

# ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND



FISCAL YEAR 2006 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear **Donors** and **Friends** of the Association for the Blind:

Because you are an investor in our organization and in our clients' futures, we want to inform you about how your investment has been spent, what outcomes have been achieved and what we are planning for the future. We feel sure that you will be pleased with the accomplishments and direction the Association is taking.

For the past 70 years the Association has positively impacted and empowered the lives of thousands of low country South Carolinians to reduce the daily living problems imposed by blindness or severe visual impairment. By improving our clients' independence and confidence over the years, the Association is building its reputation in the local and statewide community.

As we look to the future we are seeking ways that we can serve the visually impaired of the low country more effectively and improve the quality of their life in a variety of ways.

**Focus on Mission.** The Association has always carefully targeted its funding on the essential needs of our clients and will continue to do so. Our goal is to maintain cost efficiency as we obtain the best possible result for the greatest number of people who need our services.

**Fiscal Stewardship.** The Association's audits consistently reflect that the funds donated to the organization are used for the intended purpose – empowering our visually impaired members to overcome the challenges of visual impairment. Our stellar fiduciary record over the last five years speaks for itself.

**Quality.** The Association is committed to providing quality in every aspect of its operation and in the people who serve it. The staff is responsive to our members, assisting them in developing new skills and achieving their individual goals. The board of directors is a dedicated group of community leaders who serve the Association faithfully and ensures fiscal and program accountability and support.

Looking to the future. With these essential values as a guide, the board of directors established a strategic plan in the fall of 2005 which addresses current and future needs and prioritizes them.

**The Strategic Plan includes:**

- Partnering with the new ITNCharlestonTrident transportation system to ensure that the visually impaired of all ages will be better served in the tri-county.
- Expanding the Living Well with Partial Vision program in order to serve more individuals with severe vision loss.
- Evaluating the means of offering Orientation and Mobility training to individuals needing the service.
- Identifying needs in the community which the Association could help solve by initiating new program.
- Preserving the Cane Studio for employment and a service to the community.
- Arranging recreational activities for our constituency including Spoleto Tickets, Lions Club Fishing Trip, Christmas Party



- Advocating for the visually impaired.
- Maintaining effective communications with our constituency and the broader community.

By achieving progress toward these goals, the Association will continue to expand its effectiveness as a local and statewide resource for persons whose lives are impacted by visual disabilities.

Achievement of these goals will require concerted effort from many individuals. The board and staff are committed to fulfilling their responsibilities.

In the future we must reach out for expanded support from other individuals, foundations, and corporations.

We pledge continued good stewardship of your investment in our organization. As you read about the success of our programs, please feel a sense of pride that your direct support has enabled so many visually impaired individuals to have their lives positively impacted.

Cornelia H. Pelzer  
Executive Director

Susan G. Legare  
President of the Board



# Programs

The Association for the Blind has been serving hundreds of blind and vision impaired individuals of all ages in Charleston and the Tri-County for 69 years. The Association has developed programs that help low vision individuals function productively and safely in their homes, provide social and recreational outlets, referral services, computer training, educational programs, and employment in the skilled re-caning of chairs.

## ***Living Well with Partial Vision Program- Serving 170 this year and growing***

Occupational therapists trained in low vision rehabilitation provide skills to the growing number of individuals in the lowcountry with age related vision loss to function safely and productively both in their homes and in the community. One on one in-home sessions provide self-care and home-care management training and coping mechanisms for individuals with severe vision loss to help them live independently.

## **Cane Studio– Employment Serving 5**

Since its inception the Association has been noted for its excellent craftsmanship in the re-caning of chairs by the blind. Individuals from all over the low country and beyond bring hundreds of chairs each year for re-caning.

## **Veterans Administration– Serving 75**

The Association provides orientation and mobility training to visually impaired veterans though out the low country. In addition the Association delivers and sets up Closed Circuit Televisions (CCTVs) for veterans from southern Georgia to Myrtle Beach.

## **Family Support Classes – Serving 100**

The Association sponsored four classes in adjustment to severe vision loss at the Charleston County Public Library during the winter of 2006. Topics included: Medical Conditions that Result in Severe Vision Loss by Virgil Alfaro, III MD; Low Vision Devices, Computers and Technology by Steven Morse, PhD OD; Vision Rehabilitation, Community Resources and Transportation by South Carolina Commissioner for the Blind, James Kirby and Stasi Gormley, MSOTR/L; Adjustment to Vision Loss Panel: Karen Bays, VA, Marian Mentavlos EdD, and D. Scott Cutting, PhD.

## **Special Assistance – Serving 90**

The Association is proud to be recipients of the Post & Courier sponsored Good Cheer Fund each December. Through the Association clients apply for and receive assistance at Christmas time for special needs.

## **Social and Sports Member Events – Serving 300**

The Association provides a Christmas luncheon each year with entertainment and gifts for the low vision and blind clients, in May a fishing trip to Santee sponsored by the Lions Club. A beeperball (low vision baseball) team is sponsored by the Association and tickets are provided by Spoletto and the Charleston Concert Assn. for the blind.

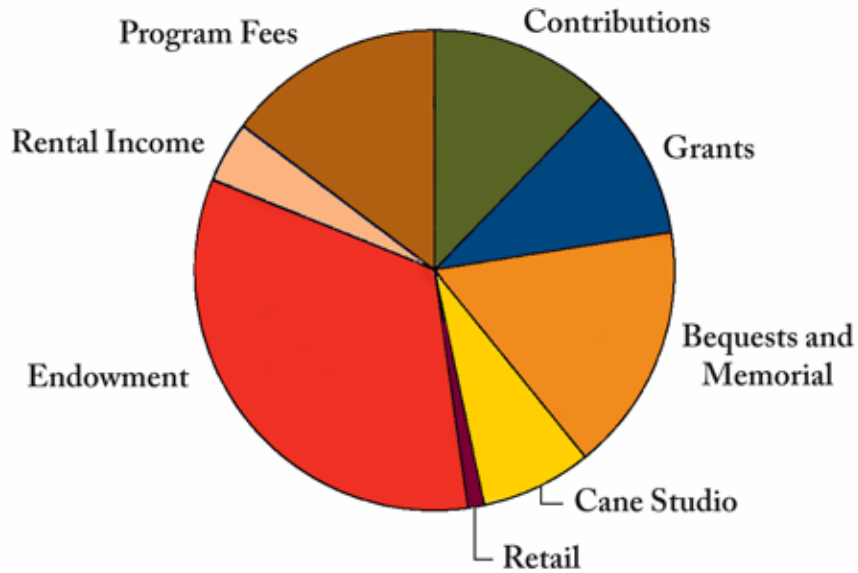
## **Referrals – Serving 250**

Every day the Association receives calls from persons seeking advice for services for themselves or their family member with vision problems. The Association maintains a list of telephone numbers and information to assist persons with vision problems.

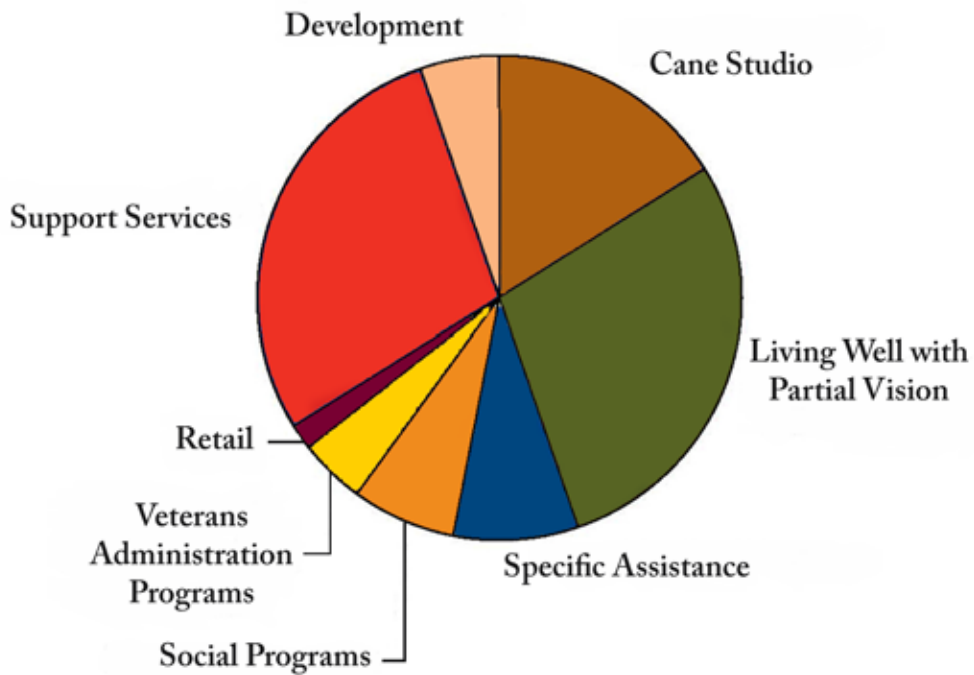
## **ITNCharlestonTrident Transportation Network**

The Association has provided funding and support for this innovative transportation system which will begin serving the blind and seniors in the tri-county area in November 2006. Pioneered in Portland, ME the transportation service will utilize the services of volunteer drivers who will chauffeur member riders 24/7 door to door to the destination of their choice.

## Sources of Funds



## Uses of Funds



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*Every effort has been made to reflect accurately the contributions made from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006. If you have questions about this listing or would like more information about giving to the Association, please call the Executive Director at 723.6915.*

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## **Mission:**

**The Association for the Blind seeks to improve the quality of life for the visually impaired through services, programs, and advocacy by promoting independence and self-sufficiency, and helping individuals to participate fully in their communities.**

Association for the Blind  
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(843)723. 6915

[www.associationfortheblindsc.org](http://www.associationfortheblindsc.org)

