



50 Years of Transformation

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Annual Report
2022-2023

A Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Community Partner,

Transformation - a word that is ever present in the work of this passionate team. What a privilege to share with our community how far we have come and how far our clients are going. 2022-2023 was a year of growth and refinement for Valley Center for the Blind.

We started the year off with deep appreciation for a prestigious Disability Advisory Commission Achievement Award from the City of Fresno, recognizing 50 years of services and support for people who are blind. This year also brought our first major event in Kern County, Dining in the Dark, an incredible success developing more community relationships and support in this newest territory.

We also started another first, our Glow Golf Tournament in Fresno, which was one of the most fun nights of the year to be sure. We provided more training to more clients than ever before and had wonderful feedback about the many other new or expanded opportunities for individuals receiving our services- a new adult work experience program, more beeper egg hunts, increased adaptive sports programming, a wearable tech fair, and so much more. Being nominated for Beautiful Bakersfield Award for Best Nonprofit was another highlight, demonstrating just how impactful this incredible organization has had in such a short period of time.

All of this is only possible because of the passion and vision of our founder, Dr. Andrea Schwartz. Our VCB family warmly remembers her and celebrates her vibrant legacy. Her passion, vision, and tireless energy are our guiding stars. We seek every day to honor her impact by ensuring that people who are blind or have low vision are never forgotten and always have a place to go to in times of need.

Helen Keller said "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence." As I look back on 2022-2023, I see the dramatic impact of having a deep and unwavering expectation that the transformation of this organization will lead to countless stories of optimism. Thank you, friends, for going on this incredible journey with us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shellena J. Heber". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Shellena Heber
Executive Director, VCB

About Us



Mission

We support, train, and employ people who are blind or have low vision across Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern Counties.



Vision

VCB envisions a California where people who are blind or have low vision have access to robust and effective services that reach each person's unique goals and improving equity in our communities. Through excellence in training, support, community education, and successful employment assistance, VCB will be the premiere agency serving the blind in the Central Valley.

Core Values



Driven towards progress and quality.



Foster empowerment through accountability.



Care Personally – Challenge Directly



Committed to treating people with respect and professionalism.



Community Events



In previous years, VCB would organize up to three major events per year. However, in the 2022-2023 fiscal year, we hosted seven major events. Our team's ability to organize this large number of events and remain dedicated to providing monthly social opportunities for our clients is a testament to our growth as the number of people joining our mission through these events increases.

VCB's annual White Cane Safety Day returned to Fresno with an awareness walk, lunch, and a beep baseball game. Our blind/low vision community came from all over our service area to celebrate the symbol of independence that is the White Cane.

The Beeper Egg Hunt in Fresno returned to give 3 kids who are blind or have low vision an opportunity to meet other

families with similar experiences and demonstrate their listening skills by searching for beeping eggs.

The VCB Team hosted a Wearable Tech Fair for clients to try out innovative devices that are available to help the blind and low vision community. This event had such great turnout, that the vendors wanted to return for more demonstrations in the next year.

As staff and their families gathered for the 50th Anniversary Celebration, the VCB team got to reflect on the transformation of starting out as a small support group of seniors to having over 50 employees providing independence and employment training. To commemorate this occasion, the City of Fresno proclaimed the week of July 19th as VCB Week in Fresno.



Rehabilitation Services

Person-Centered Care

Our Rehabilitation Services provide wrap-around training services that are based on the clients' goals to help them live more independently.

- ✓ **Case Management**
Our Case Managers listen to client needs and create a person-centered care plan while also connecting them to community resources.
- ✓ **Independent Living Skills (ILS)**
Independent Living Skills Instructors teach essential techniques to daily tasks such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, and so much more to instill self-sufficiency.
- ✓ **Assistive Technology (A-T)**
A-T is equipment and software that allow people who are blind or have low vision to use computers, phones, labelers, and software.
- ✓ **Low Vision Clinic**
Our Low Vision Clinic Manager and Eye Care partners help clients understand their level of vision and explore helpful low vision aid devices available to them.
- ✓ **Braille**
Braille allows people who are blind or have low vision to maintain or gain literacy skills essential for daily life, education, and employment.
- ✓ **Orientation & Mobility (O&M)**
Clients learn how to safely and confidently travel within the home, out in the community and even across the country!

Community Impact

Training and Engagement



259
new clients



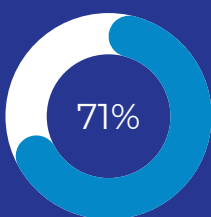
638
clients trained



1,296
people received
a meaningful
engagement
from VCB



8,654
hours of direct
training



VCB staff who
are blind or
have low vision



Rehabilitation

Low Vision appointments – 234
Independent Living Skills clients – 108
Orientation and Mobility clients – 20
Assistive Technology clients – 284
Braille clients – 8



Work Readiness

Clients Placed in Employment – 10
Adult Work Experience Clients – 16
Job Placements – 14



Workforce Development

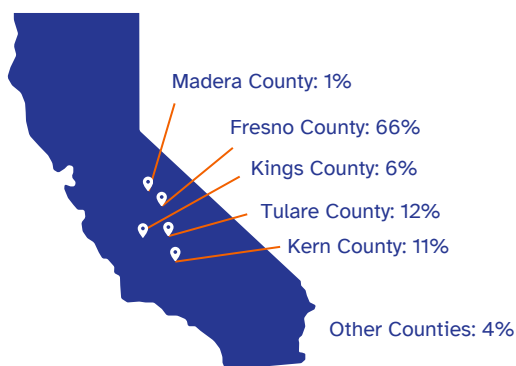
Jobs created through contracts – 20

I didn't let the kitchen get to me. I overcame the challenge of cooking on a gas range stove. I learned some new adaptive ways, and tricks to cook in the kitchen, but I also had the chance to brush up on my already well-known cooking and the skills that go with it.

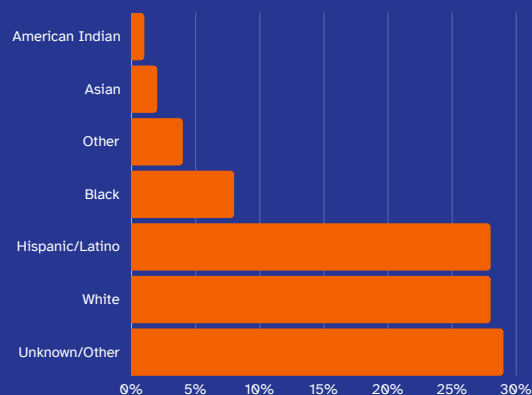
— Sylvia

Demographics

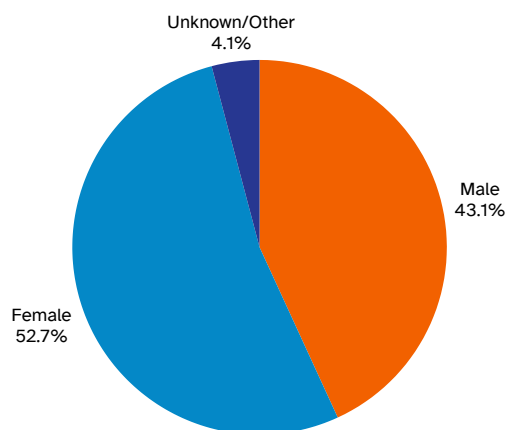
Client County of Residence



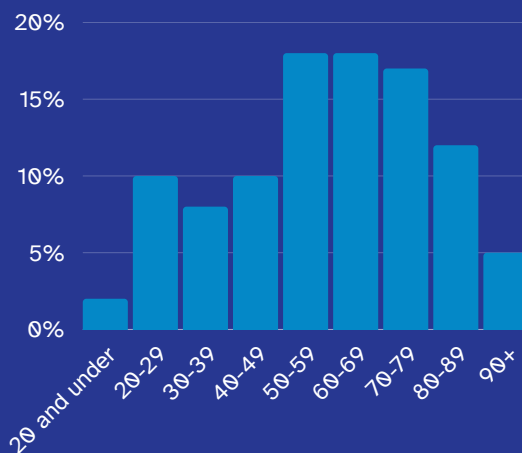
Client Ethnicity



Client Gender



Client Age





Work Readiness

Achieving Career Goals

By partnering with businesses and our state Department of Rehabilitation, our work readiness programs provide real employment experiences and supports to help clients succeed in the workforce.



Vocational Assessments

Through conversations, quizzes, and skill demonstrations, clients explore potential careers to find the right fit based on their interests, education, and experience.



Situational Assessments

Clients get hands-on opportunities to do related job tasks to identify any barriers to reaching goals, then set up a clear career path success plan.



Adult Work Experience

To help clients add relevant experiences to their resumes, we give them opportunities for paid temporary work experience, whether that takes place at VCB or another business. This work is paid for by the CA Department of Rehabilitation. Connect with VCB if you are a business interested in giving a client temporary work experience at no cost to you.



On-the-Job Training

Starting a new job can be very challenging, and a lot of the time a new employee is settling into a job are spent in training. To alleviate the burden of a business paying for that time training a new employee, the CA Department of Rehabilitation will subsidize some of the employees hours, reimbursing the business who hire individuals with disabilities to cover the cost of those critical onboarding activities.

Work Readiness (continued)



Short-Term Support

This program includes application guidance, mock interviews, and short-term courses for employment training. Once a client is ready to apply for work, we help them in their job search, application process, and provides support in the first 90 days (unless additional support is needed) at the client's new job in collaboration with the site supervisor/employer and the State Department of Rehabilitation. Examples of supports include but are not limited to one or more of the following:

- ✓ Reasonable accommodations
- ✓ Travel and job destination training
- ✓ Work Clothing/Uniform
- ✓ Training on employment setting tasks
- ✓ Equipment
- ✓ Additional activities (on or off the job) as needed to stabilize the employment setting
- ✓ Collaboration with the client and their supervisor/employer
- ✓ Developing appropriate work behaviors

[The coworkers at Goodwill] had never worked with a blind person so it was a great experience for them also. By the time my AWE program ended, my coworkers learned to let me do things on my own.

— Annette

Workforce Development

Supporting Businesses and Our Community

Through contracts with businesses, we are able to give our clients employment opportunities and educate these businesses on the best ways to support employees who are blind or have low vision. Fiscal year 2022-2023 was the transformative year of firsts for the Workforce Development Team:

- ✓ First Disability Allyship presentations
- ✓ First contract with a Federal Agency
- ✓ First Community Health Workers on staff
- ✓ First commercial contract

Our Workforce Development efforts make a real impact. Not only on the people who are blind or low vision gaining meaningful employment, but on the communities they serve as well. Listen to Joaquin share his story and how our partnership with Fresno County Department of Public Health is making a difference.

A man with a beard and short dark hair, wearing a dark grey polo shirt, is smiling at the camera. He is in an indoor setting with a blurred background.

Scan this QR code to
watch Joaquin's story!

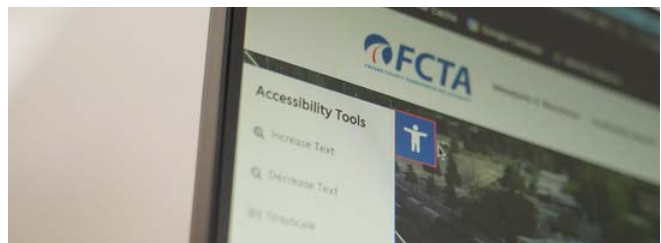
A square QR code with a black and white pixelated pattern. An orange arrow points from the text "Scan this QR code to watch Joaquin's story!" to the QR code.

Business Solutions

Grow Your Business with VCB!

We offer impactful solutions for businesses looking to increase their capacity, client base, and workforce. By partnering with VCB, you gain access to a pool of highly skilled professionals which allows you to increase diversity, build a stronger, more dynamic workforce, and boost your company's performance and culture. With partnerships ranging from private companies to government entities, let VCB's success and experience be the solution to your business needs. We offer:

- ✓ Website Accessibility Testing
- ✓ Document Scanning
- ✓ Call Center Services
- ✓ Disability Allyship Training Certificate
- ✓ Employment Solutions
- ✓ Translation Services
- ✓ **AND MORE!**



The training and onboarding process was smooth and thorough, ensuring that agents were well-prepared to represent our company. I highly recommend VCB's call center services to any company in need of reliable and professional assistance. They are an amazing organization doing amazing things for their community.



Jaime Mautz
President, Pacific Ink Inc.

Financials

Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$624,844
Accounts Receivable	\$633,986
Inventories	\$9,108
Prepaid Expenses	\$27,112
Deposits	\$2,993
Property and Equipment, Net	\$519,614
Total Assets	\$1,817,657

Support and Revenue	
Grant Revenue	\$296,812
Program Services	\$1,402,863
Contributions	\$146,345
Fundraising	\$50,755
Inventory and Equipment Sales	\$43,975
Other Income	\$30,264
Total Support and Revenue	\$1,971,014

Liabilities and Net Assets	
Accounts Payable	\$62,278
Accrued Payroll Liabilities	\$35,578
Accrued Vacation Liabilities	\$42,475
Sales Tax Payable	\$1,558
Restricted Grant Income	\$74,710
Unearned Revenue	\$3,711
Other Liabilities	\$2,606
Note Payable, Current Portion	\$10,833
Note Payable, Long-Term Portion	\$247,792
Net Assets	\$1,336,116
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$1,817,657

Expenses	
Program Services	\$1,578,424
Management and General	\$335,137
Fundraising	\$24,971
Total Expenses	\$1,938,532

Revenue Over Expenses
\$32,482

THANK YOU!

As a registered 501(c)3 supporting people who are blind or have low vision, we rely on the generosity of our community to continue our essential services. VCB receives \$0 in base grant funding provided by the State of California for blind rehabilitation, which demonstrates how much we need your ongoing support.

With you by our side, we have been able to significantly transform during a milestone year. We onboarded the largest group of new employees, expanded recreation opportunities to children and teens who are blind or have low vision, added a new fundraiser, and became number one in the state for employment success rates in the blind/low vision community.

A Special Thank You To:

Central California Women's Conference
Alin Ciorobea
Clovis Country Lions Club
EYE Q Vision Care
Fig Garden Women's Club
Pawandeep Janghu
Kevin McCarthy for Congress
Olsen Construction and Restoration Company Inc.
Susan Rogers
George and Sheila Saxelby
Schilling Family Trust
Linda Sidlinger
Mark Sidlinger
Mary Trichell
Walmart Madera #1583
Walmart Visalia #1826
Wanger Jones Helsley PC Attorneys



I don't think I could have dealt with my vision loss and succeeded in law school and accomplished my career goals without the help of organizations like VCB.

— Leticia

Contact Us



Our Locations

VCB serves clients throughout Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern Counties.

Fresno

3417 W Shaw Ave. Fresno, CA 93711

Visalia

220 S Mooney Blvd. Suite E. Visalia, CA 93291

Bakersfield

2520 H Street, Suite A/B, Bakersfield, CA 93301



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