

**Message from the CEO and Board Chair**

“I’m realizing that vision loss isn’t the end of the world. I can still do things.” Our client Tom said this after a technology training class, and it’s something we hear almost every day from our clients.

Vision impairment is the most feared disability of all disabilities; people are afraid that if they can’t see, they can’t do what they want to do in life. Our staff and volunteers spread a different message: there is hope. Maybe you or a loved one is living with vision loss right now. There is a world of possibility out there, and we can help you access it.

In 2017, our community of people with vision loss inspired us to innovate, including more small-group Independent Living Skills classes, more volunteers, and new developments thanks to a grant from the Live Well at Home Grant Program of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (2016-2017). Thanks to the grant, we upgraded our database, developed partnerships with other groups serving older adults, and built a fee-for-service program on a sliding fee scale to serve everyone who needs vision rehabilitation training.

How do we transform fear into hope? We provide emotional support and functional skill-building in our programs. Our clients learn techniques and tools that they can use to do the everyday functional tasks, from cooking, to reading, to using their smartphone, to getting around town. And during that training, our clients need to work through feelings of grief, loss, and fear. So we listen. We empathize. We bring people with vision loss into a vibrant community of others who are dealing with the same issues. When we listen, we can change lives.

Thank you for joining us in our mission.



Kate Grathwol, Ph.D.  
President/CEO



Patricia Durst  
Board Chair

**2017 By the Numbers**

901 clients with vision loss participated in training, support groups, presentations, and recreational activities	467 clients attended support groups	232 clients attended an average of 9 accessible social and recreational activities per month
52 clients received rehabilitation training in orientation and mobility, cooking, tasks of daily living, Braille, typing, and technology	302 volunteers gave 10,206 hours of service to clients	67 deafblind adults and 57 deafblind children received direct services to adults to help them communicate with others and maintain their independence

**The mission of Vision Loss Resources is to create a community of services, skills and support for people with vision loss.**

We serve people with vision loss. Services are provided throughout the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area.

**COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**Training and supporting adults with vision loss, primarily seniors**

Total program service expenses: \$622,718

**REHABILITATION CENTER**

**Individualized training for workforce-aged adults**

Total program service expenses: \$641,874

**DEAFBLIND SERVICES MINNESOTA, LLC**

**Service and support for people with combined vision and hearing loss**

Total program service expenses: \$1,050,162

**CONTRACT PRODUCTION SERVICES**

**Social enterprise investing 100 percent of its profits into Vision Loss Resources**

**Providing packaging and light manufacturing with quick turnaround to local and regional customers**

Total expenses: \$11,931,613

**Live Well at Home Grant Program**

**A Grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2016-2017**

Technology upgrades

- We improved our database in order to track our clients' needs and analyze how we could strengthen our services. We also moved the database to cloud-based storage so that our specialists can make the most of their time with clients by quickly accessing information and entering data.

Program sustainability

- Developed revenue to sustain program private pay and sliding fee scale services to provide one-to-one direct community support and vision rehabilitation services.
- Provided vision rehabilitation training to more older adults with vision loss by offering additional Independent Living Skills courses.
- Our specialists were certified in vision rehabilitation instruction.

Outreach

- We met and made connections with professionals in related fields by attending and presenting at events such as the Minnesota Age & Disabilities Odyssey Conference, St. Paul Senior Workers Fall Aging Conference, and the American Society on Aging's Aging in America Conference.
- We held trainings to spread our expertise and insight to other professionals who work with aging adults, such as the Faith Community Nurse Network, DARTS, and the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging.
- We contacted senior housing activity directors as well as ophthalmologists and optometrists, to inform them of services that we could provide to their residents or patients.

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