

# Braille Institute

*Empowering visually impaired people to live fulfilling lives*



## *Strategic Plan* *2011-2016*

*Strategic planning is a commitment to action based on an analysis of what the organization is and what it wants to achieve*

***“Kites rise highest against the wind—not with it.”***

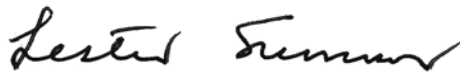
When Sir Winston Churchill said these words, it was in the turbulence of a world at war. The turbulence of our times poses its own unique set of challenges—the accelerating winds of change, evidenced by rapid advances in technology and global economic crises that affect our daily lives. At the same time, the needs of blind and visually impaired people of all ages continue to evolve.

With this backdrop, we embarked on a strategic planning process to chart the appropriate course for our organization in the years immediately ahead. This project involved a broad array of clients, donors, volunteers, staff and Board members sharing their opinions and giving their guidance, helping us determine how best to set our kite against the wind.

This plan is the result. It contains eight over-arching goals that will enable Braille Institute to focus our precious resources on areas of greatest impact. They call for better use of technology and more collaboration with other organizations to leverage our efforts. Innovation will continue to be a central theme of our programs and services.

Implementation of this plan will help ensure sustainability in these uncertain times and calls for increased investment in human resources. Our aim is to more effectively communicate Braille Institute’s value to the greater community and to better reach those who need our services. While the development of this plan involved many tough choices, we intend to tailor our services to the most important needs of those we serve.

We are indebted to the numerous men and women who participated in the planning process. We especially thank our Board’s Strategic Plan Steering Committee for the commitment of their time and effort in guiding the process. While a plan in and of itself is only as good as the implementation, we believe that we are beginning a transformative process. Those who will turn to Braille Institute tomorrow and in the years ahead will continue to find the life-changing programs and human spirit that have become our hallmark. They will also find an organization fueled by its imagination—energized and responsive to life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.



Lester M. Sussman, Chairman



Leslie E. Stocker, Jr., President

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## Overview

Braille Institute of America (BIA) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to eliminate barriers to a fulfilling life caused by blindness and severe sight loss. Braille Institute provides an environment of hope and encouragement for people who are blind and visually impaired through integrated educational, social and recreational programs and services. It is operated and funded almost entirely through private individual and foundation sources. Generous donors and dedicated efforts by more than 4,000 volunteers enable staff to provide training, programs and services without charge. In 2010, BIA embarked on a year-long planning process designed to take stock of its achievements and challenges and set its strategic direction for the future. This document summarizes the planning process and the core goals and strategies for the next five years.

*“Each BIA center is a place of learning where people learn independence.”*

– Donor

## Our Planning Process

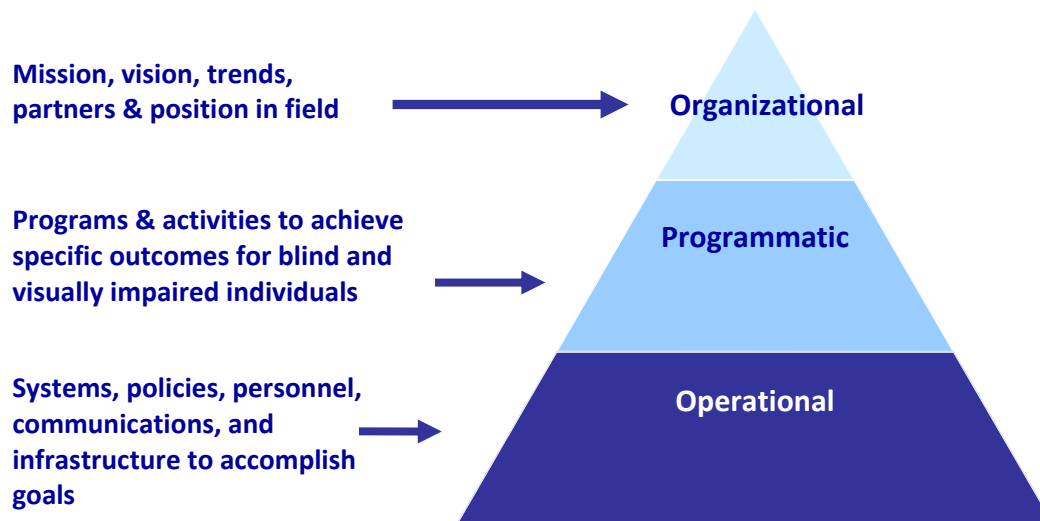
The Strategic Planning Committee was comprised of Board Members and executive staff and directors with Harder+Company Community Research providing planning, data collection, and facilitation services. The group met for two five-hour planning retreats in the fall of 2010 and winter of 2011. A strategic planning task force made up of key staff directors provided additional leadership and coordination throughout the planning process. During the summer and fall of 2010 (the data collection phase), input was collected from staff, donors, board members, volunteers and clients at all regional centers as well as key external stakeholders (peer institutions and funders). The planning process was guided by several key overarching questions designed to reflect on “who we are” and “where we want to go” (see below).

Who Are We?	Where are We Going?
+ How do we describe Braille Institute?	+ What do we want to achieve in the next 5 years?
+ How do others see us?	+ What strategies will we pursue?
+ What have been our main accomplishments and challenges?	+ What resources do we need?
+ How does the changing environment affect our work?	+ How do we know we are making progress?
	+ How will we implement our plan?

To ensure the planning process integrated all aspects of BIA’s work – organizational, programmatic, and operational – the strategic planning committee used the framework<sup>1</sup> below as well as other tools designed to explore key considerations such as impact on the organization’s mission and the sustainability of specific goals and activities.<sup>2</sup> The planning committee formed work groups to further refine organizational, programmatic, and operational goals and objectives. Each work group met on several occasions and represented a combination of staff and board members.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from The Nonprofit Strategy Revolution by David La Piana (2008)

<sup>2</sup> The Dual Bottom-Line Matrix adapted by CompassPoint from Boston Consulting Group's well-known Growth-Share Matrix



In an effort to better understand emerging trends and opportunities, the first phase of the planning process focused on collecting and reviewing data and feedback from multiple sources. The data, input and recommendations from BIA staff, volunteers, board members, donors and clients was used to help inform this plan. Working closely with the Task Force, Harder+Company conducted the following data collection activities:

- **External & Internal Trend Analysis:** Harder+Company conducted an internal review of BIA’s programs, clients, and finances, as well as an external assessment of the environment in which it operates. *Dashboards* were developed to summarize key trends in demographics, education, service demand, independent living, and giving and volunteerism (see appendices).
- **Focus Groups:** Seven focus groups in all regions with approximately 175 staff members and volunteers
- **Interviews:** Thirty phone interviews with students/clients, family and friends, donors, volunteers, board members and peer institutions
- **Online Survey:** Forty-two anonymous online survey responses were received and analyzed

*“[BIA] continues to think outside of the box.”*  
– Focus Group Participant

## Who are we and how do others perceive us?

When stakeholders were asked to describe Braille Institute using just one or two words, terms such as independence, empowerment, knowledge, self-confidence and hope were repeated most frequently across all groups. The *word cloud* below reveals the many terms people used to describe BIA, with the larger fonts representing the words most frequently mentioned.



## What have been our achievements and challenges?

Learning from past achievements and challenges is an important part of building a blueprint for future action. Stakeholders were asked to share their views on organizational strengths and achievements as well as challenges during the past several years. Challenges ranged from fundraising in challenging economic times and overburdened infrastructure and staff, to increasing the overall awareness and misconceptions about the mission of BIA. The planning committee carefully considered both the achievements (listed below) and challenges throughout the planning process.

- **Strong Foundation:** BIA's strong foundation buoyed the organization through a challenging and protracted recession. BIA has sustained the number and quality of services for blind and visually impaired clients during this period.
- **Expansion and Growth:** BIA continues to expand its focus to serve not only blind and visually impaired individuals, but also individuals who may become visually impaired. In addition, BIA services have also expanded into new geographic areas and communities to accommodate changing community needs.
- **Innovation and Adaptability:** With centers in multiple regions, BIA navigates diverse landscapes and meets the needs of different communities through innovative programming and flexible service modes. In addition to transporting clients to the center, BIA increasingly brings more of its services to the community by co-locating with other providers and working with community partners.

*"Fundraising is always an issue because everything they do is at 200%."*

– Peer Institution

- Technology:** BIA increases access and expands its reach through technological applications like its digital library, media, website and other network tools.
- Partnerships:** Over the years, BIA cultivated and deepened relationships with diverse partners in multiple areas and sectors, including other CBOs, medical professionals and nursing homes. Creative collaborations have also promoted resource sharing and coordination to best meet clients' needs.
- Strong Reputation:** BIA is a recognized leader and field expert. The organization's Braille Challenge<sup>®</sup> continues to gain popularity and receive more entries from young people across the United States and Canada.

*“Another challenge is just letting people know about Braille. Many people, including doctors, don’t know about us.”*  
 – Board Member

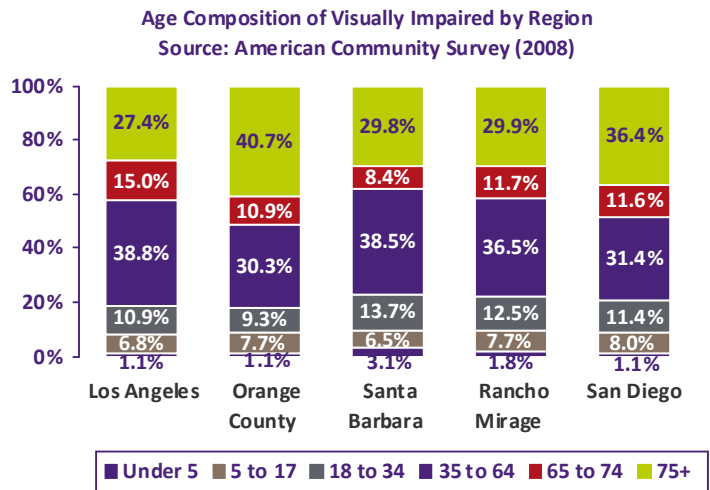
## How does the changing environment affect our work?

In addition to gathering input from various stakeholders, the committee also sought to understand how the changing environment affects BIA’s work. This included examining population shifts, educational trends, changes in service needs, new opportunities and technologies for independent living, and giving and volunteer trends. The committee discussed many critical questions such as:

- What is our operating model and strategy for sustainability?
- How can we best use our resources to improve the way we do business?
- Given the environment and current trends, are we doing the right things?
- What are the gaps and opportunities for new services or programs and do we have resources to sustain them?
- Who do we serve and how is that changing?

Southern California’s demographic makeup has shifted in years and continues to change. Latinos represented approximately 38% of residents in 2000. By 2010, 43% of residents were Latino. Furthermore, Latinos, American Indians, and African Americans, are disproportionately affected by obesity and diabetes, which increases these populations’ risk of vision impairment.

In addition to considering the racial and ethnic shifts of Southern California’s population, the committee also examined the visually impaired population by age. Nearly three-quarters of BIA clients are 65 years of age and older; 6% are 19 years and under. A large proportion of the visually impaired population in Southern California, however, is comprised of children, youth, and adults. Roughly a fifth of visually impaired residents are 18 years and under, and at least 30% are between the ages of 35 and 64. BIA stakeholders also observed increased demand for youth and younger adult services due to cutbacks in state funded programs.



## What do we want to achieve?

Following thoughtful consideration of the trend data and input from BIA staff, clients, funders and external stakeholders, the planning committee identified the following broad organizational goals to frame the discussion of more specific objectives, strategies, and actions:

- **Organizational Capacity:** Invest in our capacity to support programs in terms of staffing, infrastructure and governance.
- **Sustainability:** Broaden and diversify funding and revenue sources to ensure the financial stability of Braille Institute.
- **Visibility:** Improve our visibility and broaden the understanding of what we do and the impact we have on our clients' lives.
- **Programs & Services:** Enhance our programs and services to meet the needs of clients, respond to new trends and opportunities and maximize impact on the lives of visually impaired people.

**Stakeholder Recommendations**

- Improve use of technology
- Improve internal communications
- Streamline procedures
- Continue to develop human resources

**Organizational Capacity:** Invest in our capacity to support programs in terms of staffing, infrastructure and governance.

Goal	Objectives & Actions
<p><b>Governance:</b> Ensure continuous alignment of leadership with strategic goals and maintain an effective, active and informed board of directors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase the capacity of board to assist with fundraising</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Establish criteria for board membership, composition and diversity for future recruitment</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop regional leadership to generate local support, leadership and fundraising capabilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Human Resources:</b> Develop, assess, and align our human resources to meet current and future needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Regularly seek staff input and assess current and future staffing needs</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create training plan to maintain and enhance an effective workforce</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop action plan for internal communication, recruitment, retention, benefits, compensation, recognition &amp; reward</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Assess current volunteer recruitment and utilization and make modifications as necessary</li> </ul>

Goal	Objectives & Actions
<b>Technology:</b> Enhance and manage BIA’s technology and resources to support operational and programmatic goals for current and future needs of BIA and its clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Organization:</b> Conduct integrated internal technology assessment and develop plan of action to ensure operational efficiency and effectiveness</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Clients:</b> Assess technological needs and capacity of BIA clients and develop plan of action that integrates technology to maximize program outreach, provision and outcomes</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Library:</b> Evaluate and determine technological resources to promote and enrich library services (including ways to develop BIA’s digital capacity)</li> </ul>

**Sustainability:** Broaden and diversify funding and revenue sources to ensure the financial stability of the Braille Institute.

Goal	Objectives & Actions
<b>Revenue:</b> Ensure sustainability by maintaining and exploring broad-based funding to support programs and growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Explore and evaluate additional sources of funding including an assessment of various fundraising options, resources required to obtain funding and the potential return</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Based on assessment, strengthen existing fundraising activities to optimize performance</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase board participation in fundraising</li> </ul>
<b>Resource Allocation:</b> Align revenue and expenditures to maximize the impact of BIA and the effective allocation of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop financial plan to assess current and future resource needs and the alignment of spending with projected income</li> </ul>

The planning committee carefully considered a variety of factors and trends related to income generation and fundraising in challenging economic times (see the “Giving and Volunteer Trends” dashboard in appendix).

**Visibility:** Improve our visibility and broaden the understanding of what we do and the impact we have on our clients' lives.

Goal	Objectives & Actions
<b>Visibility:</b> Enhance BIA's visibility through strategic partnerships, marketing and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase visibility and understanding of BIA services to broaden the depth of clients, donors, vision-related professionals and partnerships</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inform and educate vision-related and medical providers at all levels, as well as universities</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop marketing plan that communicates BIA's mission and programs by expanding BIA brand through recognizable subsidiaries, an internal and external communications plan, effective educational materials and tools</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continuously assess marketing and communication activities</li> </ul>

The planning committee drew from the focus groups, surveys and interviews to better understand and formulate strategies for expanding the organization's visibility and reputation as a national leader and resource for the visually impaired.

**Programs & Services:** Enhance our programs and services to meet the needs of clients, respond to new trends and opportunities and maximize impact on the lives of visually impaired people.

Goal	Objectives & Actions
<b>Childhood Programs:</b> Improve and promote childhood Braille literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Refocus Braille Publishing into Braille literacy only</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue to expand <i>Braille Challenge</i><sup>®</sup> as a platform to nationally promote Braille literacy at an early age</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop and increase access of Special Collection products for young children to promote early childhood learning and literacy</li> </ul>
<b>Adult Programs:</b> Enhance and expand the spectrum of adult programs to better serve the diverse and changing needs of the blind and visually impaired people at different stages in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Evaluate delivery, content, and technology needs of programs and services (on-site, outreach, library services, low vision rehabilitation, mobile solutions) and refine accordingly</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Establish ongoing evaluation process for all programs and services to assess results, quality of services, and our ability to address the changing needs of our clients</li> </ul>

## How do we implement our plan?

The next critical step in the planning process is to develop a detailed roadmap that guides the implementation of the strategic plan. Based on the goals and strategies outlined above, specific next steps may include:

- **Communicate strategic vision:** Once the final strategic plan is adopted, it's important to communicate BIA's strategic vision and priorities to other stakeholders, particularly staff. Staff will need to understand the strategic goals and contribute to operationalizing them.
- **Develop operational plan:** Another important step is the development of a detailed operating plan for the first year including an annual budget, objectives, action steps, timelines and responsibilities.
- **Conduct assessments:** In almost all the goal areas, the planning committee acknowledged the need to prioritize the implementation of various strategies based on a variety of factors. Once more detailed assessment data has been collected, more specific and reasonable timeframes can be established. The specific details around when, who and how much it will cost can be further described in the above operational plan.
- **Identify measures of success:** The task force should identify specific benchmarks for monitoring progress and measuring success.
- **Revisit the strategic plan:** The strategic plan should be re-visited on an annual basis to assess progress, revisit assumptions, consider emerging opportunities and discuss changing circumstances. The primary purpose is to ensure that the strategic plan remains a "living and breathing" document that continues to be relevant over time.

### BIA Programs & Services

- Programs for Adults
- Library Services
- Low Vision Rehabilitation
- Braille Challenge<sup>®</sup>
- Braille Publishing
- Child Development
- Youth & Career Services

## Acknowledgements

Many people contributed to the development of this strategic plan by providing feedback, direction, leadership, time and creative energy to the planning process. In particular, we would like to thank the

### **BIA Strategic Planning Task Force:**

Adama Dyoniziak, Director, Strategic Programs  
Janice E. Herzberg, Director, Human Resources  
Gene Mathiowetz, Regional Director, Orange County  
Lisa M. Jimenez, Regional Director, Rancho Mirage

### **BIA Executive Staff:**

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Anthony Joji Taketa, General Counsel & Corporate Secretary  
Reza Rahmann, Vice President, Finance & Chief Financial Officer  
David Burkhardt, Vice President, Development

### **BIA Strategic Planning Board of Directors Committee:**

George E. Thomas, Chair SP Committee  
James H. Jackson  
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Michael Corley  
Thomas K. Callister  
John G. Nuanes  
Lester M. Sussman, Chair, Board of Directors

### **Staff Providing Focus Groups Assistance:**

All Directors and Assistant Directors including:  
Gene Mathiowetz, Regional Director, Orange County  
Lisa M. Jimenez, Regional Director, Rancho Mirage  
Anita Wright, Regional Director, Los Angeles  
Michael Lazarovits, Regional Director, Santa Barbara  
Jay Comstock, Regional Director, San Diego

### **Focus Group, Interview and Survey Participants:**

Braille Institute Staff  
Braille Institute Volunteers and Clients

### **The Facilitation & Data Collection Team:**

Harder+Company Community Research including  
Sonia Taddy-Sandino, Linda Tran, Dulce Jimenez and  
Alfonso Martin.



### Demographic Trends for Visually Impaired People

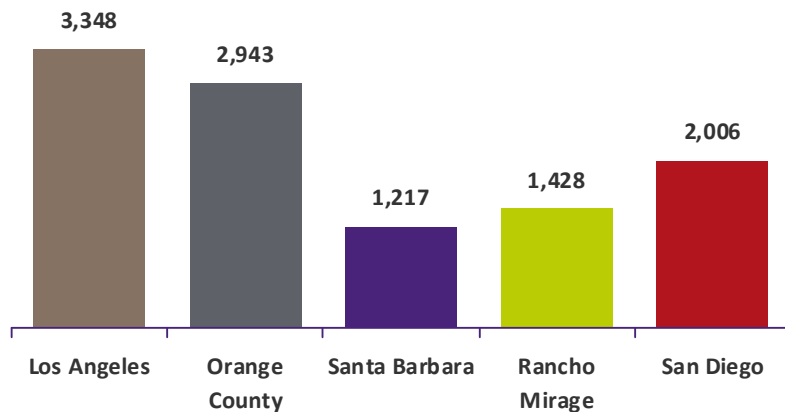
This data dashboard provides a demographic snapshot of the visually impaired population in California and is intended to help inform Braille Institute’s strategic planning process.

### Key Planning Questions

- Who do we serve and how does it compare to the larger visually impaired population in California?
- How has the population we serve changed over time?
- Are there gaps and opportunities we should consider?
- What sort of programming and outreach strategies might we consider based on what we have learned?

### Total Clients Served

Figure 1. Total Served by Region, FY 2009-2010



Source: Braille Institute Annual Report 2009-2010

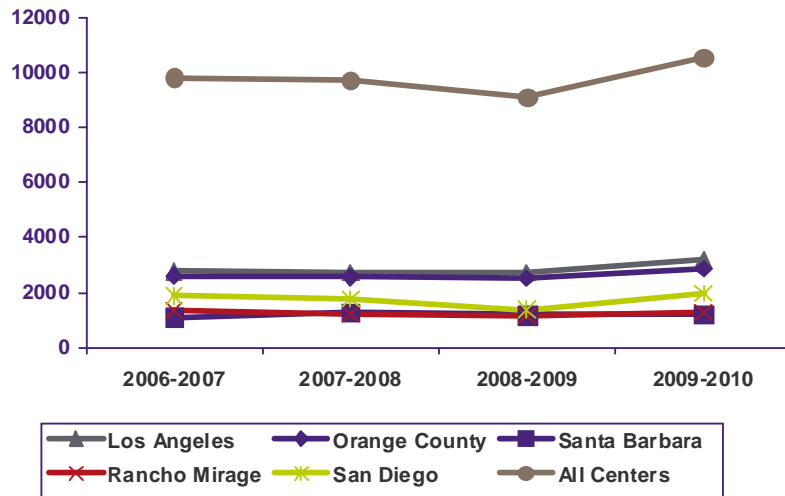
### Number of Visually Impaired by County

Figure 2. Estimated # of Visually Impaired People by County (2008)



### Clients Served Over Time

Figure 3. Unduplicated Clients Served by Region, 2006-2010\*



\*Regional numbers do not include number of children in preschool.

Source: Braille Institute Annual Report 2006-2010

- Total individuals served at each center have remained relatively consistent in recent years.
- There is a slight decreasing trend in total individuals served by the San Diego Regional Center.
- The Los Angeles region has the largest number of visually impaired residents. Its regional center also served the largest number of individuals in 2007-2008.
- The Orange County Regional Center served approximately 6% of visually impaired people in the county in 2007-2008.

### Visually Impaired People by BIA Service Area

Figure 4. Number of Visually Impaired People Service Area/ Region, 2008

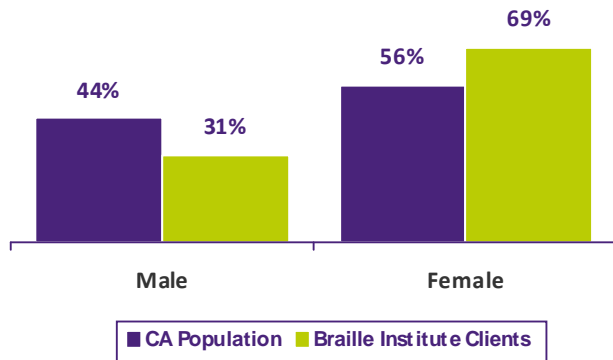
Region	Total Population	Total Served*	Percent Served
Los Angeles Regional Center	223,025	2,866	1.3%
Los Angeles	204,281		
Kern	18,744		
Orange County Regional Center	40,890	2,611	6.4%
Santa Barbara Regional Center	27,341	1,300	4.8%
Santa Barbara	8,719		
San Luis Obispo	4,496		
Ventura	14,126		
Rancho Mirage Regional Center	86,250	1,317	1.5%
Riverside	48,667		
San Bernardino	37,583		
San Diego Regional Center	53,382	1,771	3.3%
San Diego	48,104		
Imperial	5,278		
<b>All Regions</b>	<b>430,888</b>	<b>9,698</b>	<b>2.3%</b>

\*Regional numbers do not include number of children in preschool.

Source: American Community Survey 2008 and Braille Institute Annual Report 2007-2008

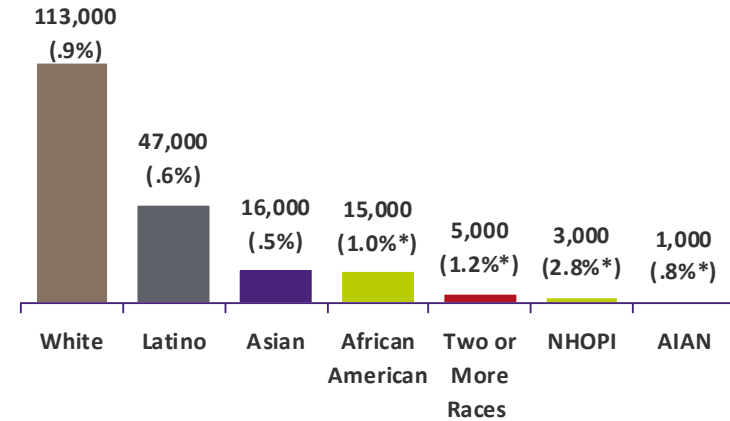
### Trends by Gender and Race

Figure 5. Gender Composition of Visually Impaired People in CA and among Braille Institute Clients (2008)



Source: American Community Survey 2008 and Braille Institute Annual Report 2007-2008

Figure 6. Estimated Number of Legally Blind People in CA by Race (2005)

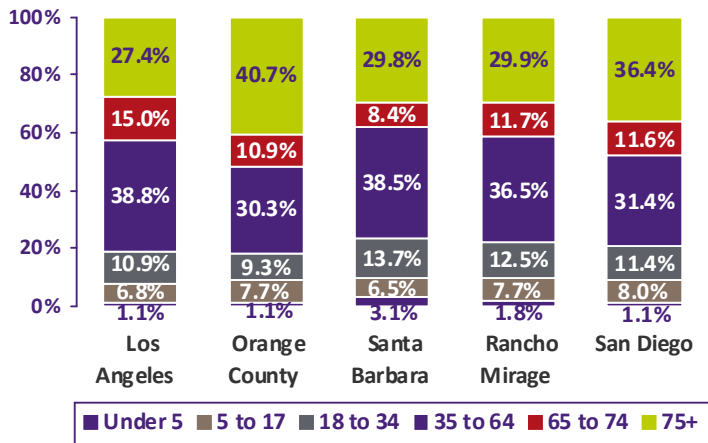


\*Statistically unstable

Source: California Health Interview Survey 2005

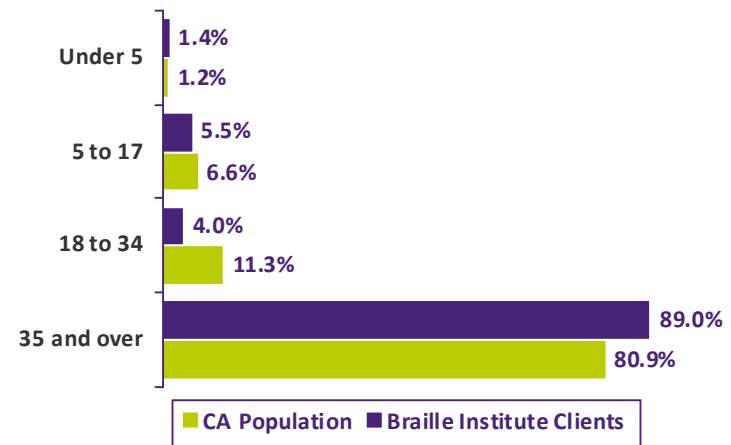
### Trends by Age

Figure 7. Age Composition of CA Visually Impaired Population by Region (2008)



Source: American Community Survey 2008

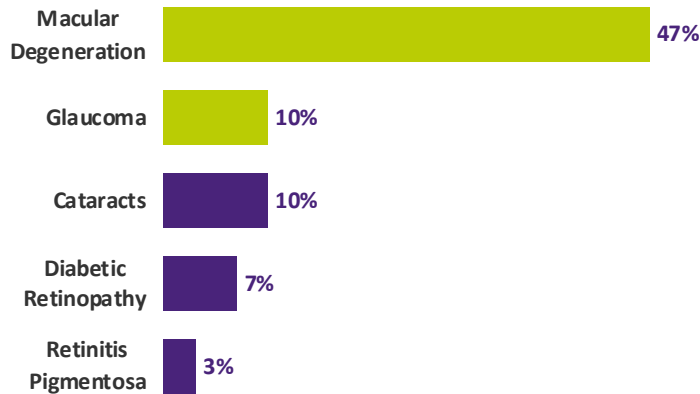
Figure 8. Age Composition of CA Visually Impaired Population and Braille Institute Clients (2008)



Source: American Community Survey 2008 and Braille Institute Annual Report 2007-2008

### Chronic Diseases

Figure 9. Primary Causes of Visual Impairment among Braille Institute Clients (2008)



Source: Braille Institute Annual Report 2007-2008

Figure 10. Prevalence of Cataract, Age-Related Macular Degeneration, and Open-Angle Glaucoma By Age Among Adults 40 Years and Older in the US (2004)

Age	Cataract	Advanced AMD	Intermediate AMD	Glaucoma
40-49	2.5%	0.1%	2.0%	0.7%
50-59	6.8%	0.4%	3.4%	1.0%
60-69	20.0%	0.7%	6.4%	1.8%
70-79	42.8%	2.4%	12.0%	3.9%
80 and over	68.3%	11.8%	23.6%	7.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.2%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>

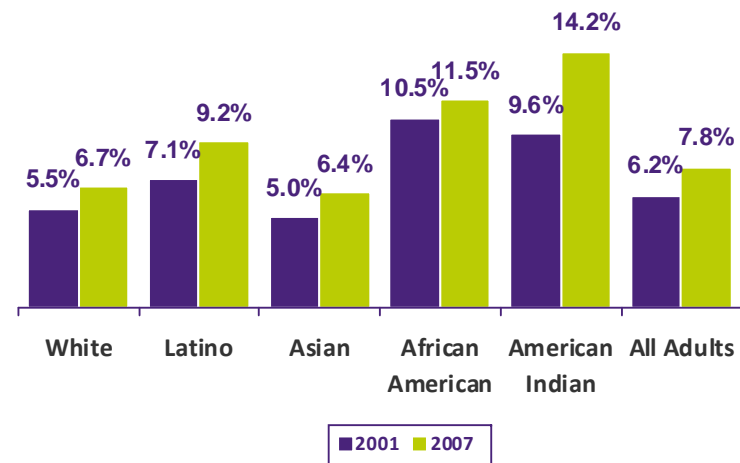
Source: Archives of Ophthalmology, Volume 122, April 2004

Figure 11. Estimated Prevalence of Diabetic Retinopathy by Age in the US (2004)

Age	Diabetic Retinopathy
40-49	1.4%
50-64	3.8%
65-74	5.8%
75 and over	5.0%

Source: Archives of Ophthalmology, Volume 122, April 2004

Figure 12. Diabetes Prevalence in CA by Race/Ethnicity (2001 & 2007)



- Los Angeles County had the largest number of people with diabetes with an estimated 642,000 residents.

Source: Diamant, A. et al. Obesity and Diabetes: Two Growing Epidemics in California. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. August 2010.

### Demand and Service Trends for the Visually Impaired

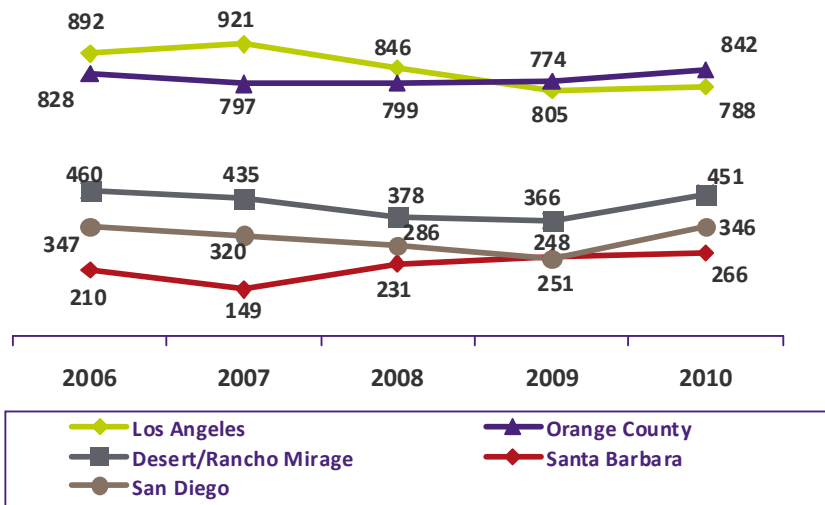
This data dashboard provides a snapshot of Braille Institute services for the visually impaired population in California and is intended to help inform Braille Institute’s strategic planning process.

#### Key Planning Questions

- What services does Braille Institute offer, and how many people do they serve?
- How has demand for different services shifted over time?
- Who uses the services, and how do they differ by region?

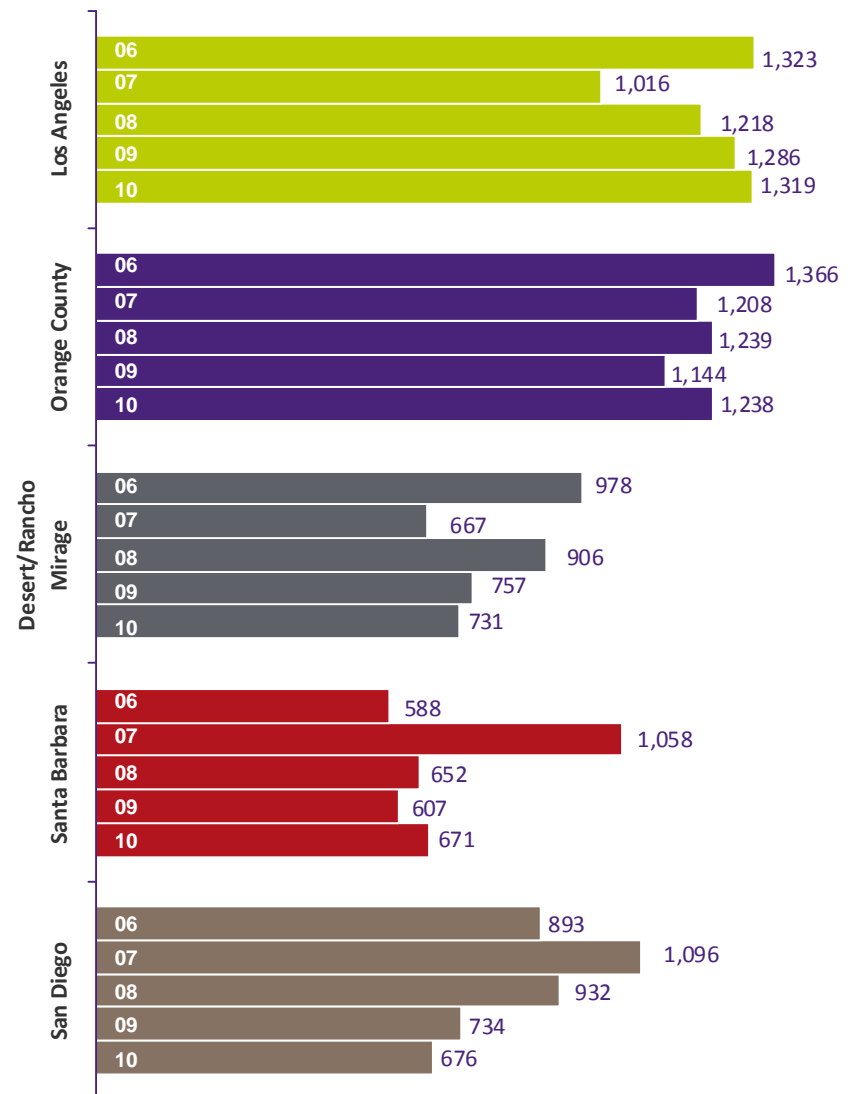
#### Adult Education and Counseling

Figure 1. Number of Students Enrolled by Year (2006-2010)



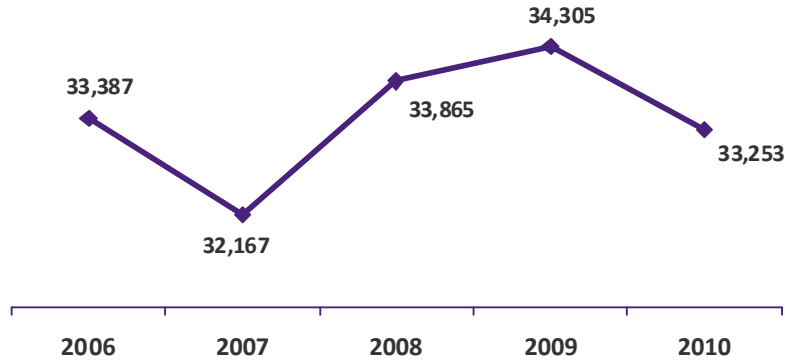
### Low Vision Rehabilitation Services

Figure 2. Number of Consultations by Year (2006-2010)



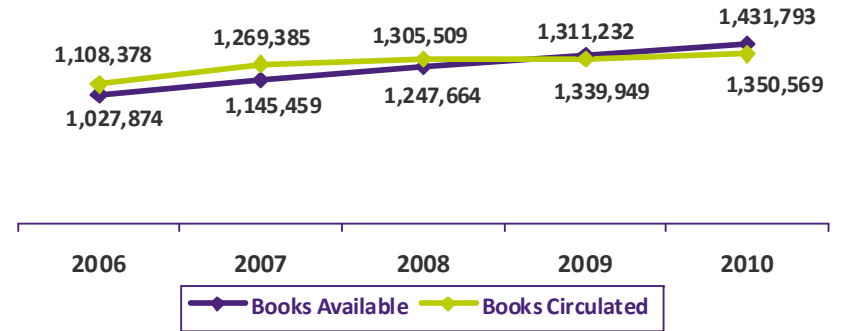
## Library Services

Figure 3. Number of Registered Readers by Year (2006-2010)



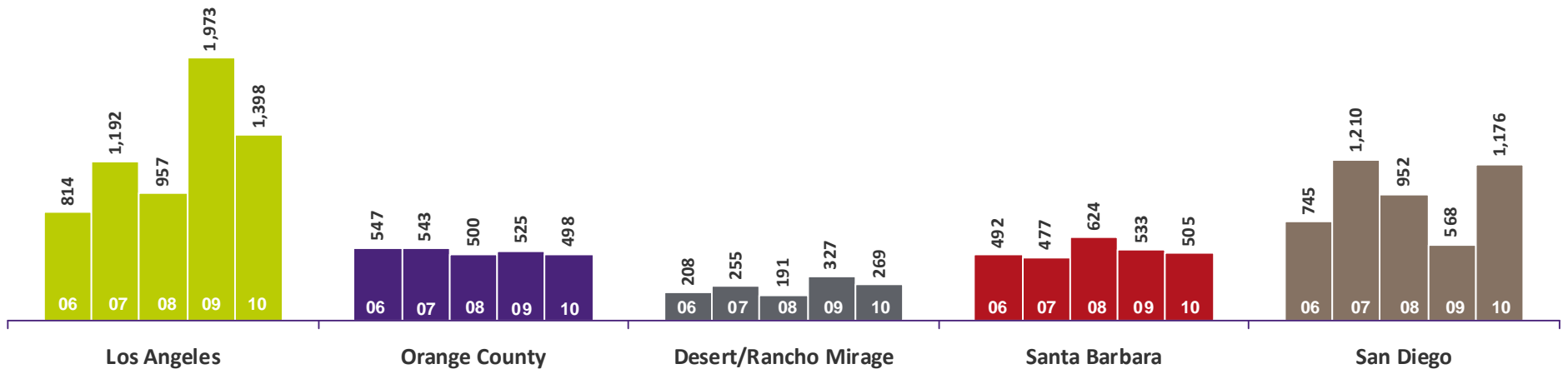
## Library Services

Figure 4. Number of Books Available and Books Circulated by Year (2006-2010)



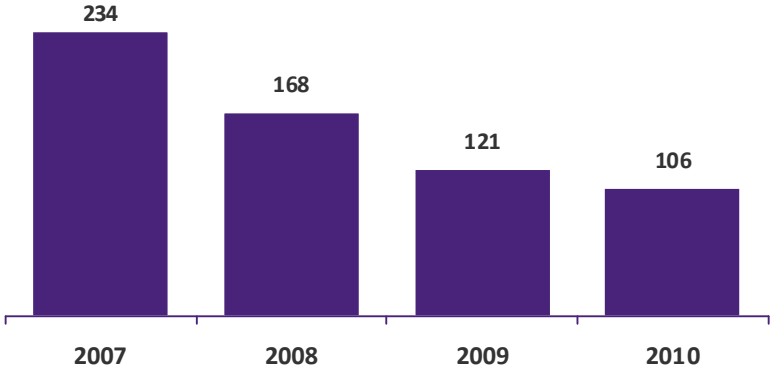
## Community Outreach (2006-2010)

Figure 5. Number of Students Enrolled by Year (2006-2010)



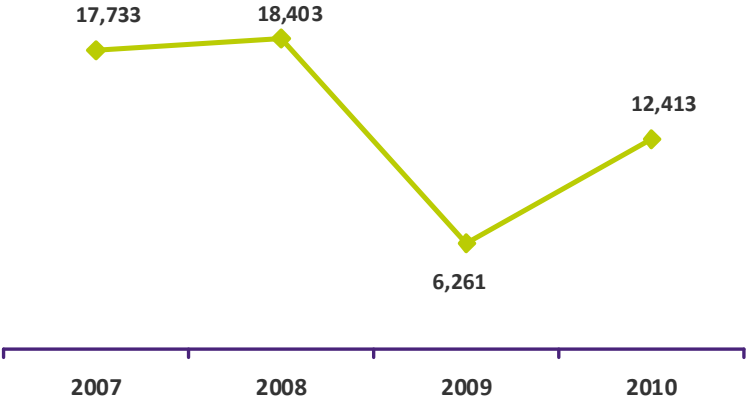
### Braille Publishing

Figure 6. Number of Commercial Clients by Year (2007-2010)



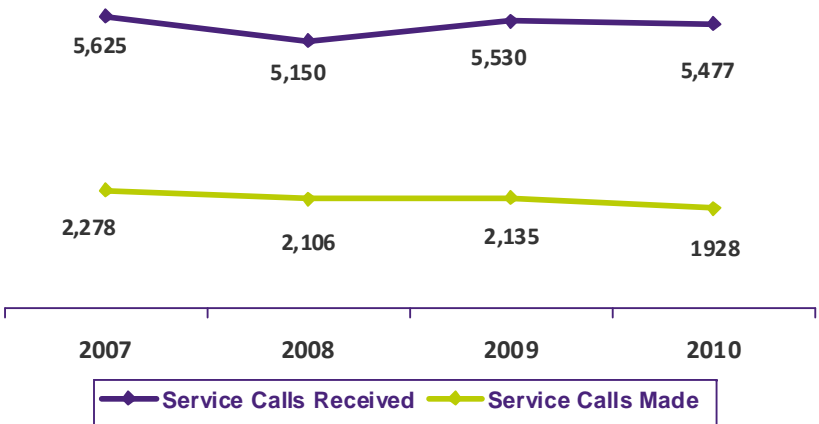
### Braille Publishing

Figure 7. Total Number of Subscription Publications by Year (2007-2010)



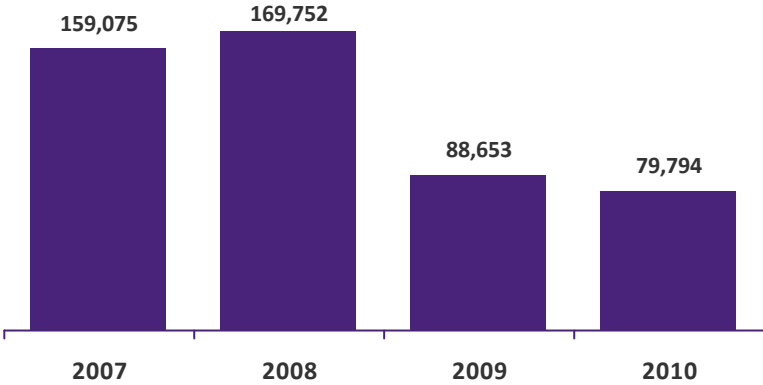
### TeleService Department

Figure 8. Number of Service Calls Received and Made by Year (2007-2010)



### Web Site Visits

Figure 9. Number of Web Site Visits by Year (2007-2010)



### Public Education

**Figure 10. Number of Public Education Services (2007-2010)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Speaking Engagements	888	1,046	424	301
Group Tours	335	477	586	460
Film and Television Consultations	23	20	21	20
Public Service Announcements (Southern California)	235	246	284	--

### Mobile Solutions

**Figure 11. Number of Mobile Solutions Services (2007-2010)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Sites Visited	524	468	406	501
Low Vision Rehabilitation Consultations	1,212	1,190	1,171	1,017
Number of Visitors	2,137	3,185	1,750	3,248
Library Applications Returned	263	202	100	144
<i>Vistas</i> Sales	\$22,334	\$32,844	\$34,819	\$26,327

### Sources

- All data obtained from the Braille Institute Light Annual Reports (2006-2010).

### Educational Trends for Visually Impaired People

This data dashboard provides a summary of Braille literacy trends and seeks to identify gaps and shifts in adult and special education. This dashboard is intended to help inform Braille Institute’s strategic planning process.

### Key Planning Questions

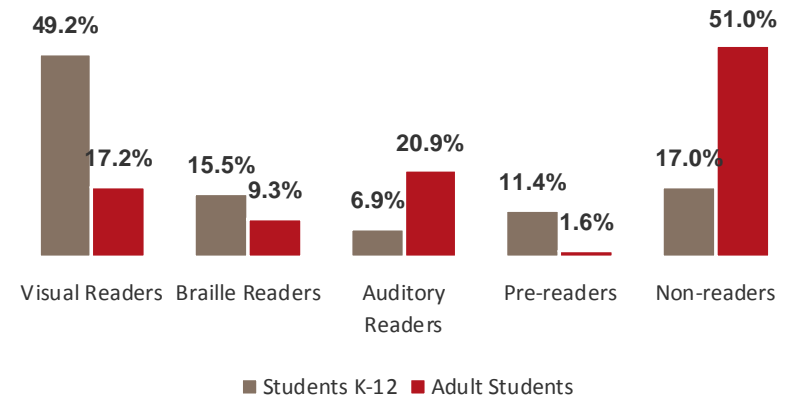
- What are emerging Braille literacy and Braille education trends?
- What are the gaps and trends in adult and special education?

### Braille Literacy Trends

- According to a report by the National Federation for the Blind, fewer than 10% of legally blind Americans are Braille readers.
- Data collected from the January 2008 Federal Census Quota suggest approximately 9% of all registered blind students in the US are Braille readers, 22% are pre-readers, and 34% are non-readers.\*
- Among registered students who are readers, 21% use Braille as their primary reading medium.\*
- Technological advances have made Braille more available. At the same time, these advances have also made audio devices and software more available and accessible.

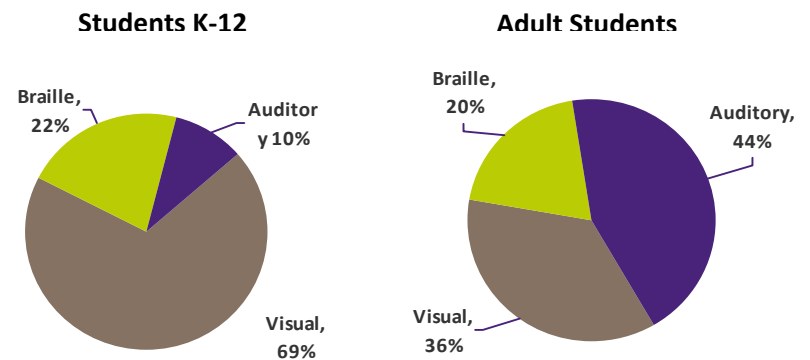
**\* Note from American Printing House: Determinations regarding student literacy and/or appropriate learning media cannot be supported or proven using APH registration data.**

Figure 1. Primary Reading Medium by Age (Federal Quota Census of Jan 2008)\*



Source: American Printing House for the Blind 2009 Annual Report

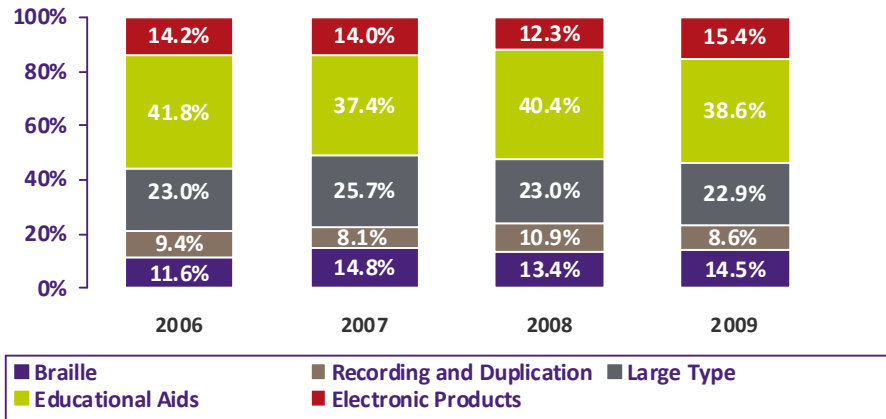
Figure 2. Primary Reading Medium Among Readers by Age (Federal Quota Census of Jan 2008)\*



Source: American Printing House for the Blind 2009 Annual Report

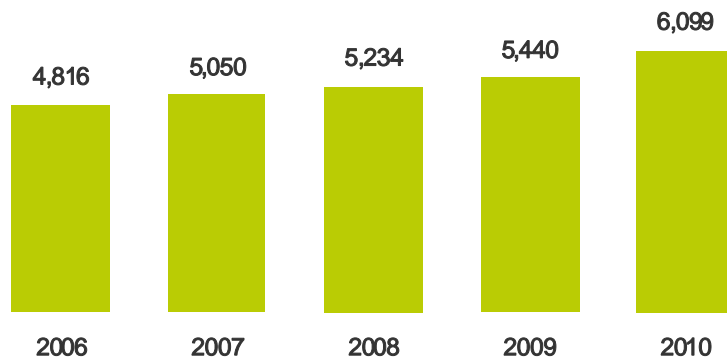
## Braille Consumption

Figure 3. Proportion of American Printing House for the Blind Revenue by Product Type and Year (2006-2009)



Source: American Printing House for the Blind Annual Reports (2006-2009)

Figure 4. Number of Registered BIA Publications Readers by Year (2006-2009)

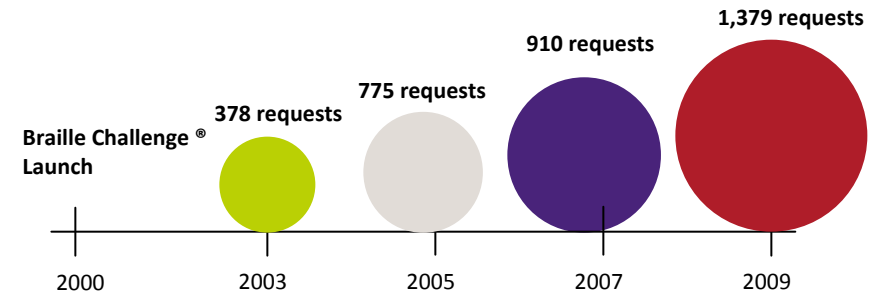


Source: Braille Institute Annual Reports (2006-2010)

- What proportion of BIA readers are Braille readers?

## The Braille Challenge®

Figure 5. Number of Preliminary Contests Requested by Year (2003-2009)



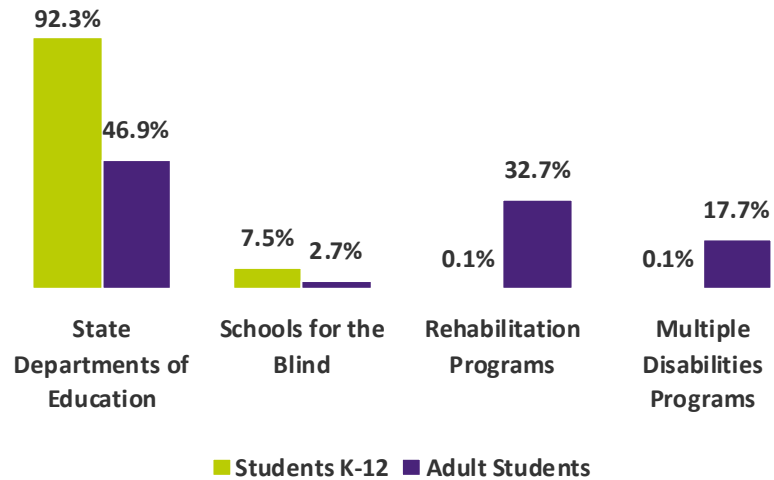
Source: Braille Institute Annual Reports 2003-2009

## Barriers to Braille Literacy

- Lack of enforcement and dedicated resources to bolster policies supporting Braille instruction (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - 2004 & California State Board of Education Braille Reading Standards - 2006).
- Higher cost of Braille notepads and devices.
- Affordability and accessibility of text magnification tools and audio programs.
- Shortage of Braille teachers and inconsistent standards for Braille teacher credentialing.

## Visually Impaired K-12 and Adult Students in the US

Figure 6. Enrolled Students by Age and Program Type (2008)



Source: American Printing House for the Blind 2009 Annual Report

## Visually Impaired Students in Special Education (CA)

Figure 7. Number of Visually Impaired Students in Special Education by Age (2004-2009) - California

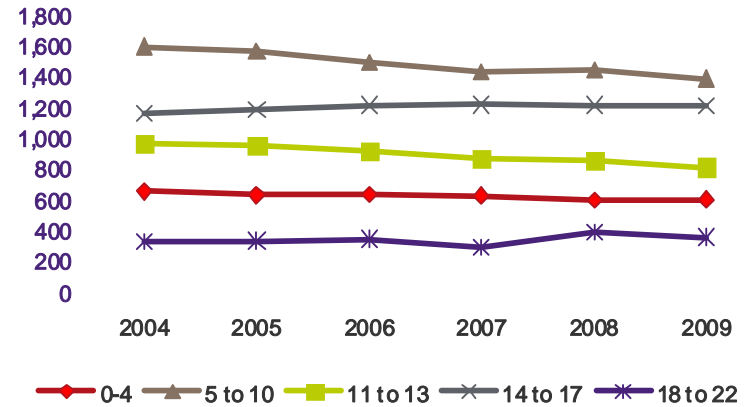
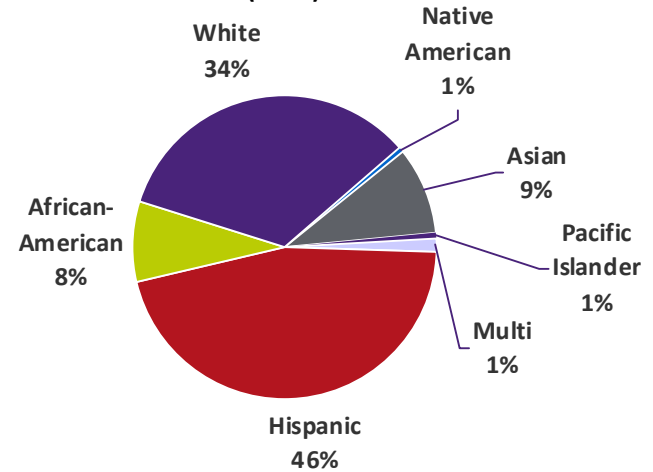


Figure 8. Racial/Ethnic Composition of Visually Impaired Students in Special Education (2009) - California



Source: CA Department of Education 2009

### Independent Living for Visually Impaired People

This data dashboard provides information on existing services and supports that promote independent living for visually impaired people. It is intended to help inform Braille Institute’s strategic planning process.

### Key Planning Questions

- What services do BIA and peer institutions provide to support independent living?
- How have government supports and policies changed over time?
- What are the employment trends and opportunities available to visually impaired individuals?

### BIA and Peer Institution Adult Services

**Figure 1. Braille Institute and Peer Institution Adult Services (18 and above)**

Braille Institute	Peer Institutions
Life Skills Class Curriculum	Macular Degenerative Program
Enrichment Class Curriculum	Diabetes and Low-Vision Program
Career Services Program	Transition Services
Low-Vision Consultation	Low-Vision Consultation
Access to assistive devices	Access to assistive devices
Support Group	COPE Support Group for Ages 25-59
	Diabetes Support Group in multiple languages
	Individual and Group Psychotherapy
Hotline	Peer Phone Calls

### BIA and Peer Institution Children Services

**Figure 2. Braille Institute and Peer Institution Children Service (5-18)**

Braille Institute	Peer Institutions
<b>Early Intervention/In Home Services</b>	
Child Development Consultation	Preschool-Kindergarten Curriculum
Parent Groups	Parent to Parent Program
	Individual and Family Counseling
<b>Braille Advocacy</b>	
The Braille Challenge®	Lucky Touch Fortune Cookies (with Braille messages)
Children Literacy Service	K-12 Academic Curriculum
<b>Preschool Support &amp; Transition Program</b>	
Work with community Preschools	Provide Preschool Curriculum
	Adapted Physical Education
<b>Youth Services</b>	
Youth Equipment Loans	Technology team to reinforce student technology skills
Youth Career Services - Employment Readiness	Transition Services (vocational training and adult education)
Youth Social –Recreational Programs	

- Some peer institutions explicitly state that they serve students with multiple disabilities.

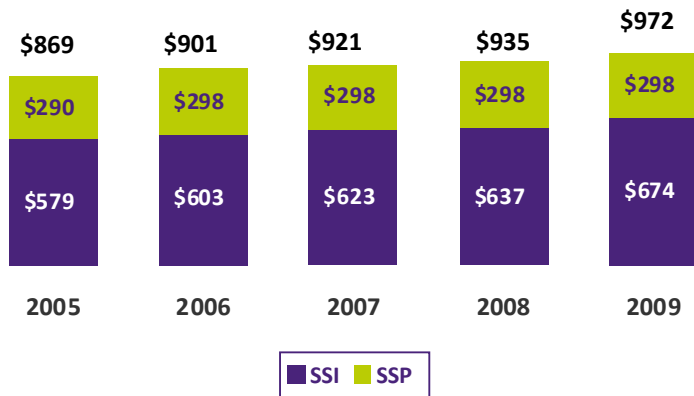
### Government Supports

Figure 3. Average Monthly Benefits for SSDI 2005-2010



Source: Annual Statistical Report on the Social Security Disability Insurance Program 2005-2009  
 \*2010 averages include January-September data

Figure 4. SSI and SSP Grant Levels for Independent Legally Blind Individuals 2005-2009



Source: CA Department of Social Services, Public Assistance Facts & Figures 2005-2009

### Policy Changes Related to SSDI

#### The Disability Insurance Automation (DIA) Solution

- Implementation of a secure electronic communication and information processing environment.
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) provides the Employment Development Department (EDD) an opportunity to utilize the advantages of electronic communications with claimants, medical providers and employers.
- System seeks to significantly improve its delivery of Disability Insurance services.
- Claimant Benefits include: Online help and access to claim status and payment history, improved confirmation of form submissions, access forms on-screen and reduced overall processing time.
- System will be implemented in January 2011.

### Government Housing Assistance

#### The Home ownership voucher program - Section 8

- Housing Choice Vouchers is a U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) federal housing program that financially helps moderate or low-income families with disabilities to rent or buy a home.
- The goal of the program is for people with limited income to afford to rent or buy a home. Section 8 hence offers subsidies for both renters and home owners.
- Mainstream Vouchers enable families having a person with disabilities to lease affordable private housing of their choice.
- Designated Housing Vouchers enable non-elderly families with a disabled person, who would be eligible for public housing if occupancy were not restricted to elderly families to lease safe, to occupy decent and affordable housing.
- Certain Development Vouchers enable non-elderly families having a person with disabilities, who do not currently receive housing assistance in certain developments where owners establish preferences for or restrict occupancy to elderly families, to obtain affordable housing.

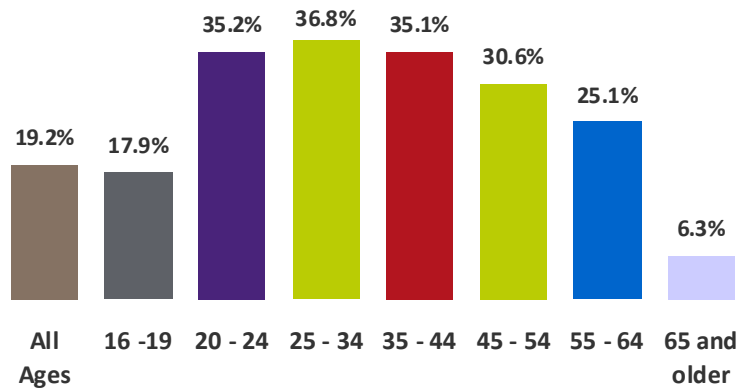
### Employment Trends

**Figure 5. Employment Data Pertaining to All People who reported Vision Impairment (16 Years of Age and Over)**

Month/Year	Not in Labor Force	Labor Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate	Employment to Population Rate
September 2009	3,150,000	22%	12.2%	19.3%
December 2009	3,163,000	21.7%	13%	18.9%
March 2010	3,132,000	23%	15.3%	19.5%
June 2010	2,903,000	25.4%	13.2%	22%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

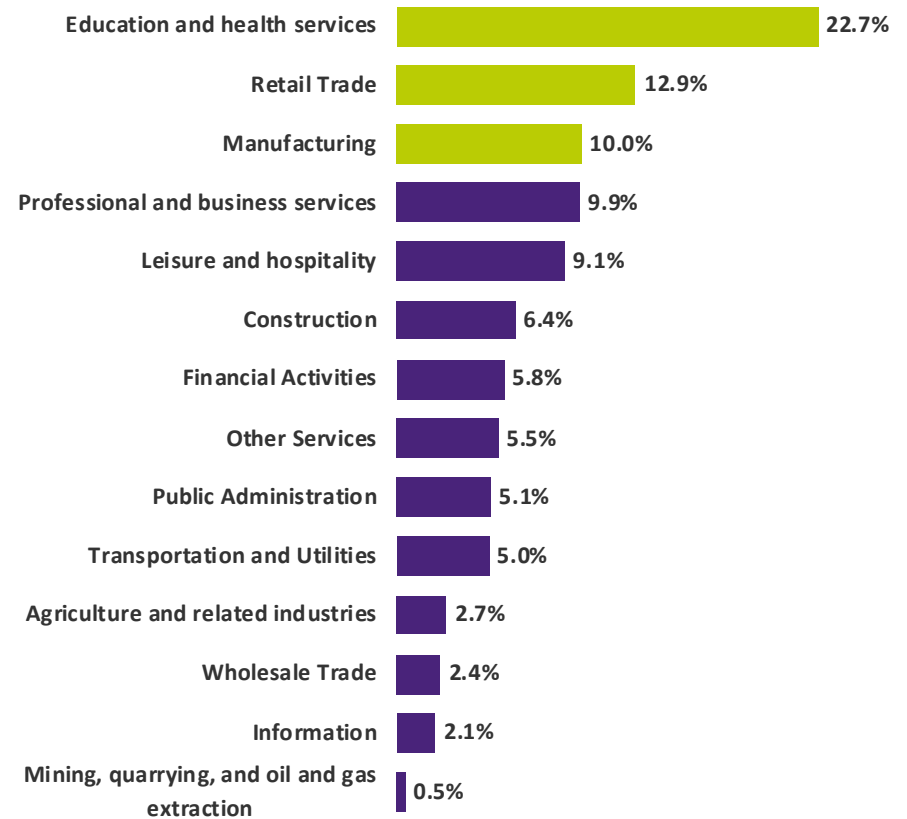
**Figure 6. Employment to Population Ratio of Civilian Non-Institutional Persons with a Disability by Age, 2009 Annual Averages**



- Overall more than 19% of individuals with a disability are employed.
- That percentage of employment significantly increases between ages 20 to 44.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

**Figure 7. Distribution of Disabled Employees by Sector in 2009**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Giving & Volunteer Trends

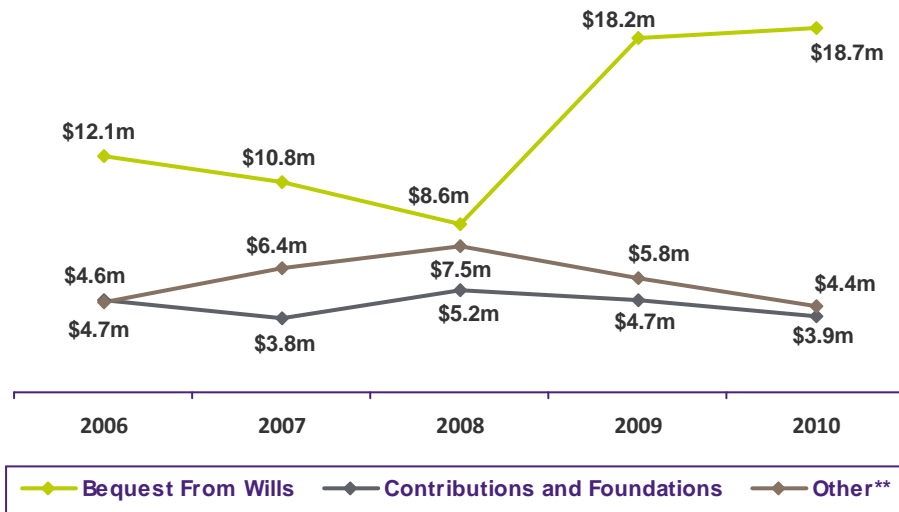
This data dashboard provides information about volunteers at Braille Institute and current trends in philanthropic giving. It is intended to help inform Braille Institute's strategic planning process.

### Key Planning Questions

- What are Braille Institute's sources of funding, and how has that changed over time?
- What are the current giving and volunteer trends, and how might that impact Braille Institute?
- What are potential funding opportunities for Braille Institute?
- Who are Braille Institute's volunteers, and how have they changed over time?

### Sources of Funding for Braille Institute\*

Figure 1. Income Support by Source and Year (2006-2010)



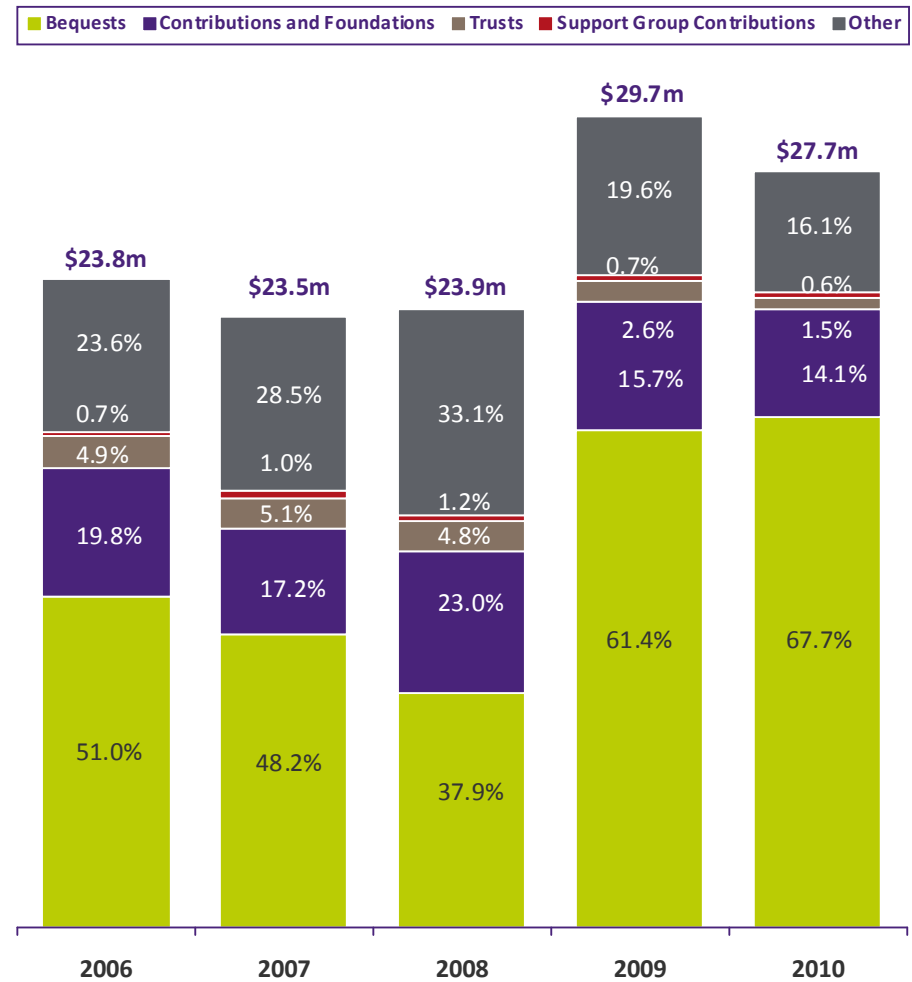
\*Only the top three sources of funding are shown, Trusts and Support Group Contributions were excluded

\*\*Other sources of income include Royalties, State Library Appropriations, and Net Investments

Source: Braille Institute Annual Report Light (2006-2010)

### Total Funds Received by Braille Institute

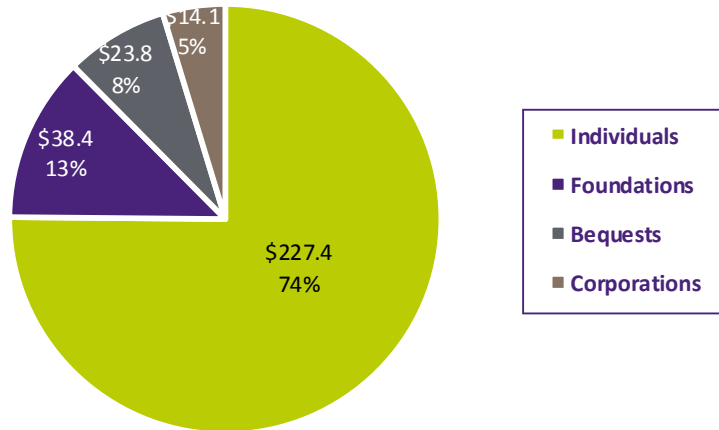
Figure 2. Funds Received by Year (2006-2010)



Source: Braille Institute Annual Report Light (2006-2010)

## Contributions in Billions by Source in the U.S.

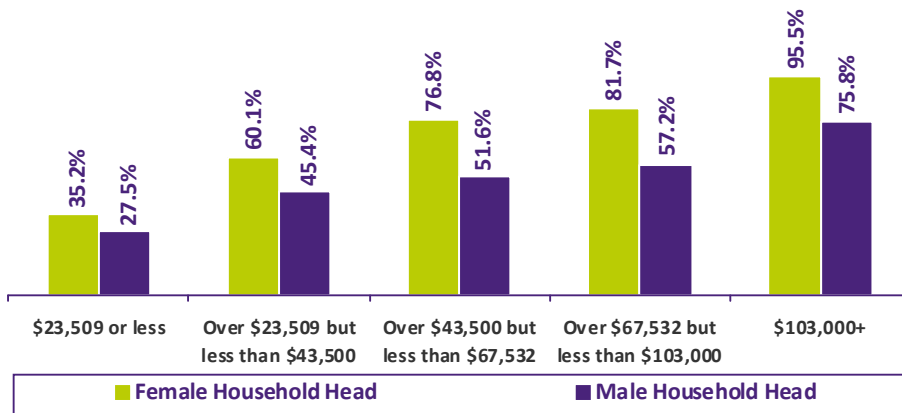
Figure 3. Contributions in Billions by Source in 2009



Source: Giving USA Foundation

## Individual Giving by Income and Gender

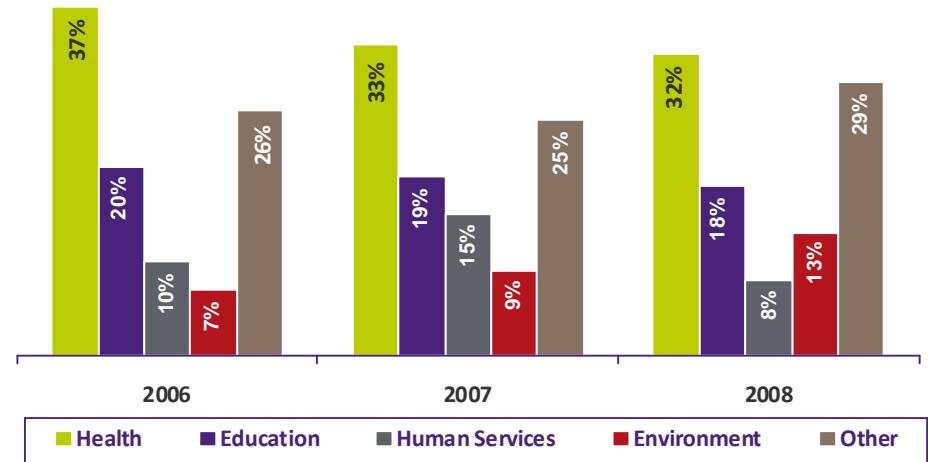
Figure 4. Percent of Households who Donated Money by Income in 2006



Source: The Society Pages

## Foundations in the West Funding Patterns

Figure 5. Percent of Grant Dollars in the U.S. by Year (2004-2008)



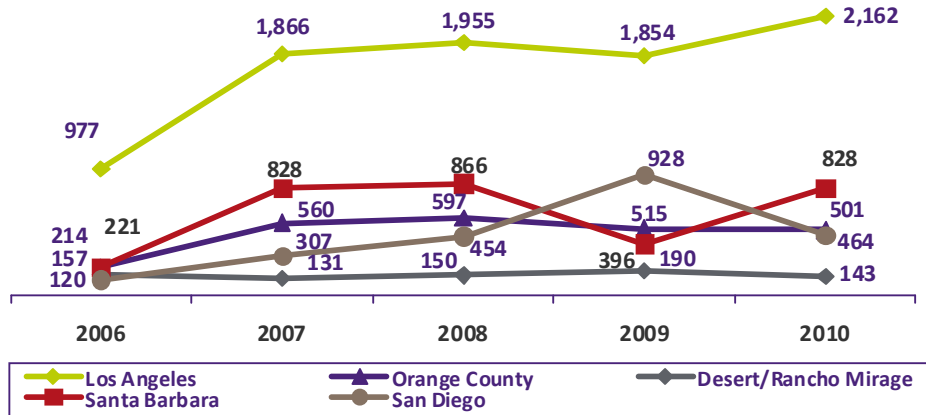
Source: The Foundation Center

## Giving Trends in the U.S. (2009)<sup>1</sup>

- Total estimated charitable giving in the United States dropped 3.6%.
- Individual giving fell an estimated 0.4%.
- Foundation grantmaking by private, community, and operating foundations fell 8.9%.
- Corporate giving rose an estimated 5.5%; this unexpected bounce takes corporate giving to within 1% of its pre-recession level.
- Giving for health rose 3.8%.
- Giving to education declined an estimated 3.6%.

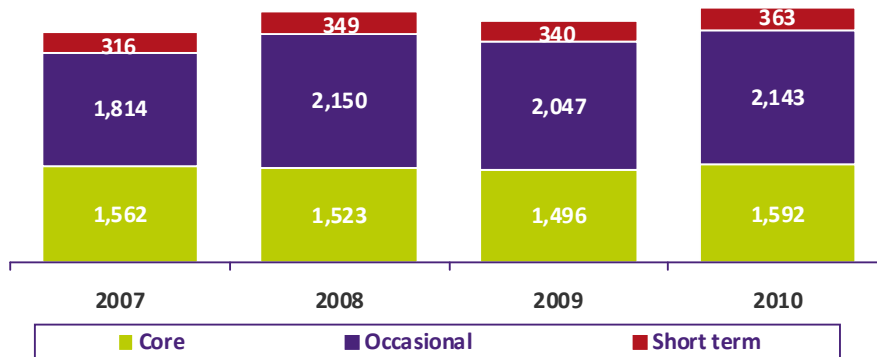
### Volunteer Services

Figure 6. Number of Braille Institute Volunteers by Year (2006-2010)



Source: Braille Institute Annual Report Light (2006-2010)

Figure 7. Number of Core, Occasional, and Short Term Volunteers across Centers by Year (2007-2010)



Source: Braille Institute Annual Report Light (2007-2010)

### Public Funding Opportunity<sup>2</sup>

The **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009** - The Twenty-first Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2009 commits \$500 million for vocational training for the disabled. HR 3101. The bill has been passed in the House and now goes on to the Senate. The goal of the bill is to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to emerging Internet Protocol-based communication and video programming technologies in the 21st Century.

- Braille Institute could advocate for passage
- BIA could monitor and potentially pursue funding

### Sources

- <sup>1</sup> Giving USA Foundation. The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2009: Executive Summary.
- <sup>2</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor