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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOCAL ORGANIZATION EXPANDS ITS SERVICES TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT VISION LOSS IN THE LATINO COMMUNITY

Los Angeles, CA – February 10, 2004

Braille Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people with fading vision continue to live independently, has expanded its services in an effort to get the word out to the Latino community about vision loss and prevention. Diabetes affects more than 2 million Latinos in the United States, and of that number nearly 40% of those diagnosed will develop the eye condition known as diabetic retinopathy, the leading cause of blindness for Mexican Americans. Braille Institute has now developed several free Spanish-language programs and classes that not only address issues concerning specific eye diseases, but also how to maintain an independent lifestyle despite loss of vision.

Braille Institute's Los Angeles Center, located at 741 North Vermont Avenue, now offers free classes on independent living skills, cooking and English as a second language (ESL)—all conducted in Spanish. But one of the most popular tools is the free taped series "¿Cómo Se Dice en Inglés?", which is designed to teach blind or visually impaired listeners basic "survival English" skills, such as how to ask for help in emergency situations. The tape is divided into five sections, each focusing on various scenarios in which a blind person who does not speak English might need assistance. The purpose of the tape is to help listeners learn everyday English phrases and in turn help them gain greater independence.

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If you would like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview with Courtney Goines, Media Relations Manager, please contact her at (323) 663-1111, Ext. 3176, or by email:

Braille Institute is a private, nonprofit organization whose mission is to eliminate blindness and severe sight loss as a barrier to a fulfilling life. Through educational training, programs and services, Braille Institute helps tens of thousands of people each year regain and maintain their independence. Thanks to generous donations, Braille Institute services are available free of charge. More information can be found at www.brailleinstitute.org.

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