



JULES STEIN EYE INSTITUTE
DAVID GEFFEN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AT UCLA
CENTER FOR THE HEALTH SCIENCES
100 STEIN PLAZA
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90095-7000

6/4/2013

To Whom it May Concern,

I would like to express my support and gratitude for Brian Bushway and World Access for the Blind. I had the pleasure of working with him and the organization for two years while organizing the departmental retreat for the research scientists at the Jules Stein Eye Institute, UCLA. We were a group of about 60 people, including faculty, post docs, graduate students, staff and families. Our goal was to have a fun, informational, and inspirational talk, followed by team building exercises to expand our understanding of the world around us, and each other. Brian shared with us his story of overcoming blindness with the help of World Access for the Blind and learning how to echolocate. Throughout Brian's talk, he pointed out all the non-visual cues and information he uses to understand his environment. We later put those lessons into practice, starting off with basic skills, and then combining them to tackle the obstacle course relay race they had set up. The course had a series of challenges, following a rope, listening for a beacon, finding an object, and returning it to the start, all while blindfolded of course. The activities got us out of our comfort zone and made us rely on our other senses and communication to achieve our goals. I feel the experience made us all more aware of the non-visual cues we take in every day either knowingly or unknowingly, and allowed us to connect with the people around us.

As an organizer of the event, I was very happy to hear all of the positive feedback from our group regarding Brian and the activities. He is a very personable and inspiring person, and took time to talk with much of our group individually before, during, and after the events. We had such a great experience the first year, we asked him to come back the following year. Brian and World Access have now become regulars at our retreat and continue to contribute new and interesting ways to perceive the world. I would be happy to provide more information or discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeremy Cook".

Jeremy Cook, PhD

Postdoctoral Scholar

Jeremy.D.Cook@gmail.com

734.754.0476