

## Daredevil – A Superhero Who is Blind

**Season 2 now Streaming with Audio Description on Netflix**

*Iron Man, Spider Man, Batman, Avengers...* These are just a few examples of how Hollywood continues to reinvent superheroes and bring comic books to life! The blockbuster hits just keep coming. Over the past few years television and Netflix have joined the comic book craze with hits like the *Walking Dead, Gotham, and Jessica Jones*. Most comic fans know that superheroes usually had a life-altering experience that left them with powers or special skills and the same is true for this masked crusader who also happens to be blind - *Daredevil*.

Originally published by Marvel Comics in the 1960's, Daredevil has consistently been a popular character and appeared in multiple media formats such as: several animated series, a major motion picture, and video games. Jack Murdock was a typical child who grew up in the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood of New York City. Then one fateful day he went



out of his way to save a stranger in the path of a moving vehicle. In doing so, he was doused with radioactive material which left him totally blind and heightened his other senses beyond normal human ability. As an adult Jack Murdock became an attorney to fight against wrongs on a daily basis. As Jack Murdock, he conceals his alter-ego but allows the world to know of his blindness, mainly by way of the cane he uses for guidance. When Murdock becomes Daredevil, he dons a crime-fighting outfit to conceal his identity but he has such tremendous skills that his blindness is unknown to most.

By this point you may be curious about the Daredevil's enhanced senses and special skills. The radioactive material robbed Murdock of his sight but left him with beyond human ability to hear, taste, smell, and feel. He also developed a new sense that he

named *radar sense*. Radar sense is the result a mutation in his brain that emits electromagnetic energy allowing him to read reverberations as if they were on a 3D map in his brain. This 'sight' leaves Daredevil with an impression of the physical shape of objects and has often been compared to an exaggerated form of [echolocation \(click here to learn how people who are blind use echolocation\)](#). Daredevil co-creator Stan Lee once said he was worried that people who are blind would be offended by the exaggerated way the other senses were enhanced but was pleasantly surprised when he received letters from national organizations for the blind that said people with visual impairments really enjoyed the character. In addition to special senses, Daredevil was thoroughly trained in martial arts and carries a customized, multi-purpose weapon disguised as his white cane.



Prior to filming the first season of Daredevil, Netflix hired Blind Consultant and Director of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Blind and Visual Services Joe Strechay, to work with the series leading man, Charlie Cox. According to an [interview with Strechay](#)<sup>1</sup> Cox wanted to give an accurate portrayal of someone who is blind.

Strechay taught Cox by using real-life training such as: walking the streets of New York blindfolded, learning to pour hot liquid into a teacup, and using labels to identify household products. Strechay goes on to explain that people who are blind learn to trust their other senses just like Murdock does in Daredevil.

Shortly following the season one release of the show advocates from the disability community protested Netflix to support audio description services for this series along with many other series and movies. Netflix has since responded by adding audio description as a service on all new content while adding this feature to much of their previously released streaming content beginning in April, 2015. Netflix released season two of their adaptation of the blind superhero in April. Picking up from his attorney years, Daredevil teams with his crime fighting partner Foggy and assistant Karen in this dark rendition of the character. The critically acclaimed series shows viewers the human side of Daredevil while he struggles with the moral dilemma of taking justice into his own hand. If you enjoy superheroes, tune in to Netflix to watch all episodes of this legendary blind crime-fighter.

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<sup>1</sup> Author David Molofsky of AP2HYC, <https://www.ap2hyc.com/2015/05/interview-joe-strechay-blindness-consultant-on-daredevil/>

# Employers! It Pays to Hire People with Disabilities!

Did you know? The government provides businesses with incentives to hire people with disabilities. The Federal [Work Opportunity Tax Credit \(WOTC\)](#) and newly introduced Delaware [Senate Bill 221](#), are tax incentive that benefits both employers and qualified workers. Here's what you need to know!

## Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The WOTC is a Federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals with disabilities and those from certain [target groups](#) who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. WOTC helps targeted employees move from economic dependency to self-sufficiency while earning a steady income and becoming contributing taxpayers.

On December 18, 2015, President Obama signed into law the *Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 (the PATH Act)* that extends and modifies the WOTC Program and the Empowerment Zones. In summary, the PATH Act:

- **Retroactively reauthorizes** the WOTC program target groups for a five-year period, from December 31, 2014 to December 31, 2019.
- Extends the Empowerment Zones for a two-year period, from December 31, 2014 to December 31, 2016.
- Introduces a new target group, Qualified Long-term Unemployment Recipients, for new hires that begin to work for an employer on or after January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2019.

The **most important** thing for businesses to remember is to be sure to complete **ALL** WOTC paperwork for **ALL** qualifying new hires within the established timeframe; even when the WOTC does not have been reauthorized! This tax incentive was introduced in 1996 and has a long history of delayed reauthorizations that have retroactive hiring dates. Of course there are no guarantees that the credit will always be available, but better safe than sorry! Click here for WOTC [rules and forms](#).

## Delaware Tax Credit (*proposed*)

[SB221](#) – An act to amend the Delaware Code relating to Delaware Tax Credits is designed to provide employers with an incentive to hire people with disabilities who are receiving services from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) or the Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI). The bill has been approved by the DE Senate and will soon move to the House for voting. [Read about the tax incentives here](#) and look for future updates as DVI tracks the progress of the bill.

*Note: This information is written to support the employment of people with disabilities. For additional information regarding federal initiatives for barrier removal and building access, please [click here](#). For additional State of Delaware business resources, please [click here](#).*

# Healthy Vision Month

For years May has been nationally observed as [Healthy Vision Month](#). In 2016 it was recognized locally due to Delaware State Legislators approval of [State Concurrent Resolution 78](#). Introduced by Senators [Hall Long](#) and [Lawson](#) and [Representative Heffernan](#), the resolution acknowledges the astounding growth in the number of people with visual impairments and/or diseases that lead to blindness. The resolution also gently reminds Delawareans that May is a good time to remember to schedule your eye exam, raise awareness to the prevention and treatment of eye diseases, and remember to teach children about protection from UV rays.



## Nine ways you can help protect your vision

1. Get regular comprehensive dilated eye exams.
2. Know your family's eye health history. It's important to know if anyone has been diagnosed with an eye disease or condition, since some are hereditary.
3. Eat right to protect your sight: In particular, eat plenty of dark leafy greens such as spinach, kale, or collard greens, and fish that is high in omega-3 fatty acids such as salmon, albacore tuna, trout, and halibut.
4. Maintain a healthy weight.
5. Wear protective eyewear when playing sports or doing activities around the home, such as painting, yard work, and home repairs.

6. Quit smoking or never start.
7. Wear sunglasses that block 99 percent-100 percent of ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) radiation.
8. Wash your hands before taking out your contacts and cleanse your contact lenses properly to avoid infection.
9. Practice workplace eye safety.

## Smyrna Gift Shop Grand Opening

May 26<sup>th</sup> was a day of celebration for the Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI), community partners, and Delawareans with blindness or visual impairments. DVI hosted a grand opening celebration at the Smyrna Rest Area to officially launch the newest Blind Entrepreneurs' Program (BEP) business, the Smyrna Gift Shop.



This unique business shall be operated by persons who are blind or visually impaired and supported by DVI. The BEP is dedicated to promoting the economic development of businesses managed by persons who are blind or visually impaired. As such, BEP business professionals provide the store manager with training, consultation, and guidance on an ongoing basis. The gift shop is

the first retail store opened and operated by BEP. Several other BEP businesses throughout the State include Canteen Vending and Dunkin Donuts sites. Proceeds from all of the businesses go directly to improving the lives of people who are blind through employment and training opportunities. Located directly across from the information desk in the Smyrna Rest Area, the gift shop is



designed to meet the needs of travelers and the local community in search of souvenirs and gifts. Products range from hand-made jewelry and pottery to organic dog treats and souvenirs. Most of the items are produced by Delaware artisans.

The kickoff was a huge success! DVI Director Dan Madrid, Deputy Director, Elisha Jenkins, BEP Manager Rob Schmidlkofer, and BEP Committee Chair Wayne Marsh, addressed the crowd, describing BEP businesses and upcoming ventures. Prior to the official ribbon cutting ceremony, attendees enjoyed baked treats, raffle prizes

and vision resources. After the ceremony ended, visitors had the opportunity to browse the store and purchase gifts.



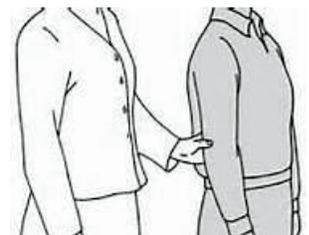
DVI would like to thank all of the BEP participants, merchants, and community partners who came out to support this new business and welcome the gift shop to Smyrna!

Come out and visit the gift shop on your next trip to the beach or on your way to any of Delaware's wonderful summer events. The shop is located in the Smyrna Rest Area Information Center at 5500 DuPont Parkway (Rt. 13) in Smyrna. For hours and additional information, call 302-659-6778.

## How to Guide People with Visual Impairments

Sighted guide techniques enable a person who is blind to use a person with sight as a guide. This quick look at methods can be helpful to you at home or work so make sure to share with family, friends, employees, and co-workers!

- Offer to guide a person who is blind or visually impaired by asking if he or she would like assistance. Be aware that the person may not need or want guided help; in some instances it can be disorienting and disruptive.
- If your help is accepted, offer the person your arm. To do so, tap the back of your hand against his or her hand. The person will then grasp your arm directly above the elbow. Never grab the person's arm or try to direct him or her by pushing or pulling.
- Relax and walk at a comfortable normal pace. Stay one step ahead of the person you are guiding, except at the top and bottom of stairs and to cross streets. At these places, pause and stand alongside the person. Then resume travel, walking one step ahead. Always pause when you change directions, step up, or step down.



- It is helpful, but not necessary, to tell the person you are guiding about changes in terrain, stairs, narrow spaces, elevators, and escalators.
- The standard form of sighted guide technique may have to be modified because of other disabilities or for someone who is exceptionally tall or short. Be sure to ask the person you are guiding what, if any, modifications he or she would like you to use.
- When you are acting as a guide, never leave the person in "free space." When walking, always be sure that the person has a firm grasp on your arm. If you have to be separated briefly, be sure the person is in contact with a wall, railing, or some other stable object until you return.
- To guide a person to a seat, place the hand of your guiding arm on the seat. The person you are guiding will find the seat by following along your arm.



## DVI Needs Teachers!

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Teachers of students who are visually impaired (TVIs) are Special Education teachers who are certified to help children with visual impairments (birth - 22 years) achieve their educational goals. Their goal is to help students achieve independence. TVIs work with children with visual impairments (low vision and blind), their parents, other educators, and community agencies. TVIs are itinerant teachers responsible for providing vision related education services to students in a variety of settings. Duties include: participating in the development of Individualized Education Programs, using and instructing Braille and functional vision and learning media assessments, adapting core curriculum and instruction in the expanded core curriculum, collaborating with families, school personnel, and related service providers and agencies. To learn about qualifications or to apply, click [here!](#)

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***DVI Views***

Division for the Visually Impaired  
Delaware Health and Social  
Services

Daniel Madrid, Director  
Elisha Jenkins, Deputy Director  
Deborah Talley, Editorial Staff

Delaware 87ers pose with Sarah  
Fox & Romy Mikhail from DE  
Industries for the Blind &  
Elisha Jenkins, DVI Deputy  
Director (right)

