

# Blind Childrens Center



ANNUAL  
REPORT  
**2010**  
**2011**

# Angela's Story



## Graduation is a bittersweet time for everyone.

This year at Blind Childrens Center, it meant saying goodbye to a young lady whom we have watched grow up and achieve many milestones over the past eight years.



Angela Marquez has been at the Center since she was an infant. As a baby, the doctors had difficulty diagnosing her. In addition to being blind, she had other symptoms which included developmental delays and physical impairments which doctors thought would keep her from doing even basic tasks, like feeding herself. The doctors continued to go back and forth on what they thought might be the cause of all of Angela's issues.

Finally, at the age of four, she was diagnosed with ONH (Optic Nerve Hypoplasia). ONH presents itself differently in each child. Sometimes vision is seriously impacted and in other cases, as with another Blind Childrens Center student you may remember from our holiday letter, Christopher, the person is more affected physically than with visual impairment.

In Angela's case, she is both blind and has been severely impacted physically. Learning



to walk seemed nearly an impossible task for Angela. Doctors told the family early on, that she probably would never walk. In fact, according to Angela's mother, Lourdes, "They said she wouldn't be able to do anything. They told me there was a good chance she wouldn't live much longer after she was born."

With the patience and love of her family and the Blind Childrens Center staff, Angela not only survived, she accomplished milestones nobody thought possible. She went from scooting around on the floor to using a walker. Then, Pre-K Teacher Grace Lasisi began walking Angela around the classroom holding her up with a belt around her waist, without the assistance of a walker.



## U Ready to take that next step

Today, you will see Angela running around the playground using her cane to guide her and you would never know the challenges she once faced.

Recently, Angela overcame sensory issues with sound and smell. She had been frightened when she heard a noise and fearful when she touched new textures. The staff continually explained to her what each sound was and slowly but surely, she began to improve. She is no longer afraid. Braille Teacher, Rosalinda Mendiola laughs, remembering how different it was not so long ago. "Now Angela is able to walk down



the halls, and not only hear, but identify the sounds. She will say, 'Remember when I used to be scared of that sound?'"

Angela went from a scared little girl to the independent girl you



see navigating the playground, chatting with her peers and talking of her excitement about graduating and attending a new school. When she first started talking about transitioning, she was apprehensive. Her mom, Lourdes, and her Second grade teacher, Nancy Gutierrez, will tell you that now she is more than ready to take that next step.

Angela is a miracle. Her time at the Center has proven to be not only beneficial for her, but for her entire family.

Her mother Lourdes recounts, "I didn't want to bring her to this

school. I didn't even want to tell anybody what was going on, I was so scared. I didn't know what to do. But once I came through the doors and really saw what the school was about I knew it was the best thing and now I don't know how I can ever thank the Blind Childrens Center for what they have given to Angela."

"Angela made me a better person; she made me appreciate life so much more. She brought our whole family closer together. Before Angela came along we would fight over silly things that didn't matter, she showed us what is important."

When asked if she thinks Angela is ready to move on, Lourdes responded, "Yes. I don't think I am ready for it, I wish she could just stay here until sixth grade or something! But she has matured so much and I know now that she is ready to take the next step, and I have to let her."

"I don't know how I can ever thank the Blind Childrens Center enough. I can't. Doctors told me she wouldn't be able to eat...to talk...to walk. And now, look at her! Because of Blind Childrens Center, she can do anything she wants to. And she will." **b**



# ANNUAL REPORT 2010 2011

The Blind Childrens Center is a place where miracles happen every day, where smiles are abundant, and where children run, giggle, play, and learn to read in Braille.

This past year, we saw our very first Second Grade Class graduate. All of the Second graders had attended the Center since they were six months old. There was much to celebrate, successes to enjoy, and, yes, tears to share, as we said goodbye.

Since 1938, the Center has continued to grow, to serve more families, and to serve each family for a longer period of time. This has only been possible due to the support and guidance of our Board of Directors and our family of donors and volunteers.

Dr. Titcomb and our Delta Gamma founders would be thrilled to see where we are today.

## Education & Family Services

- In 2010/2011, we served 147 children and families:
  - 86 students and their families were enrolled and received direct services from Blind Childrens Center professional staff.
  - 22 families attended the Infant Program.
  - 27 children attended the Preschool.
  - 13 children attended the Kindergarten Program.
  - 7 children attended the First Grade Program.
  - 7 children attended the Second Grade Program.
  - 10 children graduated (July 2010).
  - 61 families, in addition to those enrolled, were served by the family services professionals.
  - All classrooms were inclusive, incorporating typically developing children.
- Kindergarten, First and Second graders met (and some exceeded) the requirements of the California State Curriculum.
- 41 IEPs were conducted, and 83 Pre-IEPs and Parent/Teacher Conferences were held.
- Transition meetings were held and school site visits were made with parents and staff to support the transition for graduates to their local school systems.
- Therapeutic Services provided by our specialists included: Orientation & Mobility, Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language, Sensory Integration, Low Vision Intervention, Pre-Braille, Braille, and Music classes.
- Weekly Parent Groups, led by our Social Worker, included topics such as: advocacy, assertiveness, relaxation, grief & loss, rebuilding dreams, behavior management, developmental milestones, and vision development.
- Family Workers provided assistance, resources, support and follow up with 69 medical and social service appointments
- The Parent Self-Enhancement Group met 9 times.
- 162 parents or extended family members were served through parent consultations and group sessions.

## Community Outreach & Continuing Education

- BCC professionals made four offsite presentations: USC – Visual Impairment: A holistic Approach; CSULA – Orientation & Mobility sleepshade graduate level classes; Technology and Adaptation Advances at BCC; and Corona Children's Montessori Center – Pre-K, Kindergarten and First Graders.
- 81 medical interns from USC, Kaiser, and CHLA were given tours.
- Kid's Space, Pasadena, entered into a partnership with BCC to develop more interactive activities for children who are visually impaired.
- Administrative Staff made 102 presentations to visitors, community clubs, organizations and businesses.
- 18 professional conferences and workshops were attended by Center staff.
- 3,470 of the Center's 18 educational and training publications and videos were distributed internationally.

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## Volunteers

- Board Past President, Carolyn Newberry, volunteered three days a week in the classroom and at all events.
- Judy Luu volunteered to work with the children every Friday and at all events.
- 17 interns from E. Manfred Evans Community Adult School, training in child development, volunteered in the classroom.
- 25 volunteers from CSULA, Loyola, USC and the parent co-op assisted the children.
- Junior Mentors, Carlos, 19 yrs., Karen, 18 yrs., and Daisy, 12 yrs., BCC graduates, held open discussions with parents and staff and worked regularly with the children during their own school breaks.
- Highland Capital Brokerage Co. donated 11 computers, office furniture for 9 offices, the reception area, the entry way, and miscellaneous items for classrooms, family services and various locations throughout the Center.
- Out-a-Sight vocal group volunteered and performed for the parent appreciation luncheon.
- Rotary Club members donated a child's wheelchair, donated paint and 57 members worked all day painting classrooms.
- More than 200 volunteers provided support for The Tom Sullivan Blind Childrens Center Celebrity Golf Classic and the Los Angeles Marathon.

## Delta Gammas

- Collegians from USC, UCLA, Pepperdine, Long Beach, Loyola Marymount, Chapman, Riverside, and San Diego volunteered for events and helped at the Center.
- 40 volunteers from Pepperdine University spent a Saturday working at the Center.
- Alumnae from Glendale/Burbank, San Fernando Valley and South Bay volunteered for special events and children's activities.
- Glendale/Burbank Delta Gamma Alumnae had a Saturday work day.
- Five Delta Gammas served on the Board of Directors.



## Field Trips

- 9 field trips provided the children with educational and community experiences.
- 6 Parent Field Trips offered education and exposure to community activities.

## Campus

- Some of the more significant projects included: installation of the Sensory Pathway; new Security System; new Intercom system for the gates; a walking gate; donor brick pathway; addition to playhouse for storage; new flooring in office; installation of artificial grass; and set up of Second Grade classroom.

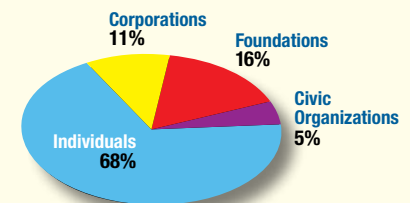
## Development, Public Relations, Research

- Light the Way Circle maintained membership of 150, realizing over \$342,000.
- 44 grant requests were submitted, 36 received funding for a total of \$392,073.
- Two bequests were received from individuals whom we cultivated and regularly contacted over the years for a total of \$450,000.
- The 2011 Tom Sullivan Blind Childrens Center Celebrity Golf Classic, sponsored by John Hancock Life Insurance, raised a net of \$143,389.
- The Longest Day of Golf, sponsored by The Foster Family Foundation and supported by our incredible volunteer golfers, raised \$105,327.
- The Roddy Hiatt Golf Tournament raised \$15,000 for the children.
- Les Mairaines continued their remarkable efforts raising over \$18,000.
- LA Marathon/Team Blind Children raised \$41,692 with two race days.
- LAPD Centurions raised \$5,000.
- *Cages* film premiere benefitted the Center and was donated by director, Graham Streeter.
- North Hollywood Lions donated \$4,500; L.A. Host Lions contributed \$3,000 through their

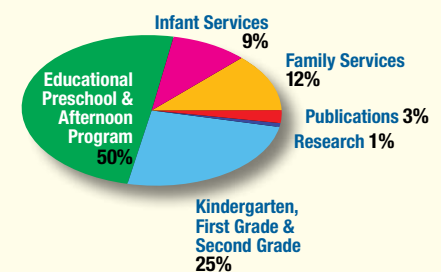
Lark Ellen Charities; and Northwest Glendale Lions donated \$750.00.

- Parent group donated \$600 through a variety of fund raisers.
- All graphics were provided by in-house staff with printing donated or discounted by Optima Graphics.
- The newsletter was sent to 4,000 friends twice during the year, and a mini-newsletter was created.
- The children's Holiday Party, Beeping Egg event, 100 Days, and Graduation were covered by the media and several write ups were published. The Center's presence was increased in Social Media.
- Media spots were produced by NBC (3), ABC, and Univision.
- Planned Giving Committee researched and approved annuity services by 54 Freedom.
- A research project, *Visions: Visual Instructional Strategies in Occupational Therapy for Young Children*, a guide/manual, was developed by BCC intern, Tritia Woo, USC Doctorate Student.

## Donor Support



## How It Helps



Administration, Development, and Public Information costs are supported by the Investment Account.

Audited Financial Statements are available upon request.



*In acknowledgement of the extraordinary work accomplished at the Center through the generosity of their time and talent, we are proud to honor:*

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Non-discrimination Policy  
The Blind Childrens Center, in both its employment practices and services to the community, does not discriminate according to race, color, gender, religion, age, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.

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Founded in 1938  
by the Delta Gamma  
of Southern California