

X. ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

In addition to the services described in Chapter III of this *Handbook*, there are other organizations and associations that may be of interest to you. Some sponsor research on specific eye diseases, some do research on a wide variety of topics related to visual impairment and publish informational books, pamphlets, and newsletters. Others are consumer organizations with chapters throughout the United States whose members engage in various kinds of advocacy for individuals who are visually impaired.

CONSUMER ORGANIZATIONS

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

The American Council of the Blind (ACB) is the nation's leading membership organization of blind and visually impaired people. The Council's membership numbers in the tens of thousands of which there are 51 state and regional affiliates and 20 national special interest and professional affiliates. However, membership is not limited to blind or visually impaired individuals.

The California Council for the Blind (CCB), the ACB's California affiliate, meets statewide on a regular basis as do all statewide affiliates to the organization. The

national special interest affiliates meet annually during the ACB national convention and many of these groups also have state/metropolitan chapters.

The Council strives to improve the well-being of all blind and visually impaired people by: serving as a representative national organization of blind people; elevating the social, economic and cultural levels of blind people; improving educational and rehabilitation facilities and opportunities; cooperating with the public and private institutions and organizations concerned with blind services; encouraging and assisting all blind persons to develop their abilities; and conducting a public education program to promote greater understanding of blindness and the capabilities of blind people.

The Braille Forum, a free monthly national magazine with a readership of approximately 26,000, is produced in Braille, Large Print, cassette, and IBM-compatible computer disc and contains articles on employment, legislation, sports and leisure activities, new products and services, human interest and other information of interest to blind and visually impaired people. For additional information, contact:

American Council of the Blind (ACB)

2200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 650

Arlington, VA 22201

(202) 467-5081

(800) 424-8666 (Toll-Free)

(703) 465-5085 (Fax)

Website: www.acb.org
E-mail: info@acb.org

CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

The California Council of the Blind (CCB), an affiliate of the ACB, is comprised primarily of blind and partially sighted people from all walks of life and all parts of the state working together to ensure better opportunities and quality of life for people who are blind or visually impaired. Detailed information about the ACB will follow directly after this section.

The CCB states that its vision is "...that culture, laws, programs, and attitudes throughout California are inclusive of all people, especially persons who are blind or visually impaired." The CCB uses its resources to help blind people help themselves in three major ways:

- Scholarship programs
- Low interest equipment loans that enable blind persons to obtain special equipment
- A toll-free number for recently blind persons and their families to obtain peer counseling, referrals to training facilities and government agencies, as well as advice to make the transition easier

For additional information contact:

The California Council of the Blind (CCB)

1510 J Street, Suite 125

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 441-2100

(800) 221-6359 (Toll-Free in CA)

(916) 441-2188 (Fax)

Website: www.ccbnet.org/

E-mail: ccotb@ccbnet.org

SENIORS WITH VISION LOSS COMMITTEE

The Seniors with Vision Loss Committee, a sub-group of the CCB, is a resource for role models, peer counseling, support, information, and promotion of independence. The purpose is to assist and empower California senior citizens that are blind or visually impaired through education, advocacy and encouragement. This committee offers a statewide network of resource representatives who can provide information, referrals and peer counseling.

Call the CCB at (916) 441-2100 or (800) 221-6359 (Toll-Free in CA) to get the name and phone number of your nearest resource representative.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

Founded in 1940, the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) has grown to include more than ten percent of the

nation's blind population. The NFB is organized in every state and has local chapters, of varying sizes, in almost every community. Where there is no local chapter, there are generally members at large.

The purpose of the NFB is the complete integration of the blind into society on a basis of equality. This objective involves the removal of legal, economic and social discriminations; the education of the public to new concepts concerning blindness; and the achievement by all blind people of the right to exercise to the fullest, their individual talents and capacities.

The NFB believes that the newly blind person faces a difficult adjustment. One of the best medicines is to meet other blind people and learn of their jobs and the techniques they use in doing things without sight. The NFB provides this common meeting ground, and even more important, a sense of participation and restoration of confidence.

Members of the NFB contact newly blind persons to help them with problems of adjustment and orientation. Information is also given concerning available services from governmental and private agencies, as well as facts about laws and regulations concerning the blind. The NFB is the "voice of the blind, the blind speaking for themselves." For additional information contact:

National Federation of the Blind (NFB)

200 East Wells Street

at Jernigan Place

Baltimore, MD 21230

(410) 659-9314

(410) 685-5653 (Fax)

Website: www.nfb.org/nfb/Default.asp

E-mail: pmaurer@nfb.org

The NFB of California's contact information is:

National Federation of the Blind (NFB) of California

39481 Gallaudet Drive #127

Fremont, CA 94538.

(510) 248-0100

(877) 558-6524 (Toll-Free)

Website: www.nfbcal.org

RESEARCH ASSOCIATIONS

AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND

The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) is a national non-profit agency working in cooperation with over 700 agencies, organizations, and schools, offering services to blind and visually impaired people. The mission of the AFB is to enable people who are blind and visually impaired to achieve equality of access and opportunity that will ensure freedom of choice in their lives. Since its founding in 1921, the AFB has recognized its need to take

a leadership role in educating the general public as to the capabilities of people who are blind and visually impaired.

The AFB develops, collects and disseminates information regarding the non-medical aspects of blindness. The organization has published hundreds of books, pamphlets and magazines and has compiled a catalog of these materials. For a list of these informational publications, contact the AFB. The AFB's contact information is:

American Foundation for the Blind, Information Center

2 Penn Plaza, Suite 1102

New York, NY 10121

(212) 502-7600

(800) 232-5463 (Toll-Free)

(888) 545-8331 (Fax)

Website: www.afb.org

E-mail: afbinfo@afb.net

FOUNDATION FIGHTING BLINDNESS

The Foundation Fighting Blindness (FFB) is a national eye research foundation dedicated to finding a cure for Retinitis Pigmentosa, Macular Degeneration and related retinal degenerative diseases. The Foundation funds more research on these diseases than any other non-governmental agency in the world, supporting scores of basic and clinical research projects in the U.S. and foreign countries. In addition, it serves as a worldwide source of

information for affected families, specialists and professionals.

The Foundation has more than 50 affiliates in the United States. Annually, approximately 80 percent of the Foundation's budget is spent on program services including research, public health and education and human services. The FFB has a National Network of Volunteer Groups that raise funds, increase public awareness and provide support to their communities which are divided into local chapters. For additional information about FFB or to find a local chapter contact:

Foundation Fighting Blindness National Headquarters

11435 Cronhill Drive

Owings Mills, MD 21117

(800) 683-5555 (Toll-Free)

(800) 683-5551 (TTY)

Website: www.blindness.org

E-mail: info@FightBlindness.org

PREVENT BLINDNESS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Prevent Blindness Northern California (PBNC) provides services to prevent vision impairment to two vulnerable segments of the population: young children and underserved adults. This is accomplished by providing vision screenings throughout Northern California. For additional information contact:

Prevent Blindness Northern California

San Francisco Office

1388 Sutter Street, Suite 408

San Francisco, CA 94109

(415) 567-7500 (outside California)

(800) 338-3041 (inside California)

(415) 567-7600 (Fax)

Website: www.eyefinfo.org

E-mail: q@eyefinfo.org

Prevent Blindness Northern California

Redding Branch Office

169 Hartnell Avenue, #207

Redding, CA 96002

(530) 243-0410

(530) 243-0414 (Fax)

E-mail: msantos@eyefinfo.org

GLAUCOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness, has no warning, no symptoms, and if left undetected, steals sight. With proper care and treatment, it can be controlled and vision retained.

The Glaucoma Research Foundation sees a future time where sight and independence are not threatened. Through research, public awareness and patient education, they are looking to protect and preserve sight. For additional information contact:

Glaucoma Research Foundation

251 Post Street, Suite 600

San Francisco, CA 94108

(415) 986-3162

(800) 826-6693 (Toll-Free)

(415) 986-3763 (Fax)

Website: www.glaucoma.org

E-mail: question@glaucoma.org

THE GLAUCOMA FOUNDATION

The Glaucoma Foundation (TGF) is an international non-profit organization dedicated to fighting Glaucoma, the world's leading preventable cause of blindness. The Foundation's strategy is two-fold: to raise public awareness concerning the necessity of regular eye exams and to fund critical research to find cures for Glaucoma. For additional information contact:

The Glaucoma Foundation

80 Maiden Lane, Suite 700

New York, NY 10038

(212) 285-0080

Website: www.glaucomafoundation.org

E-mail: info@glaucomafoundation.org

AMERICAN MACULAR DEGENERATION FOUNDATION

The American Macular Degeneration Foundation (AMDF) works for the prevention, treatment and cure of macular degeneration through raising funds, educating the public and supporting scientific research. For additional information contact:

American Macular Degeneration Foundation

P.O. Box 515

Northampton, MA 01061

(413) 268-7660

(888) 622-8527 (Toll-Free)

Website: www.macular.org

E-mail: amdf@macular.org

AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION

Diabetes is the leading cause of new cases of blindness among adults aged 20-74 years. Diabetic retinopathy causes 12,000 to 24,000 new cases of blindness each year. Everything you need to know, from nutrition to exercise, to who's at risk for diabetes, has been researched by the American Diabetes Association (ADA). For additional information or to find a local office contact:

American Diabetes Association

ATTN: National Call Center

1701 North Beauregard Street

Alexandria, VA 22311

(800) 342-2383 (National Diabetic Information Line)

Website: www.diabetes.org/home.jsp

E-mail: AskADA@diabetes.org