### EVALUATION SUMMARY

#### Low Vision Resource Center
San Antonio, TX

**Project Title:** OWL Radio Operations

**Grant Description:** An operations grant to help fund Owl Radio, an audio information service for persons unable to read due to visual, physical or cognitive disabilities.

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<th>Grant Amount: $50,000</th>
<th>Approved: October 7, 2014</th>
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<td>Project Start Date: January 1, 2015</td>
<td>Project End Date: December 31, 2015</td>
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**Charitable Purpose:** Health & Human Services\Disabled\Blind

**Grant Type:** Project/Program Costs

**Grant Objectives:** To improve the quality of life and self-esteem of the visually impaired by increasing their awareness and reduce their sense of isolation and loneliness.

**Summary of Reported Findings:**

During the reporting period for this grant, the Low Vision Resource Center reported the following for the **Owl Radio program**:

- Distributed 154 radios during this period
  - Three organizations now distribute radios
    - Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry Low Vision Clinic
    - Lions Low Vision Rehabilitation Clinic
    - Audie Murphy Veterans Administration Hospital
  - Applications also completed through
    - Texas Department for Blind Services
    - Santa Rosa Low Vision Clinic
    - San Antonio Lighthouse Senior’s Program
- Supplemented its regular programming with a wide variety of public service announcements including (not a comprehensive list)
  - Job opportunities from Envision (a company serving blind individuals)
  - Monthly guided tours for the blind at the San Antonio Museum of Art
  - Sight Savers America free electronic video magnifiers for blind children in the Hill Country
  - Blue Star Art in the Dark event
  - Alamo Council of the Blind Scholarship program
- Expanded programming to include a “Potpourri” category of recorded programs taken primarily from the New York Times as well as internet articles that apply to vision
- Numerous health fairs and events were attended to promote the program
- Conducted Low Vision EXPO attended by 500 people

A **listener survey** was conducted. Excerpts include:

- 100% are satisfied with the quality of the broadcasts by the volunteer readers
- 84% agreed that Owl Radio broadcasts kept them more informed about what’s happening in the community
30% listen to Owl Radio broadcast every day
26% listen to Owl Radio broadcast 2-3 times per week

Representative comments included:
- “So good for seniors, appreciate the service you provide.”
- “Keeps me informed when I have the chance to listen.”
- “Good service, enjoy it.”
- “I enjoy the community programs.”
- “Been a listener for 14 years.”
- “Love the Wall Street Journal.”

A volunteer survey was conducted. Excerpts include:

- Length of volunteer service:
  - 24% 11+ years
  - 24% 7-10 years
  - 5% 4-6 years
  - 34% 1-3 years

Representative comments included:
- What do you enjoy most about your work with us?
  - “The fact that I can make a difference in our community and with the low vision listener base.”
  - Having the ability to provide information in a timely manner to those who can no longer read is a true service to the community.”
  - “Sense of making someone feel a little better.”
  - “Knowing the service we provide makes a difference in our listener’s lives.”
  - “I enjoy providing a service to a group of people who need and want this service. I enjoy feeling energized, enriched, and a part of something great. I enjoy reading. I enjoy the use of studio and equipment. And I enjoy the company of my work colleagues.”
- What can we do to make your volunteer experience more enjoyable?
  - “The ability to control the temperature that circulates in the office on Sunday.”
  - “I really enjoy the volunteer experience. Training was good and volunteering is simple and quick.”
  - “The staff does yeoman work! More gatherings – contact with other readers.”
  - “It would be great if we could have a permanent home.”
  - “Higher chair to read on.”
  - “Allow me to read more. No, I understand the voluntary opportunities are highly sought after, although I would welcome a weekly slot if one ever became available.”

Administrative accomplishments/challenges
- Received restricted grant of $50,000 from anonymous donor to focus on technology upgrades
- Added three new Board members
- Hired new Owl Radio coordinator