



WE ALL BELONG *spotlight*

January/February 2026

WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING BRIO LIVING SERVICES A WELCOMING PLACE FOR ALL TO LIVE AND WORK

USED EYEGLASSES PROVIDE “NEW JOB” IN RETIREMENT

How do you stay busy in retirement or after the loss of a spouse? Some people care for grandchildren, write books, volunteer in their communities, or serve through their church.

Cedars resident Cindy Pine found a new calling through short-term missions after her husband, Rick, died in 2013. A “random” email about an open spot on a women’s trip to Costa Rica inspired her to try something new. Since her first trip in 2014, Cindy has become a regular team leader with **Mission Opportunities Short Term (MOST)**, a Lutheran nonprofit based in Ann Arbor. She now serves with two to three teams each year in Central America and Africa.

As a team leader, Cindy trains participants for project work, leads Servanthood Bible studies, and oversees travel and safety. Teams fundraise to cover their own expenses and the leader’s travel. As a Spanish speaker, Cindy also serves as a translator when needed.

MOST provides refurbished eyeglasses, medical teams, water filters, and other services requested by communities connected to Lutheran missionaries or churches. Eyeglasses are the most common request, as many people cannot afford eye exams or glasses.

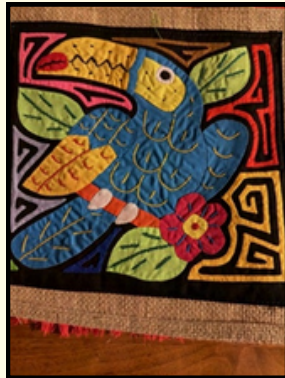
On a trip to Panama in November, Cindy led a team of 13 from an Iowa City Lutheran church. They brought 3,000 pairs of refurbished eyeglasses, 750 sunglasses, testing equipment, and a desire to share God’s love. During the week, the team distributed 750 prescription glasses to 525 people and built friendships in four local communities.



Cindy, about to fit glasses on a native Kuna woman wearing her typical clothing.



The universal “Hands Chart” allows vision testing across languages, with individuals indicating the direction the fingers point, from the largest to the smallest line.



Mola, a finely stitched embroidery piece made by Kuna women to support their family.



To contribute used eyeglasses, please see the box in the coatroom at The Cedars. All eyeglasses are welcome, because our volunteers are experts at sorting those that can be repurposed for our mission trips.



WORLD DAY OF **SOcial JUSTICE**

February 20th

Together, We All Belong

Each year on February 20th, people around the world observe World Day of Social Justice, dedicated to promoting fairness, equality, and opportunity for all. Established by the United Nations in 2007, the day encourages communities, workplaces, and governments to ensure equal rights, resources, and respect for everyone. At Brio Living Services, these values guide who we are. Through our We All Belong Committee, we are committed to fostering a culture of inclusiveness, dignity, and respect where every resident, participant, team member, and volunteer feels valued and supported. This year’s theme, “Bridging Gaps and Building Trust,” reminds us that social justice begins with everyday actions. Whether helping a neighbor, mentoring a colleague, or speaking up when something feels unfair, each of us can make a difference.

At Brio, we believe that “We all belong.” Through shared learning, open dialogue, and compassion, we continue to build spaces where everyone can thrive in mind, body, and spirit—because small actions can spark big change, and, together, we can create a community where everyone truly belongs.



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Did You Know?

- The first World Day of Social Justice was celebrated on February 20th, 2009.
- The UN chose this date to emphasize the link between fair work, human rights, and peace.
- Around the world, organizations use this day to highlight efforts in education, accessibility, fair labor, and equal opportunity.
- Studies show workplaces that emphasize inclusion and fairness see higher employee satisfaction, creativity, and teamwork, something Brio team members model every day!



Simple Ways to Honor World Day of Social Justice

Small actions can spark meaningful change. Here are some easy ways you can make an impact every day.

At Home

- Read an article or watch a short video on topics like fairness, accessibility, or social equity.
- Talk with family or friends about why justice matters in everyday life.
- Choose companies with fair labor practices or sustainable products.
- Consider small changes you can make to reduce bias and promote fairness and inclusion at home.



In the Community

- Donate clothing, household items, or hygiene products to local organizations.
- Volunteer or support groups working on housing, food security, or elder support.
- If you witness unfair treatment or exclusion, use your voice to promote kindness and respect.
- Be intentionally welcoming—smile, hold a door, offer help. Small gestures build inclusive communities.



At Work

- Invite someone new to sit with you, listen intentionally, or encourage quieter voices to share.
- Think about how your choices impact those around you with different needs and backgrounds.
- Stay curious, ask questions, and listen actively. Learning is a powerful act of justice.
- Read *We All Belong* newsletters, join committee activities, or attend educational sessions when offered.
- Offer help to a coworker, share knowledge, or acknowledge someone's contribution.



SPOTLIGHT SOURCES

- United Nations: [World Day of Social Justice](#)
- International Labor Organization
- Brio Living Services "We All Belong" Committee materials