Minnesota State Academy for the Blind Foundation

2011 Annual Report

Challenging students to reach their full potential.
The all-volunteer MSAB Foundation Board works to raise funds to enhance the education of the students at the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind and to help them achieve their full potential. We are proud of our record of keeping our administrative expense to a minimum so that over 90% of the funds raised go to the direct benefit of the students. The Board members have a broad range of skills and experience with a majority of the members being blind, visually impaired, or educators of the blind or visually impaired. Staff members of the Academy propose the projects we fund.

During 2011 we funded $60,818 for the following grant requests from the Academy:

- paper shredder for the vocational class
- button making tools for the vocational class
- visiting artists for the arts program
- multi-challenged inter-active equipment
- sound and recording studio design
- White Cane Safety Day
- iPads and wireless infrastructure
- side-by-side dual trikes

We are excited about the multi-year “Education through the Art of Music” program, which the school has developed. Design work has been completed for the recording studio and acoustic treatment of the gym. Construction will take place in the summer of 2012. Students will also have the opportunity to experience artists both in residence and their normal places of performance like Children’s Theater in Minneapolis.

We welcomed Katie Amundson, Jill Pettit, and Deborah Gleason to the Board in 2011. We thank MAP for Nonprofits in St. Paul for their continued help in matching qualified volunteers to fill open Board positions. We were sorry to say goodbye to Katie when she had to leave the area to pursue employment and education opportunities.

We thank our partner, the UMOGD Sight Preservation Foundation, for their outstanding support to MSABF with their annual golf day fundraiser. The 2011 donation of $42,000 set a record for their annual gifts.

We are grateful for other Foundation gifts:
- The Bentson Foundation – $25,000
- The Jaye F. and Betty F. Dyer Foundation – $1000
- The Stephen Colbert Americone Dream Fund of Coastal Community Foundation of South Carolina – $5000

We thank our individual donors, many of whom have supported our work for many years.

Rolland Baldwin
President of MSAB Foundation
Education through the Arts

I would just like to take this opportunity to say Thank You to the MSAB Foundation for all of their continued support of our school. It is hard to put into words how much it means to have them invest in so much time and money into our music and art programs. At a time when most schools are making cuts to their Fine Arts programs, we are expanding and offering new and exciting experiences for our students, all because of the support of the Foundation.

Our students have had the opportunity to go on field trips to museums and theatres with no expense to the families. Many of our students would never have the opportunity to attend these events outside of the school setting. The field trips offer so much more than just a “fun time” as we are able to incorporate so many other skills into the experience from traveling on a bus, orientation and mobility, social and communication skills as well as academic skills. I am always amazed when we go out on a field trip and see the different reactions from our students and I love to hear the words that are often heard from the students at the end of a trip, “That was the best!”

We are so excited that there are so many things to look forward to- thanks to the Foundation, including our new recording studio which will allow so many different opportunities for our students, as well as our upcoming summer residency with UpStream Arts that will be sponsored by the Foundation. The summer program will affect not only MSAB students but it will also expose summer school students from other districts to the wonderful opportunities we offer here at MSAB.

Thank you for all that you do to impact the lives and students and staff here at MSAB! — Nicole Zweber

White Cane Safety Day

Last October we dedicated almost an entire day to White Cane Awareness. As you know it turned out to be a huge success. We have representatives from many blind related organizations on the walk and participating in many events. Truth be told, this would have never happened if the MSAB Foundation was not involved. The MSAB Site Council and its White Cane Day Awareness committee look forward to another day of awareness this coming October with hopes that the Foundation again will play its important roll.

Again, many thanks for your participation in the White Cane Awareness Day and also for all that you do for our students here at MSAB. — Ken Trebelhorn
The iPads have been a wonderful teaching tool for my students whom have multi handicaps including visually impaired or blind. The iPad brings the world to their fingertips, making lessons exciting. I use the iPad to introduce new skills like matching, counting, and vowel sounds. The iPad enhances lessons using nature sounds and animal sounds and is great to encourage communication, including choice making, vocal sounds and word repetition. There are many music and song apps that the student greatly enjoy to identify instruments, use as cause and effect and for pleasure listening. The story books are great for students to encourage page turning. I am looking forward to exploring and learning more about the iPad including using photos in picture schedules and making experience stories. The possibilities are endless when using the iPad with my classroom. — Joyce Ongjoco

The iPads have been a useful technology tool for our elementary students who are visually/blind learners. Specifically, we use apps for our students with limited speech. The interaction has been amazing: the communication with peers and the connection with the visual reinforcement and practice.

We have a student with CP and he has independent access with the touch screen. We have two students who are blind who have been enjoying listening to stories and turning the pages independently. They also like interacting within the stories by touching the screen and having it read objects to them. All students enjoy Talking Tom! He repeats phrases, words and songs back to the player. It is guaranteed to put a smile on everyone’s face!

The games have been a huge incentive for students to stay on-task and complete their work. The games have been organized in folders and they play games within each subject. It allows the teachers to work with students as their peers are practicing skills on the iPad. Over Spring Break a student arrived back to school and said “I missed you!” and then said “I missed the iPad too!” — Stacy Akemann

The iPads have been an excellent learning tool in the area of Orientation and Mobility. Thanks to the iPad, my students, from a very early age, are developing a firm understanding of sound. They begin by just learning to use and understand the words loud and quiet, louder and quieter, using apps with animal or vehicle sounds. The students then move on to a higher level of understanding of how to have more control over sound in their environment. For example, when a sound gets louder they are likely getting closer and quieter... further away from the object. If a door is open, the sound on the other side will be louder and closed... quieter. Many of our students are very sensitive to excessive noise, so for them to understand that moving away or closing a door will make the sound quieter, helps them to have control over their environment and feel less agitated. Older students are creating picture shopping lists, using alarms to keep track of time and using maps to familiarize themselves to their home neighborhoods and plan routes. The best part is that the apps used thus far cost no additional money. I look forward to learning more of what the iPad has to offer. — Holly Nordmeyer
The UMOGD Sight Preservation Foundation held its 22nd Annual Upper Midwest Optical Golf Day successfully raising $42,000 for the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind Foundation. Generosity and celebration were in full swing while representatives from all facets of the optical industry came together at Southview Country Club in West St. Paul, on August 8, 2011. A great day of golf concluded with a moving presentation from Tom Sullivan, sponsored by Allergan, who inspired everyone to turn disadvantage into advantage. And with the students at the MSAB in mind, every UMOGD participant did just that – charitably contributing from their own pockets.

A very special “Thank You” to all of the 2011 UMOGD participants…Your generosity and support will benefit “Education Through the Art of Music” at the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind.

The UMOGD/Sight Preservation Foundation would like to recognize the following sponsors for their support in 2011…

3M Occupational Health & Environmental Safety Div – Indianapolis, IN
Rollie & Bebe Baldwin – Minneapolis, MN
Briggs & Morgan, P.A. – Minneapolis, MN
Carl Zeiss Vision, Inc. – San Diego, CA
Richard Colombik & Associates, P.C. – Itasca, IL
DAC Vision – Garland, TX
Essilor of America, Inc. – Dallas, TX
Eyewear Design LTD – Syosset, NY
Haag-Streit USA, Inc. – Mason, OH
Hilco – Plainville, MA
Hoya Vision Care – Lewisville, TX
Robert Klas, Jr., The Tapemark Company – West St Paul, MN
John Nasseff & Helene Houle – St Paul, MN
Northwest Opticians/Dunn Bros Coffee – St Paul, MN
Nouveau Eyewear – Carrollton, TX
On-Guard Safety – Plainville, MA
Pech Optical Corp. – Sioux City, IA
Quantum Innovations, Inc. – Central Point, OR

Mark & Virginia Sathe Family Fund
Satisloh – Germantown, WI
Shamir Insights – San Diego, CA
Signet Armourl, Inc. – San Marcus, CA
Soderberg Ophthalmic Services – Minneapolis, MN
SOMO Optical – Santa Fe Springs, CA
Spectacle Shoppe, Inc. – West St Paul, MN
Stencil Cutting & Supply Co. – Red Wing, MN
The McGee Group – Marietta, GA
Jim Tooke, Zyloware Corp – Germantown, TN
Transitions Optical, Inc. – Pinellas Park, FL
Ultra Optics – Brooklyn Park, MN
Vision Ease Lens – Ramsey, MN
Walman Optical Co. – Minneapolis, MN
X-Cel Optical Co. – Sauk Rapids, MN
YOUNGER OPTICS – Torrance, CA
Zyloware Eyewear – Port Chester, NY

The 2012 UMOGD Tournament will be held on Monday, August 13th at Southview Country Club in West St Paul, MN. For more information, please contact Nancy Klaers at (612) 520-6094 or e-mail: nklaers@walman.com. Visit our website to learn more about the UMOGD/Sight Preservation Foundation at www.sightpf.com
Partner Profile: Nancy Klaers

Nancy Klaers has been involved with the UMOGD Sight Preservation Foundation for 11 years in numerous roles, currently serving as their Secretary. In 2001, Nancy was originally asked to help out with some administrative duties when the Upper Midwest Optical Golf Day (UMOGD) was just “some folks getting together for a round of golf and donating the few thousand dollars at the end of the day to a vision-related charity.” As the tournament grew, so did Nancy’s responsibilities and she helped put together an exceptional team of volunteers to make the success it is today, where in 2011 the UMOGD raised $42,000 for the MSAB Foundation.

The MSAB Foundation first partnered with UMOGD 10 years ago. Nancy believes the partnership has enabled UMOGD to encompass so much more by giving back in the name of sight preservation. “Helping to provide the students with the tools they need to reach their full potential, seeing them thrive in their environment and grow in ways that will enrich their lives going forward…that’s been amazing.”

Nancy fondly remembers in 2010 when MSAB Alumni Alex Nelson and David Leathers performed, showing they are true examples of the musical talent and ability of the students at the Academy.

Beyond the students, Nancy has been personally rewarded as well. “The best experience for me was the friendship I developed with Mark Sathe, the founder of the MSAB Foundation, in 2003. Meeting Mark changed my life. His joy and zest for living life to the fullest and giving back was unlike anything I’d ever witnessed. That spirit continues to inspire us as we go through the planning process of the UMOGD and the fundraising efforts for the kids at the Academy that he was so passionate about. In Mark’s honor, we all continue to do our best for the kids year after year.”

Nancy currently works in Human Resources at Walman Optical and has worked in the optical industry for 38 years. Over that time she has learned the value of preventative eye care and the importance of the services provided by the industry. She feels proud to be part of an industry where each day they work toward a goal of providing quality eye care products aimed at improving the lives of patients.

Nancy has also been chairperson of the Walman Corporate Charitable Contribution Committee for the past 5 years whose corporate contributions benefit VOSH International (Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity), PBA (Prevent Blindness America) and National Military Family Association. She has also volunteered at the MS 150, Special Olympics and participated with the Walman Team in the Twin Cities VisionWalk.

Walman Optical is also very involved in community giving. Regarding community giving, Nancy says, “It’s kind of contagious…you get back so much more than you ever put in and once you start, you’re compelled to do more. It’s great to work for an organization that recognizes the value of community service and charitable giving.”
# 2011 Financial Report

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| Liabilities and Equity  |         |                      |         |          |         |
| Liabilities             | 0.00    |                      |         |          |         |
| Equity                  | 167,218.96|                      |         |          |         |

**Total Liabilities and Equity** 167,218.96

### Board Members

**Rolland Baldwin, President**
Special interest in blindness: family member

**LuAnne Speeter, Vice President**
Special interest in blindness: family member

**Richard Berge, Ph.D., Treasurer**
Special interest in blindness: educator

**Deborah Gleason, Secretary**
Special interest in blindness: personal

**Janet Dickleman**
Special interest in blindness: personal

**Janiece Grow Duffy**
Special interest in blindness: personal, MSAB student for 12 years

**Stephanie Hall**
Special interest in blindness: personal and parent of a MSAB graduate

**Patty Hooey**
Special interest in blindness: educator

**Michael O’Rourke**
Special interest in blindness: family member

**Jillian Pettit**
Special interest in blindness: advocacy for inclusion

**Ex-Officio**

**John Davis**
MSAB Executive Director

**Linda Mitchell**
Superintendent of MSAB and MSAD

**Deanna Lackaff**
Grant Writer
We are grateful for other Foundation gifts and would like to thank:

**The Bentson Foundation** – The Bentson Foundation was started in 1956 by Larry and Nancy Bentson to support a variety of philanthropic causes throughout Minnesota.

**The Jaye F. and Betty F. Dyer Foundation.**

**The Stephen Colbert AmeriCone Dream Fund of Coastal Community Foundation of South Carolina** - The Stephen Colbert AmeriCone Dream Fund is managed by the Coastal Community Foundation.

MSAB Foundation would like to thank Kris Lasneski for her logo design.

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MSAB Foundation is registered with GiveMN.org.

MSAB Foundation meets all accountability standards of the Charities Review Council.

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