



# EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY, TOUCHING LIVES

**The Canadian  
National Institute  
for the Blind**

**L'Institut national  
canadien pour  
les aveugles**



**Annual Review 2004-2005**



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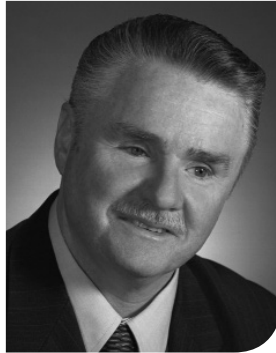
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## A Message from Jim Sanders President and Chief Executive Officer

Throughout CNIB's long history, our ability to adapt and welcome new solutions for the ever-changing needs of Canadians who are blind or visually impaired has been the foundation of our success.

This perseverance has been masterfully captured by past CNIB president Euclid Herie in his book **Journey to Independence: Blindness – The Canadian Story**, which truly encapsulates the history of vision loss in this country.

For almost a century now, we have been asking our clients, "What do you need today? What will your needs be years down the road?"



From their requests, we recognize the enormous potential of technology, leading us to employ new software for client services, use new Internet tools for professional development, and produce new digital library materials.

Through technology, the opportunities are boundless.

Equally limitless is the enthusiasm and optimism of our fine staff and volunteers, whose skill and dedication continue to inspire me.

I also salute the members of the national, divisional, and local boards for continuing to guide this organization.

## A Message from Dick Hale-Sanders Chair of the National Board of Directors

Reflecting on CNIB's accomplishments in 2004, one thought comes to mind – it's all coming together.

Our new national office is fully operational, with rave reviews from clients, volunteers, and staff and generous support from community and corporate partners and the design and architectural community.

The CNIB Library for the Blind has gone digital, providing books and other information materials on CD and over the Internet.

The federal government has shown its commitment to helping us achieve our goals, as have provincial and municipal



governments that continue to build stronger partnerships with our divisions and districts.

And CNIB is more involved in vision research than ever before, taking part in research for prevention, as well as further investigating the professional, personal, and social needs of blind or visually impaired Canadians.

It truly is coming together.

So while the challenges before us remain daunting when considering the rise of vision loss in Canada, CNIB is well positioned to meet them.

# Embracing technology, touching lives

**Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.**

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Steeped in history and tradition, The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) carved a new path in 2004 by harnessing the rapid advancement of current technology to better serve all Canadians with vision loss.

Paired with committed CNIB staff and volunteers, technology is a vital tool for success for people who are blind or visually impaired, as it provides a connection – a connection to other people, to skills needed to thrive in their communities, and to materials that enhance their lives at home or at work.

## Client Services

Thanks to digital technology, information materials at The CNIB Library for the Blind travel at the click of a mouse.

CNIB clients can now enjoy audiobooks on CD with DAISY players – digital talking book machines, or on their computers, enjoying features such as being able to skip chapters and place bookmarks. They can also follow current events with online newspapers and choose from over 10,000 online audio, text, and electronic braille titles for instant reading.

On an electronic playground, young CNIB clients let their imaginations run free on the Children's Discovery Portal.

Managing the Library's materials has become far more efficient through the Integrated Digital Library System (IDLS), which now handles production,

acquisition, client records, circulation, digital rights management, secure and permanent storage, and deliveries.

Turning the page, client services may soon benefit from information technology, as CNIB investigates the potential of a new Client Relations Management System (CRMS).

The CRMS will result in better management of information and free staff from time-consuming paperwork, allowing them to spend more time working directly with clients.

While awaiting a fully integrated CRMS, CNIB's British Columbia-Yukon and Manitoba-Saskatchewan divisions are testing the premises for the new system using electronic forms for registration and referral processes for both new and returning clients.

This interim approach has already reduced wait times for first-time clients and resulted in more efficient handling of client data and referrals. So successful is this new electronic form, other offices are quickly following suit.

Technology also fashioned a unique personal connection for blind or visually impaired job seekers.

To provide career advice, CNIB joined the American Foundation for the Blind to create **MentorMatch** – an Internet tool that connects North American job seekers who are blind or visually impaired with a visually impaired professional working in their field of interest.

Through e-mail and discussion forums, job seekers can now talk about applying for jobs, interview techniques, and how to overcome first-day jitters, as well as potential negative attitudes towards vision impairment.

### Research

Seeking a stronger presence in the research community, CNIB's National Service Development & Research branch has immersed itself in ongoing research projects, some of which involve years of study.

By examining factors that influence social relationships, community involvement, and employment success, our services can continue to be tailored for the best results.

The CNIB E.A. Baker Foundation also bolstered its reputation as a respected research branch.

The Foundation has granted more than \$1.8 million to the Canadian Glaucoma Study over 10 years – a national effort to shed light on the causes and risk factors of glaucoma, which is to be completed in 2005.

Additional new fellowships and research grants for 2004 totalling over \$435,000 included studies that explore medical and surgical treatment for corneal diseases. From its humble beginnings in 1962, the Foundation now contributes approximately \$1 million each year to training and research in vision health.

And we continue to support researchers focusing on blindness prevention, such as a Toronto hospital study that explores strategies to prevent retinopathy of prematurity (ROP) – a disorder of infants with extremely low birth weights and the most common cause of blindness in childhood.

### Public Education & Advocacy

While excelling in the role of scholar, CNIB also acted as a teacher, producing **A Strong Beginning: A Sourcebook for Health and Education Professionals Working With Young Children Who Are Visually Impaired or Blind.**

The first Canadian resource of its kind, this sourcebook quickly proved to be essential reading for intervention specialists, occupational therapists, preschool teachers, nurses, and speech-language pathologists.

CNIB also launched its Accessible Design Services – a consulting service that provides design expertise in the development or redesign of commercial, public, or residential spaces.

By reviewing building plans or providing print materials and awareness workshops, CNIB can help companies make any space both safe and accommodating for visitors who are visually impaired.

At CNIB, as thousands of active Canadians who are blind or visually impaired can attest, there are solutions for living with vision loss.

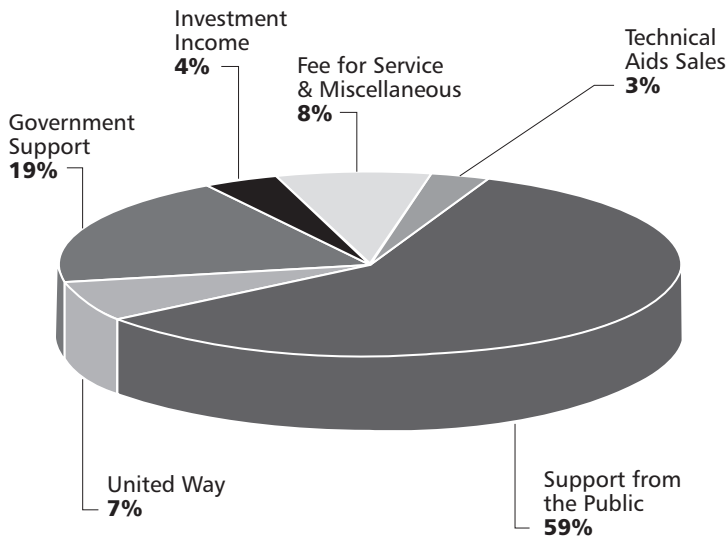
Their independence is a reflection of courage and determination, paired with essential CNIB services and programs.

We thank you for helping Canadians who are blind or visually impaired forge their own path of success and achievement by supporting CNIB.

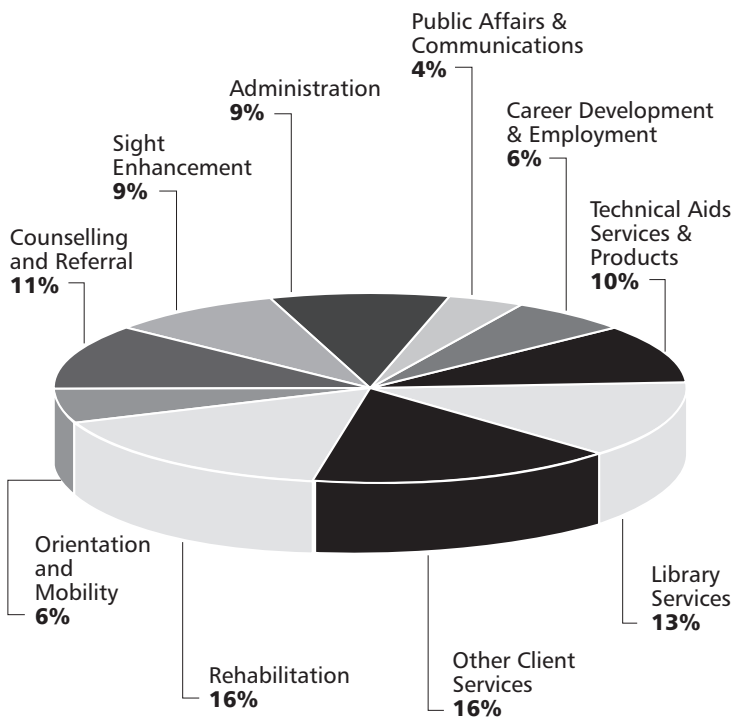


# Year in Review

## Gross Revenues by Source Fiscal Year 2004



## Cost of Services Fiscal Year 2004



To request a copy of the audited financial statements, please call Jennifer Hendren at 416-486-2500.

## CNIB by the Numbers Fiscal Year 2004

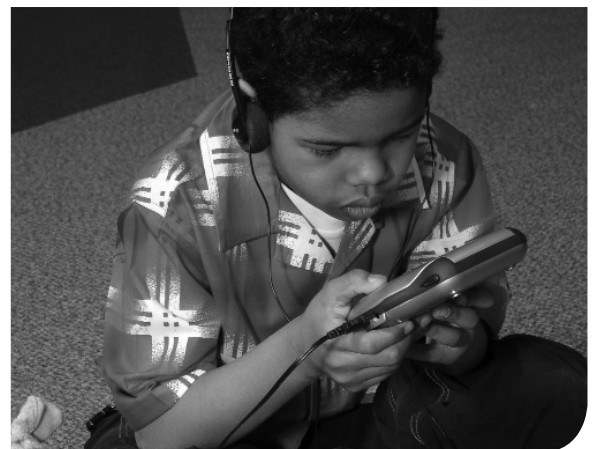
|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Number of CNIB Clients</b> | <b>105,138</b> |
| Children                      | 4,479          |
| Working Age                   | 24,393         |
| Seniors                       | 76,266         |

|                                   |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Number of New CNIB Clients</b> | <b>10,745</b> |
| Children                          | 493           |
| Working Age                       | 1,493         |
| Seniors                           | 8,759         |

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Number of Volunteer Hours</b> | <b>139,805</b> |
|----------------------------------|----------------|

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <b>Number of Service Hours Received by Clients</b> | <b>567,379</b> |
|--|----------------|

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Number of Books in all Formats Received by Clients</b> | <b>1,186,891</b> |
|---|------------------|



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The Canadian National Institute for the Blind is pleased to acknowledge the following donors who joined Visionaries from March 31, 2004 – April 1, 2005. Special thanks to our many donors who prefer to remain anonymous.

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