OUR MISSION
For more than 67 years, our mission has endured: to empower individuals living with low vision or blindness to discover, develop and achieve their full potential.
You Helped Us Widen Our Circle

We are delighted to present Society for the Blind’s 2020 Annual Report. It was a challenging year, but also a year that allowed us to expand our services and widen the circle of people with vision loss and blindness who could receive our services. Thanks to your incredible support, we were able to offer remote services, increase the number of support groups and add telemedicine services.

This year’s annual report brings you highlights from 2020 as we adjusted to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic while ensuring our blindness skills education and low vision eyecare continued. While our primary service area covers 27 counties in northern California, in the past year we have had clients of all ages participating in our remote services who live in central and southern California and several participating from out of state. Our ability to widen the circle of support and services is possible because of you.

On behalf of the staff and board, we thank you for your continued support of Society for the Blind and the people we serve. We remain optimistic for the future and look forward to leading the way in serving people living with blindness and low vision in the Sacramento region and beyond.

Sincerely,

Tracy Kinoshita
Board President
Shari Roeseler
Executive Director

2020 Revenue

- Fundraising $1,084,364
- Low Vision Clinic
  - Products & Services $215,830
- Program Fees $740,920
- Store $43,021
- Other Revenue $27,150
- Government Grants $881,513

Total: $2,992,798

2020 Expenses

- Programs $2,251,657
- Core Mission Support $195,598
- Fundraising $343,619

Total: $2,790,874

We are committed to prudent use and stewardship of our resources so we can quickly respond to the needs of people living with vision loss. We are truly grateful for our community’s generosity that makes it possible for us to serve 27 counties in Northern California.
Meet Lisa and Ana Reshma

Because of her own vision loss, Lisa sees the world like a mosaic, so it is fitting that her Sunnyvale household is filled with a beautiful array of people from around the globe, including her 14-year-old daughter Ana Reshma who is blind and adopted from India.

Thanks to our CareersPLUS program going virtual, Ana Reshma was able to join the weekly program last spring.

“This has been such a wonderful opportunity for Ana Reshma,” Lisa said. “She’s jumped forward so much this year. I’ve seen her be pushed to contribute, to speak up and to stand up for herself. It’s broadened her horizons to think about what she can do in her life in terms of a career. CareersPLUS calls are a window to a world of what people who are blind are able to do.”

For Lisa and Ana Reshma’s full story, visit: SocietyfortheBlind.org/meet-lisa-and-ana-reshma/

Expanding Our Remote Services

When we closed our physical doors in spring of 2020 and moved to virtual programs, we had no idea it would actually widen the circle of people with vision loss who could find support, build skills and increase their independence. Suddenly people of all ages with vision loss who had no transportation or lived far away could access our online and telephone programs and services. From core skills to career readiness, assistive technology classes and support groups, people from across California and the United States logged on and dialed in all year.

Thank You to Our Volunteers

We are so thankful for our volunteers that gave more than 4,000 hours of their time in 2020. Though volunteers could not be onsite for most of 2020, we had dedicated volunteers serving remotely as Access News readers, senior and career mentors, collateral designers and even a volunteer for our Low Vision Clinic. We look forward to welcoming back our onsite volunteers!
Gratitude for the Philanthropic Vision of Nancy Fisher

Earlier this summer, we learned that Society for the Blind was one of the recipients of the new Nancy and Hank Fisher Senior Initiatives Fund at the Sacramento Region Community Foundation. This gift ensures our Senior IMPACT Project (SIP) will be able to meet the growing need for services. Over the past few years, Nancy Fisher has shown her deep commitment to seniors and has contributed to our Senior IMPACT Project. Her generosity is part of the legacy she and her late husband, Hank Fisher, built through their outstanding senior residential properties.

“I am pleased to support Society for the Blind’s mission of assisting the visually impaired,” Nancy Fisher said. “I’m particularly interested in providing such support to seniors in our community who avail themselves of the services provided by Society. This would include services that are provided in their facility, but also outreach services for those who live independently and are unable to travel to the Sacramento facility.”

For the full article, visit: SocietyfortheBlind.org/philanthropic-vision-of-nancy-fisher/

Expanding the Diversity of Our Senior Support Groups

We have been working over the past couple of years to diversify our senior support groups so all people feel welcome and comfortable. In addition to our support groups for people who are Asian American and Spanish speakers, in 2020 we added our Black American Senior Support Group (BASS), which continues to grow as members support each other through their experiences of vision loss and racial discrimination.

Meet Debra

Debra was repairing communications equipment for the U.S. Army when she began losing her vision. She came to Society for the Blind for classes and became our beloved receptionist for nine years before moving onto our Senior IMPACT Project team a few years ago.

Debra spearheaded our Black American Senior Support Group (BASS) after George Floyd was killed and several Black clients requested a safe space for people who are Black to process their experiences with the intersection of vision loss and racism.

“We’re addressing issues that the other groups don’t address, like the fears we all face being Black, blind and seniors – it makes us very vulnerable in society,” Debra said. “It’s our reality and it’s what we live with. But this group helps us feel empowered. We’re a family and team that love each other.”

For Debra’s full story, visit: SocietyfortheBlind.org/meet-debra-pendleton/
Meet David

When David first came to our Senior IMPACT Project, he was not sure he fit in – he was not fully blind. When he confessed that he was legally blind but still had some vision, one of our staff members put his arm around his shoulder and said, “You’re blind, and you’re welcome here.”

Since then, David has been through three senior retreats and four senior mentor workshops. He volunteers as a mentor in the Senior IMPACT Project and is learning Braille. He credits Society for the Blind’s supportive atmosphere.

“From that day on, I just really blossomed,” David said. “I was raised by an abusive father who believed fear was the greatest motivator. But Society for the Blind is a structured blindness center where you can just feel the unconditional love and support. I love them with all my heart, and volunteering as a mentor is part of giving back to them.”

For David’s full story, visit: SocietyfortheBlind.org/meet-david-moreno/

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

- Named a Best Place to Work
  In fall 2020, we were honored to be named one of Sacramento’s Best Places to Work by the Sacramento Business Journal.

- Media Support After Vandalism
  When Society was vandalized in fall 2020, nearly all Sacramento TV stations covered the story to help spread the word about our need for funding.

- Launching Telemedicine
  We launched our Low Vision Clinic telemedicine program in fall 2020 to ensure patients could still receive care remotely.

- Award Winning Documentary
  We were honored to be featured in PBS KVIE’s Emmy award-winning “Life After Sight” ViewFinder episode in spring 2020.

- Remote National Fitness Challenge
  The shutdown did not phase our National Fitness Challenge participants who continued to find creative ways to improve their fitness from home.

- Resource Fair Goes Virtual, Monthly
  Our fall 2020 resource fair went virtual this year to great acclaim. We are now offering the popular resource fair monthly instead of annually.

- CareersPLUS Skyrockets
  When our CareersPLUS program went remote, our participant numbers increased dramatically.
More Ways You Can Help

Become a Monthly Donor:
Join our Vision Forward Giving Circle
When you give monthly, you become a member of our Vision Forward Giving Circle that ensures people losing their sight can create a new vision for their future. Sign up online at: SocietyfortheBlind.org/vision-forward-giving-circle/

Make a One-Time Donation
Give online at SocietyfortheBlind.org or use the enclosed envelope.

Ask Your Employer to Match Your Gift
Find out if your employer offers a matching gift program – you can double your donation!

Donate Your Vehicle
Say no to car repairs and instead donate your unwanted vehicle to Society for the Blind – it’s easy, pick-up is free, and the donation is tax-deductible. Call 855-550-4483 or visit CarEasy.org/nonprofit/SocietyForTheBlind.

Shop Online Through AmazonSmile
When you shop through AmazonSmile, Amazon donates a portion of the proceeds at no cost to you. Just log in and select Society for the Blind.

Leave a Legacy of Vision in Your Community
We are serving more people each year – planned gifts are essential to helping us continue our vital programs in the future. If you have included Society for the Blind in your estate plan or would like more information, please see the enclosed flier.

2021 Board of Directors

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<td>Tracy Kinoshita</td>
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