Dear Friends and Benefactors,

We are delighted to share this year's Annual Report with you. The year has not been without challenges, however thanks to the generosity and support of our friends and benefactors, we have sustained and grown the delivery of our services.

Both our vision rehabilitation services and access technology and employment services have seen an increase in client numbers. With this increase, comes an increase in miles traveled. This is an example of a small, critical component of the work the Vision Rehabilitation Therapists do that is not covered by State funds. We are beholden to donors to cover this gap which ensures our therapists get to people in their homes throughout the State of Maine. Truly, every penny counts and is put to good use!

Perhaps the most marked change this year has been the restructuring of our Low Vision Clinic. Our new Clinic Manager and Occupational Therapist has efficiently and effectively streamlined the Clinic’s operations resulting in the ability to deliver services to more individuals in need. We have seen an increase of clinic days from 2 to 3 days a week which indicates an increase in numbers of patients seen.

Without your support we could not deliver the services that we do. Every gift is significant and deeply appreciated and every gift helps. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Leonard Cole
Chairman of the Board of Directors

James Phipps
President and Executive Director
Our Mission, Vision and Values

MISSION
Helping people who are visually impaired or blind attain independence and community integration.

VISION
Building a world where no person is limited by visual impairment or blindness and everyone is an advocate for eye health and the needs of people who are visually impaired or blind.

VALUES
The Iris Network recognizes the diverse aspirations and abilities of people who are visually impaired or blind. Our services are based on respect for each individual’s right to self-direction through informed choices. We believe that the education and integration of all individuals will result in a stronger society.

COVER PHOTO: Brenda Bacon shops with the assistance of a white cane and a handheld video magnifier
“I’ve made all kinds of changes to my house. ...I just made cookies!”
Vision Rehabilitation Services

Two hours north of Bangor, Elaine has settled into a small town near the Canadian border. She moved here 10 years ago from Connecticut when in her early 70s to be closer to family.

Recently when Elaine went to renew her driver’s license, the Department of Motor Vehicles indicated the license could not be renewed because of Elaine’s failing eyesight.

Elaine slowly withdrew into herself and depression set in. With her closest family an hour away, no transportation, and no way to continue her much loved hobbies of reading and researching and learning about herbs and homeopathy, Elaine was at the end of her rope.

Then a Vision Rehabilitation Therapist, Kristy, from The Iris Network contacted her. “She just turned me around,” Elaine said. When asked how Kristy helped her, Elaine went through a list of daily living skills that she can now do independently. She is most thrilled about her video-magnifier which allows her to read again and manage her own checkbook. She used to have to depend on a family member to read her mail to her and write out her checks.

Perhaps Elaine’s highest accolade however was of her Vision Rehabilitation Therapist, “She’s a good person. You can tell she’s not doing it because it’s her job. She is really interested in people.” She went on to say that, “Now, my time goes by so fast! Now life is worth living! Kristy helped me with anything I wanted or needed to do.”
The number of clients served continues to increase with the biggest bump in the 85 and over age group.

The second age group to overtake last year’s number of clients served is the baby boomers who range from 54 to 66 years. The number of clients receiving services in this age group is anticipated to continue to grow.

The American Hospital Association estimates one of every four boomers will be living with diabetes by the year 2030. Diabetes can cause eye complications. In fact, diabetic retinopathy is the third most frequent diagnosis seen by the Vision Rehabilitation Therapists at The Iris Network. It is topped only by glaucoma in second place and macular degeneration in first.

With the aging baby boomer population an increase in number of clients served is anticipated.

“I couldn’t be more thrilled with the services provided.”
In a recent national survey of 400 hiring managers, conducted by National Industries for the Blind, 54 percent said there were few jobs in their company that blind employees could perform and 42 percent said blind employees would need someone to help them on the job. These stereotypes contribute to the fact that 75 percent of people with vision loss are unemployed or underemployed. That’s were ATES comes in.

“...incredibly helpful and it was great to see the actual devices that can be used for workplace accommodations. I was most impressed by the presenters enthusiasm and passion for their job, so refreshing!” - Amy, Registered Nurse, Custom Disabilities Solutions.

Custom Disability Solutions is a group disability risk management company in South Portland. As a result of a successful experience with an ATES client who became an employee at Custom Disability Solutions, the company requested a lunch and learn session for a cross section of employees to learn about the many successes of individuals with blindness in the workplace.

Through a series of case studies about people with vision impairment or blindness employed by Maine businesses, low tech and high tech solutions to workplace problems were presented and discussed. A demonstration of access technology devices and mainstream work tools used in the case studies dispelled the myth that the cost of hiring a person with low vision is considerable and stressed that a return to work after vision loss, though not easy, is possible.
ATES: Access Technology & Employment Services

The Access Technology and Employment Services program is establishing roots. The number of clients served has markedly increased from 41 last year to 75 this year, almost an 82 percent increase.

“A learned that I can be an independent worker and that customers can be a blast to talk to!” - Brayden, high school summer employment program

A greater number of individuals receive services in our Technology Center, reducing staff travel time and allowing for more direct service.

New business relationships were developed with Coastal Enterprise, Inc., the Inn at Brunswick Station and University of Southern Maine. The pilot transition age student summer employment program had successful placements at Wilbur’s of Maine, Old Orchard Beach Parking Enforcement and South Portland Parks and Recreation.
Leading ministries, being a wife, a grand and great-grandmother keeps 84 year old Reverend Bertha Jacqmin quite busy. She admits that she has always been very active throughout her life. When she began having difficulty with her vision, she was unsure how she would continue with all her activities.

In September 2013, Bertha visited The Iris Network’s Low Vision Clinic for an evaluation. A thorough assessment of vision in each eye was provided by Dr. A. Jan Berlin, followed by time spent with our Occupational Therapist, in the demonstration area. Bertha was unable to read anything without a very strong magnifying glass, making it so painful, frustrating and cumbersome that she was reading for less than 15 minutes a day, although her husband and study group read to her for hours!

While at The Iris Network, Bertha tried a desk-top video magnifier. She was given a list of pros and cons, and went away to “think about it”. Two weeks later she called the Low Vision Clinic and ordered one. Bertha wanted to learn how to use all the features and functions of the machine, which she conquered after only 5 sessions.

Bertha is a biblical scholar, not only of bibles in English, but also in French. This machine has, in increments, allowed her to go from 15 minutes to up to 4 hours of independent reading! The machine enlarges text, removes most of the painful glare, and can even read to her in either language, so when her eyes fatigue, she shuts them and listens.

Bertha has put the skills she has learned to good use, and no doubt will continue moving forward in her ministries and her life. She is a most remarkable woman!
The Low Vision Clinic underwent restructuring this fiscal year. At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Clinic Manager resigned. The ensuing search, recruitment and hire of a new Clinic Manager coupled with the additional time needed to allow the new Occupational Therapist and Clinic Manager to obtain Low Vision Certification, resulted in a time period when the Low Vision Clinic intentionally ramped down the number of patients seen. The Clinic has become one of the gateways to The Iris Network’s continuum of care.

The new Clinic Manager, in organizing and innovating, has made the Clinic and Demonstration Room more accessible, current and competitive. In addition, up-dated policies and procedures have been implemented for both the Occupational Therapist and the doctors to ensure a standardized quality of care. This model will permit us to see an increased number of individuals who will benefit from our Low Vision Clinic’s services and a more sustainable future.
Fran always has a kind word or greeting for anyone she meets. Originally from New Hampshire, Fran came to Maine for a better life in October of 1991. At that time The Iris Network was called The Maine Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. A boarding home was part of the Center. Rooms for men or women had a bed, a desk and a sink. Community areas and space to receive guests were on the first floor.

Fran had a roommate in the boarding house because she did not believe she could be independent enough for her own place. But, when the new apartments opened in November of 2006 following a complete renovation of the boarding house, Fran made the leap and moved into an apartment!

“I can go and do anything I want independently, but if I need help it is here,” said Fran. She does receive assistance from the residential staff with eye drops and medication but thoroughly enjoys being out and about—indeed Independently.

Fran will split a cab fare with another resident when she goes to get a haircut or shopping. She works one day a week at Goodwill where she is responsible for shredding paper. In her free time Fran can be found bowling, singing—both at church and with the musicians who stop in every so often to play concerts for the residents and she takes advantage of the activities offered by the residential staff.

Fran shows us one of her many bowling trophies while comfortably seated on her couch in her apartment.
Iris Park Apartments

Mark Anderson, Director of Resident Services, shared his philosophy which underpins all we do at the IPA, “At the core of providing services to our residents is just that: Service. Human Service. All of us who work at The Iris Park Apartments are very fortunate to be a small part of the family of individuals who choose to live here. It is an honor to be of service to people working to improve their level of independence.”

Our skilled staff assist with medication management, diabetic management, scheduling doctor appointments, transportation, light housekeeping, correspondence and appropriate referrals.

The Iris Park Apartments are staffed 24 hours per day, 365 days a year – we never close.

The Iris Park Apartments represent an affordable and independent living option for those looking to live in Greater Portland with the additional support that makes independence possible. The property management component is managed by Avesta Housing who maintains our waiting list and financial eligibility criteria.
Connect to Us

Subscribe to one of our free publications that will keep you up-to-date on happenings at The Iris Network and events throughout the state! All are available at www.theiris.org

Connecting people, and connecting people to resources are two natural offshoots of the direct services we provide at The Iris Network. Check out our Facebook page!

**Insight** is our free quarterly publication, available electronically or in print, with news about The Iris Network programs, events, and clients! To subscribe, for electronic or print, contact:

Terri at 207-774-6273.

**Community Connections** is a monthly newsletter that provides information about events going on in the Maine communities and the peer community of people who are blind or visually impaired. To subscribe, for electronic or print, contact:

Amber at 207-774-6273.

**Facebook** Interact with us on social media. Pop in to see fun posts, interesting articles, and awareness raising information.

Our page is called The Iris Network. It can be accessed through our website, home page, click on (top right), or head right to our Facebook page!
Connect to Us

A few of our programs that support individuals who wish to connect with each other and with their community are highlighted below.

Living with Grace is a program that encourages clients to get out and about and learn a new activity, independent living skill or simply enjoy a known activity in the company of others.

Independence Without Fear is a group of organizations with the goal of developing a Support Service Provider program for people who are deaf-blind/dual sensory impaired. The mission of this program is to recruit, train and maintain a database of specially trained volunteers who can facilitate communication for people with significant vision and hearing impairments.

Reading for All, launched in April 2013, travels to public libraries around the state to train library staff and to deliver a vision day for patrons who may have stopped reading (to get them back to it!) or would like to learn about reading options with low vision, visual impairment or blindness.
Financial Support

The Iris Network cannot do the work that needs to be done without the support from its many, generous donors. Every donation, regardless of amount, is essential to the work of The Iris Network and we greatly appreciate all who give in support of our work! Thank you!

Beverle Aceto
Harriet Adams
Emily Hauslohner and Doug Adams
Michael Adams
Dan and Becky Afergan
Margie and Barry Afergan
Albin, Randall and Bennett, CPAs
Bruce Albiston
Elaine Aldridge
Alere Scarborough, Inc.
Laurence Allen
Kennard and Gayle Allen
Sarah Allen
AMD Global Telemedicine, Inc.
American Legion Auxiliary No. 41
Ameriprise Financial Gift Matching Program
Amica Companies Foundation
Susan Anderson
Esther Anderson
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Anderson
Diane and William Anderson
Gail Anderson
Samuel and Sheran Andrews
Elyse Apantaku
Apple Lane Foundation
Arthur Clifford Bunker
Joyce and Albert Asali
Ellen Asherman
Elaine Ashley
Elizabeth Ashton

International wine expert, Bruce Nichols, joins Jill Backman, Chair of Feast for the Eyes, at the fundraising event held at the Nonantum Resort in Kennbunkport.

Associated Eye Care
John Atkinson
George Austin
Suzanne Austin
Avesta Housing
Frank Axtell
Beverly Babic
Rona Backstrom
Brenda Bacon
Jonathan Baker
Baker Newman and Noyes
Bank of America
One of the many activities the Portland Lions undertake for us is collecting parking donations at Red Claws and Sea Dogs games. Neither the wind, nor snow, nor driving rain deters them from their volunteer service. Thank you Lions!
Raymond and Aline Bryant  
Robert Bulduc  
Martin Bunker  
James A. and Marybeth Burbank  
Robert and Cynthia Burke  
Karen Bollwerk and William Burke  
Lawrence Burlock  
Janet Burns  
Barbara Busby  
Wendy Bush  
Robert Butler  
Simmie Butts  
Leroy Buzzell  
Laura and James Calder  
Polly Camp  
Elisha Camp  
Lois Candage  
Robert Canfield  
Patrick and Roxanne Caporino  
Patricia Carignan  
Andrew Carlista  
Carol Carlton  
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Casco Bay Newcomers Club  
James Cassidy  
Forrest Caswell  
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Marc S. and Becky Christie  
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Peter and Marjorie Clifford  
Lila Cobb  
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Maddy Corson  
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Elaine Duffus
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Jeffrey Dunlop
Patricia Dunn
Bill Dunn
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Shirley Dyer
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Francis Egan
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John and Jeryl Erickson
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Estate of Franklin Talbot
Estate of Lottie and Bruce Tornquist Trust
Estate of Patricia Casey Trust and Casey Family Trust
Suzanne Ewing
ExxonMobil Foundation
Eyecare Medical Group
Falmouth Lions Club
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Frank Farrington
Dennis and Mary Farwell
Margaret Fearon
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Jean Luc and Diane Fecteau
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Donna and Irving Felker
Female Samaritan Association
Victoria and William Ferentz
First Congregational Church of the United Church
Mildred Fisette
Herbert Fish
Alan Fisher
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Philip and Eleanor Fitzpatrick
James and Edith Flaker
Kathleen and David Flanagan
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Freeport Lioness-Lions Club
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Gerald Garman
Mary and Martin Gavin
Gisela Gawronski
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Harold C. and K. Elizabeth Gibbs
Gibney Family Foundation
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Eva Giro
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Alfred Gobeil
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Jean and Paul Hamlin
Sirus Hamzavi
Christine Hanscome
Thomas and Anne Hanson
Forrest Hanvey
Irene Harford
Richard and Peggy Harris
David Hartley
Owen Haskell
Ernest and Eunice Haskell

The White Cane Walk for Independence rallies folks to raise awareness and funds for our programs!

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Nancy Hawes
Phyllis and Daniel Hayes
Richard and Diane Hayes
Billy Hazlewood
Sally Heald
Healey and Associates
Alayna Hebert
Elena Heim
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Darrin Henckel
Candice and Ruben Hernandez
Lasca and Bradley Hewes
Cecelia Hickson  
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Maine Alumnae Chapter of Delta Gamma Sorority
Maine Eye Center
Maine Liferaft and Inflatable Service Company
Maine Family Eye Care
Maine Lions Sight and Hearing Association
Ernest Mains

No tech options exist for the appropriate situations to enable greater independence.
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John Majkut
Ralph Malloch
Manchester Lions
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Catherine Marden
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Bruce Nichols
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Nonesuch Charitable Trust
Northeast Delta Dental
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Harold and Peggy Osher
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Valerie Paquin Gould
Carol Parcher
Elizabeth Paris
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Margaret Reed
Shirley and Richard Reese
Howard and Elizabeth Rennie
Robert and Margaret Rice

Diane Richard
Debra Richards
Clyde and Sally Ricker
Diane Ricker
Hugh Riddleberger
Paul and Nina Riese
Alice Rieser
Bernard and Priscilla Rines
Martin and Meike Ringwald

ATES brings the Falmouth Lions up to date on the latest access technology.

Arlene Ritchie
Phil Roberts
Jason Roberts
Hugh Robinson, M.D.
Rockland Lodge B.P.O.E. No. 1008, Inc.
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Elizabeth Rolfe
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Curt and Nina Scribner
David Searle
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Angela Sharp
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Jim and Sally Silverman
Frederick and Toby Simpson
Doris Sirkin
Howard Skillings
William H. and Ursula Slavick
David L. and Betty B. Small
Alice Smalley
Winthrop and Margaret Smith
Martha and Peter Smith
Jennifer Smith
William Soucy
South Portland Lions Club
Eleanor Speirs
Spinnaker Trust

A handheld video magnifier is a low tech option available through our Low Vision Clinic.

Andreea Sabin
Kerry Sack
Susie and Jeffrey Saffer, M.D.
Joan Samuels
Harriet Sandberg
Sanford Lions Club
Madeline Sargent
Lorraine Sarno
Nancy Spooner
Nathan and Amy Spooner
Carol Stabinsky
Gary A. and Karen Stairs
Sylvia Staples
Joan Stark
State Farm Insurance
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Lionel Thibodeau
Aubrey Thomas
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Evelyn Tuttle
Albert Tweedie
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United Way of Eastern Maine
United Way of Greater Portland
Designated Gifts
United Way of Greater Portland
United Way of York County
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George and Ruth Walker
Susan Wallace
Robert and Nancy Warren
Raymond H. and Alina Waterhouse
Stanley E. and Mary C. Waterman
Raymond Watson
Joseph and Jerry Wax
Raymond and Iris Weare
William Weatherbie
Marcia and Peter Webber, M.D.
Karl Webster
Jane Wellehan
Evelyn Welling
Henry Welzel
Frederick Weston
Floyd White
S. Jane and Ernest White
Richard and Susan Whitman
Philip and Doreen Whitney
Wendell Whitten
Maurice Whitten, Ph.D.
J. Louise Whittier
Robert and Jane Whytock

D. Wiggin
Tanna and Steve Witkin, M. D.
Harriet Wood
Mark Woodhead
Roger Woodman, Jr.
Fred Worcester
Celia and Parker Worrey
Wright-Ryan Construction
Joseph H. and Nancy Wyman
Margaret Wyman
Yarmouth Lions Club
York Lions Club
David Young

Brothers from the University of Southern Maine’s Sigma Nu fraternity brush up on Maine’s White Cane Law before the Walk.
Financials FY 2013

This past fiscal year saw a major turn-around for The Iris Network’s financial picture. A hard fought victory with Maine’s legislature brought critically needed additional state revenue to meet a growing demand for services. An improving economy led to a significant increase in grants and philanthropic revenue. All told, our revenue increased 7% while careful fiscal management kept our expense growth at 2.5%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support and Revenue</th>
<th>FY'12</th>
<th>FY'13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive equipment sale</td>
<td>$52,320</td>
<td>$56,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and foundations</td>
<td>$82,919</td>
<td>$150,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event income</td>
<td>$88,323</td>
<td>$104,968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General contributions</td>
<td>$138,974</td>
<td>$243,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other revenue (expense)</td>
<td>$342,377</td>
<td>$285,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees for service</td>
<td>$1,680,270</td>
<td>$1,718,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,385,183</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,560,443</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>FY'12</th>
<th>FY'13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program expenses</td>
<td>$1,994,991</td>
<td>$2,054,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$286,196</td>
<td>$302,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and general</td>
<td>$207,758</td>
<td>$193,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,488,945</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,551,294</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$ (103,762)  $ 9,149

www.theiris.org
FY 2013 Board of Directors

“*We couldn’t be more thrilled with the services provided!*”

**Board of Directors**

Merrill Barter
Philip Bruen
Leonard Cole, Esquire, Chair
William Dunn, Jr., Treasurer
Mark Girr
Nancy Hawes
Chandler Jones
David Joyce, Esquire
Karen Goldberg
Ann McFarland
Frederick Miller, III, M.D.
Lauren Myers
Keith Potts
Donald Quigley, Secretary
Katharine Ray, First Vice Chair
Bruce Rouillard, Second Vice Chair
David Stuchiner, M.D.

James Phipps
President and Executive Director
Aparna Shah, Assistant Secretary
Executive Assistant
Steve Trabold, Assistant Treasurer
Director of Finance and Administration
## FY 2013 Advisory Board & Consumer Advisory Board

### Advisory Board

Rachel Armstrong  
Katherine Cheney Chappell  
Madeleine Corson  
David Flanagan  
Cynthia Lamberton  
Arthur Mayo, III  
Althea McGirr  
George Mitchell  
Jane Moody  
Steven Obremski  
Jeremiah Newbury  
Pamela Plumb  
William Ryan  
David Stuchiner, M.D.  
Paul Tagliabue

### Consumer Advisory Board

Brenda Bacon  
Muriel Benshimol  
Bud Buzzell  
Mel Clarrage  
Mary Ellen Frost  
Pat Hart  
Mary Levine  
Patrick Peoples  
David Perry  
Patti Sarchi,  
Mary Seagrave  
Mark Sinclair  
David Stuchiner  
Nancy Tousey  
Walter Woitasek  
Carson Wood, *Chair*
Step 1
Call us.

1-800-715-0097
1-207-774-6273

Step 2
Get connected to services tailored to your individual vision needs and your goals.

The Iris Network is a state-wide, private, community-based, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with a mission of helping people who are visually impaired or blind attain independence and community integration.

www.theiris.org