

FOCUSED ON THE FUNDAMENTALS

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



LETTER TO OUR COMMUNITY



To our loyal donors and stakeholders,

I am pleased to present the Sight Center's annual report of activities, outcomes, and impact for the program year July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. Thank you for your continued commitment to the mission of the Sight Center. We could not do it without you.

Today, as we look back on the last fiscal year and plan for the next, we remain FOCUSED on the VALUES that enable us to be known as one of Erie's oldest and most respected social service agencies. These are:

- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Excellence
- Leadership
- Perseverance
- Sustainability
- A Clear Vision of Success (Improved quality of life for our clients!)



The Sight Center is the only organization in this area that provides FUNDAMENTAL vision-related services to our community including prevention of blindness, vision rehabilitation, and social support.

We are also the only nonprofit organization in Northwest PA that offers the range of vision and blindness services specifically needed by high-risk populations; low-income individuals, older adults (regardless of income), and young children. People in these groups may reside in virtually every household in the region!

I hope you enjoy this little peek into the mission work of the Sight Center. If you'd like to see more of what we do, please don't hesitate to pay us a visit. You will see that not only do we focus on the fundamentals, we make the fundamentals FUN!

Sincerely,

Linda J. Moore, Executive Director





2022 HIGHLIGHTS

4,440 Specialized Service Hours

2,802 Children screened in 7 counties

Key areas of focus: Diabetes Prevention Program, Transportation and Specialized Services, Preventive Screening and Evaluation, Eye Care, Children's Program

Thank you to our loyal and generous individual donors! We could not continue our mission without you!



Grants and contributions totaled \$761,918 with an additional \$224,841 in government grants.



One Distinguished Naming Opportunity donation was received for \$505,000.



The Sight Center of Northwest PA saw 345 donor transactions totaling \$648,354 in 2022. A breakdown of donor transactions can be found on page 12.



FOCUSED ON PERSEVERING THROUGH CHALLENGES!

Susan McNeish guides, mentors, and encourages people with visual impairments to live their best life despite the tragedy of an eye disease, eye injury or being blind from birth. Within weeks after she experienced an overnight loss of vision from a brain aneurysm, her career as a hairdresser ended and with her income source abruptly halted, she lost her home. Susan knew that independence was the key to surviving and thriving.

She began rehabilitation, learning mobility, daily living skills and the use of Braille. She was also fortunate to receive the gift of a guide dog. Her confidence level increased through these steps, which she attributes to the help of the Sight Center of Northwest PA. Next, she pursued her education, eventually achieving a master's degree in Psychology. With her life moving in a positive direction, Susan challenged herself in areas such as leadership programs, golfing, and continuing her love of painting, which she does so beautifully. She realized that by overcoming her fear, facing her barriers, and redirecting her goals - she could pay it forward and help others do the same.

Today, Susan is the Group Services Coordinator at the Sight Center and leads the Wednesday Club. For the past 14 years, she has been a hero and friend to all, helping in their pursuit of acceptance, independence, and happiness. She thrives as a consultant and advocates for additional resources to address the needs of those with visual impairments.

Susan has not stopped learning or taking on new challenges. She is now in training with her new guide dog Nia (2 years old), as her retired dog Tuscan (12 years old), enjoys a well-deserved break. Susan is so grateful that, through the years, each of her guide dogs has given her the gift of a more independent life. In a similar way, Susan is truly a guiding star to others, helping them persevere through their vision challenges, inspiring them with the courage to stay on course with their dreams and even develop the confidence to create new ones!



FOCUSED ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND EXCELLENCE

The Sight Center of Northwest PA proudly maintains accreditation from the Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations (PANO) Standards for Excellence:® An Ethics and Accountability Code for the Nonprofit Sector. Through this accreditation, PANO imparts and upholds the highest standard of ethics and accountability through six guiding principles including.

- Mission, Strategy and Evaluation
- Leadership: Board, Staff, and volunteers
- Legal Compliance and Ethics
- Finance and Operations
- Resource Development
- Public Awareness, Engagement and Advocacy

These six areas include 27 areas of focus and 64 specific performance benchmarks that characterize effective, ethical, and accountable organizations. This is a voluntary accreditation for nonprofits that are committed to meeting the highest ethical standards for effective service in the public interest. It builds on the organization's trust, integrity, respect, compassion, and transparency.

The Sight Center has been committed to its mission and our communities for the past 84 years. Under the direction of the Board of Directors, the Sight Center staff document and report quantifiable indicators of progress toward strategies, goals, and outcomes in mission delivery. Annual analysis of efficiency, effectiveness, accessibility, and financial sustainability is a top priority for our administration.

“
Alone we can
do so little;
together we
can do so
much.”

HELEN KELLER

Ongoing programmatic goals include:

- Accessibility to underserved populations and all our geographic territory
- Satisfaction from clients that their needs were met in line with our mission
- Maintaining relevance with the needs of our communities
- Cost effectiveness in achieving our desired outcomes

The Sight Center is the agency of hope for those who are blind or visually impaired and the source of prevention screening and education through our ongoing programs. This is accomplished through the generosity of donors, the commitment of our partners, and our dedicated staff and Board.



FOCUSED ON MISSION OUTCOMES

BENCHMARKS & RESULTS

NATIONAL DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM (NDPP)

Diabetes is the leading cause of severe and permanent vision loss in people of all ages. The Sight Center supports prevention of blindness by offering the evidence-based National Diabetes Prevention Program to those considered to be at risk for Type 2 diabetes.

Participants learn strategies and skills to help meet personal weight loss goals and increase their level of physical activity, which are key to preventing, delaying and/or reversing the onset of Type 2 diabetes.

During the fiscal year there were 128 individuals served by the NDPP program, a 137% increase from the prior fiscal year. Almost a third (31%) of those enrolled have a disability and 4% have a visual impairment.

Benchmarks: The Center of Disease Control (CDC) provides the following benchmarks for success for DPP

- 50% of individuals will participate in at least 150 minutes of activity
- 50% of participants will lose 5-7% of their body weight
- 60% of referrals will be from physicians

RESULTS



3

**NEW
COACHES
ADDED**

60%

**ACTIVITY GOAL MET
OR EXCEEDED**

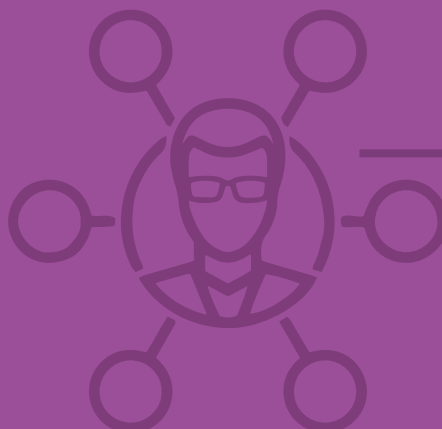
74%

**BODY WEIGHT GOAL
MET OR EXCEEDED**



10

**NEW PROGRAM
PARTNERS**



62%

**REFERRALS
FROM
PHYSICIANS**

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Achieved CDC Full Plus recognition for meeting and exceeding all health outcomes and retention thresholds
- Highmark provider agreement affirms the credibility of the program to improve health and lower cost

Transportation and Specialized Services (TSS)

Independence is achieved or maintained, and quality of life is improved for those with vision loss or blindness through the Sight Center Specialized Services program and individualized case management. This year, **195** individuals received services including life skills, education, social work, and transportation, a **32.8%** increase from the prior fiscal year.

4,440 HOURS

80% TRANSPORTATION

2,076

**CASE MANAGEMENT
CONTACTS**



48

**ASSISTIVE
EQUIPMENT
DONATIONS**

96

**TECHNOLOGY
DEMONSTRATIONS**

155

COMMUNITY REFERRALS



OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- This year we kicked off our assistive technology program that provides education and demonstrations of new assistive technology and software to support independence.
- The Sight Center continues to expand the professionally run support groups (Clubs) that help participants learn new techniques, technology, and adaptations for daily living, to follow their passions and create new ones, and most importantly - have the confidence and resources to be as independent and fulfilled as they can be despite life's challenges.

EYE CARE

Partners for over 80 years, the Sight Center and Erie Lions Club Save an Eye Fund connect children and adults in our communities to necessary eye care, regardless of their income, insurance, or ability to pay.

Annual eye exams and proper eye wear can be critical pieces in an individuals' health and wellbeing. Maximum visual efficiency helps individuals to function their best in life, promoting independence and preventing irreversible vision loss.



46%

INCREASE OVER PREVIOUS YEAR



16 INDIVIDUALS

RECEIVED EYE CARE FINANCIAL SUPPORT THROUGH THE ERIE LIONS CLUB SAVE AN EYE FUND

Preventive Screening and Evaluation

Pediatric vision screenings conducted in pre-schools, child-care centers, home school groups and kindergarten registrations can detect current and potential vision loss in children ages one to six. Early intervention allows time for eye care professionals to diagnose and successfully treat conditions that can lead to blindness if not treated in early childhood.

THE SIGHT CENTER IS COMMITTED TO:

- Being accessible to daycares, pre-schools, and kindergarten classes to provide vision screenings
- 100% of children who fail a screening will be referred for professional eye care
- Follow up will occur with 100% of the families of children who were referred to eyecare professionals at 30, 60, and 90 days

2,802
CHILDREN SCREENED
IN 7 COUNTIES



15
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
ON EYE HEALTH AND SAFETY



19.6%
CHILDREN REFERRED FOR PROFESSIONAL EYE EXAM

466 EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

100% would schedule screening/education program again

Children's Program

The children's program teaches participants to better function in the sighted world through professionally administered activities. They work through challenges, learn daily living skills, and explore diverse opportunities to thrive and gain independence.

The youth group met bi-weekly from 9:30-12:30 throughout the summer. Guest speakers, both visually impaired and sighted, spoke to the children about the skills needed to be independent and thrive. Some topics included career exploration and education, others were about fun activities and friendships.

With the support of the Sight Center gardener, the children grew tomatoes, cucumbers, squash, strawberries, pumpkins, onion, zucchini and fresh herbs. They planned a special meal for the Sight Center adult support group and the staff with their harvest, including spaghetti and sauce made with herbs and tomatoes and a tossed salad with all the delicious veggies. The children participated in everything from growing the food in the garden to cleaning, slicing, and preparing the meal which all came together for a beautiful celebration.



3 STUDENTS
PARTICIPATED

10 VEGETABLES & HERBS
GROWN AND HARVESTED

25 PARTICIPANTS IN HARVEST MEAL
PLANNED AND PREPARED BY STUDENTS



PREVENTING BLINDNESS BY PREVENTING THE LEADING CAUSE OF WORKING AGE VISION LOSS

FOCUSED ON SUCCESS

Mark is 51 years old. He was referred to The National Diabetes Prevention Program at the Sight Center by his physician because Dr. Carvelli knew from experience that the program is highly effective for health status improvement.

Mark enrolled in the program and was willing to try small lifestyle changes that were suggested. He has attended classes diligently and continues to work the program daily. "I had to accept that what I was doing wasn't working. I trusted my coaches, followed their advice, and now nobody can tell me that change isn't possible," Mark says. "Knowledge is power," Mark attests. "In seven months, I have been able to lose 70 pounds and

reverse my diagnosis of pre-diabetes. I haven't made any changes that I can't continue long term. If I can do this, you can do this; but you have to want your health."

In just seven months, Mark slashed his risks of vision loss, heart attack, stroke and debilitation exponentially. As his lifestyle changes continue, he can only expect even greater results! We are proud and honored to help him improve his health and quality of life!



Top right photo: These graduates of the Sight Center's Diabetes Prevention Program are joyful and they should be! Over the course of a year, more than 200 pounds were lost and participants reported lower blood sugars, cholesterol, triglycerides and blood pressure results.



FOCUSED ON INDEPENDENCE

The Sight Center drivers and vehicles are on the road in seven counties providing escorted transportation to medical appointments and essential trips to enhance the independence of our visually impaired community members.

"The Sight Center really changed my life. I had no independence before, and it was hard to have to rely on family and friends for everything. I couldn't shop for what I needed or get to my medical appointments.

My life and self-esteem have dramatically improved through my interactions with the Sight Center. They get me where I need to go!"

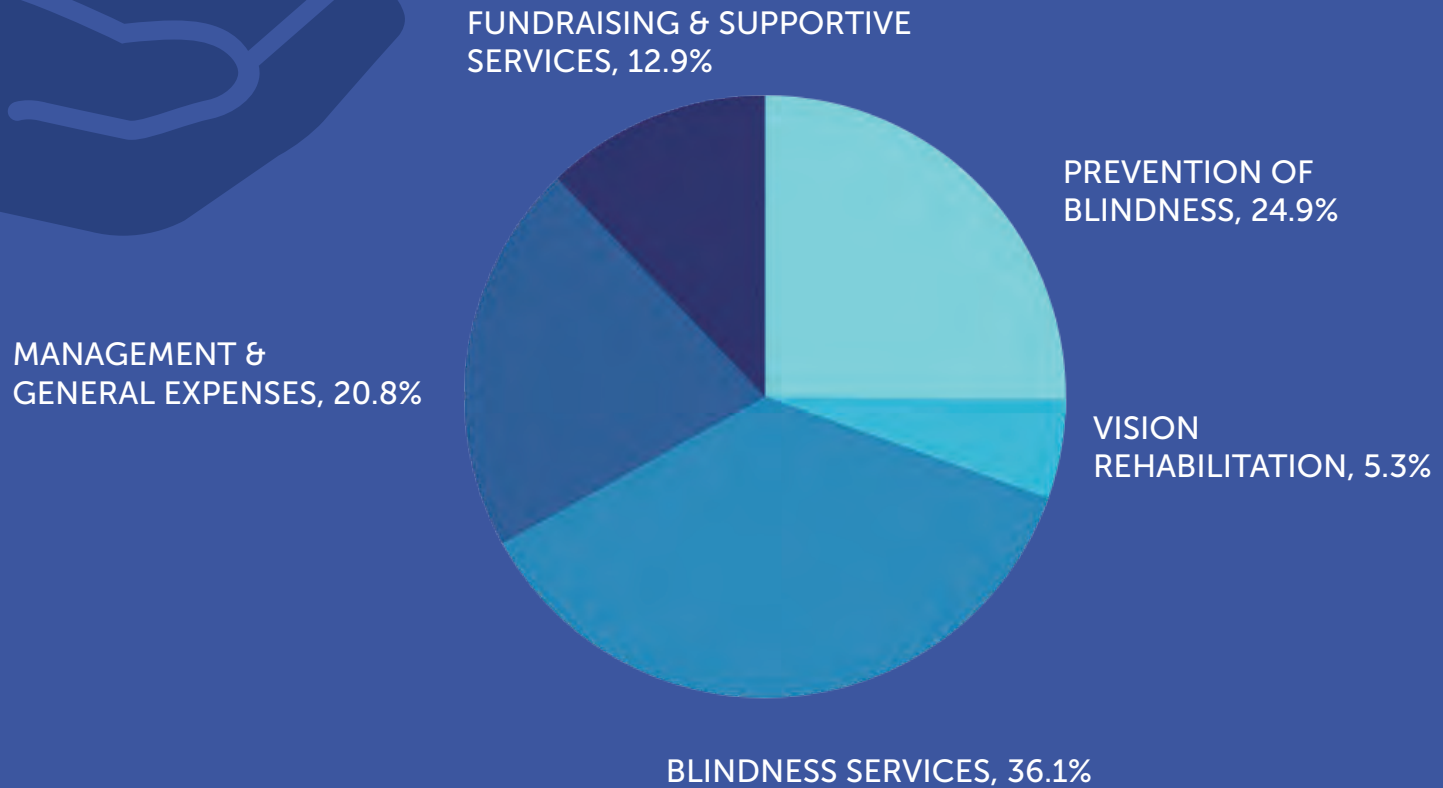
- Sean Johnson, Sight Center transportation client



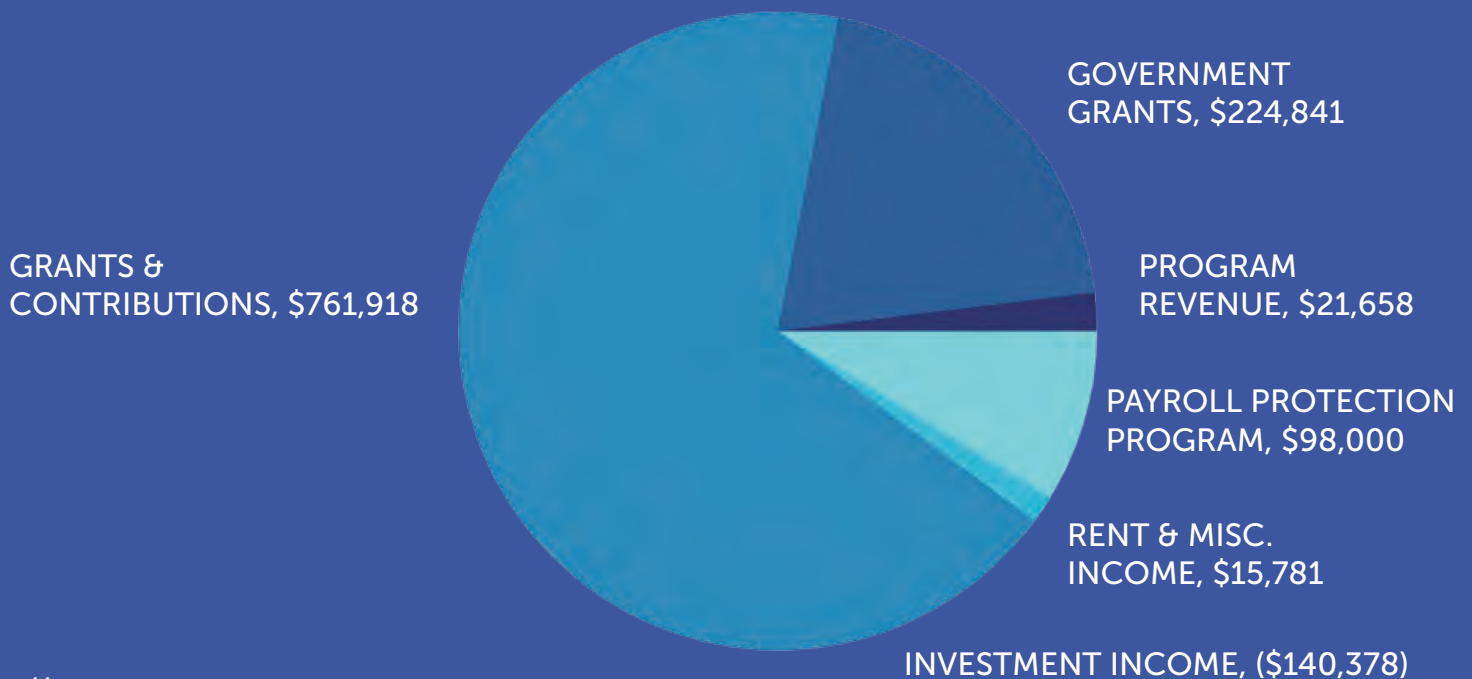
“
They get me
where I need
to go!”



Overall Agency Expenses: \$1,032,796



Sources of Revenue | Total Support & Revenue: \$981,820



FOCUSED ON FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY



NUMBER OF DONORS		DONATION AMOUNT
1	Distinguished Naming Opportunity	\$505,000
2	Platinum \$25,000 - \$99,999	\$65,000
0	Diamond \$15,000 - \$24,999	\$0
0	Crystal \$10,000 - \$14,999	\$0
3	Gold \$5,000 - \$9,999	\$15,304.34
2	Silver \$2,500 - \$4,999	\$7,500
14	Bronze \$1,000 - \$2,499	\$16,537.52
3	Distinguished Benefactor \$750 - \$999	\$2,585.16
18	Benefactor \$500 - \$749	\$9,407.08
23	Distinguished Circle of Friends \$250 - \$499	\$7,075.92
86	Circle of Friends \$100 - \$249	\$12,692.37
84	Friends50 \$50 - \$99	\$4,426.02
109	Friends \$1 - \$49	\$2,826
345	TOTAL	\$648,354.41



Partnerships help us to build strength in the communities we serve, to elevate our level of service and collaborate in the continuum of care for those with vision impairments.

FOCUSED ON LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Board of Directors 2021-2022

Thomas Pysz, Chair
Douglas Star, Vice Chair
Michael Ruzzi, Secretary
Anne Piotrowicz, Treasurer
Anthony Angeloni, Esq.
Daniel Bensur
John Blich
Jacque Caringola, OD
Joseph DiMartino
William Finney, CPA

Barbara Sepich
Ned Reade

Emeritus Directors

Thorp Andrews
Nicholas Sala, DO
Barry Stamm, MD
Roger Taft, Esq.
William Vorsheck

Our Current Staff

Linda Moore, Executive Director
Carol Brocious, Vision Screener/Driver
Vicki Ferloin Shields, Case Manager
James Findlay, Director of Specialized Services
Lana Kunik, LC, Director of Diabetes Prevention
Janine LaCour, Office Manager
Pam Masi, Director of Operations

Susan McNeish, Group Services Coordinator
Kathleen Mosier, Executive Assistant
Becca Swick, LC, MPA, LPN, BSW, Outreach Coordinator
Tyco Swick, Services Coordinator, Lions Liaison
Driver/Service Aids:
Allen Erickson, Jack Johnson, Michael Redinger, David Way

Our Partners

We are grateful to the following

Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations
PA Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS)
Intermediate Unit 5- Erie County (IU-5)
Warren Area Agency on Aging
Nonprofit Partnership
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
Medicare/Medicaid Diabetes Prevention Program
PA Health Promotion Council
Erie County Department of Health
Allegheny Health Network
AmeriHealth Caritas Health Plan
Highmark Whole Care
Highmark and Highmark Foundation
Erie Community Foundation
Multiple Primary Care Physicians and Endocrinologists
Aetna Medicare Advantage

Meadville Area Free Clinic
Quality Insights
Blue Zone Project
Joe Schember, City of Erie Mayor
Ryan Bizzarro, PA House of Representatives
Dan Laughlin, PA State Senator
Warren General Hospital
Corry Memorial Hospital
Corry Library
Crawford County Area Agency on Aging
GECAC
Walmart
Venango Association for the Blind
Second Harvest Food Bank
All of Us Research Program
Mercyhurst University





**COMING SOON:
60 YEAR LEGACY
OF LOVE
AND LEADERSHIP**



MISSION
TO PREVENT BLINDNESS AND PROMOTE INDEPENDENCE FOR THOSE
WITH VISION LOSS AND THOSE WHO ARE BLIND.



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