

"To dream anything that you want to dream. That's the beauty of the human mind. To do anything that you want to do. That is the strength of the human will. To trust yourself to test your limits. That is the courage to succeed."

Bernard Edmonds
1910-2003




**THE
LEAGUE**
for the blind & disabled

2007 Annual Report



Look at me. What do you see? I am just a girl standing in front of you; a girl with a dream. When I was little, I was always told to be careful, slow down, take it easy. Why do all the other kids get to play? What makes me so different? Why can't I play too?

I used to sit in my room and dream. Dreams were all I had. I would dream of one day being able to dance. I longed to be onstage and bring joy to someone else's life.

The League made it possible for me to fulfill my dreams. I used to let my condition drag me down, and be the obstacle between me and my dreams. But today is a new day. I have dreams that now have life. I have desires that I know I can accomplish. I am a living testimony that dreams are not meant to be only pursued, but to be actualized, because I can do anything I set my heart to. Every day is a new beginning for me now.

A Foundation of Strength

At the League for the Blind & Disabled, we encourage dreams by providing the services, support, and connections that build each consumer's foundation of strength. With this strength comes greater independence and an increased ability to achieve one's dreams.

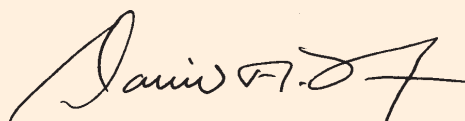
To support consumers and their dreams, the League strengthened its organizational foundation and consumer opportunities during fiscal year 2007 by:

- Building a partnership with Purdue University, West Lafayette, to provide outreach and case coordination services to disabled farm workers and residents in rural northeast Indiana counties. The program will be implemented in fiscal year 2008.
- Devoting 2,130 staff hours to community capacity building, including establishing partnerships among those with disabilities, advocates, service providers, and governmental representatives.
- Developing staff members through 35 different training activities.
- Creating a Development Director position and a Business Manager position to support the League's strategic objectives of increasing donations and fee-for-service revenues. By year's end, charitable donations increased by more than 8%, and fee-for-service revenue increased by 53% when compared to the previous year.
- Engaging community stakeholders to gain preliminary input for a long range facility and property plan.

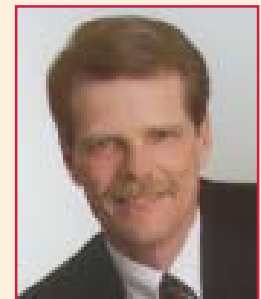
With a strong foundation, all dreams are possible. And we know that once a dream is realized, a new one can be fostered. That's why we're here today, and it's why we will be here tomorrow.



Michael A. McKay
Board President



David A. Nelson, CRC
President/CEO



David A. Nelson, CRC
President/CEO



Michael A. McKay
Board President



Don't assume that because I am Deaf I can't go to college, get a job, or have dreams. My Deafness doesn't affect my intelligence or my ability to work.

One 6th-grade teacher yelled at me because she didn't think I understood what was being said. No, I didn't always catch everything, but I am not stupid. For example, I learned about "don't drink and drive." Because I only got parts of what was going on, though, in fear I told my mom she would get arrested while drinking a cola on the drive home from school.

I'm in college today. I'm the first Deaf nursing student at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne. With the League's support, I have an interpreter in class. I have a special stethoscope, and I can communicate one-to-one with patients.

A foundation of strength and independence is vital to every individual's ability to achieve his or her dreams. At the League for the Blind & Disabled, the development of that foundation is supported through programs that empower people with disabilities to achieve their potential.

Volunteers and professional staff link those with disabilities to the services, opportunities, peer- and community-based support they want and need. As importantly, the League offers the opportunities that enable these consumers to have control over the decisions that affect their lives and make their dreams possible.

During the 2007 program year, 475 consumers were served by the League and received in-depth services, an increase of 48% when compared to the previous year. Of those who received in-depth services and responded to an agency evaluation:

- 91% reported that they maintained or increased their independence.
- 77% reported gaining more control over the decisions that affect their lives.
- 51% reported maintaining or increasing their participation in community life.

These respondents also reported that 60% of all the personal goals they established were achieved. And with each goal that was achieved, a dream came closer to being realized.

Additional evaluation efforts demonstrated these League-supported outcomes:

- 79% of active consumers and Information & Referral consumers reported gaining access to previously unavailable transportation, health care, and/or adaptive equipment.
- 100% of those responding to a survey about the League's advocacy alert information service reported gaining new information about current advocacy and/or legislative issues.
- 67% of those responding to the survey about the advocacy alerts reported that they expressed their views on issues by taking action.





I knew he would be the right employee for the position. We recognized his diligence toward his work duties. However, I wasn't sure, because he had a disability. I didn't want him to have problems or be frustrated in the work environment.

I talked to the League, and they gave me the right questions to ask. They also helped connect him with the social service agencies and resources that made us both more confident.

I had anxieties, but with the League's support I grew personally. They helped me become a better person in working with those with disabilities. I now understand the opportunities that are possible when we look further.

I discovered that there are agencies to help all of us in enhancing the workplace for those with disabilities. We became more comfortable, and he blended in successfully.

The League provides services to those with disabilities who want and need to build their individual foundation of strength and independence. During 2007, League accomplishments included:

Adaptive Equipment Services provided equipment demonstration, loaner, and acquisition services to 146 consumers. To further increase the affordability of equipment, the League successfully negotiated adaptive equipment purchase discounts with two providers.

Advocacy efforts promoted the full inclusion of people with disabilities into all aspects of community life. For example, the League:

- Hosted a legislative forum in cooperation with Fifth Freedom to inform members of the Indiana General Assembly about current disability issues.
- Organized regular statewide meetings of state-funded community agencies for the Deaf to increase collaboration and address common challenges.
- Advocated successfully for the inclusion of \$2.5 million into the state's budget to support the state-funded Centers for Independent Living.



Braille Services produced thousands of pages of Braille materials on a fee-for-service basis for government and private sector organizations. To ensure appropriate compensation for these services, the League negotiated appropriate fee increases with two corporate customers.



Community Support Services offered free meeting space to organizations that make positive contributions to the quality of community life. During 2007, 72 non-League events were hosted in available meeting rooms.



Right now I'm the same as you; I look down, I see the door handle and I open the door. One day, I'll wake up and I won't be able to tell the door from the wall. I won't even see the wall.

Unfortunately, people won't see the abilities I still have, or the amount of things I can still do for myself. They'll only see a disability.

The League is here to remind me that I can open my own doors and I don't have to depend on others. I can still find my way around, just differently.

The League has helped me go as far as I can. I feel better about myself now, and I know I can do things.



DeafLink provided 2,074 sign language interpreting and case coordination services for consumers who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The League also initiated:

- A statewide training project for people who are Deaf and the sign language interpreters who serve them. The project increases access to medical, employment, and Social Security benefits planning services.
- A partnership among the Deaf community, advocates, and Dupont Hospital to improve access to medical services.
- An Internet-based interpreting project in collaboration with the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center to expand the availability of sign language services to consumers.

Independent Living Skills Training provided daily living skills instruction, including home and personal management, as well as communication skills training for 28 consumers.

Information and Referral Services

responded to 1,182 inquiries and provided these individuals, organizations, and businesses with the information they needed regarding disability-related rights, options, and issues. The efforts reflect an increase of nearly 35% when compared to 2006 service levels.

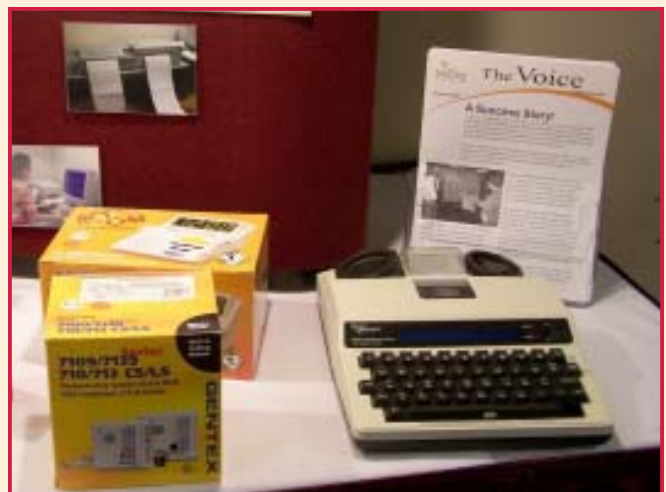
Orientation and Mobility Training

helped equip individuals with the skills they needed to travel independently, including white cane travel training and public transportation travel training; 52 consumers were served.

Peer Support Services

coordinated 37 peer counseling and support group sessions between people with disabilities and mentors with similar disabilities or experiences. In response to consumer need in Steuben County, a new support group was also established for older citizens who are blind or visually impaired.

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I saw the face of hope in a cucumber. It was a huge cucumber, grown by my 11-year-old son after summer camp triggered his desire for a garden.

He planted his garden, and he cared for it all summer. His harvest was bountiful, and he generously gave his produce to others.

For him it was a powerful experience to take responsibility for something he created. It was also powerful for him to learn the joy of giving.

As he gained personal strength through his garden, he gave me hope. Hope that each of us will discover how our capabilities and dreams can create a bountiful harvest which can be shared with others.

Senior Blind Services provided daily living skills training, adaptive equipment, orientation and mobility instruction, and other independent living services to 94 people age 55 and above who are blind or visually impaired.

Volunteer Services recruited and coordinated 166 volunteers to provide support group meeting transportation, reader service, home visitors, preschool vision services, recreational services, adaptive equipment services, and League office support.

Because of the 8,831 hours of time given by volunteers who served the League and its consumers, these services were available across Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Jay, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wells, and Whitley counties in northern Indiana.

It is rewarding that two dedicated volunteers received external community recognition for their commitment:

- *Len Luginbill*, a volunteer, received a Jefferson Award for Public Service in April 2007 for his service at the League.
- *M. Frances Ganaway*, a board member, was honored in July 2007 as a recipient of Indiana Lt. Governor Becky Skillman's Senior Spotlight Award for her service at the League.



Youth Services continued to provide parent advocacy training, family and peer networking opportunities, and advocacy assistance for young people with disabilities. The programs also integrated children and youth with severe disabilities into community-based programs. During the year, the League connected 80 young boys and girls of all ages to opportunities and helped 75 youth attend summer camp, too.





We value people with disabilities and believe that people with disabilities are the true experts in issues that affect their lives.

We value consumer control and believe that people with disabilities are entitled to control over the decisions that affect their lives.

We value equal opportunity and believe that all people should have the opportunity to use their strengths and abilities to achieve their potential.

We 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.

We value the community and believe that we have a responsibility to contribute to the overall quality of life in the community.

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

The mission of the League and the work of its volunteers and professional staff were supported by individual, corporate, and foundation donors. With a shared belief in the League's mission of providing and promoting opportunities that empower people with disabilities to achieve their potential, they donated \$460,250 in generous financial gifts during 2007. Each gift further strengthened the foundation of the League and helped consumers reach their goals and achieve their dreams.



Mission

The mission of the League for the Blind & Disabled, Inc. is to provide and promote opportunities that empower people with disabilities to achieve their potential.

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Vision

Full inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life.



2007

Board of Directors

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David A. Nelson, CRC
President/CEO

Preliminary Statement of Activities

Year Ended September 30, 2007

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temporarily Restricted</u>	<u>Permanently Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Revenues, Gains and Other Support</u>				
Government Grants	\$ 418,500	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 418,500
United Way	54,700	0	0	54,700
Contributions and Grants	408,224	51,246	0	459,470
Capital Campaign Contributions	0	0	780	780
Program Fees & Supply Sales	152,189	0	0	152,189
Investment Income	243,634	0	0	243,634
(net of trustee fees of \$18,026 and \$15,846)				
Unrealized Gains	133,757	0	0	133,757
(Loss) Gain on Sale of Assets	(1,257)	0	0	(1,257)
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	<u>358,216</u>	<u>(358,216)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Total Revenues, Gains and Other Support</u>	<u>\$ 1,767,963</u>	<u>\$ (306,970)</u>	<u>\$ 780</u>	<u>\$ 1,461,773</u>
<u>Expenses</u>				
Program Services				
Center for Independent Living	\$ 1,082,840	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 1,082,840
Supporting Services:				
Management and General	\$ 50,567	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 50,567
Fund-raising	<u>9,606</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>9,606</u>
<u>Total Supporting Services</u>	<u>\$ 60,173</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 60,173</u>
<u>Total Expenses</u>	<u>\$ 1,143,013</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>	<u>\$ 1,143,013</u>
<u>Increase in Net Assets</u>	<u>\$ 624,950</u>	<u>\$ (306,970)</u>	<u>\$ 780</u>	<u>\$ 318,760</u>
<u>Net Assets – Beginning</u>	<u>3,298,699</u>	<u>804,435</u>	<u>372,881</u>	<u>4,476,015</u>
<u>Net Assets – Ending</u>	<u>\$ 3,923,649</u>	<u>\$ 497,465</u>	<u>\$ 373,661</u>	<u>\$ 4,794,775</u>



Serving people with
disabilities in Adams,
Allen, DeKalb, Huntington,
Jay, Kosciusko, LaGrange,
Noble, Steuben, Wells,
and Whitley counties
in northeast Indiana

Annual Report 2007

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