

The Lighthouse
411 W. Front St.
Tyler, Texas 75702
903.593.3111

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 19th, 2017

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Summer Tillson
Marketing Manager
903.590.4329
stillson@tylerlighthouse.org

Youth forum for blind and visually impaired youth

Region 7 ESC, HHSC, and The Lighthouse were host to a youth forum on May 19th from 10am-2pm at The Boys and Girls Club of East Texas, located in Tyler, TX. The event was for blind and visually impaired students and included a keynote speaker and advice from other blind and visually impaired individuals to prepare students for a successful future.

Keynote speaker, Professor John Russo, provided students with his life story, overview of his disability, challenges he faced while transitioning into adulthood and his journey of becoming a college history professor. Russo has been a college professor since 2012 and attributes much of his success on self-advocacy and a supportive family.

“One thing about having any disability is you have to be determined, that’s all there is to it.” says Russo. “You must say, I can do this, I will do this, I will figure out any alternative way to get it done.”

In addition to a keynote speaker, the schedule consisted of the following topics, College Life and Technology with Britney Walters and Cesar Lopez, Looking Good and Employment and Kali

Hammond and Trenton Rowland, Transportation and Dating with Joel Lawson and Jennifer Taylor as well as an open panel for questions of all speakers.

When speaking on college life, Britney Walters encouraged students to utilize the disability services office on campus and get involved with clubs and organizations. “I was really nervous about attending college and living on campus, but I joined some clubs and got to know people in class and now it’s no big deal.”

