

Resources for the Blind, Inc.

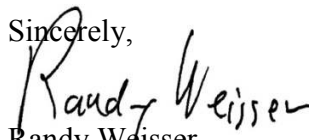
2010 Annual Report

Greetings!

Dr. Arthur Lown, the blind American missionary who founded Resources for the Blind in 1988, began with a desire to produce a Braille version of the Tagalog Bible. Last week, we celebrated the graduation of Bryan, pictured below, at the Wesleyan Bible College, with some of his blind classmates. For us here at RBI, Bryan's graduation with a Bachelors Degree in Theology is an exciting reminder of the continuing impact of Dr. Lown's original dream.



In 2010, we interacted with thousands of blind persons in every corner of the country. Our mission is that all Filipinos who are visually impaired, like Bryan, will be able to reach the fullest potential in life and service that God has for them. We provided training to parents of blind infants; we helped blind children complete their education from pre-school through college; and we helped blind adults to live normal, independent lives and to find meaningful and productive employment. To all of our partners, friends, and donors who helped us to extend God's love to so many of our blind friends in 2010, a very sincere thanks!

Sincerely,

Randy Weisser
Director

Program Reports 2010

Blindness Prevention

The most important thing we should do for blind people is to prevent their blindness in the first place, or to restore their sight through eye surgery. Our three offices – Manila, Cebu and Davao, have full-time teams working with volunteer doctors to accomplish these goals. In 2010, they facilitated eye screening for almost 100,000 adults and children. They provided 3700 eye surgeries, and fitted 300 children with eyeglasses to improve vision.



Blindness Prevention Highlights of 2010

- **Primary Eye Care Training**
Part of our blindness prevention strategy is to train Barangay Community Health Workers in Primary Eye Care. In 2010, this two-day training prepared 2300 Health Workers to identify and refer patients in need of immediate eye care.
- **Day Care Eye Screening**
We partnered with the Department of Social Welfare and Development to provide eye screening for 77,000 Day Care students (ages 3-5) in the seven provinces of Region III.

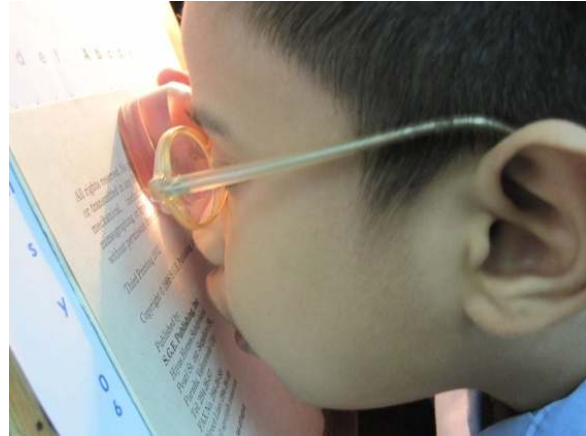


Low Vision

Low Vision refers to those persons who are not totally blind but whose poor level of vision severely limits their normal functioning. Because this population is greater than those who are totally blind, we have developed an array of services to address their unique needs.

Low Vision Highlights in 2010

- **Internships** In partnership with Dr. Christine Rodriguez of Manila Central University – College of Optometry, Dr. Sheila Santos of the St. Luke Medical Center, and volunteer RBI ophthalmologist, Dr. Marikka Perez-Carpela, we have developed a training and internship program for undergraduate optometry students to better prepare them to assist patients with low vision. We enrolled 17 interns in 2010 and anticipate 50 more to join in 2011, from three Colleges of Optometry.



Christian Growth

The production and distribution of Braille and audio Bibles, and other Christian materials, helps us in promoting Christian discipleship and growth. We conducted weekly Bible study groups for almost 700 blind children, summer camps for 200 children, and produced radio programs broadcast on four stations to help introduce Bible concepts to our blind friends.

Christian Growth Highlights of 2010

- **Audio Bible** In partnership with the Philippine Bible Society and the Netherlands Bible Society, we were able to complete a new digital recording of the Tagalog Old and New Testaments. These pocket-size audio Bibles will be produced by MegaVoice and be ready for distribution to our blind friends in 2011.



- **Blind Pastors Conference** After many years of seeing the need, we were finally able to invite 13 blind pastors and their wives to a 3-day retreat in Antipolo. Speakers included Pastor Eric Maliwat, Pastor Willy Basilio, and Pastor Rolly Manuel of the Philippine Counsel of Evangelical Churches. Special thanks to Christian Community Church in Alaska for sponsoring the retreat.
- **Bible College Scholarships** Union Church of Manila provided scholarships for eight blind theology students in 2010, with one graduating student. Seven of our former graduates are currently involved in church ministry, both to the blind and to the sighted.

Education

One of the biggest handicaps faced by blind children is the lack of opportunity to enroll in school. We continued our partnership with the Department of Education to increase the enrollment of blind children nationwide. This year we provided training in inclusive education for 2500 school teachers, school administrators, undergraduate education students, therapists and other stakeholders. We provided services, materials, and equipment for 2300 blind students from the pre-school level through college level. We also assisted in producing the Braille and audio textbooks that these students need.



Education Highlights in 2010

- **National Teachers Congress on Visual Impairment**
Almost 600 teachers and school administrators attended our 3-day conference in Tagaytay with a theme of “Achieving Quality Education for All Children with Visual Impairment.” We also welcomed participants from Indonesia, Thailand, India, and the US.



- **Higher Education** In support to our efforts to enroll blind students at the tertiary level, the International Council for the Education of People with Visual Impairment provided 50 netbook computers to be used by blind college and university students.
- **Summer Teacher Training** 200 teachers enrolled in our graduate level summer courses for teachers of children with visual impairment at three universities. The Department of Education provided P1.4 million this year towards the teachers’ expenses.

- **Pre-School for Blind Children**

The combined enrollment of our Manila and Davao pre-schools for blind children was 120 students. Besides preparing the children for enrollment in regular schools, the pre-schools also served as training venues for student teachers.



Parent Support

One of the best things we can do for young blind children is to provide support and training for their parents. Left to themselves, parents almost invariably become extremely over-protective of their blind child which can prevent normal development and a successful adjustment to life without vision. In 2010, we provided training, counseling, and assistance to 1000 parents of blind children around the country.

Parent Support Highlights of 2010

- **Mindanao Parents Organization** We helped give birth to the Mindanao Advocates for Children with Visual Impairment (MACVI), and provided them with space in our Davao office for a full-time staff member to coordinate their activities. They have 90 parent members as of December, 2010. A smaller group has been activated in Cebu. The very active Manila based parent group, PAVIC, has almost 500 members.



Rehabilitation

Our rehabilitation program provides counseling, training in independent living skills, and job training and placement for blind adults. In 2010 we helped 180 blind adults cope with the loss of vision and provided computer training to 100. We were able to find employment for 15 blind adults.

Rehabilitation Highlights for 2010

- **Regional Consultative Meetings with Local Governments** We scheduled seminars in two municipalities – Rosales, Pangasinan and Carmona, Cavite, to build support from the local government for the inclusion of those with disabilities. Representatives from the Department of Education, the Department of Social Welfare and Development, Parent groups, and other stakeholders joined to discuss ways to improve access to government services for children with disabilities.



- **Blindness caused by HIV AIDS** In partnership with the HIV ward of San Lazaro Hospital, in Manila, we began providing training in blindness skills to patients who are losing their sight because of their HIV medications.

Multiply-Disabled Visually Impaired (MDVI)

Blindness can be severely complicated by additional disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, deafness, or mental retardation. In the last few years, our staff have undergone extensive training to provide services for this special group of children. Almost 500 blind children with other disabilities received assistance in 2010.

MDVI Highlights for 2010

- **Therapy** We facilitated free or subsidized therapy for more than 100 children with motor problems.



Emergency Relief

Typhoons and other natural disasters often put families of the visually impaired at risk. When possible, we strive to meet the emergency needs of our blind friends. In 2010, with assistance from the Church On The Rock, in Alaska, and other donors, we were able to construct two new homes for families displaced by typhoons.



Advocacy

We made encouraging progress on our proposed amendment to the Copyright Law in both the Senate and the House of Representatives. This amendment will allow us to produce Braille versions of any reading material in the Philippines without first requesting permission from the publisher. The National Book Development Board has helped generate support for this amendment from the publishers.

Staff Development

In pursuit of excellence in our service to those who are blind, continual upgrading of skills is a high priority for us. This year, most of our staff participated in one or more of 30 training workshops, both within the Philippines and overseas.



Plans for 2011

Blindness prevention

The number of people suffering from avoidable blindness is still far too high in the Philippines. We will continue our efforts to partner with local doctors and community health workers in all regions of the country to find those who unnecessarily blind. We also hope to develop a social marketing scheme to help prevent childhood blindness, especially blindness due to pre-mature birth.

We want to improve services for people with low vision by expanding our internship (externship) program with Colleges of Optometry.

Christian Growth

Currently we have about 700 blind children attending weekly Bible studies in their schools. We would like to expand that effort to reach all 2300 blind children who are enrolled in schools nationwide.

We hope to follow up our Blind Pastors Conference of last year with a National Blind Pastors Conference in 2011, and hopefully make that an annual event.

We would like to partner again with the Philippine Bible Society in 2011 to produce a new digital recording of the Cebuano Bible, and make that available to our many blind Cebuano friends.

We will continue our efforts to improve our outreach to blind college students, which number over 100 this year.

Education

Although we have reached an enrollment of about 2300 blind children nationwide, there are still thousands of children not yet enrolled. We will continue our efforts to increase the enrollment rate and at the same time to reduce the dropout rate.

We will continue our efforts to involve the Commission on Higher Education in building the enrollment of blind students in the tertiary level.



We are making good progress in turning over the responsibility for producing braille textbooks to the Department of Education. In three years' time we hope to see them take full responsibility.

We will work with the Department of Education to facilitate the production of audio textbooks for blind secondary students.

We plan to investigate the need for a pre-school for blind children in the Visayas, modeled after our Manila and Davao programs.

We would like to partner with the Department of Social Welfare and Development for the training of Day Care teachers in inclusive education for children with disabilities.

Parent Support

We will participate in a National Parents Congress to be conducted by the Manila based Parent Advocacy for Visually Impaired Children (PAVIC).

We will try to strengthen Parent Advocacy groups in Mindanao and the Visayas.

Rehabilitation

We plan to complete the Tagalog Braille Literacy Correspondence course for the blind. We hope to begin an English Braille Literacy Correspondence course for the blind, and also a course in Tagalog and English Braille for sighted learners.

We would like to begin local production of mobility canes.

We also would like to inaugurate a Speed Typing and Spelling course for blind adults to prepare them for employment in transcription and call centers.

We hope to set up a Guest House in Manila for our clients and patients coming from the provinces.

We would like to find partners to help us reach out more effectively to adults who are deaf and blind.



Emergency Relief

We hope to provide training in Disaster Preparedness for people with disabilities.

We anticipate building homes for two families of the blind who are at risk because of their lack of adequate shelter.

Advocacy

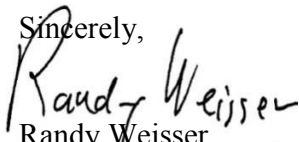
We plan on partnering with the Philippine Blind Union in advocacy projects that will benefit the blind population.

We hope to see our proposed amendment of the Copyright Law signed into law in 2011. This will allow us to produce Braille versions of textbooks and other reading materials without securing permission from the publisher or author.

We will partner with the Harvard Law School Project on Disability to promote the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability.

This is our report for the year 2010. On behalf of all the staff of RBI, and on behalf of those who are blind, let me extend a very sincere thank you for your prayers and for your involvement with the ministry of RBI.

Sincerely,



Randy Weisser
Director