



Annual Report

2015-2016

New Mexico School for the Blind & Visually Impaired

Superintendent's Letter

July 1, 2016

Dear Supporters of NMSBVI,

As the 2015-16 school year draws to a close, one is tempted to take a quick snapshot or to jot down a word or two that will capture the year. Regardless of how hard one tries, there is no simple picture or catchy phrase that can capture the swell in our hearts when we watched one of our preschoolers take her first steps or when one of our babies, after reaching with his cane to check out the secrets under the big bush at the park, stands up and toddles off using his cane while walking for the first time. We were there to silently cheer when one of the residential students speaks up for herself for the first time and asks for accessible materials for her science class; or when the wonderful, tantalizing smells from the Life Skills kitchen waft down the hall to remind us that the Holiday Sampler has finally arrived! All of these moments and a thousand others capture our imagination with possibilities for the future and enrich our lives with joy that we have been a part of this little miracle!

The year has been full of exciting projects! The renovation of buildings on the residential campus continues with a new Health Services wing opening in Jack Hall and a building renovated to become the school's library. In addition, the NM legislative body approved a funding increase to once again support air transportation to students who live in the northwest and who seek enrollment on the residential campus. On both campuses, the halls rang with the delighted sounds of students who made new discoveries, developed special friendships and, in every way, celebrated life every day. Meanwhile, the developmental specialists, outreach mentors, assistive technology specialists and low vision clinic staff racked up thousands of miles visiting every community that needed their services. The NMSU personnel preparation program ("VIP Program") enjoyed the largest cohort of teachers and developmental specialists seeking to become teachers of the visually impaired that the program has known since its inception.

So, instead of a snapshot or two and a few words, we present this picture, an annual report, that describes NMSBVI as we lived the school year 2015-16. From capital projects to student demographics, from new programs to retiring teachers, we offer you a glimpse at the dynamic staff and outstanding students who made up NMSBVI this year.

Enjoy!



Linda M. Lyle
NMSBVI Superintendent



NMSBVI Board of Regents

Alicia McAninch **President**

Democrat
P.O. Box 146,
La Luz, NM 88337
Home: 505-437-0632
Cell: 575-430-5828
email:
jcmasm@msn.com

Alfred Sena, **Vice President**

Republican
2103 Coba Road SE,
Rio Rancho, NM 87124
Phone: 505-899-1046
Phone: 505-896-0667,
ext. 51161
email: asena@rrps.net

Christine Hall **Secretary**

Democrat
10315 Propps Dr. NE,
Albuquerque, NM 87112
Home: 505-268-3895
email:
C.tessa4@comcast.net

Catherine Gray **Member**

Republican
13401 Pinnacle Ct. NE,
Albuquerque, NM 87112
Home: 505-323-2910
Cell: 505-250-2754
email:
fcgray@comcast.net

History of NMSBVI:

As a network of services, the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMSBVI) staff can be found in hospitals, in family homes, in classrooms, at Low Vision Clinics and in university classrooms. This hasn't always been the case. When NMSBVI (originally called the Institute for the Blind) was officially created by the territorial New Mexico Legislature in 1903, the goal was to establish a residential campus that would house the state's students who were blind and provide for their education and upbringing. To that end, 20 acres were set aside in Otero County for this purpose and an \$8,000 appropriation from the legislative process was used to build the first education building in Alamogordo, New Mexico. As the number of students grew, the need for additional buildings grew as well. In 1925, R.R. Pratt, the school's superintendent, invited Helen Keller to help him lobby in Santa Fe. Helen Keller and Elizabeth Garrett, daughter of lawman Pat Garrett, addressed a joint session of the New Mexico Legislature on behalf of the school and were successful in raising \$65,000 for expansion.

Through the years, school staff as well as the Board of Regents have grappled with ways to meet the programmatic needs of their students. Programming has changed dramatically through the years. Students are now educated in their home schools with short bursts of intensive instruction on the residential campus. Career exploration remains an essential component of blindness education but chair caning and piano tuning have given way to individualized career plans that teach job skills matching the interest of each student. Braille & independent travel skills continue to be a priority, and students now have extensive exposure to the expanded core curriculum of blindness.

One thing that has not changed through the years is the abiding belief that independence is essential for every student, and the development of independence requires the engagement of everyone.

With the understanding that independence comes when everyone has promoted its development throughout a child's life, in 1974 the school opened a second campus in Albuquerque to provide services to children aged 3-6, who need to learn early blindness skills. In the late 1990's, the school established a statewide birth-to-3 homebased program that has become a national model for visual impairment (VI) services to very young children and their families. A Low Vision Clinic, a university teacher preparation program, technology lending library, extensive mentorship program for teachers, and a prison Braille program have all followed.

At every level, NMSBVI continues to live its mission: every child in New Mexico, every day, will be educated in an appropriate setting with programming and materials that are accessible; and will have access to highly qualified teachers of the visually impaired.



Mission:

As a leader and unifying entity in the field of educating students birth-to-high school who are blind or visually impaired, NMSBVI is a statewide network of services that ensures all students who are blind or visually impaired will become independent, productive members of their communities by identifying and providing quality education and collaborating with students, families and partners to provide outstanding training, resources and support services.

NMSBVI's Condensed Mission:

Every student, every day in the right setting with appropriate goals and materials taught by a highly qualified teacher of the visually impaired.

NMSBVI Strategic Plan Goals:

1. We will foster an atmosphere of creativity that results in innovative practices and programs.
2. We will create a training system that results in sufficient numbers of specialized staff in the field of blindness and visual impairment for the state of New Mexico.
3. We will create a system to convey and receive information about blindness and visual impairment educational services, trends, research, etc. to all those involved or interested in serving students who are blind or visually impaired.
4. We will build a system of data-driven decision making that will be used collaboratively to determine goals, services and settings for educating New Mexico students with blindness or visual impairments.
5. We will develop a system that supports the successful transition of students with blindness or visual impairment and their programming across settings.
6. We will acquire community support and the resources essential to advance the success of each student with blindness or visual impairment.

Strategic Plan: Goals 2016

During 2016, the school was actively engaged in several projects that were a direct outgrowth of its ongoing strategic plan. The following is an update on progress toward the goals of that plan.

- Collaboration is a large component of the work of the school. During 2016, NMSBVI launched a national database, established a prison Braille project, participated in a research project with the NM Mind Institute and UNM Hospital's Pediatric Neurology Department, facilitated a statewide Autism focus group and helped with the implementation of the state's UEB (Unified English Braille) transition plan. Within the school, an Innovations & Development Department was established and processes were identified that will support the development of innovative ideas within the school.
- The school's university preparation program continues to grow and develop. When 20+ teachers enrolled in the teacher preparation program, NMSBVI Outreach was challenged with providing extensive mentorship to teachers spread across the state. Through the year, that process continued to be refined and mentors were rewarded with teachers who began to develop skills as Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs). Of particular note, Rio Rancho Public Schools enrolled three teachers in the program and has set out to develop a VI department in their own district!



- Sharing information about the school, services, its students and about the field of blindness is essential. To that end, the school's website was rebuilt and is now in a format that permits easy updating. The school has also entered the realm of social media and can now be found on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, with videos posted on the school's YouTube channel.
- While the state database for blindness education has not yet been released for piloting as was originally hoped, NMSBVI continues to refine all components of the work. It is anticipated that the database will be piloted during Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17).
- An essential goal during 2016 was to identify the students who could best be served at this time with a placement on the residential campus. The legislative process resulted in a renewal of funding for air transportation for students who live in the northwest quadrant of the state. As construction projects end and dorms open, NMSBVI anticipates serving about 65 students yearly on its residential campus.
- Capital projects continue to unfold on the residential campus. During the year, the Health Services building was transformed into the school's Library and a portion of the Jack Hall Building became the permanent home of Health Services. The next projects -- including renovating the old Watkins Education building to make it an administration building, renovating the Ditzler and Recreation Buildings, transforming the Central Receiving Building into the school's Instructional Resource Center (IRC) and the Tapia Building into the Braille Production Department -- began during 2016.
- Like all schools, funding for expansion is a continuing challenge. NMSBVI continues to work with its Foundation Director and Board to develop funding sources to supplement state funding. Work during the past year centered on developing a strategic plan for the Foundation and for developing a Foundation Board.

Strategic Planning: 2017

Good strategic plans drive the decision-making process of an organization. At NMSBVI, a 5-year plan, developed in 2012, has been the impetus for the growth of the school. As the plan continues to unfold, several goals remain unfinished. The school continues to work on the development of a statewide database that will collect relevant data about all New Mexico students who are blind or visually impaired. Students can be registered with the American Printing House for the Blind and with the state's Instructional Resource Center; districts can manage caseloads and identify students at risk. The school's other database project, the Babies Count project, continues to grow; next steps include filing paperwork to make the project a 501c3 non-profit, to create training materials, and to establish a national advisory committee to guide the project forward.

The fledgling Innovations & Development Department continues to evolve as they develop processes for helping staff identify good ideas and bring dreams to fruition. NMSBVI's collaboration with other leaders in the field have resulted in projects that have become an ongoing part of the work of NMSBVI. The NIVI project (Neuroimaging and Visual Improvement) should see some medical and educational journal articles published during the upcoming year; and the school hopes to have its first certified transcriptionists from the Prison Braille Program and to help the prison establish a cottage industry for Braille production.

Above all, the school will continue to provide exemplary educational experiences for those children entrusted to our care.



Program Updates

NMSBVI NIVI Project

Melody Furze, Project Coordinator

What if there was a way to provide programming to our students with a Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) diagnosis and discover how and if it affects their brain development? The Neuroimaging and Visual Improvement (NIVI) Project happening at NMSBVI's ECP (Early Childhood Programs), in a joint partnership with the M.I.N.D. Research Network at the University of New Mexico, is using brain scan technology and educational programming to better serve a group of our students with CVI and visual processing difficulties.



Approximately 10 participants were chosen from three different classrooms at the ECP. Students were selected across a spectrum of abilities. Three classroom teachers (Aleesha Homza, Navi Madrugada and Maya Alarid-Pease) and other staff members worked together to understand the basic cognitive structure & function of the brain, neurological origins of visual impairment and corresponding successful strategies that can lead to academic and functional success in their students. Currently, the neurologists are reviewing and analyzing the last round of scans. The goal of this project is to gain a better understanding of the children's strengths as well as to identify effective teaching strategies that can change the learning scape for students who are blind/visually impaired.

New Mexico Family Infant Toddler Program (FIT) Video Pilot Project

Cindy Faris, Program Coordinator, NMSBVI Infant Toddler Program

The NMSBVI Infant Toddler (FIT) Program was chosen to participate in Phase I of a pilot program by the New Mexico Family Infant Toddler Program in 2015 to learn how to use video techniques in the field to capture home and community visits with Larry Edelman. (Larry Edelman, M.S., Senior Clinical Instructor, Department of Pediatrics, University of Colorado School of Medicine.) The FIT group also began to work on aspects of reflective coaching and video conferencing for staff and received technical support and coaching from Mr. Edelman. In January 2016, the NMSBVI FIT program was selected to participate in Phase II of the pilot to more fully develop using video with children and families for training, for reflective coaching and quality improvement; specifically in the area of working with infants, toddlers, and their families.



The objectives for this program included developing the quality of our infant and toddler program, developing reflective coaching for our staff, learning how to use video conferencing, and sharing our knowledge in the field of visual impairment. In Phase II of the pilot project, the FIT group also received



training in using Family Guided Routines from Juliann Woods of Florida State University. The group's developmental specialists found that Family Guided Routines supported their Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) concepts. The FIT group has been working further to integrate the ECC concepts into its work with infants and toddlers in New Mexico, and is developing video examples of these concepts in the routines and daily activities of families. The NMSBVI FIT group presented this information at the International AER conference (Association for Education & Rehabilitation of the Blind & Visually Impaired) in July 2016 to share the information with colleagues in the field of visual impairment. To the group's knowledge, NMSBVI is the only state school for the Blind & Visually Impaired to have been included in such a collaborative pilot project in the United States for infants and toddlers.

Birth-to-6 Orientation & Mobility Inventory

Julie Maner, COMS, Early Intervention

The early intervention Orientation & Mobility (O&M) team, along with other key staff at NMSBVI, has completed a years-long quest: an existing evaluation tool (using Excel spreadsheets) has been updated with a checklist and evaluation template. All are now posted on NMSBVI's website along with the O&M Inventory tool used for school age students (developed by Ron Later of NMSBVI). The B-6 O&M Inventory has six key domains using a numerical rating scale resulting in a numerical score for students. This is an objective measure that can be used for data-driven goal setting, lesson planning and documentation of progress in the area of O&M skills. The Inventory also fills the need for a comprehensive, practical and consistent tool to be used by staff statewide.



Work continues with Dr. Dawn Anderson of Western Michigan University, who will apply for a research grant to begin validity and reliability research on the B-6 O&M Inventory. Development of a valid and reliable tool can lead to future research on the progress and development of children who are blind or visually impaired; and can be used for needs assessments, determination of service delivery, and justification for O&M services. All of these components are needed in the field of Orientation & Mobility.

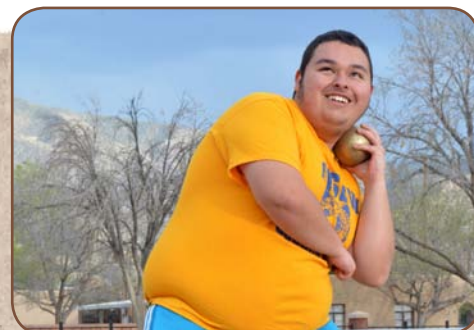
Babies Count: National Database Project

Linda Lyle, NMSBVI Superintendent

The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, representing the International Preschool Symposium, agreed to help the national field of blindness professionals create a second generation database whose data could be used to better understand the changing face of blindness in the twenty-first century. In March of 2016, the school piloted a web-based survey/database that can be easily accessed throughout the United States by developmental specialists, their agencies and any state enrolled in the process.



(continued...)



Over time, data from this work can be used to inform medical researchers and help provide data for grant applications in the medical field. Policy makers at the state and federal level can look at the demographics of young blind children & their families to better understand future funding and policy needs. University personnel preparation programs will have real-time data on the changing needs of young children who are blind or visually impaired and thus, can better prepare tomorrow's teachers for the children they will serve. To date, twelve states have enrolled in Babies Count. For more information go to www.babiescount.org

Traveling Summer Camps

Ron Later, Orientation & Mobility Specialist

When the Alamogordo campus was undergoing extensive construction, NMSBVI took summer camps on the road instead of just putting them on hold for a couple of summers. Because the school was able to reach students who had never had contact with NMSBVI and strengthen connections with teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs) in local districts, the camps-on-the-road have continued even though the Alamogordo campus is once again hosting on-site summer camps as well. In 2016 the host sites for camps were Clovis, Gallup, Santa Fe, Carlsbad and Rio Rancho. While the first three towns were familiar territory for the camps, Carlsbad and Rio Rancho hosted their first NMSBVI camps. Students in all of those camps worked on technology, math, science, independent living skills (ILS), and Orientation & Mobility (O&M). In addition, NMSBVI staff were able to accompany local TVIs to see students on their caseload for whom the district-held camps weren't necessarily appropriate. Those students, generally students with numerous additional disabilities, can be challenging for local TVIs; having someone with a wealth of experience in those specific areas accompany the local TVIs on a trip to work with their students was beneficial for instructors and students alike.



NMSU's VIP Program

Loana Mason, Ed.D., COMS, Visual Impairment Program (VIP) Director

In Summer 2015, New Mexico State University's Visual Impairment Program (NMSU VIP) admitted its largest cohort of students to date. While blindness and visual impairment is a low-incidence disability, the VIP comprises 1/3 of the total student enrollment in the NMSU Special Education Program. Thanks to the provision of mentors by NMSBVI Outreach Services, we were able to actively support 24 interns teaching in 10 different districts in New Mexico and one district in a neighboring state. During the past school year, one developmental vision specialist, four orientation and mobility specialists, and one teacher of students with visual impairments successfully completed their licensure programs. Approximately 59% of the blindness professionals currently serving children and youth with visual impairments (ages birth-21) in the state of New Mexico are NMSU VIP alumni.



In addition to training prospective Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TSVIs), Developmental Vision Specialists (DVSs), and Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialists (COMs), faculty in the NMSU-VIP have been busy providing service to the field at large. Both Mark Carter and Loana Mason are currently serving on the Executive Board of the AER Orientation and Mobility Division and the NM-AER Conference Planning Committee. Mark Carter also co-published an article on orientation and mobility for infants and toddlers in the Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness. Loana Mason co-presented on literacy for students with multiple impairments at the following conferences: Getting in Touch with Literacy, Council for Exceptional Children's Annual Convention and Expo, and the AER International Conference.

NASA's SOFIA Project

Jeff Killebrew, Science Instructor

New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired hosted a groundbreaking online learning event on March 23, 2016. Using the Adobe Connect web conferencing platform, students attending COSB (Council of Schools for the Blind) / POSB (Principals of Schools for the Blind) schools from around the country and Canada simultaneously joined together in a live, web-based instructional activity to learn about NASA's SOFIA program (Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy) with Jeff Killebrew – the nation's first TVI selected as a NASA SOFIA Airborne Astronomy Ambassador. The SOFIA webinar gave our students the opportunity to collectively learn more about infrared astronomy and how SOFIA studies the universe in infrared. Students interacted with and asked many excellent questions of Dr. Dana Backman, NASA astronomer and Director of SOFIA's Educational Outreach, and Andrew Helton, also a NASA astronomer.



In addition to learning about infrared astronomy and the workings of NASA's SOFIA aircraft, all of the students explored several tactile graphics that included the SOFIA aircraft and images of celestial objects illustrating discoveries made in infrared astronomy – even the black hole that is at the center of our Milky Way galaxy! Killebrew, along with NMSBVI Braille Transcriptionist Beverly Naylor, produced these tactile images using the Tiger embosser and provided them to participating students to explore during the event. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive with many students asking for more!

Prison Braille Program

Cheryl Petree, Director of NMSBVI's Instructional Resource Center and Braille Production

What is a Prison Braille Program? It is not teaching inmates with visual impairments! The purpose of the Prison Braille Program is to establish Braille transcription as a prison industry in New Mexico. NMSBVI started this journey two years ago with Lea County Correctional Facility (LCCF) in Hobbs, New Mexico. To date, there are approximately 35 Prison Braille programs across the United States. The primary goal of the program in New Mexico from the prison side is to educate, (continued...)



rehabilitate and prepare offenders for reentry by providing them opportunities to gain job skills and to discover their own talents and abilities. From the vision education field, the goal is to develop a highly qualified Braille transcription work force that will produce high quality Braille materials.

The inmates complete a rigorous Braille transcription course through the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), and upon completion, become certified literary transcriptionists. The prison plans to operate a full-fledged Braille production department that provides high quality literary and Nemeth Braille and tactile graphics to Braille readers.

At LCCF, the inmates' dedication, motivation, and perseverance is astounding. When the prison experienced personnel changes and Braille instruction was not available for several months, the inmates took it upon themselves to progress through the transcription lessons in the absence of a Braille instructor. Currently, the program consists of 14 inmates currently enrolled in the NFB program with 35 more on a waiting list. Their energetic drive to become transcriptionists will be of great benefit to students across New Mexico.

Conferences

Linda Lyle, NMSBVI Superintendent

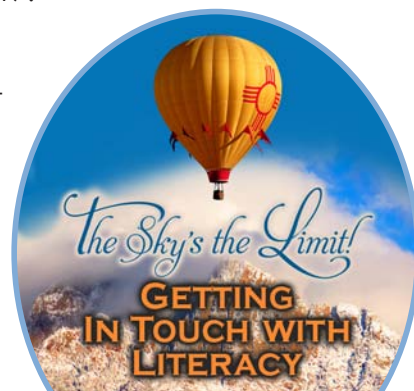
Western Regional Early Intervention Conference (WREIC):

For more than thirty years, NMSBVI has been a part of a seven-state group whose schools for the blind and schools for the deaf work together to provide staff development through hosting a conference: WREIC. Every other year, one of the seven states hosts this three-day conference which provides training for educators of the blind, the deaf and deaf/blind. Each school assumes fiscal responsibility for providing one speaker for the conference. In 2016, NMSBVI hosted the event; the New Mexico School for the Deaf acted as fiscal agent for the conference. States that participated in planning for this year's conference included Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Wyoming and New Mexico. The original conference was designed to support the service provider/educator who had been working in the field for a minimum of five years and who is no longer a novice in the field. Consequently, speakers are selected for the breadth of their knowledge and their ability to speak in depth within their subject area. This traveling conference will next be held in Arizona in June 2017.



Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference (GITWL):

GITWL is the only literacy conference specifically devoted to Braille literacy. It originated as the dream of Dr. Kay Holbrook of Canada and Janie Blome of APH to bring educators together to discuss strategies, technology and developments in the field pertaining to Braille education. NMSBVI hosted the literacy conference in November 2015 at the beautiful Tamaya Resort in Bernalillo, NM. Over four hundred professionals from around the world attended the conference in a setting that spoke of the varied cultures of the southwest. Conference speakers are selected



from the field and most are currently practicing. Here, at the literacy conference, attendees shared stories, learned about promising practices and networked with others from around the world who are engaged in the important work of teaching others to read. This conference will be held in school year 2017-18 in Louisiana.

Innovations & Development

Beth Lyle, Innovations and Development Specialist

The New Mexico School for the Blind & Visually Impaired introduced a new department this year: Innovations & Development. The Innovations & Development Department is a direct product of the 2012 strategic planning process with a focus on facilitating innovation in the school and the blind & visually impaired community. The department helps to champion innovative ideas through connecting partners and resources; and supporting the development of new tools and practices. While still in its infancy, the Innovations & Development Department is starting to gain traction as a resource for staff when developing ideas. We are excited about all of the projects to come!



NMSBVI is a Proud Recipient!

ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL



*"Top Workplaces 2015",
a special insert of the
Albuquerque Journal,
May 17, 2015.*

#1 Midsize Company in the State of New Mexico!

What NMSBVI employees say... "I get to **help students** learn & gain confidence."

"I am vested in the mission of the school. It is **very rewarding** to work at NMSBVI."

"I feel that I **make a difference** in the children's lives."

"I get to see the children that I work with **grow & learn** each day.
And they also teach me."

"The kids are amazing."



Demographics (FY16)

Birth-to-3 (also called Family, Infant, Toddler Program or FIT):

- 1,267 children have been screened
- 1,088 children have received direct services
- 500 infants/toddlers enrolled in program

Early Childhood Program (ECP/Albuquerque campus):

- 60 children were enrolled during the school year
- School districts included: Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Mountainaire, and Grants
- About 15 preschool children also receive services from NMSBVI using an itinerant model

Residential Campus (Alamogordo campus):

- On May 18, there were 36 students on the campus
- 13 additional students received itinerant services
- This number does not include the students who attended for part of the year or who participated in a short-term stay

Outreach Department:

- Statewide services
- 33 districts have MOUs with the school to provide some type of services for their students
- Provide mentorship support, assessment, planning, etc.
- Beginning in FY17, NMSBVI will provide some limited direct VI service as a fee for service

Vision Impairment Program (NMSU VIP):

- 32 graduate students enrolled in programs to become Teachers of the Visually Impaired or Orientation and Mobility Instructors
- NMSBVI pays salaries for two professors
- NMSBVI offers scholarships to any NM teacher who wants this licensure and who will work in New Mexico for three years

Instructional Resource Center (IRC):

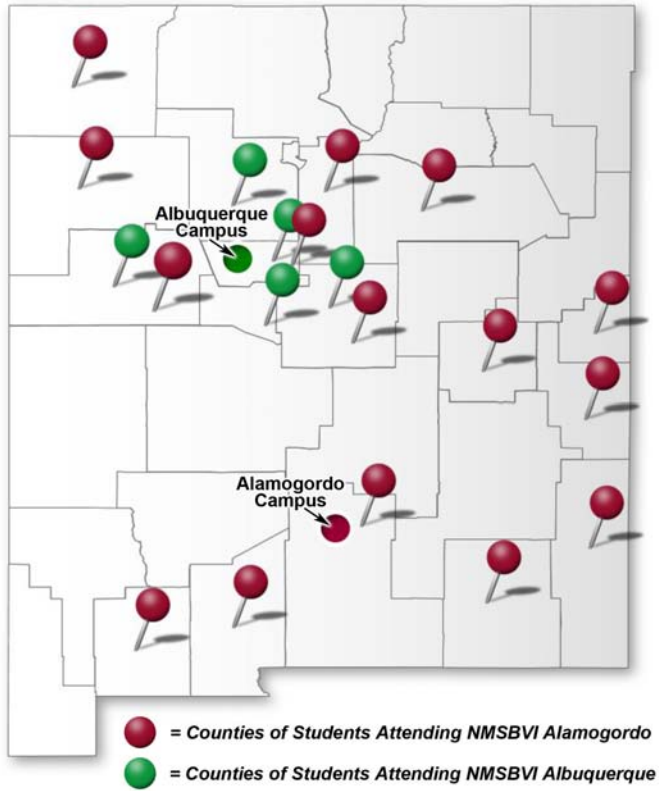
- Provides adapted materials to any student in NM who is registered with the IRC
- 3,490 items/kits were checked out during FY16
- Braille Production: produces Braille books and End of Course Exams for NM students

Low Vision Clinic:

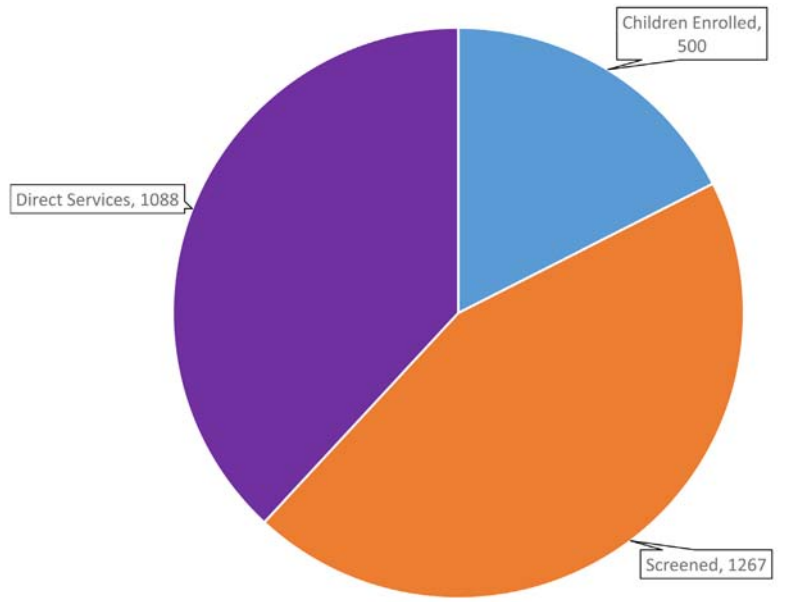
- Partnership between NMSBVI and medical profession
- Rural clinic
- Seven clinics held each year
- 88 students seen at clinic in FY16



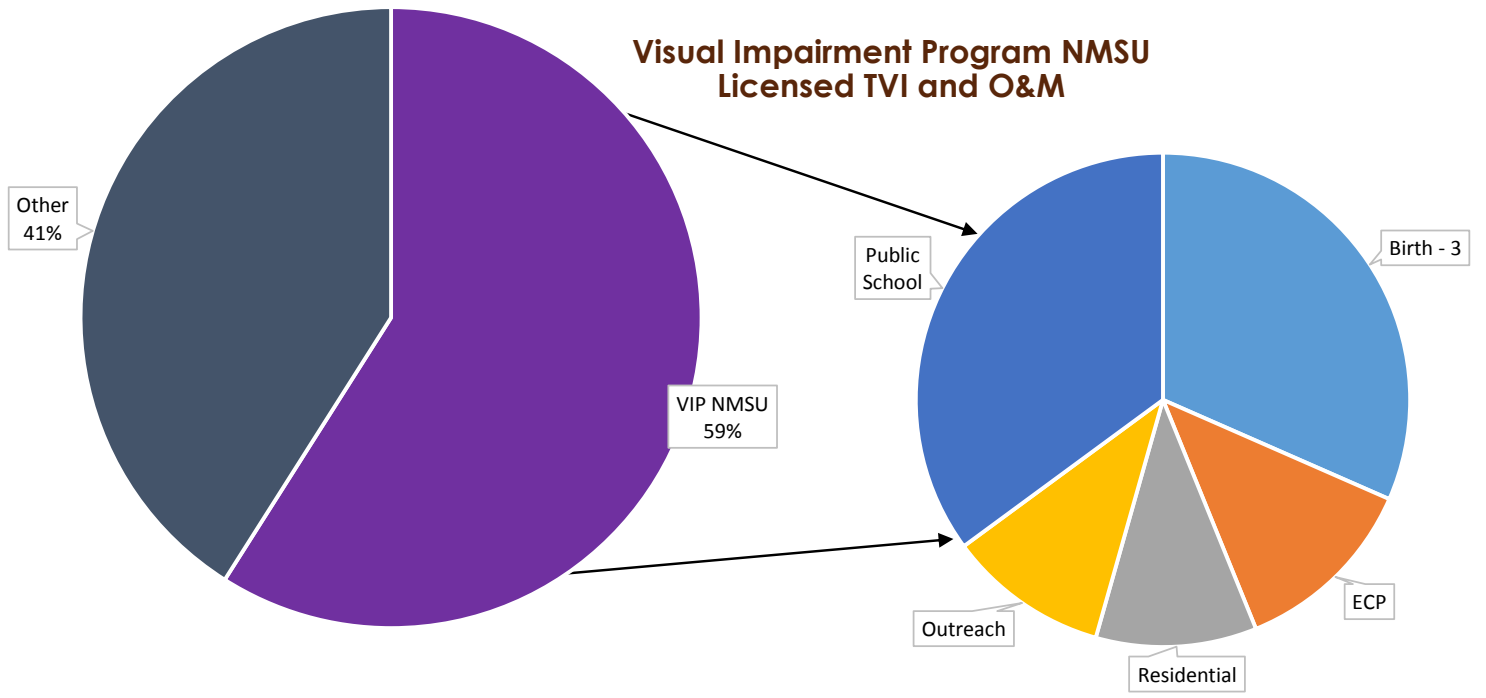
NMSBVI - ECP and Residential Campus / FY 16



**Birth - 3 Program
FY 16**

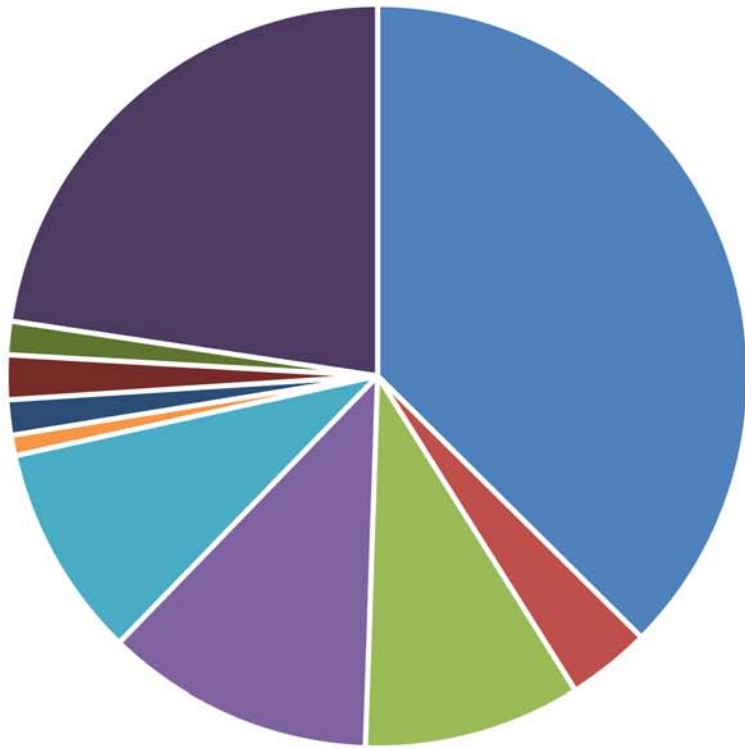


**Visual Impairment Program NMSU
Licensed TVI and O&M**



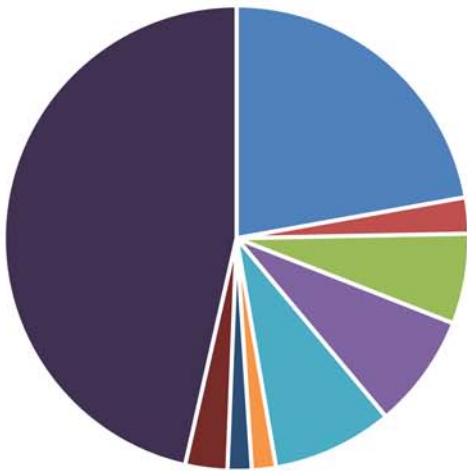
Vision Diagnosis ~ July 2016

Statewide

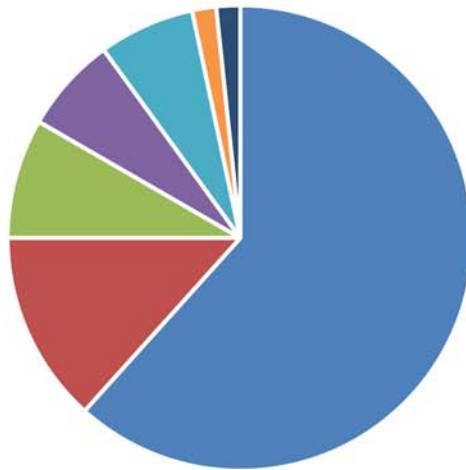


- Neurological Vision Impairment
- VI due to Non-Accidental Head Trauma
- Optic Nerve Hypoplasia
- Retinal Defect
- Anterior Defect
- Ocular Motor
- Enucleation, Anophthalmia, Microphthalmia
- Nystagmus
- Unknown
- At Risk

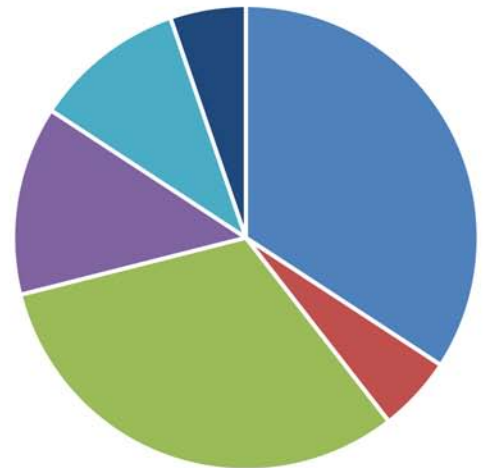
BIRTH-3



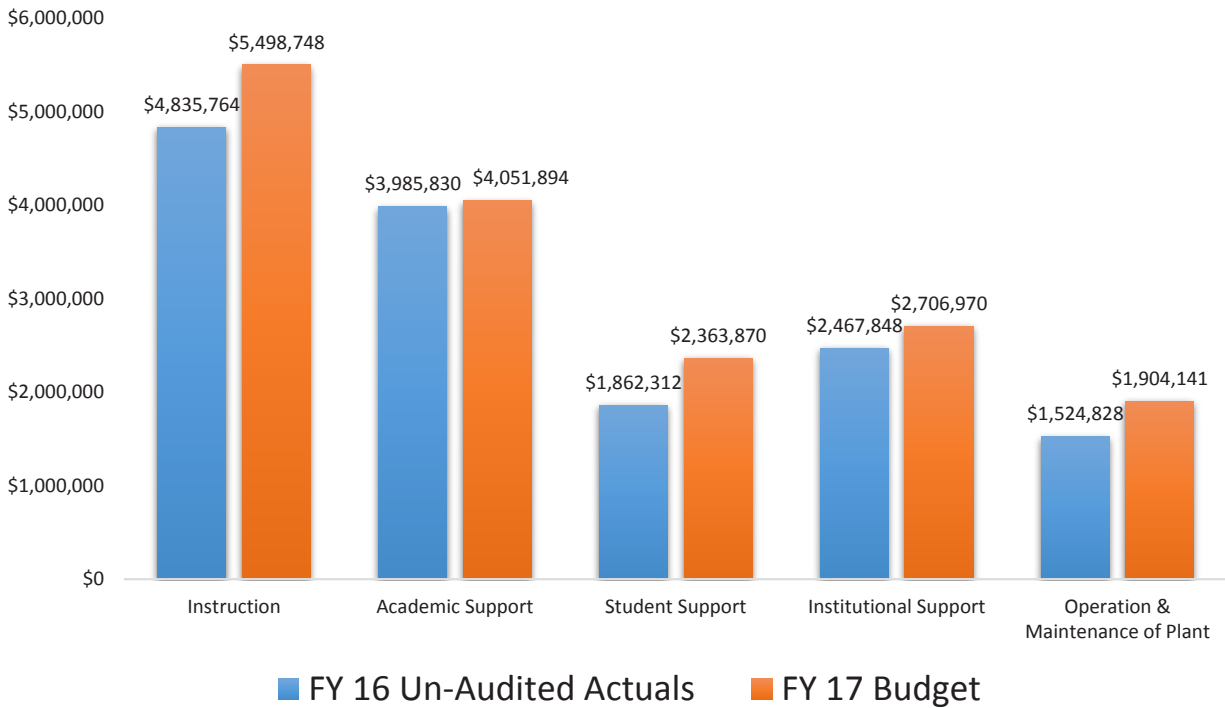
ECP



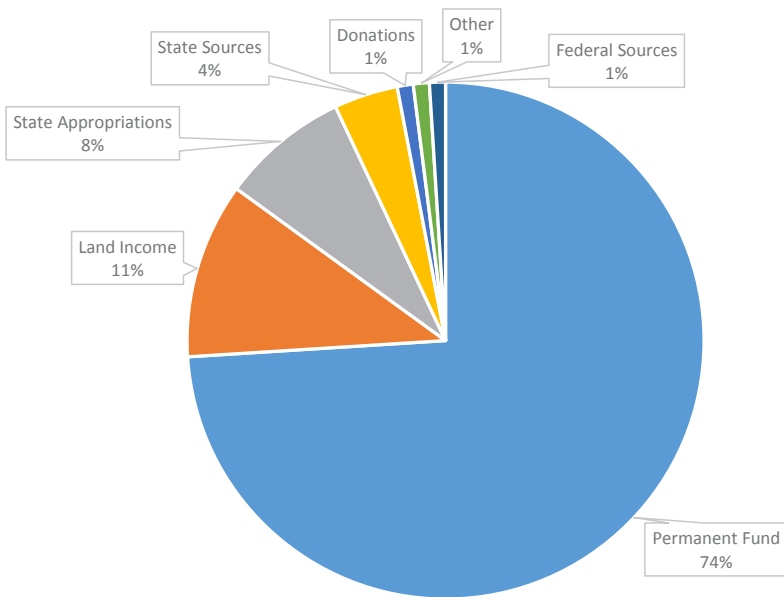
RESIDENTIAL



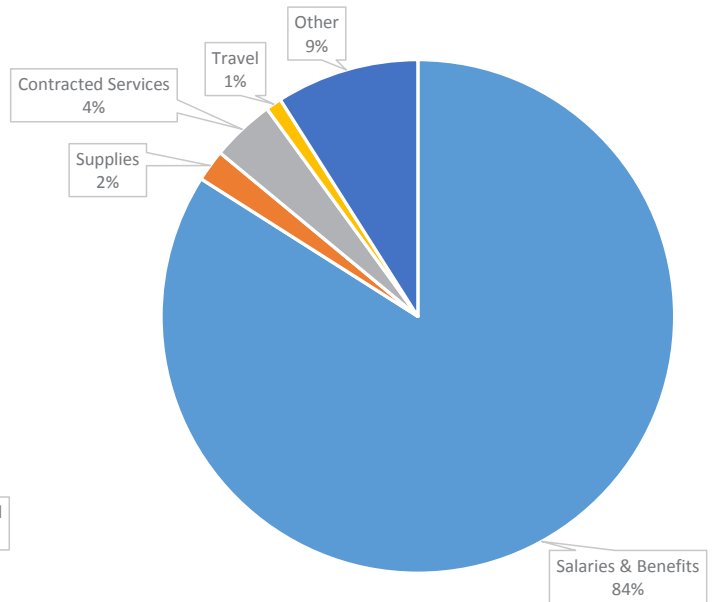
FY 16 Un-Audited Actuals & FY 17 Budget



Cumulative Revenue by Source - FY 16



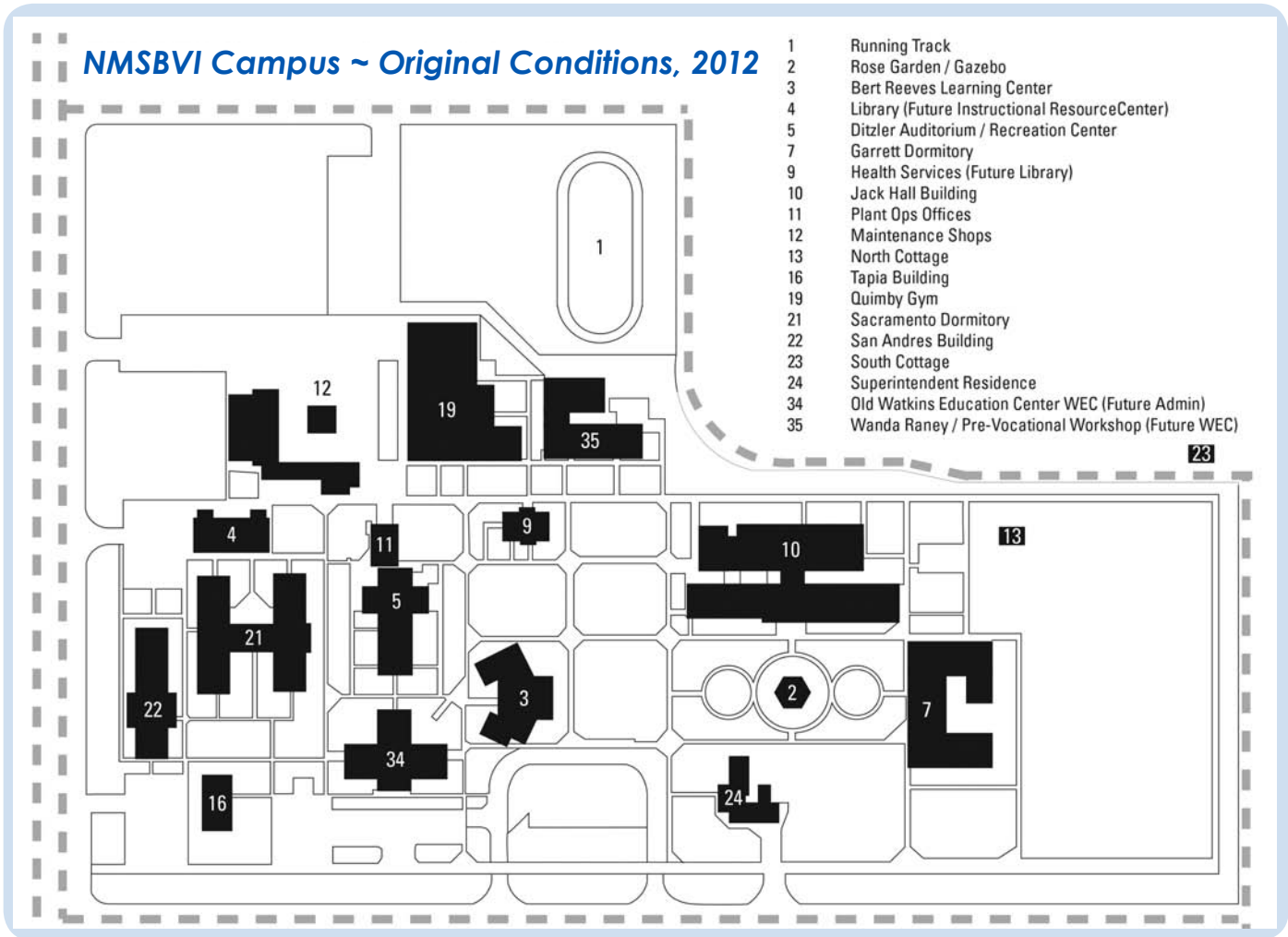
Cumulative Expenses by Object - FY 16



Construction Projects

Linda Lyle, NMSBVI Superintendent

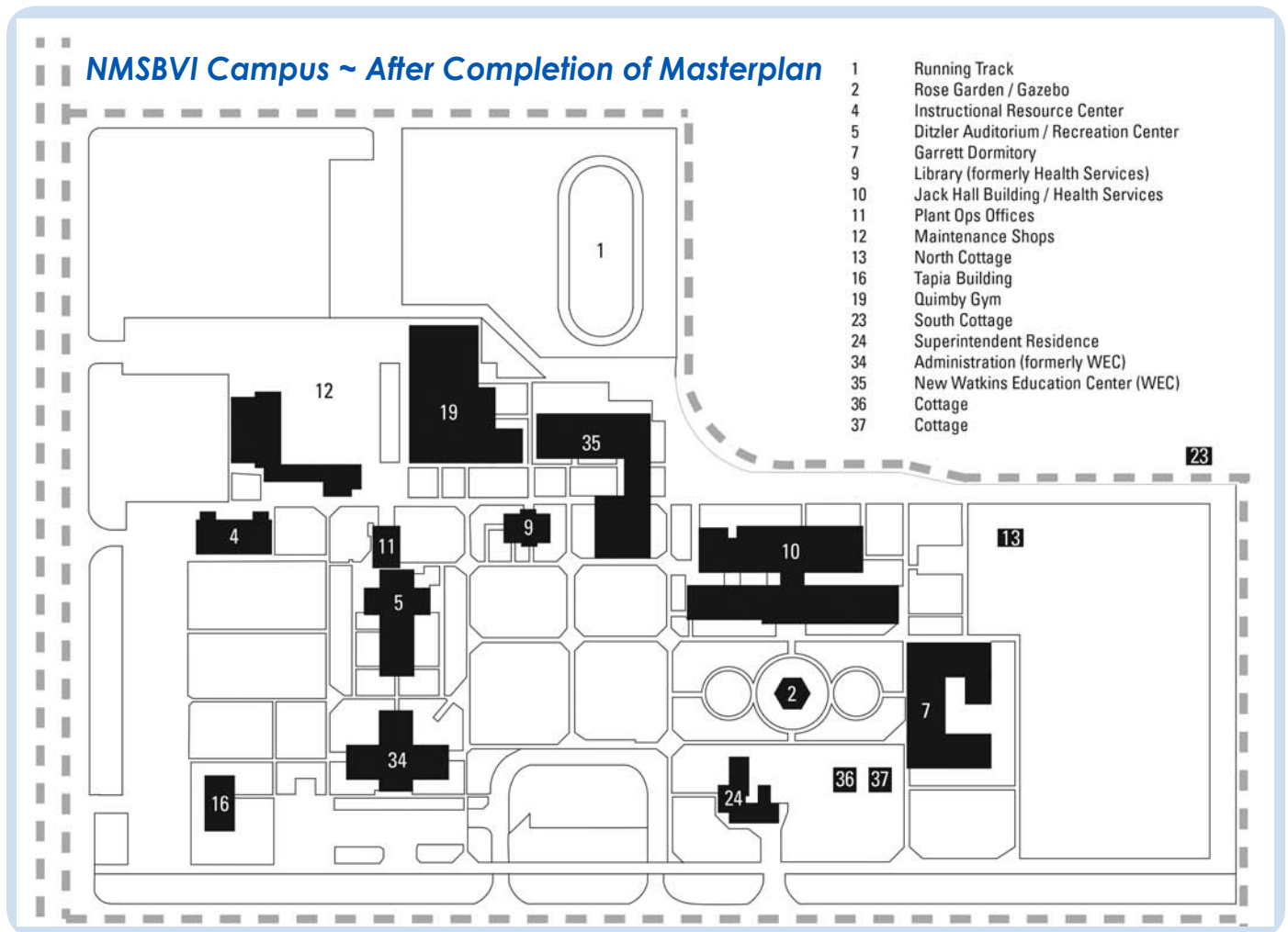
2016 found NMSBVI surrounded with yellow caution tape as renovations on the residential campus continued throughout the year. Most work was centered on the Jack Hall Building and the original Health Services Building. In an effort to reduce the footprint of the school as well as to reorganize the campus so that student services were located together and district administrative functions were centralized, buildings are being repurposed. A section of the Jack Hall building was transformed into a permanent site for the Health Services Department. Its location makes it easily accessible from both the dorms and from the education buildings. This streamlined space was specially designed for nursing services and includes a medication room, treatment rooms, office space and Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) educational space. The nursing staff help each student understand their unique medical conditions and provide training to help them become increasingly independent in their medical care. Under the watchful eyes of the nursing staff, students learn to take their own medications, make medical appointments, keep track of their medical needs and learn to self-advocate with the medical profession.



At the same time that the nursing staff eagerly waited for their new space, their old home was being transformed into the school's Library. This historical building was gutted, then fitted with new energy efficient windows, ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) restrooms and space for many, many books as well as the school's collection of touchable stuffed safari animals. Located immediately to the north of the Watkins Education Center (WEC), the new Library will be easily accessible, and its beauty will make perusing the stacks a delight. Project completion is expected in the very near future. NMSBVI is grateful for the capital funding that has permitted the school to renovate aging buildings and to continue to create the beautiful learning environments for which it is known.

Our next projects have already begun, and work will continue through 2017:

- Renovation of the old Watkins Education Center (WEC) building, which will become Administration
- Renovations of the Ditzler Auditorium and the Recreation Center
- Renovation of the Central Receiving Building (presently the school library) which will become the Instructional Resource Center
- Demolition of the San Andres Building and the Bert Reeves Building



The Foundation (NMSBVIF)

The purpose of the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Foundation (NMSBVIF) is a simple one: provide support to the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMS-BVI) to better help New Mexico's children who are blind and visually impaired with the best possible tools to succeed. There is no one method of supporting NMSBVIF; options include individual contributions, corporate giving, and planned giving / honorariums. For more information, please call NMSBVI Foundation Director Herb Wright at (505)271-3064 (Albuquerque) or (575)439-4449 (Alamogordo); or, you can email him at herbwright@nmsbvi.k12.nm.us

NMSBVI Foundation Board of Directors

(as of June 2016)

- Stuart Butzier
- Michelle Croasdell
- Remick Ham
- Richard Koehler
- Linda Lyle
- Alicia McAninch
- Carol Stephens
- Phil Stevens
- Agnes Vallejos
- Brenda Yousif

Foundation Goals for 2015-2016:

- Goal 1 ~ Increase Board recruitment and development
- Goal 2 ~ Position NMSBVIF to provide relevant long-term support to NMSBVI
- Goal 3 ~ Position NMSBVIF to provide relevant annual support
- Goal 4 ~ Increase public awareness of the School and its Foundation

Foundation Goals for 2016-2017:

This year, NMSBVIF is planning to launch a \$70,000 comprehensive fundraising campaign to benefit the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, providing for both current/annual needs and future needs as well.

Foundation Hosts First-Annual Glowball Event

Herb Wright, NMSBVI Foundation Director

The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Foundation held its first-ever fundraising event on April 2nd, 2016. Co-chaired by Foundation Directors Richard Koehler and Remick Ham, the nighttime golf tournament (Glowball) took place at the Desert Lakes Golf Course in Alamogordo. The event began with a 4pm shotgun start on the back nine holes. When finished, golfers gathered at the Clubhouse for dinner, a silent auction, and a putting contest. Once the sun set, they played the front nine holes in the dark – hence the need for the Glowball.

It's been nearly 20 years since a Glowball event was last played in Alamogordo and community interest was high; 36 people signed up and player fees were kept low to encourage people to come out and play. In addition, new technology made the golf balls more visible in the dark and added to the fun. The tees and holes were lit with glow sticks, and players accessorized their golfing attire with glow sticks, glow necklaces/bracelets, glow shoe laces, headlamps, and other decorations to make their presence known on the course. This first fundraising event was a success! The event netted over \$5,000, and proceeds were earmarked for the new playground on the NMSBVI Alamogordo Campus. Plans are underway to host a similar fundraising event this autumn in Albuquerque.



Saying Goodbye

Graduating Seniors, Class of 2016

- Aaron Delton Kysar
- Sabrina Jean Madrid
- Lavon Heath Smith

Class Colors: Red & Black

Class Flower: Red Rose

Class Song: "You're Gonna Miss This"
by Trace Atkins

Class Motto: Great people are forged
in fire. It is the job of great
people to light that fire.



ECP Program Graduates

(Early Childhood Program / Albuquerque)

- Bryon Archibeque
- Chrystal Ball
- Valeria Ceballos
- Solana de la Cruz
- Makayla Dooley
- Mia Dutton
- Josiah Garcia-Allende
- Elijah George
- Brandon Greer
- Ean Hosteen
- Lillian "Lilly" Mangan
- Marcelino Martinez
- Ariana Meza
- Jarely Nuñez-Barraza
- Isabella O'Connor
- Joaquin Otero
- Mason Sunderland
- Aubree Terchila
- Mattea Woodard



NMSBVI Retirees

Joanne Habelt

Developmental Vision Specialist

Hired 8/20/2001 to 6/30/2016

Barbara Snow-Titus

Physical Therapist, ECP

Hired 8/12/2013 to 5/20/2016

Will Soistman

Information Systems Manager

Hired 10/18/1999 to 9/30/2015

Valerie Tiensvold

Outreach Coordinator

Hired 8/6/2001 to 6/30/2016

Vera Woolf

PBX Secretary

Hired 8/7/1995 - 11/30/2015



To request a copy of this publication in Braille,
please contact Sharon Hilton,
NMSBVI Braille Production Department:
email SHilton@nmsbvi.k12.nm.us



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AUTUMN 2016