

HISTORY

In 1946, the local Community Chest (now called United Way of Allen County) asked the Social Planning Council to conduct a study to determine if services for the blind should be carried out by a part-time Community Chest employee, be merged or coordinated with other existing community services, or if a new non-profit corporation to serve people who are blind was needed in the community.

The Social Planning Council completed their study in 1948 and recommended that a new non-profit agency for the blind be started. The Council also recommended that an interim committee be established to set up the new agency. This committee, known as the Allen County Committee for the Blind, was established in 1948. This interim group brought Helen Keller to Fort Wayne in 1949 to challenge the community to address the needs of the blind, and to assist the Committee with its first fund raising effort. The first two-year budget was \$15,000. The *Allen County League for the Blind, Inc. (ACLB)* was established as a corporation on October 17, 1950 to provide educational, employment and rehabilitation services for people who were blind, began operations in February 1951, and obtained its non-profit, 501(c)(3) status in July 1951.

The agency was **instrumental** in the **passage** of a 1955 state law that required public schools to provide educational services for children who were blind, deaf, mentally retarded, and epileptic. In 1958 the **agency** rejected the concept of sheltered employment for the blind and started a program to place these individuals in community based competitive jobs.

The League operated as a completely self-contained organization until 1961. From 1961 to 1981 it was administered by the Community Coordinating Council. During this 20 year period, the League maintained its non-profit corporate status and was governed by its own Board of Directors. In 1981 the agency re-established its independence through a federal grant to become the **first Center for Independent Living in Indiana** and separated ties with the Community Coordinating Council.

This event had a major impact on the agency's philosophy and operations. The League established a commitment to "consumer control" and put this commitment in action by requiring that the **majority of its staff and Board members be qualified people with disabilities.** A new organizational emphasis was also placed on addressing systemic barriers that people with disabilities encounter as they seek to be included in community life. In 1994, the organization's name was changed to the *League for the Blind & Disabled, Inc.* to better reflect the Center's service to all people with severe disabilities and to reflect service availability to people with disabilities outside of Allen County.

In 2006, DeafLink was acquired from AWS and was established as the only non-profit sign language interpreting and case coordination provider in Northeast Indiana. In 2009, the In-Home Care Division was created to help people receive the homemaking and attendant care services they need in order to remain in their own home and community.

Today, the League for the Blind & Disabled, Inc. continues its tradition as a direct service provider and advocate through commitment to its **mission to provide and promote opportunities that empower people with disabilities to achieve their potential.** Services are provided to all people with significant or severe disabilities and communities in 11 counties in Northeast Indiana.

SOWING SEEDS OF CHANGE

Sixty years ago, a group of people in Fort Wayne looked at the needs of people who were blind and purposed that change might be necessary in the way they were served. They brought Ms. Helen Keller to Fort Wayne in 1949 to challenge the community to address the needs of the blind. Her Fort Wayne visit in 1949 helped plant the seed of change about people with disabilities.

The seeds that were planted grew and began to bear fruit as the independent living center we now call the League for the Blind and Disabled. Through the years, leadership at the agency have embraced these changes and planted new seeds of change. The League planted seeds to address the needs of not just the blind, but all disabilities. Some of these changes include:

- * Being instrumental in the passage of a 1955 state law that required public schools to provide educational services for children who were blind, deaf, mentally retarded, and epileptic.
- * Rejecting the concept of sheltered employment for the blind in 1958 and starting a program to place these individuals in community based competitive jobs.
- * Establishing the concept that people with disabilities are the true experts on their disability
- * Working to remove systemic barriers that people with disabilities encounter as they seek to be included in community life
- * Established a commitment to "consumer control" and put this commitment in action by requiring that the majority of its staff and Board members be qualified people with disabilities.
- * Addressed the needs of those who are Deaf with the DeafLink program, the needs of those who live in rural areas with Agribility, and those who want to remain independent in their home with the addition of In-Home Care.

As Ms. Helen Keller once said "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Thank you for your support of this small group of people who are doing so much for people with disabilities.

y /

M. Frances Ganaway
Board President

M. Lances Hanan

(aviv) FT 2

David A. Nelson, CRC President/CEO



Mission

To provide and promote opportunities that empower people with disabilities to achieve their potential.

Vision

The full inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life.

VALUES, BELIEFS AND ACTIONS

At the League for the Blind & Disabled, we:

Value people with disabilities and,

Believe that people with disabilities are the true experts in issues that affect their lives.

Therefore, in all of our interactions, we respect people with disabilities as service consumers instead of as patients or clients who need to be "fixed", "rehabilitated" or cared for by providers.

Value consumer control and,

Believe that people with disabilities are entitled to control over the decisions that affect their lives.

Therefore, consumers provide the direction for the League services that they receive, constitute the majority of the League's Board of Directors and staff, and are encouraged to participate in other decision making bodies that are relevant to their issues.

Value equal opportunity and,

Believe that all people should have the opportunity to use their strengths and abilities to achieve their potential.

Therefore, we work at individual and systemic levels to promote equal access to opportunities in society that people with disabilities need to achieve their potential.

Value diversity of thought and ideas and,

Believe that this diversity stimulates innovation, creativity, knowledge, and understanding that makes the League a more effective organization.

Therefore, we actively *work to include people from diverse backgrounds and cultures* in the League's Board of Directors, staff, and consumer service population in order to have access to the widest possible range of thoughts and ideas.

Value the community and,

Believe that we have a responsibility to contribute to the overall quality of life in the community.

Therefore, we *share our knowledge*, *expertise*, *and physical facilities with others* for the betterment of the community.

Value quality and,

Believe that consumers, funders and communities in which we operate are entitled to nothing less than our best efforts.

Therefore, we hold ourselves accountable for providing *quality programs and services*, managing our resources in a fiscally responsible manner, and reflecting this commitment to quality in action and appearance.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

1. INDIVIDUAL & SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY SERVICES

Advocacy is conducted by all staff members and is what truly separates Centers for Independent Living from other programs for people with disabilities. Individual advocacy services assists people with disabilities exercise their basic rights and responsibilities and teaches personal advocacy skills. The League also works at local, state, and national levels to ensure that needed supports are available and that discriminatory practices and barriers to independent living are removed.

2. INFORMATION & REFERRAL SERVICES

Information and referral (I&R) services are provided by all staff members. The basic purpose behind the provision of these services is to ensure that information relating to rights, options, issues and resources are available to any individual, organization or business in need of these services. Staffed by a full time I&R Coordinator, the program maintains an internet based set of local, state and national disability related information, sponsors distance learning opportunities, and conducts information research activities for individuals, organizations and business.

3. INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS TRAINING

This program provides daily living skills instruction to consumers, including home and personal management, as well as communication skills training. These are often the skills needed by individuals to remain in their home after the on-set of a disabling condition.

4. PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

This program is designed to promote personal independence for people with disabilities by providing opportunities for them to meet experienced mentors with a similar disabilities or experiences. The purpose of the service is to provide practical, real life solutions to everyday problems encountered as a result of a new disability. This program also includes peer support group activities.

5. ORIENTATION & MOBILITY TRAINING (O&M)

The purpose of O&M is to provide consumers with the skills needed to travel independently. Services include white cane travel training and public transportation travel training.

6. ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT SERVICES

The Adaptive Equipment Program maintains an inventory of independent living aids and adaptive technology used to provide equipment demonstration and loaner services for consumers and the community at large. This type of equipment often enables people with disabilities to perform personal, work, recreational and social functions that would otherwise not be possible. Individuals can also acquire some items through the League at no cost, prorate cost or at the League's cost, depending on their ability to pay.

7. YOUTH SERVICES

This year round service to children, youth and their family members was established in 1995 as an expansion of the League's Summer Youth Program. It emphasizes integrating children and youth with severe disabilities into existing age appropriate, community based summer programs with individualized support from League staff members. It also includes advocacy training and assistance, parent support services, youth peer support opportunities, and adult/youth mentoring services.

8. BRAILLE SERVICES

The League produces materials in braille using a computerized braille printing system. Braille materials are produced on a fee for service basis for government and private sector organizations.

9. SENIOR BLIND SERVICES

This program provides daily living skills training, adaptive equipment, orientation and mobility instruction (travel training), and other independent living services (individual advocacy, peer support, information and referral assistance, services to family members and followup services) to people age 55 and above who are blind or visually impaired. The purpose of the program is to help these consumers maintain a high quality of life and live independently in their own homes and communities.

10. VOLUNTEER SERVICES

This program recruits and coordinates community volunteers to provide group meeting transportation, reader services, home visits, pre-school vision services, recreational services, adaptive equipment services and office support at the League. Over 120 volunteers donate over 8,000 hours per year to the community through the League.

11. DEAFLINK

DeafLink is a program of the League that provides sign language interpreting and case coordination services for people who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing throughout northeast Indiana. Interpreting services are provided on a fee-for-service basis by an on-staff and private contract interpreters. Fees are paid by businesses, government entities and other third party payers who need assistance in communicating with people who are Deaf.

12. AGRABILITY PROGRAM

Through a partnership with Breaking New Ground at Purdue University in West Lafayette in 2008, the League provides case coordination services, conducts outreach, and provides public education services for people with disabilities in agriculture and communities in rural areas.

13. IN-HOME CARE

In-home care is the League's newest service and includes homemaker, attendant care, and respite care services. These are provided in the residential setting of those served and enable consumers to stay in their homes and community. This is a fee-for-service program.

14. COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

The League provides large and small meeting rooms at no cost to organizations that make positive contributions to the quality of life for all citizens. Meeting rooms are scheduled on a first come, first serve basis.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS - FISCAL YEAR 2009

Provided in-depth services to **574** consumers, for an increase of **10%** as compared to **FY 2008.** Of those who received services and responded to an agency evaluation survey:

96% reported that they maintained or increased their independence

62% reported gaining more control over the decisions that affect their lives

58% reported maintained or increased participation in community life

72% of all personal goals established by consumers were achieved

Responded to **2,484** information and referral inquiries (I&R), for an increase of **24.0%** as compared to *FY 2008*. Of those surveyed who received advocacy alert information:

100% reported gaining new information on current advocacy and/or legislative issues 25% reported that they expressed their views on issues by taking action

78% of active consumers and I&R consumers gained access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and/or adaptive equipment.

Engaged in 12 community capacity building activities. Examples of community capacity building activities include:

- ☑ Conducted 3 presentations that reached 226 people in outlying counties to inform them of League services and programs.
- ☑ Developing a medical training curriculum to improve access to medical services for people who are Deaf.

In *FY 2009* the League provided 51 public education activities using 638 staff hours and contacted 8,481 people.

- ☑ 500 students rec eived disabilitity training on guide dogs and people who are blind.
- Provided free meeting room space for 129 non-League events for groups working to improve the community.

Facilitated 10 monthly support groups, with 5 of those groups meeting in outlying counties.

Collaborated on a Deaf smoke alarm project with the Fort Wayne Fire Department, Fort Wayne Housing & Urban Development & Delta Gamma Chapter of Psi Iota Xi. HUD provided a grant to the fire department, who coordinated with the League to identify Deaf consumers and provide interpreters, and Psi Iota Xi helped pay for the interpreters. **Sixteen homes** received alarms.

Reinstated the block party. Attendance was over **500**, with school supplies provided to **100 children**, & **140 pounds of food** collected for Community Harvest Food Bank.

Continued to promote quality programs by supporting 44 different training activities for staff members. Examples include:

- ☑ Medicaid in Indiana
- ☑ Interpreting in Mental Health Settings

In the second year of the transition/diversion program, 16 consumers were helped out of or kept out of institutions for a taxpayer savings of \$323,840.

In-Home Care, the newest division at the League, grew dramatically in its first year. The program has 2 full-time staff, 48 consumers that are served by 28 staff, and is licensed in 27 Indiana counties.

Began a new partnership with the Literacy Alliance using our facility two times a week to provide English classes for the Burmese population.

Provided space in our facility for Sorensen Communications to distribute video phones to people who are Deaf.

Julie Collins received the 2008 Frank Celerik Sight Service Award from the Fort Wayne Central Lions Club on December 17, 2008

Tom Locke, Past Board Chair, was honored by the Foellinger Foundation at a luncheon on October 28, 2008 for his Board service at the League.

Volunteers donated 8,099 hours in FY2009. The value of these volunteer hours from the Bureau of Labor 2007 statistics is \$17.16 per hour, which is a donated value of \$138,978.84.

In *FY2009*, **58.8%** of the members of the Board of Directors were people with disabilities, and **17.6%** of the Board members were individuals from racial minority groups.

In *FY2009*, 72% of the League staff members were **people with disabilities**, and 40% of the staff members were individuals from **racial minority groups**.

Increased fee-for-service revenue by 50% as compared to FY 2008.

The League provides services to any person with disabilities who wants and needs to build their individual foundation of strength and independence. During 2009, League program highlights included:

Adaptive Equipment Services maintained an inventory of independent living aids and adaptive technology to provide equipment demonstration, loaner, and acquisition services. The program helped 133 people find the equipment they needed to be more independent.



The League's Adaptive Equipment Program is designed to address the equipment needs of people with disabilities. It is the only program of its kind in northeast Indiana, and provides equipment services to all people with severe disabilities regardless of age, disability, or their ability to pay for the service. The purpose of the program is to help these individuals acquire specialized equipment that they need to be more independent and self-sufficient.

Advocacy efforts promoted the full inclusion of people with disabilities into all aspects of community life. In FY 2009, the League helped 156 individuals with advocacy issues, an increase of 34% over FY 2008. Staff members devoted 311 hours to 12 system wide advocacy activities, and reached an audience of 156 people. In addition, the program advocated for XX systems improvements to increase the availability and quality of community based programs and equal access and/or options for people with significant disabilities. Some of the advocacy activities from this year include:



Assisted 3 people in understanding ADA accessibility issues with a medical facility



Presented Advocacy training on how to be a strong advocate for students with disabilities to freshmen and sophmore teacher candidates at the University of Saint Francis.



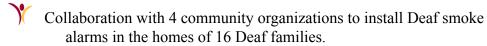
Agrability is an ongoing partnership with Breaking New Ground at Purdue University in West Lafayette. The program provides information, education and outreach activities for agricultural workers and members of rural communities. In *FY 2009*, 17.4% of those served by the League were from rural areas.

Braille Services produced 31870 pages of Braille materials on a fee-for-service basis for government and private sector organizations in 14 different states in FY 2009.

Community Support Services provided free meeting space to organizations that make positive contributions to the quality of community life. In FY 2009, there were 129 non-League events that utilized this free meeting space.

DeafLink is the only non-profit sign language interpreting and case coordination provider in Northeast Indiana. Sign language and interpreting services were provided for **183** consumers in **FY 2009**, an increase of **37%** compared to **FY 2008**. Case coordination services were provided for 32 consumers. DeafLink staff have provided many community public education awareness activities including:







Independent Living Skills Training provided daily living skills instruction, including home and personal management as well as communication skills training to **227** consumers, an increase of **28%** compared to **FY 2008**. Emphasis was placed on consumers living independently in their own homes rather than an institution. The program assisted:



7

16 consumers were helped out of or kept out of institutions for a taxpayer savings of \$323,840.

Information and Referral Services responded to 2,484 inquiries and provided these individuals, organizations and businesses with the information they needed regarding disability-related rights, options and issues. These efforts reflect an increase of 24% when compared to *FY 2008* service levels. In addition, 25 Advocacy Alerts were disbursed covering 137 different issues, prompting 25% of those receiving them express their views by taking action.



In-Home Care began to serve consumers for the first time during FY 2009 as the League's newest and fastest growing division. The staff provided homemaker, attendant care, and respite care services to 48 consumers in their own residence. This fee-for-service program provides services in the home to enable consumers to stay in their home and community.

Orientation & Mobility Training helped equip 51 individuals with the skills they needed to travel independently, including white cane travel training and public transportation travel training.



Peer Support Services served 24 consumers through individual peer support services and worked with 348 consumers and family members through 10 support groups. The support groups focus on topics of interest to participants such as guide dog presentation, eye diseases and treatment, low vision equipment demonstrations and includes time for socialization.



Senior Blind Services provided daily living skills training, adaptive equipment, and other independent living services to 138 blind or visually impaired people age 55 and above, an increase of 14.5% over **FY 2008**

Volunteer Services recruited and coordinated 161 volunteers to provide support group meeting transportation, adaptive equipment services, reader service and office support. In *FY 2009*, our dedicated volunteers:



Y Donated **8,099** hours to the League

Value of these **8,099** hours at \$17.16 per hour = **\$138,978.84** (Bureau of Labor 2007 statistics)

Conducted pre-school vision screenings for **562** children.

Tom Locke, Esquire, was honored by the Foellinger Foundation at a luncheon in October 2008 for his Volunteer Board service at the League.



Youth Services provided parent advocacy training, family and peer networking opportunities and advocacy assistance for young people with disabilities. Through the year, **167 youth** were served by the program.

A key component of the Youth Services program is to place young people with significant disabilities in inclusive, age appropriate, community based programs of their choosing. The Youth Services coordinators gave staff training and/or provided individualized technical assistance to community based organizations so that youth with disabilities could participate in inclusive summer camps with other youth in the area. The League connected 69 boys and girls to 14 different community involvement opportunities, like Drum Set Camp, Science Central, MASTer Camp, Zoo Camp, and McCracken Basketball Camp to name





LEAGUE FOR THE BLIND AND DISABLED, INC. STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2009 WITH COMPARATIVE TOTALS FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2008

*1,				200		D9			2008
		<u>UNR</u>	ESTRICTED		IPORARILY STRICTED		MANENTLY STRICTED	TOTAL	TOTALS
Ē	REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT						ere Significant		
•	GOVERNMENT GRANTS	\$	594,900	\$	0	\$	0	\$ 594,900	•
	UNITED WAY CONTRIBUTIONS AND GRANTS		62,377 216,364		0 73,335		0 390	62,377 290,089	65,860 430,614
	PROGRAM FEES AND SUPPLY SALES INVESTMENT INCOME		489,845		0		0	489,845	349,369
	(NET OF TRUSTEE FEES							•	
	OF \$17,863 AND \$19,261)		523		2,216		0	2,739	80,787
	UNREALIZED GAINS (LOSSES) (LOSS) GAIN ON SALE OF ASSETS		115 ,80 5 0		0 0		0	115,805	(294,897) 5,170
	OTHER REVENUES		10,569		0		0	10,569	. 5,170
	NET ASSETS RELEASED		10,505		v		v	10,505	Ū
	FROM RESTRICTIONS		136,934		(136,934)		0	<u> </u>	0
	TOTAL REVENUES, GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT	<u>\$ 1</u>	.627.317	<u>\$</u>	(61,383)	<u>\$</u>	390	\$ 1,566,324	<u>\$ 1,171,560</u>
<u>I</u>	EXPENSES								
	PROGRAM SERVICES: CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT								
	LIVING SUPPORTING SERVICES:	<u>\$ 1</u>	,268,041	<u>\$</u>	0	<u>\$</u>	0	\$ 1,268,041	<u>\$ 1,091,005</u>
	MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL FUND RAISING	\$	98,993 11,460	\$	0 0	\$	0 0	\$ 98,993 11,460	\$ 86,738 43,309
	TOTAL SUPPORTING	_		_		_			
	<u>SERVICES</u>	\$	110,453	<u>\$</u>	0	<u>\$</u>	0	<u>\$ 110,453</u>	<u>\$ 130,047</u>
	TOTAL EXPENSES INCREASE (DECREASE) IN	<u>\$ 1</u>	<u>,378,494</u>	<u>\$</u>	0	\$	0	\$ 1,378,494	<u>\$ 1,221,052</u>
	NET ASSETS BEFORE ADOPTION OF NEW								
	STANDARD	\$	248,823	\$	(61,383)	\$	390	\$ 187,830	\$ (49,492)
	EFFECT OF ADOPTION OF NEW STANDARD		(152,674)		152,674		0	0	0
	INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	\$	96,149	\$	91,291	\$	390	\$ 187,830	\$ (49,492)
]	NET ASSETS - BEGINNING	_3	3,823,502		547,730	_	<u>374,051</u>	4,745,283	4,794,775
]	NET ASSETS - ENDING	\$ 3	<u>3,919,651</u>	\$	639,021	<u>\$</u>	<u>374,441</u>	<u>\$ 4,933,113</u>	<u>\$ 4,745,283</u>

LEAGUE FOR THE BLIND & DISABLED STAFF MEMBERS

INDEPENDENT LIVING & DEAFLINK STAFF

Sylvia Adams Adaptive Equipment Coordinator

Juanita DeLeon In-Home Care Director

Nancy Gasparini Independent Living Director
Nancy Gerding Braille Services Coordinator
Cheryl Gillespie Donor Relations/Grants Director

Beverly Harding Advocacy Coordinator

Mike Hines Agrability Case Coordinator

Pat Howard Information & Referral Coordinator Wendy James Orientation & Mobility Specialist

JJ Johnston DeafLink Case Coordinator

Glenda Kendle Office Manager

Sharon Lengacher Bookkeeping & Braille Services Assistant Laura Lindsay Independent Living Skills Coordinator

Annie Moorman Janitor/Maintenance Technician

David A. Nelson, CRC
Carlos Parra
Jodie Pennell
Diana Roach
President/CEO
Driver/Assistant
Interpreter Scheduler
Development Director
Patrick Robinson
Administrative Assistant

Linda Scribner Senior Blind Services Coordinator

Kevin Showalter Youth Services Coordinator

Garth Sponseller DeafLink Director

Carmen Terrell Youth Services Coordinator

Mark Williams Volunteer Coordinator

IN-HOME CARE STAFF MEMBERS

Jeanie BairRobin GovanTylisa MoormanLouise BrelandMiranda GreerVeronica MorenoLisa BrightStefanie HernandezWarwick Morrison

Leta Bryant Maria James Dora Rivera
Sylvia Castro Soshia Jones Vonda Ruhr
Janice Clingerman Beatrice Malone Michelle Tyra

Ronald Cloyd Aysia Mambo Grasiela Vasquez

Ronald Cloyd Aysia Mambo Grasiela Vasquez
Marisole Delafuente Dolores Mata Eve Villeda
Vicki Garcia Kabala Mboboshi Martha Villareal
Marisela Gracia Heladia Montes Ziola Villeda

LEAGUE FOR THE BLIND & DISABLED BOARD MEMBERS



Back row L to R: Frank Moore, Eric Ellet, Donald Dunten, Mike McKay, Nathan Strange, John Guingrich Middle row L to R: Natalie Eggeman, Frances Ganaway, Susana Worth

Front row L to R: Randy Collins, David Strater

2009 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Frances Ganaway, Chair Susana Worth, Vice Chair Frank Moore, Secretary Jeff Sprinkle, Treasurer Mike McKay, AIA, Immediate Past Chair

Randy Collins
Natalie Eggeman*
Eric Ellet*
John Guingrich
Karl LaPan
Thomas S. Locke, Esq.
Frank N. Moore
Lisa Poole
Nathan Strange
David Strater

^{*} New board members



Serving people with disabilities in the following counties in Northeast Indiana:

Adams

Allen

DeKalb

Huntington

Jay

Kosciusko

LaGrange

Noble

Steuben

Wells

Whitley

5821 South Anthony Blvd

Fort Wayne, IN 46861

260-441-0551 Voice/TTY

800-889-3443 Voice/TTY

Fax: 260-441-7760

Email: the.league@verizon.net

www.the-league.org

