

“There is no better way to thank God
for your sight than by giving a
helping hand to someone in the dark.”

— Helen Keller




Annual Report 2008



"In our life there is a single color, as on an artist's palette, which provides the meaning of life and art. It is the color of love."

— Marc Chagall



unique in Wisconsin and one of the very few agencies of its type in the country, the Center for Blind & Visually Impaired Children provides comprehensive services for infants and preschool children with visual impairments and for their families. Our services include Vision and Sensory Training, Early Childhood Special Education, Social Work, Orientation and Mobility, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech Therapy.





Dear Center Friends,

Thank you for your generous support this past year and helping the Center to continue to succeed in our work with blind and visually impaired children and their families. Success for the Center can be defined in many ways: From 80 percent of parents reporting enhanced skills in caring for their special needs child, to the two-year-old little girl stepping out of her wheelchair and walking hand in hand with her mother, to the exuberant faces of the 11 children who graduated from the Center with the skills needed to go on to elementary school. These accomplishments and others are critical for a child to reach his or her true potential.

In my second year as Board President, I am continuing to explore new avenues and opportunities for the Center to help children thrive in a world they cannot see — to reach their developmental milestones and to graduate to kindergarten prepared for the challenges and opportunities they will encounter. Through the dedication and caring work of a talented staff, an energetic board of directors and committed supporters like you, I am confident that the Center will continue to play a pivotal role in helping the children we serve excel. As I said at the Center's annual Feast for the Senses fundraiser, the Center will continue to perform and improve our services because the children are too important, and the work we do for them is too important.

In this report you will receive an overview of our services, our supporters, and our financial status for 2008. I invite you to schedule a visit to the Center. I firmly believe that a tour of the Center firsthand is the best and perhaps only way to truly understand the difference the Center makes every day in the lives of visually impaired children and their families.

As Helen Keller said, "Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much." Thank you again for all of your support and making such a difference in the lives of so many families.

With Sincere Gratitude,

Michael J. Aprahamian, Esq., Board President



2008 Financials

(for the year ended December 31, 2008)

Statement of Activities

Revenue and other support:

Program services	\$ 341,103
Contributions	\$ 504,298
Milwaukee County	\$ 84,726
United Way	\$ 96,037
Fundraising events	\$ 64,749
Investment income	\$ 2,035
Net assets released from restrictions	\$ 0
Total revenue and other support	\$ 1,092,948

Expenses:

Program	\$ 800,106
Administration	\$ 119,090
Fundraising	\$ 42,135
Total expenses	\$ 961,331
Income (loss) from operations	\$ 131,617

Other gains and losses:

Realized gains on investments	\$ 0
Unrealized gains (losses) on investments ..	\$ (27,996)
Total other gains and (losses)	\$ (27,996)

Change in net assets

\$ 103,621

Beginning net assets

\$ 436,190

Ending net assets

<u>\$ 539,811</u>

The complete 2008 audit is available upon request.

Statement of Financial Position

Assets

Cash and cash equivalents \$ 183,953

Receivables:

Accounts receivable \$ 72,902

Contribution receivable United Way . \$ 71,500

Contribution receivable, Other \$ 63,000

Total receivables \$ 207,402

Other assets:

Prepaid expenses \$ 566

Board designated \$ 75,000

Miller long-term investment fund . . \$ 93,383

Total other assets \$ 168,949

Fixed assets:

Leasehold improvements \$ 25,369

Office furniture and equipment . . . \$ 132,083

Accumulated depreciation \$ (139,877)

Fixed assets, net \$ 17,575

Total assets \$ 577,879

Liabilities and net assets

Liabilities

Accounts payable \$ 15,057

Accrued payroll and payroll taxes . . \$ 23,011

Total liabilities \$ 38,068

Net assets:

Unrestricted

Undesignated \$ 280,347

Board designated \$ 75,000

Temporarily restricted \$ 184,464

Total net assets \$ 539,811

Total liabilities and net assets \$ 577,879

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Confidence for Clarence

“Every day he would learn something new, and develop more confidence,” shares Brenda Minter about her son Clarence’s experience at the Center for Blind & Visually Impaired Children. “I’d think to myself, is this really the same little boy!”

Clarence, who will start 4K in the fall, first came to the Center in 2006. Diagnosed with OptoKinetic Nystagmus, a condition that causes involuntary eye movement, along with a second syndrome that results in spontaneous head movement, the young boy had difficulty focusing on objects and was easily fatigued when using his vision.

“His head would start to bob, and he would get so frustrated and not even try to bring things into focus,” Brenda recalls. “Instead he relied on hearing and seemed to give up on his vision. As a result, he was afraid to do most things — even to touch the grass. I was really worried that he would get lost in the cracks.”

During Clarence’s first few months at the Center, Brenda was at his side, watching and observing. “It was just amazing,” she says. “He absorbed so much and developed this new confidence. It was like I could see him thinking, ‘be patient, you can do this.’ And then he would try harder and do it.” She adds, “It got to a point I was comfortable dropping him off, knowing he was in good hands.”

Clarence graduated from the Center in 2008, an assured boy who not only liked to play on grass, but also splash in swimming pools, do gymnastics and tell his mom about everything. “He learned so many skills — most important — that it’s okay to try new things and there is no reason to be afraid,” Brenda says.



Thank you to our 2008 Donors!

We apologize for any errors or omissions that may have been made in recognizing our donors.

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“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.” – Helen Keller

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** 2008 staff members who resigned.*

Mission

Partnering with families, the Center for Blind & Visually Impaired Children provides education and therapy services to children with vision impairments so they may reach their fullest potential.

