



January 16, 2025

TAMC – Measure X Funding
55-B Plaza Circle
Salinas, California 93901

Re: Year-End Report, FY 2023-2024

Dear Friends,

Since 1971, The Blind and Visually Impaired Center of Monterey County has provided free and reduced cost services to individuals with visual impairments throughout Monterey County. Our mission is to empower these individuals toward independent living through education, support services, and skills training.

To accomplish our broad mission, the Center provides a variety of services to the visually impaired community. Clients are first seen with a low vision comprehensive eye evaluation. From there, clients receive assisted devices to help lead an independent life with their remaining vision. Assistive devices can include handheld magnifiers, CCTVs, or other optical aids. Clients are then referred for additional services, which include our Orientation and Mobility Specialists who work directly with the clients for safe, purposeful movement. Clients can also see our Daily Rehab Specialist who works to provide life skills such as cooking, cleaning, and money management. The Center also offers support groups at three locations throughout the County: Pacific Grove, Salinas, and Soledad. The Blind and Visually Impaired Center serves as the only low vision clinic in Monterey County.

For the fiscal year 2023 to 2024, The Blind and Visually Impaired Center saw 344 unique clients, resulting in over 2,491 interactions through telephone calls, appointments, support groups, braille classes, and walk-ins. Regionally, we have seen strong growth in Salinas and South Monterey County as a direct result of our Salinas and Soledad Locations. We continue to see a growth in Spanish speaking clients.

Of these unique clients, 25 received Orientation and Mobility Services. Mobility and Orientation Specialist teach safe and purposeful navigation for clients to travel independently to their destination. Orientation is being aware of where you are and want to go. Mobility refers to being able to move safely and effectively. Our Orientation and Mobility Specialist teach clients to travel using indoor and outdoor protective techniques, long cane skills, sighted guide, orientation skills, street crossing skills, and how to use various mode of public transportation and para-transit (MST). Instruction is provided one-on-one at no charge.

The Blind and Visually Impaired Center had difficulty securing an Orientation and Mobility Specialist at first. The skillset and education required makes it difficult to find individuals specializing in this field. Through resourcefulness, and some patience, the Center was able to hire three part-time Orientation and Mobility Specialist who serves our clients regionally.

Work provided by these individuals include:

- Assessments and interviews to learn client's mobility concerns and review of exam notes.
- Service plan to reach client goals of utilizing various modes of transportation.

- Scheduling appointments and follow-ups to accomplish client goals.
- Collaborating with other instructors to provide best practices.
- Documenting training and activities performed with client.
- Referrals to various community partners to provide outside resources.
- Community outreach through group trips and White Cane Day.

Of the clients our Orientation and Mobility instructors worked with, 16 resided in Salinas, 10 resided in Monterey, Pacific Grove, Carmel and Marina, and 6 resided in South County (Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City). Most the clients seen were age 55 and older.

As we move into the second year of funding for Measure X, we continue to see growth in the number of clients seen. The first two quarters of the second year have already shown tremendous need in the community for Orientation and Mobility Services. The Center has also began hosting group walks with our Orientation and Mobility clients throughout the County, and plans are underway to expand group travel trips to include more locations.

For the fiscal year 2023 to 2024, The Blind and Visually Impaired Center expenses \$40,746.22 of the \$142,644 total funds.

The Blind and Visually Impaired Center appreciates the support of the Measure X grant. It truly makes a positive impact in the community for the visually impaired.

If you require additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,



Steven Macias
Executive Director