lighthouse's success and commitment to increasing employment and economic opportunities for people who are blind.

We are proud to provide employment opportunities for people who are blind," said Pat Spenla, director of human resources. "Our team members who are blind represent a qualified, dedicated and loyal workforce. Our employees play an integral role in providing quality products and services to the federal government."

The 2010 Employment Award winners receive cash payments from a \$1 million fund created to recognize and encourage NIB associated agencies that grow or sustain employment for people who are blind. Emphasis is also placed on efforts to increase upward mobility in the workplace and job

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placements.

With a 70 percent unemployment rate for working aged Americans who are blind, all efforts to create jobs for this population help to change this statistic and provide economic and personal freedom for people who are blind.

“It is an honor for me to recognize agencies such as the East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind who are dedicated to creating jobs and high-growth career opportunities for people who are blind,” said Kevin A. Lynch, president and CEO of NIB. “I truly appreciate their efforts to reduce the unemployment rate for this population.”

About National Industries for the Blind (NIB)

National Industries for the Blind’s mission is to enhance the opportunities for economic and personal independence of persons who are blind by creating, sustaining and improving employment opportunities. NIB and 90 associated agencies serve as the largest employer for people who are blind. These employees make and sell SKILCRAFT® products and services to the federal government and Department of Defense through the AbilityOne Program, established by the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act. www.NIB.org.

The Lighthouse has three operating divisions: Horizon Industries, Lighthouse Graphics and East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind Rehabilitative Services which collectively employs blind and visually impaired people. To learn more about the programs and services at The Lighthouse visit www.tylerlighthouse.org or call 903.595.3444.

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