Our Story.

Since our founding in 1919 by J. Robert Atkinson and through a century of service, regional growth and technological advancement, Braille Institute has always remained focused on our singular mission: to positively transform the lives of those with vision loss.

While the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020-2021 presented life-changing difficulties, Braille Institute remained focused, adapting programs for remote delivery and establishing a foundation for a new “hybrid” model of service — of both in-person at our centers and remotely through online delivery.

Your whole organization has become a huge part of our family and we’re extremely grateful!

– Rich Flores, Child Development Parent

All this would not have been possible without incredible community members like you. Our community is strong because it includes everyone — blind, low vision or sighted — working together day-by-day to empower others.

Our core values serve as our beacon, as we build upon our foundation to serve future generations:

Our Commitment to Mission means we “positively transform the lives of individuals living with vision loss” each and every day.

Our Passion to Serve energizes our daily work, stimulates our ability to innovate and find creative solutions, and provides the necessary fuel we need to sustain the mission for decades to come.

Our commitment to Teamwork means that we value every individual team member and recognize the power we all have when working as a collective.

Our commitment to Excellence and Integrity keeps us focused on mission delivery and service, always striving to assure the best outcome in everything we do.

As we look to the future, we stand poised to help even more people living with vision loss improve their lives. Thank you for being part of our vibrant community.
Our Connections.

Connecting to the future…. the changes we are making together are creating a brighter future for those with vision loss.

In a year of social distancing and quarantines, staying connected was especially important. While Braille Institute could not hold in-person classes due to the pandemic, we pivoted so programs and services could be delivered remotely, continuously and free of charge. Students, clients, and families received support and stayed connected from the comfort and safety of their homes. It was remarkable to see the resilience, enthusiasm, and positivity demonstrated by our entire community.

100% of programs and services were delivered remotely…. providing enhanced benefits and experiences

- Students had more classes to choose from, with options available from all seven centers.
- Students got to know new instructors and students from other centers.
- People from other states and even other countries participated in workshops.
- “Live” classes provided socialization and interactive discussions among students and instructors.
- Training on Microsoft Teams with a focus on accessibility was available to anyone who needed it.

Next Level “Virtual” Braille Challenge and Braille Challenge Finals
Over 700 youth participated in remote Braille Challenge Regionals and Finals. Both events were hosted virtually to celebrate the finalists and winners.

Over 1,200 unique adult students attended classes,
69,000 hours of instruction delivered

First “Virtual” Move-A-Thon
Inspired physical movement and enabled students to show off their Orientation and Mobility skills over an entire month.
We are proud to have made so many connections with our various stakeholders this past year:

Over **280** unique youth and child development families helped

**First “Virtual” Child Development Graduation**
A wonderful milestone celebration of our young children (ages 0-6) who graduated from the Child Development program.

Over **9,000** library patrons and **296,600** books downloaded

**First “Virtual” Adult Braille Graduation**
Congratulated our students who demonstrated a commitment to life-long learning and braille literacy.

Over **1,000** teleservice sessions provided

Over **10,800** consultations provided

**First “Remote” Southern California Cane Quest**
Enabled youth students to demonstrate their Orientation & Mobility skills from the safety of their home and neighborhood.
• Staff members from every center hosted “Meet The Staff” webinars so that students and guests could personally get to know team members.

• Eye doctors and other experts were invited to host seminars on important topics like eye diseases and use of technology.

• Professionals attended workshops and received Continuing Education Units (CEUs), now that Braille Institute is an accredited provider.

Over 200 remote classes and workshops offered each semester... utilizing innovative and engaging approaches.

- Children’s books and story kits were mailed to families to support in-home learning.

- Class kits were mailed to students beforehand to enable a hands-on experience with the right tools and resources.

- Adult classes offered something for everyone on a range of topics from cooking, art, independent living skills and much, much more.

- Our youth choir created five music videos and hosted fun social events like karaoke parties, talent shows, and music revues.
One Student’s Journey With Vision Loss In A Socially Distanced Year

Aim Gilstrap has grown so much in her time as a Braille Institute student and volunteer... but never so much than in the past year.

Aim was born blind and recalls studying Braille in preschool and kindergarten. Her first adult memory of Braille Institute was touring the San Diego Center in 1999. Three years later, while interning in a rehabilitation counseling program and earning her master’s degree in adaptive technology, Aim served as a Braille Institute volunteer for the first time.

In 2013, Aim volunteered at Braille Institute once again, where she served in the library and eventually at the front desk, helping callers and visitors which was her favorite thing about volunteering. She began a few classes, too — one on cooking and one on how to use the iPhone, though she didn’t own one. She was always curious about technology and eager to learn. That’s when she also was introduced to the B.A.R.D. (Braille and Audio Reading Download) service and she learned how to download audio books.

Although she was working on computers with speech before she came to Braille Institute and using screen reader programs in the computer lab at San Diego State, Aim’s life was really transformed after getting a laptop capable of running Microsoft Teams and Zoom. During the pandemic, these audio-visual conferencing programs were essential for attending classes online. Before the pandemic, she knew nothing about these programs, and it was Braille Institute’s remote learning one-on-one training that taught her how to get connected.

Because of the wide array of one-on-one services she was able to access through Braille Institute, Aim has become more independent. She can order items from places like Amazon, and she uses a scanner to read product labels. Getting online with Microsoft Teams has made a huge difference in her life. She has even been able to volunteer and help others get connected. Even though Aim and other students are not physically together, they now get to hear and talk to others from the Braille Institute community in a whole new way.

“The computer and other technology I’ve learned (at Braille Institute) has been very advantageous and has changed my life in so many ways.”
— Aim Gilstrap

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Dear Stakeholders,

As we reflect on fiscal year 2020-21, the opening line of Charles Dickens’ great novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, immediately comes to mind. “It was the best of times and it was the worst of times.”

It’s an excellent description of not only what has happened around the world due to the pandemic, but also the unprecedented political, social, and economic upheaval that took place. Despite the difficulties that this year presented, Braille Institute has worked tirelessly these past 18 months to strengthen our foundation and position us for our second century of service.
In fact, when we re-open our centers, we will shift to a new “hybrid delivery model.” Students will have the option to continue with remote classes which they can take from home, or return to in-person classes at our centers. Many of our students have told us how much they enjoy the online experience, and people are now joining us from all over the country and the world. We have shifted from being a regional provider to one that can serve anyone with internet access, anywhere around the globe.

Recalling the words of the famous writer and theologian, C.S. Lewis, who remarked “Sometimes the hardships of life prepare ordinary people to do extraordinary things,” our Braille Institute team continues to persevere with focus, urgency, and agility, and has made remarkable progress in sustaining the strategic and cultural transformation that we began more than seven years ago.

We believe our way forward has never been clearer, and that we have the requisite strategic, cultural, and organizational clarity in place to successfully complete our work and renew Braille Institute for its next century.

Key highlights and achievements from this past year –

• Created the Pandemic Response Team (PRT) to efficiently monitor and process the ongoing changes regarding health, legal, and regulatory issues, thus protecting the safety and well-being of our students, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

• Employed our existing digital infrastructure and Microsoft Teams technology to: create and deliver a new remote service delivery capability giving students options of how to receive services; serve more than 1,500 clients per quarter over the past 18 months; provide much wider access to our services (including individuals outside California and the U.S.); and create a powerful new engine for future growth.

• Continued to invest in our people through professional support in mental health and well-being; no layoffs/no reduction in compensation; maintenance of all employee benefits; continuation of annual compensation increases based on performance; and the hiring of new core staff members.

• Strengthened BIA’s financial sustainability with effective fundraising, disciplined focus on operating costs, continuing growth in the value of our endowment investment holdings, and opportunistic monetization of our real estate assets. The total value of BIA’s endowment of $250 million is now at an all-time high.

• Maintained high focus on the importance of our core values, which include: Commitment to Mission, Passion to Serve, Excellence and Integrity, and Teamwork.

In closing, we thank all our stakeholders for your continuing support of Braille Institute. We could not be more confident and excited about our future, and truly believe the best is yet to come for our great organization and its mission.

With gratitude,

Peter A. Mindnich, President

Michael C. Corley, Chair
Who We Serve.

Gender

40% Male
60% Female

Ages

11% Up to 19 Years Old
35% 20 to 64 Years Old
54% 65+ Years Old

Primary Causes of Visual Impairment

8.4% Retinitis Pigmentosa
9.6% Diabetes Related
14.6% Glaucoma
24.1% Macular Degeneration
43.3% Other
Program Statistics.*

### Distance Learning Attendance by Class Type
- **Daily Living**
  - 1,049 students
- **Arts & Healthy Living**
  - 631 students

### Adult Group Instruction — Remote
- **Contact Hours**
  - 69,140
- **Unique Students**
  - 1,241

### Adult One-on-One Instruction — Modes Of Delivery
- **Remote Services**
  - 7,934
- **Distance Learning**
  - 11,400
- **Teleservice**
  - 1,241
- **Consultations**
  - 992
- **Contact Hours**
  - 3,315

### Adult Services and Programs (One-on-One Instruction By Service)
- **Orientation & Mobility**
  - 961
- **Low Vision Service**
  - 829
- **Connection Pointe**
  - 428
- **Personal Connection**
  - 153

### Community Training Programs
- Professional Training Attendees: 173
- Eye Disease Seminar Attendees: 1,510

### Volunteer Services
- Center Volunteers: 126
- Special Event Volunteers: 45
- Center Service Hours: 6,294
- Special Event Service Hours: 200

### Library Services
- Direct Library Patrons: 9,055
- Served by Partner Institutions: 7,950
- Books Circulated: 547,888

### Child Development: Birth to Age 6
- Unique Families/Children Served: 167
- Hours of Service: 4,616

### Youth Services: Ages 6 to 18
- Unique Youth Served: 117
- Contact Hours: 1,651

### National Programs
- **Braille Challenge**
  - Number of Participants: 738
  - U.S., Canadian & UK Provinces Represented: 41
- **Braille Special Collection**
  - Active Subscribers: 7,632
  - Children’s Books and Story Kits Distributed: 3,370
- **Cane Quest**
  - Number of Participants: 176

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* Program statistic figures for this fiscal year (2020/2021) reflect the temporary closure of all seven centers due to COVID-19. All figures reflect remote delivery of programs and services only.
## Financials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income ($000)</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years Ended June 30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bequests &amp; Trust</td>
<td>$8,311</td>
<td>$9,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions and Institutional Giving</td>
<td>9,646</td>
<td>4,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Public Support</strong></td>
<td><strong>$17,957</strong></td>
<td><strong>$14,238</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Revenues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royalties</td>
<td>1,425</td>
<td>1,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Library Appropriation</td>
<td>748</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Income</td>
<td>3,879</td>
<td>3,443</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Other Revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>$6,052</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5,606</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$24,009</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19,844</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Changes in Net Assets</td>
<td>$4,387</td>
<td>($1,879)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For complete financial results, prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the USA, refer to the Report on Audited Consolidated Financial Statements for Braille Institute which is available on its website www.brailleinstitute.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditures ($000)</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Years Ended June 30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaheim Center</td>
<td>$2,033</td>
<td>$2,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Center</td>
<td>3,377</td>
<td>4,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside/Coachella Valley</td>
<td>1,367</td>
<td>1,687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego Center</td>
<td>1,383</td>
<td>1,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Barbara Center</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>1,142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Development</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Services</td>
<td>2,207</td>
<td>2,529</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing and Communication</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Programs</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Program Services</strong></td>
<td><strong>$13,797</strong></td>
<td><strong>$15,669</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>857</td>
<td>899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>3,028</td>
<td>3,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Services</td>
<td>1,415</td>
<td>1,5067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Expenditures Before Depreciation</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19,097</strong></td>
<td><strong>$21,180</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Expenditures</td>
<td>$525</td>
<td>$543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19,622</strong></td>
<td><strong>$21,723</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Income Sources**

- **34.6%** Bequests & Trust
- **40.2%** Contributions and Foundations
- **5.9%** Royalties
- **3.1%** State Library Appropriation
- **16.2%** Investment Income

**Operating Expenses* **

- **73.6%** Program Services
- **15.0%** Development
- **7.1%** Support Services
- **4.3%** Administration

* Including Depreciation of 1,163
Our Leadership.

Braille Institute Executives
Peter A. Mindnich
President

Gary Jimenez
Vice President
Development

Lisa Jimenez
Vice President
Programs and Services

Sergio Oliva
Vice President
Programs and Services

Reza Rahman
Chief Financial Officer

Sandy Shin
Vice President
Marketing and Communications

Anthony J. Taketa
Corporate Secretary and General Counsel

Maria Valdivia
Vice President
Technology and Business Solutions

Board of Directors
Michael C. Corley
Chair

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Percy Duran III, Esq.
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Linda A. Lam, MD, MBA
William J. Link, PhD
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Richard A. Nelson
John G. Nuanes, Esq.
Jeanne Olenicoff
James J. Rhodes
Harvey Strode
Lester M. Sussman
George E. Thomas
Diane Wilkinson

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President,
East San Gabriel Valley

Nancy Gallagher
President, San Diego

Sally Faulstich & Mary Romo
Co-Presidents,
Santa Barbara

Marie Hoesman
President,
Coachella Valley

Clinical Advisory Board
Linda A. Lam, MD, MBA Chair
Professor of Ophthalmology and Vice Chair of Satellite Affairs, Vitreoretinal Surgeon, USC Keck School of Medicine

Mark S. Humayun, MD, PhD
Director of Research USC Roski Eye Institute; Professor of Ophthalmology, USC Keck School of Medicine; Inventor of Argus Implant (Retina)

Don O. Kikkawa, MD
Professor of Ophthalmology and Vice-Chairman; UCSD Department of Ophthalmology; Chief, Division of Oculofacial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (Oculoplastics)

Bartly J. Mondino, MD
Chairman, Jules Stein Eye Institute (Cornea)

Bibiana J. Reiser, MD
Associate Professor, Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles (Pediatric Glaucoma and Cornea)

James C. Tsai, MD, MBA
President, New York Eye and Ear Infirmary of Mount Sinai; Professor and System Chair, Ophthalmology (Glaucoma)
This past year, Braille Institute’s tradition of philanthropy was carried passionately by people like you, who heard the call for support during the global COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that people with vision loss stayed connected and lived well during a time of uncertainty.

“My husband and I have enjoyed contributing to Braille Institute for over a decade now. Their encouragement, support, and sense of community are essential for low-vision and blind people”

– Jackie Cadman, planned giving donor

Braille Institute is able to offer its programs and services entirely free of charge because of the support and generosity of many. Together, we are fulfilling our mission for the next generation, who will have more ways to access our services through our new hybrid delivery model — both online and in person.

The future is bigger and brighter because of you... for that, we offer our deepest gratitude.

Please visit BrailleInstitute.org/ways-to-give to learn more or call 1-800-BRAILLE (272-4553) ext. 1238.