



Press Release

Contact: Jim Kerlin, President & CEO, Beyond Vision

Phone: 414-801-6825

Email: jkerlin@beyondvision.com

Beyond Vision Takes Steps Toward Expansion – Closing on former Sam’s Club in West Allis represents bright future.

Milwaukee, WI. June 24, 2019: Beyond Vision, a nonprofit social enterprise providing employment opportunities for people who are blind, has purchased the former Sam’s Club property at 1540 South 108 Street in West Allis.

Beyond Vision purchased the 130,000 square foot building from Sam’s Club. This property was of interest to several organizations. Sam’s Club decision makers chose Beyond Vision because of their powerful mission. “The Sam’s Club real estate transaction team saw our vision. We think they wanted to be a part of helping us make it a reality to help people with vision loss in Wisconsin reach their dreams, regardless of their challenges,” said Jim Kerlin, President and CEO of Beyond Vision.

Beyond Vision is choked for space in the two buildings they currently occupy. Circa the 1930s, the buildings are out-of-date, missing loading docks and most critically, fire protection.

Most important to employees, the new location has excellent access to public transportation, the primary mode of travel for the blindness community. Being centrally located makes it an ideal space for a campus serving the entire city.

Expanding their facilities will enable Beyond Vision to potentially triple its workforce. *In Wisconsin, 70% of adults coping with low or changing vision are unemployed.* Beyond Vision is one of only two Wisconsin organizations with the sole mission of providing meaningful and sustainable employment for people who are blind.

“We hope to co-locate eye health providers, advocacy groups, rehabilitation, education and literacy/braille services for people who are blind and their families. These support agencies are scattered throughout the city, creating challenges for people who are blind accessing the services they need and deserve. This co-location model eliminates these challenges,” said Kerlin.

The former Sam’s Club building will be renovated utilizing state-of-the-art universal design, tailored for people of all abilities. Renovation of the site is expected to take about twelve months and include such aids as:

- Universal design throughout interior spaces
- Electronic audio navigation aids throughout
- Tactile wayfinding on sidewalks and hallways
- Natural light flooding the facility
- Braille signage for all displays and pictures
- Wisconsin Lions sponsored guide dog rest area
- Accessible computer systems
- Public walking paths and green space

About Beyond Vision: Beyond Vision, a 501(c)3 social enterprise, was founded in 1903 with the mission of providing employment opportunities to people with vision loss and are legally blind. Beyond Vision continues to “Enrich the lives of Americans who are blind... through the dignity of work valued by customers and the community.” Employment offers market competitive wages and excellent benefits in an integrated environment where people who are sighted and blind work side-by-side on all levels of the organization. Visit www.beyondvision.com to learn more.