



Embracing Freedom



Our Mission

Guiding Eyes for the Blind is dedicated to enriching the lives of blind and visually impaired men and women by providing them with the freedom to travel safely, thereby assuring greater independence, dignity and new horizons of opportunity.



Dear Friends, We are proud that 2011 will be remembered as a year of innovation and celebration of the mission that guides us. Capitalizing on our strengths, we are determined to see how we can use our resources to produce the best possible Guiding Eyes teams. It is not always easy, but the importance of our work – as validated through the stories and successes of our clients – moves us forward.

We listened. We value the opinions of others. Input from our Board of Directors, donors, volunteers, puppy raisers, staff and graduates allows us to remain one of the leading guide dog schools in the world.

We met our clients' individual needs by providing more highly customized training this year as we recognize that this aspect of our programs is the key to their continued success.

We created the most comprehensive graduate survey in our organization's history, enabling us to evaluate – quantitatively and qualitatively – the full impact of what we do for our graduates. Their candid responses will inform our work in the future and offer invaluable information to prospective clients.

We sent a thousand current and former puppy raisers a survey asking them to offer feedback on nearly every aspect of their experience. This information is helping us to implement new strategies and methods to support our outstanding and dedicated volunteers.

We empowered. We provide superior Guiding Eyes dogs, training and a lifetime of support services to clients who come to our organization with hope. Their success is entirely dependent on contributions that have been made to our organization, and their experiences fully convey the ways in which barriers to independence are removed by the connection between a human being and a Guiding Eyes dog.

We achieved. We are one step closer to realizing our dream. Our vision of providing our future guide dogs with the most optimal training techniques and surroundings is becoming a reality. Our revolutionary training method – Successive Training and Enrichment Program (STEP) – has been proven to yield dramatically higher success rates for our dogs, and Phase I construction of our new Canine Development Center was completed this year.

The Arthur and Phyllis Milton Foundation gifted \$1 million to our next phase of construction. This extraordinary leadership contribution brings us one monumental step closer to achieving our goal of creating the finest and most unique puppy raising facility in the world.

Our dreams and the dreams of our clients are coming true. **We hope the stories in this Annual Report inspire you as they do us, and remind you that your support enables others to embrace freedom.**

Sincerely,



Robert Druskin
Chairman, Board of Directors



William D. Badger
President and Chief Executive Officer



Lisa Cantwell's Story



Lisa Cantwell survived a frightening ordeal while traveling to work with her white cane. She fell off the train platform onto the tracks, injuring her back, elbow and wrist. After the accident, she was terrified to venture outside her home and took a leave of absence from the job she has held for 23 years as a special education teacher. Desperate to resume her life, Lisa decided to get a guide dog.

From the moment Lisa was matched with her guide dog, Ogden, it was as though an enormous weight had been lifted. Over the next month in our signature Residential Training Program, the pair learned to work together as a team. Today, Lisa's confidence is stronger than ever. Ogden's presence has positively affected her entire family; her teenaged daughter, who often had to act as a sighted guide, can now enjoy her mom's company in an entirely new way.

Guiding Eyes strives to meet the nuanced needs of each and every one of our clients, often accepting those who are turned away from other schools. Instructors studied Lisa's lifestyle carefully, designing a training program that included intensive train and subway station work.

Lisa soon returned to work with Ogden by her side. Like many before her, she had come to Guiding Eyes to regain her independence, but this was only the beginning of a new, more gratifying life.

In addition to our **Residential Training Program** in which blind and visually impaired men and women from all over the United States come to our Training Center to meet their guide dogs and undertake the rigorous one-month training program, other core programs include:

The **Special Needs Program** helps students who have physical or developmental challenges in addition to blindness. Students with cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, and muscular dystrophy are all welcomed, along with those who are Deaf-Blind.

Our Home Training Program brings Guiding Eyes dogs to the homes of students who cannot attend the Residential Training Program. These individuals might be single parents with school-age children, newly-employed people without accrued leave time, or primary caregivers to a spouse or parent.





Amelia Wasson's Story



When Amelia Wasson enrolled at Indiana University, she was thrilled to be taking the first step in fulfilling her ambition to become a nurse. Her job at a nursing home was ideal; the experience was useful, and she was able to put money toward her education. Amelia's busy schedule caught up with her one defining moment when she fell asleep behind the wheel of her car on her way to work. The accident that resulted nearly took her life, and doctors did not believe she would walk again. The bones in her face were crushed and Amelia was left blind. Against unimaginable odds, she pushed herself through arduous physical therapy and has learned to walk again.

Reclaiming her once full life would prove a harder task, however, and for two years Amelia struggled emotionally.

This year, Amelia came to Guiding Eyes for her first guide dog, Persia. She began to believe she was still in control of her life. **Today, Amelia is back on her education track at Ivy Tech, pondering the many choices before her.**

91% of survey respondents reported having a guide dog has made it easier to travel.

While on campus, Amelia was able to take advantage of our Sights on College Program which equips high school students with the essential tools to begin successful college careers. The program familiarizes students with the latest developments in assistive technology and software, and allows them to stay connected to school and work and to communicate with friends and family.

This year, the Information Technology Department focused on many upgrades, most notably equipping the **Assistive Technology Center** with revamped computers utilizing updated software and faster Internet access. Other developments include wireless connectivity, an enhanced emergency paging system, and the installation of more user-friendly phones in the dormitory rooms. Improved Guiding Eyes web site accessibility has made it easier for potential and current students and graduates, like Amelia, to utilize our site.



Eileen Fabiano's Story



Eileen Fabiano had gotten used to unfriendly stares from strangers whenever she took her three children — all of whom are on the autism spectrum — to places like the supermarket or shopping mall. She tried not to let this bother her, as she wants her children to have all the experiences other children have. However, these “routine” outings were becoming anything but; it was nearly impossible for her to keep nine-year-old Gianna and seven-year-old twins Vincent and Marz safe. Vincent frequently bolted into busy parking lots, making it difficult to retrieve him while holding onto Marz and Gianna.

When Eileen learned about **Guiding Eyes for the Blind's Heeling Autism Program**, she immediately thought of Vincent, who is the most severely affected by the disorder. At the age of three, Vincent suffered a complicated seizure that exacerbated his condition.

Eileen could not believe how quickly her life improved when Heeling Autism dog, Randy, arrived in her home. Randy sleeps beside Vincent's bed, and alerts Eileen if Vincent is about to have a seizure. Vincent has found security in Randy's presence, and both mother and son sleep more peacefully.



Vincent has become increasingly verbal and outgoing; all three children's peers respond more positively to them. Eileen painfully recalls that no one would speak to Vincent in public before Randy came into their lives. Now he is approached by people who want to know more about his cool dog.

The family is now able to function without being constantly sidetracked by the obstacles of autism. Eileen now laughs when she remembers her reservations about getting a dog and her concerns that it might only add to her already nerve-wracking life. Nothing could be further from the truth.



William Casias' Story



Blind U.S. military veterans come to Guiding Eyes through many channels; through rehabilitation services for military veterans, graduates' recommendations, first-hand contact with our Field Representatives, or orientation and mobility professionals. Outreach to veterans has always been a priority for the organization.

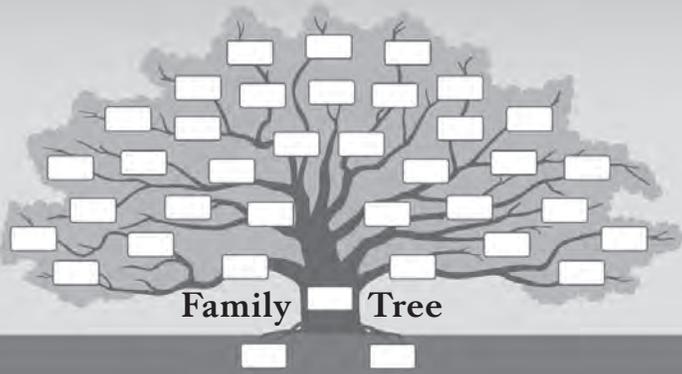
Fifty-seven-year-old veteran William "Willy" Casias had 20/20 vision until seven years ago, when a torn retina heralded the beginning of a new way of life. He was eventually diagnosed with sarcoidosis, a disease linked to military veterans; he served in the Army from 1977 until 1993 and was called to duty multiple times, most notably during the invasion of Panama and the Gulf War.

In just a few short months, Willy went from being completely independent to having to rely on his wife for transportation. He often felt encumbered by his cane. He learned about the process of getting a guide dog after attending a program for veterans and hearing about Guiding Eyes.

Willy's guide dog, Hadley, has transformed his life. He remarks, "A guide dog will never leave you in the field. My safety and well-being are paramount to Hadley."

Inspired by his grandchild with ADHD, he creates computer programs for children with similar challenges.

Willy holds a master's from Vanderbilt University in Science and Marketing, and had a successful business building computers. He had already led a full, accomplished life before losing his sight, and the way he has embraced his new one inspires us. **"These dogs become your eyes, an extension of yourself, allowing you to experience a new way of life."**



Guiding Eyes Breeding Yuri's Story

Our Veterinary Department bustles with activity as our full-time director, Dr. Sandler, and two staff veterinarians, Dr. Ball and Dr. Hungerbuhler, receive thousands of dog visits annually. In addition, the veterinary staff partners with Jane Russenberger, senior director of genetics and canine development, to research new ways of ensuring the success and health of our current and future guide dogs.

Guiding Eyes utilizes cutting-edge genetic testing to identify dogs that may carry the genes for certain diseases. In consultation with a veterinary cardiologist, our breeding dogs now receive cardiac ultrasounds to look for physical markers of genetic heart disease. This same spirit of proactive research and investigation has prompted us to collaborate with the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard to study a type of Mast Cell cancer. Such testing helps to prevent the introduction of these diseases into Guiding Eyes' breeding lines.

Yuri, one of Guiding Eyes' most prodigious studs, is an example of the culmination of the work we do to ensure the healthiest and most promising guide dogs; he has produced nine dogs that are actively breeding, 17 dogs currently in training, and 31 working guide dogs. Each guide dog has profoundly changed the life of his or her blind partner and, by virtue of this, countless numbers of family members and friends.



We are pleased to share the stories of some of the individuals whose sense of independence, acceptance, and accomplishment have been enhanced by Yuri's offspring in 2011.

Diego Luciano de Castro's partnership with his guide dog, **Frito**, has allowed him to "dream in the same way [he] did before blindness." A native of Brazil, Diego works full-time while attending business school with the goal of supporting his large extended family — a once seemingly intangible wish that is now becoming a reality.

Andrea Marley teaches visually impaired children from kindergarten through high school and holds a master's degree in assistive technology. A degenerative eye disease caused her vision loss and Andrea was frustrated that her cane did not allow for the fluidity and speed of movement she desired. Her guide dog, **Yacht**, has provided this and much more; his sensitivity and good manners with children have made it a joy for her to bring him to work.

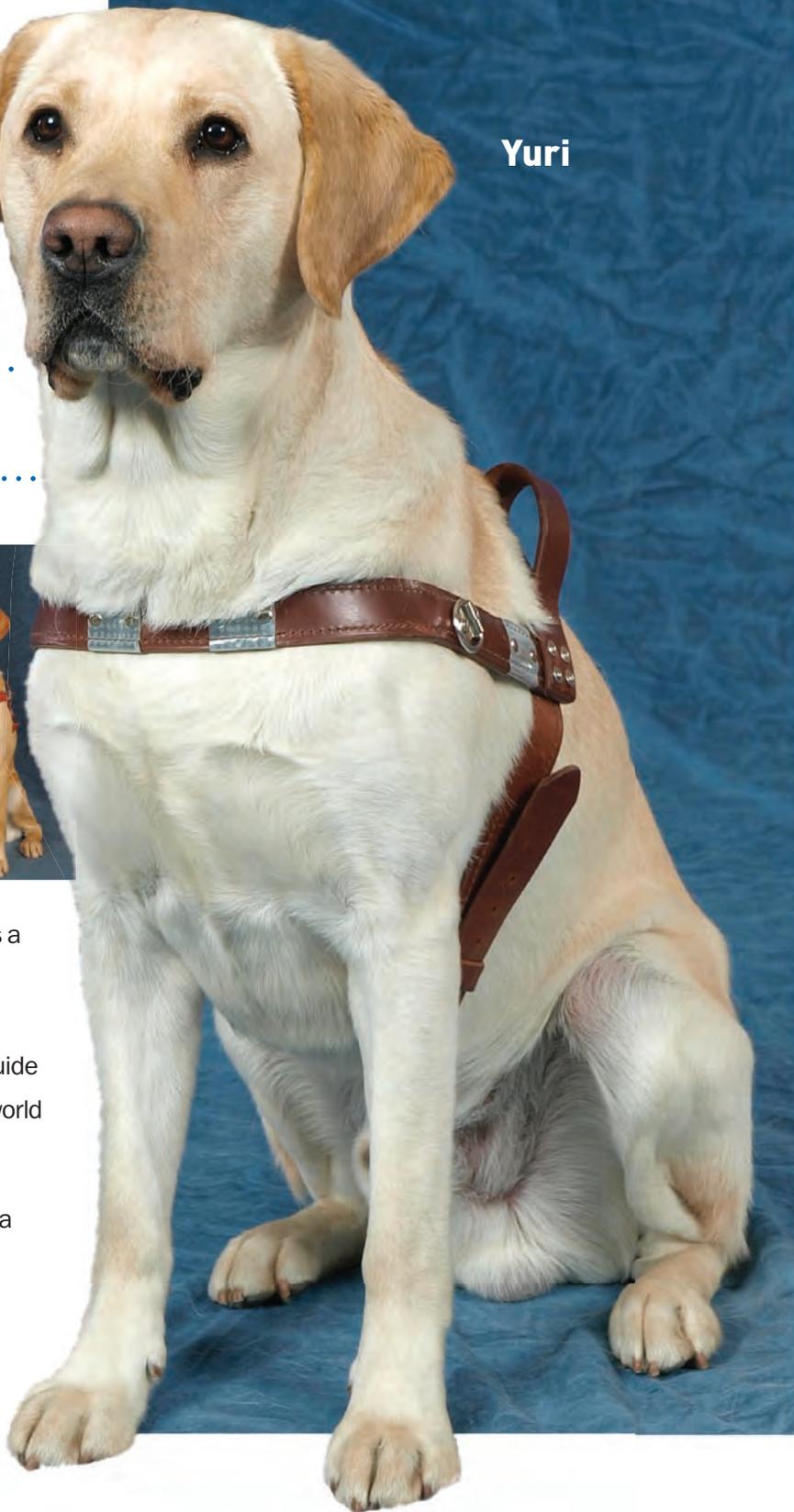
..... To date, Yuri has produced:

9 dogs that are actively breeding

17 dogs currently in training

31 active guide dogs

Yuri



When she came to Guiding Eyes, **Stephanie Ries** was a student at the University of Wisconsin. She frequently stayed in her dorm room at night, fearful of becoming injured or lost if she ventured out. **Holmes**, her new guide dog, has given her the confidence to experience the world around her in ways she never could have anticipated.

Corey Fancher's vision loss began in eighth grade as a result of retinitis pigmentosa. He is employed with an international education foundation and works as an advocate and supporter for students. With his guide dog, **Pearl**, Corey feels as though blindness no longer defines him as he rediscovers many of the interests and activities he had sacrificed.

Doug Coyle was already an experienced guide dog user when he came for his new guide dog, **Pacer**. As a ranger with the National Park Service, he must be able to travel safely, and Pacer makes it easy for him. Doug has regained the unspoken and powerful bond that is forged between a guide dog and handler.

There are many more stories like these, stories that illustrate how selective breeding and tireless research lead to immeasurably improved and empowered lives.



Abigail Lanier's Story



100% of survey respondents said having a guide dog made it easier to navigate the college campus.

Our network of puppy raisers is vital to the success of our programs and services. Raisers instill trust and skills that set the stage for the life lessons a guide dog must master. Raisers provide hours of patient teaching and numerous socialization journeys over a 14 to 16 month period, before they return a well-socialized young adult dog to Guiding Eyes training staff.

Raisers are assured that their hard work is well worth it when they witness the graduation of a student with his or her new guide. When one raiser met her pup's new handler, she said it felt as though she had given the graduate wings.

For puppy raiser Abigail "Abbey" Lanier, this gift came full circle.

Abbey and her family had raised six puppies in North Carolina, realizing that one day Abbey may need a guide of her own. She was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa at age four, and her eyesight continued to deteriorate. Abbey came to Guiding Eyes for the Blind at the age of 18 to get her own guide dog, Alexa.

Currently a junior at Appalachian State University majoring in Music Industry with a concentration in audio engineering and production, Abbey is amazed at how effortlessly she navigates the campus with Alexa, especially the snow-covered sidewalks that were daunting to her when she first arrived. Alexa has become the music program's "mascot," contributing to the positive morale of the entire department.

It is not often that a volunteer raiser becomes a Guiding Eyes graduate. **So perhaps more than anyone else, Abbey understands the incredible amount of time, patience, and energy that has been devoted to preparing Alexa for her role as a guide dog.** She knows that practically from the moment Alexa was born, countless volunteers, trainers and her dedicated raisers worked together to ensure she would eventually fulfill her destiny.



We are halfway there!

The Canine Development Center (CDC), located on 30 acres in Patterson, New York, is where a pup's journey as a Guiding Eyes dog begins. In 2011, we completed Phase I of the One Step Ahead campaign with the construction of our new whelping kennels. This dramatic change in the size and layout of living quarters allows mothers the option of some down-time away from the puppies, giving them a chance to recharge for nurturing, playing, and teaching their pups. The puppies benefit as well; they gain passive socialization in the presence of their littermates and mother, increasing feelings of confidence and security.

The new indoor and outdoor spaces have created wonderful opportunities for enrichment. Volunteers and early puppy raisers bring more confident and relaxed puppies to their homes, and many even sleep through the night.

In September, we ceremoniously unveiled the completed Phase I. Staff, board members, clients and friends gathered to celebrate the successful achievement of our first steps. We also outlined more details for our future plans: the completion of fundraising for the \$8 million dollar One Step Ahead campaign and a review of the Phase II and III comprehensive expansion.

The new 20,000 square-foot facility is being designed with function in mind and will include space for instructional training and a new veterinary area.

It will provide the ideal setting for Guiding Eyes' proprietary advanced puppy training program, entitled STEP — Successive Training and Enrichment Program.



CEO Bill Badger stands with Phyllis Milton in front of the new location for the Arthur Milton Breeding Kennel. The kennel will be named in recognition of the \$1 million gift presented by the Arthur and Phyllis Milton Foundation to the One Step Ahead Campaign.



Newly designed outdoor areas provide early exposure to experiences that will build the foundation for future work as a guide dog.

An Eventful Year



“I received Tanya in 2007, and since then she’s accompanied me each year to play in the Guiding Eyes Corcoran Cup, the master’s invitational of the United States Blind Golf Association. Guiding Eyes has given me more than a guide dog; it has brought to my life a partner who will allow me to travel independently and share a kind of love that only those who love animals can understand.” – Champion Blind Golfer Dick Pomo

The 34th Annual Guiding Eyes Golf Classic was held on June 13th with a sellout crowd. Our favorite football player – NY Giants quarterback Eli Manning – returned to host the event for the fifth year in a row. Thanks to our dedicated sponsors and friends, the outing raised close to \$700,000 for Guiding Eyes’ programs and services.

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Casino Royale, May 2011



Savor Your Senses, September, 2011

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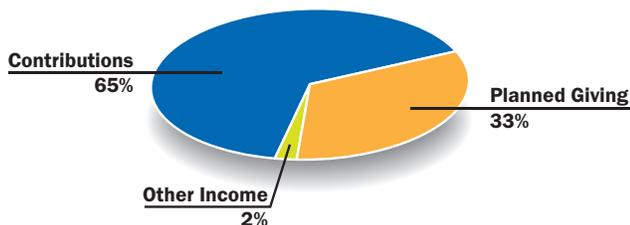
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Public Support				
Contributions	\$13,307,838	-\$1,827,418	\$139,540	\$15,274,796
Planned giving	7,858,535	-	-	7,858,535
Other income	364,446	-	-	364,446
Net assets released from restrictions	844,101	(844,101)	-	-
Total Public Support	22,374,920	983,317	139,540	23,497,777
Expenses				
Program services				
• Student Instruction & Dog Training	5,574,298	-	-	5,574,298
• Student Services	1,385,818	-	-	1,385,818
• Veterinary Hospital	2,365,330	-	-	2,365,330
• Canine Development Center	4,110,082	-	-	4,110,082
• Facility & Food Service	1,613,227	-	-	1,613,227
• Enrichment	2,219,142	-	-	2,219,142
Total Program Services	17,267,897	-	-	17,267,897
Supporting Services				
Management & general	1,009,023	-	-	1,009,023
Fundraising	3,475,004	-	-	3,475,004
Total supporting services	4,484,027	-	-	4,484,027
TOTAL EXPENSES	21,751,924	0	0	21,751,924
Excess of public support over expenses	622,996	983,317	139,540	1,745,853
Investment income (net)	(663,928)	-	(146,676)	(810,604)
Other net asset adjustments	(1,122,369)	-	-	(1,122,369)
Net assets, beginning of year	41,989,465	2,201,959	6,002,067	50,193,491
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$40,826,164	\$3,185,276	\$5,994,931	\$50,006,371

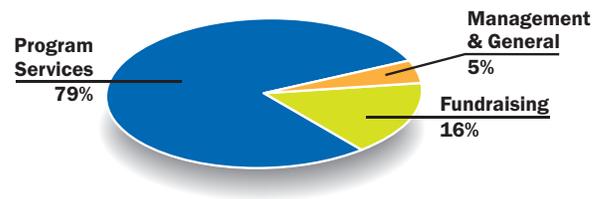
STATEMENT of FINANCIAL POSITION

	UNRESTRICTED	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED	PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$5,935,338	-	-	\$5,935,338
Receivables and prepaids	3,448,152	-	-	3,448,152
Investments	29,866,516	\$3,185,276	\$5,994,931	39,046,723
Other assets	382,119	-	-	382,119
Land, buildings and equipment, net	16,408,741	-	-	16,408,741
Total Assets	\$56,040,866	3,185,276	5,994,931	\$65,221,073
Liabilities & Net Assets				
Accounts payable & accrued expenses	890,811	-	-	890,811
Gift annuity and other reserves	1,774,709	-	-	1,774,709
Bonds payable	5,360,000	-	-	5,360,000
Accrued pension obligation	7,189,182	-	-	7,189,182
Net assets	40,826,164	3,185,276	5,994,931	50,006,371
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$56,040,866	\$3,185,276	\$5,994,931	\$65,221,073

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FY11 FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES



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