



Media Release

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Cabot woman regains vision, serves others, earns achievement award

Jennifer Manasco of Cabot has come a long way from being a scared young woman who was losing her eyesight and facing lifestyle changes. Now after several surgeries, her vision has been restored to 20/20 and she can even drive and hunt again. She is “very appreciative” of her change in circumstances.

In 2010, she was diagnosed as legally blind. After eye surgeries and the restoration of her vision, she was able to find a job teaching kindergarteners and first graders in the before-and- after school early childhood education program at the Cabot United Methodist Church Child Development Center. Now she’s been promoted and works in the center’s office, answering the phone and doing clerical work.

Because of her determination to overcome adversity, succeed at work, and serve others, Manasco has been named as an area Consumer of the Year by DSB. She is one of only 13 people in Arkansas who will receive an area award and was chosen from the area that includes Lonoke, Prairie, Grant, part of Saline, and north Pulaski Counties. An overall state winner will be named at the end of the year.

Her employer, the Cabot United Methodist Church Child Development Center, has been named as an area Employer of the Year as an outstanding business partner for its commitment to promoting the employment of persons with vision impairment.

An awards presentation for Manasco and her employer will be held at the noon meeting of the Cabot Lions Club on November 7, at the Frontier Diner.

Manasco came to DSB for assistance, because she had bilateral cataracts that were greatly affecting her ability to work and complete everyday household tasks. Her vision prevented her from being able to drive, which severely limited her employment possibilities.

“It’s horrible to be only 24-years-old and know you have no way to pay (for needed surgeries and medical care),” Manasco said. “I didn’t know about DSB.” Her eye doctor referred her to DSB, which paid for the surgeries, medical visits, and eyeglasses.

Terry Ross, the DSB Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor who nominated her for the award, said, “I am privileged to share in the recognition of a job well done, and trust that success will continue to follow this most deserving individual, who has demonstrated that, with determination, blindness is not a barrier to competitive employment.”

This is the sixth year that DSB has given Consumer of the Year awards to recognize individuals who have managed their rehabilitation plans, gained marketable skills, secured good jobs, and become role models for others.

DSB provides vocational rehabilitation services to adults who are blind or severely visually impaired and whose goal is successful employment. The division also serves youth and older blind individuals. For information about DSB’s programs and services, visit the DSB website at <http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/dsb/Pages/default.aspx> or call 1-800-960-9270, 501-682-5463, or TDD 501-682-0093.