

# Project NATIVE

Native Americans Teaming in Visual Empowerment

**FEBRUARY IS LOW VISION MONTH – LEARN HOW YOU CAN HELP**

## *What Businesses Should Know About the Visually Impaired*

First in the Low Vision Awareness Series

Project NATIVE is a free program, based in Tahlequah, whose goals include raising awareness of the needs and challenges of the visually impaired. Not all people with low vision are disabled; most don't carry a cane and you can't tell that they have low vision.

**Our local businesses** can help people with low vision. Superior customer service is a good place to start! These tips from [USDA.gov](http://USDA.gov) can help our business community accommodate these customers:

- Review access to your establishment (parking, sidewalks, ramps and doors) and access to products once inside. What challenges might they encounter?
- Treat the customer with dignity, respect and courtesy.
- Welcome all customers.
- Listen to the customer, make them feel comfortable and learn their needs.
- Offer assistance but do not insist. Ask them the best way to help.
- Deal with unfamiliar situations in a calm, professional manner.
- Customers will continue to patronize businesses that welcome them, are helpful, accessible and provide quality services.

You may already have customers with low vision, or perhaps employees. Please feel free to contact Project NATIVE at 918-456-5581 to provide a free consultation on how you might meet the needs of your low vision patrons.



Special Lights & Magnifier Aids

**REMEMBER, YOU  
CARRY PRODUCTS  
AND SERVICES THEY  
NEED!**



Arts and Crafts Are Still Enjoyable

# Project NATIVE

## Native Americans Teaming in Visual Empowerment

### *What Businesses Should Know About the Visually Impaired*

*Serving Customers who are Visually Impaired (tips from USDA.gov)*

- Speak to the customer when you approach them.
- State clearly who you are; speak in a normal tone of voice.
- Never touch or distract a service dog without asking first.
- Tell the customer when you are leaving; never leave a person who is visually impaired talking to an empty space.
- Do not attempt to lead the customer without first asking; allow the customer to hold your arm and control their own movements. (the correct way is for them to place their hand on your shoulder and to walk behind you, if they are comfortable with this method)
- Be descriptive when giving directions; for example, if you are approaching steps mention how many and the direction (or if you are directing them to a shelf say left or right and how high up).
- If you are offering a chair, gently place the customer's hand on the back or arm and let them sit down on their own.
- Ask the customer if they need assistance signing forms and offer to guide their hand to the appropriate space for signature.
- Make sure the customer has all of their possessions before leaving.

Future topics in the series will discuss employing & training the visually impaired and the Disability Act.

If you have any questions about low vision or Project NATIVE, please contact us at 918-456-5581.

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Medication Aids



Cooking Aids



Participants Using Technology

**PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR EMPLOYEES!**