Dear Friends of The Iris Network

2016 was a momentous year of growth and development for The Iris Network. In addition to being the first full year of operation of the Rehabilitation Center, clients were served through our community-based Vision Rehabilitation Services program throughout the State of Maine. Also, our Access Technology and Employment Services program, the Low Vision Clinic, and a resident support program at Iris Park Apartments served many clients experiencing low vision or blindness.

In collaboration with our contract partner, Maine’s Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI), our programs enable people, many newly experiencing vision loss, and many seniors aging in place – to live independently in their communities. We provide the blindness compensatory skills needed by transition-age students and working-age adults to enable them to successfully compete in the job market.

For senior citizens, we provide the independent living skills they need to avoid or delay unnecessary and prohibitively expensive institutionalization. Each of our programs is strengthened by our deep partnership with DBVI. Our collaborative relationship enables us to work as part of an integrated team of dedicated professionals.

Designed to combat the 70% rate of unemployment and under-employment among people with low vision and blindness, the Rehabilitation Center offers individualized residential rehabilitation through several programs ranging in length from two to 20 weeks.

These programs are designed to meet the primary vision rehabilitation needs of transition-age youth and working-age adult clients from Maine and across the U.S. who want to enter the competitive employment market and reclaim their lives after vision loss.

James Phipps, President and Executive Director

THE ONGOING STRONG PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE IRIS NETWORK AND MAINE’S DIVISION FOR THE BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED ALLOWS US TO BEST SERVE CONSUMERS IN MAINE.
SINCE 1905, THE IRIS NETWORK HAS BEEN SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED.

A Year in Review (2015-16)

776 consumers received services

18 people with multiple disabilities received licensed assisted living services

20,160 hours of service were provided

12,000 hours of direct service were provided to consumers

Hours of service went up 46% and hours of direct service went up 56% from the previous year, mainly due to the launch of the Rehabilitation Center's intensive 40 hour per week program.

The Rehabilitation Center graduated 12 students in its first year of operation.
Board of Directors

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Community Events

The Low Vision Clinic coordinated several "Demo Days" to demonstrate equipment designed to support daily functioning for people who are visually impaired, in addition to Clinic Days. Other special events included BonTon Community Days held twice a year, where coupon booklets are sold to support local charities. Proceeds from the weekend sales at the BonTon store at the Maine Mall go to support these charities including The Iris Network. Leonardo's Pizza has been donating partial proceeds from their pizza sales in Portland to The Iris Network in the month of May for the last six years. We won $1,000 from the Bangor Savings Community Matters More voting contest in the month of February. From WCSH6, Lee Goldberg's team won a challenge for us at the Portland SeaDogs. The Biddeford Knights of Columbus from generously donated proceeds from a bingo night. UNUM invited us to their mini-golf tournament and donated baseball tickets along with the SeaDogs, J.J. Nissen, U.S. Cellular; and we participated in the United Way of Greater Portland's campaign and spoke at Marden's, Dead River Company, and L.L. Bean, among others.

Vendor demonstrating a video magnifying device to a client who is visually impaired during a Demo Day
Employees of the Year

Laura Vittorioso has been working with The Iris Network for over 30 years. Laura has a great depth of knowledge that she shares willingly with all staff and is very open to working with newer staff in the low vision field. Laura re-certified as a Low Vision Therapist to assist clients of the new Rehabilitation Center. She consistently stays abreast of trending topics in the field and works diligently, beyond her scheduled time, to share new knowledge with the Iris team. Laura represents the field as a strong professional and advocates tirelessly for client’s needs while maintaining high professional standards.

Amber Mooney is fairly new to The Iris Network but has taken a leading role in the launch and coordination of the Rehabilitation Center. Her work ethic is second to none. She comes in early, stays late, and is always quick to respond to any situation. Amber is fearless. She will do anything that she is asked to do, even if she is uncomfortable with it at first. Her cheerfulness, great sense of humor, and positive outlook mask a relentless determination to get her job done to the best of her ability, no matter what gets thrown at her. She loves her job, and it shows.

Dream Come True!

Roland Derosier, a lifelong SeaDogs season pass holder, got to throw out the first pitch in a game during the 2016 season!
In Honor

Fredda Brennan - Margie & Barry Afergan
Kathryn Grendell Bolton - Dauna Binder
Ellen Finley Flach Tribute - Michael & Rosemary Wood
Mr. & Mrs. Horace Mann - Constance Barker
Charlie Prinn
Janice McCormick
Margaret E. Burnham Charitable Trust
James Phipps - Dorothy Bean
Richard Plaisted - Mary & Martin Gavin

Financials

REVENUE

General Contributions $203,465
Fees for Service $1,868,066
Grants & Foundations $137,251
United Way of Greater Portland $20,049
Event Income $32,324
Adaptive Equipment Sales $55,318
Other Revenue $299,301

Total Income $2,615,774

EXPENSES

Program Expenses $2,246,778
Fundraising $248,270
Management & General $310,197

Total Expenses $2,805,245
Change in Net Assets ($189,471)
In Memory

Richard Benshimol
Wendy Matthews

H. Clifford & Pauline Berry
Phillip & Darlene Caverhill

Venney & Roland Bolduc
Joseph and Rebecah White

Robert Crouse
Martha Cavin
Maxine Crouse

Phyllis Powers Fenderson
Ann Brandt
Waynflete School

James Forestell
Mary & Bill Keith

John L. Johnston
William Johnston

Marion L. McGinley
Rosemary Nelson & Family

Robert Merchant
Theresa Merchant

Lynne Murray
Eileen Adams
Paula Beverage
William Carr
Phoebe Chandler
Kevin Concannon
Aaron Kiander & Julie Doughty
Sandra Ginley

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Grants Help us Thrive

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