

**PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS SOCIETY OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON INC**  
**APPLICATION SUMMARY**

***Charles and Mary Latham Fund Board Meeting***

<b>Request Date:</b>	October 13, 2023
<b>Project Title:</b>	Free Eyeglasses for People Experiencing Homelessness
<b>Request Amount:</b>	\$7,000.00
<b>Program Area:</b>	Health and Human Services

<b>Organization Information</b>	<b>Contact Person for Application</b>
Prevention Of Blindness Society Of Metropolitan Washington Inc 415 2nd Street NE, Suite 200 Washington, DC 20002  Tel: (202) 234-1010 Fax: (202) 234-1020	MS. Dee Komo Komo  Development and Marketing Associate (202) 234-1010 grants@youreyes.org

**Organization's annual operating budget:** \$1,951,840.00

Tax Status Notes  
n/a

**Background**

Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington (POB) is a nonprofit dedicated to improving and preserving sight and quality of life by providing services and education and championing healthy vision and innovation to everyone in DC, Northern Virginia, and Maryland's Montgomery and Prince George's Counties.

We began in 1936 as a 7- point community vision health plan. May Vories, a dedicated advocate for people with vision challenges, collaborated with William H. Wilmer, the founding director of the nation's first university eye hospital, the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins Medicine, to launch the program. Over 85 years, POB has become a leading partner in eye education and support in the DC region.

We reach 13,000 people annually. Our goal is to prevent the needless loss of sight and preserve and maximize remaining sight for people with impairments. Current initiatives include:

- Bright Eyes Program screens preschoolers for blinding eye conditions at no cost and helps families needing further care to navigate a complex medical system.
- Glasses4Scholars Program offers vision screening and, as needed, eye exams and eyeglasses to grade-school children in under-served communities at no cost.

- Affordable Adult Eyeglasses Program is an immediate intervention offering disadvantaged adults affordable eyeglasses, including frames.
- The Glaucoma Program offers free screening and linkages to treatment for people disproportionately affected by this blinding condition.
- Our Low Vision Support Program provides vision rehabilitation, free resource navigation, assistive technology training, and access to an extensive group of supportive peers for people with chronic vision loss.

### **Project/Program Budget (if applicable):**

#### **Project/Program Title:** Free Eyeglasses for People Experiencing Homelessness

##### Statement of Need

According to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, there are approximately 7,605 unsheltered individuals across the DC metro area. Further, a 2010 American Journal of Public Health study found that 41% of people experiencing homelessness have a vision impairment, and 56% have an unmet need for eyeglasses. This means that 3,126 of our unsheltered neighbors have vision challenges, and more than 4,200 do not have the eyeglasses they need.

Loss of sight endangers lives by increasing comorbidities, threatening personal safety, and decreasing overall life satisfaction. Additionally, vision loss jeopardizes personal potential and reduces opportunities to reach and sustain self-reliance.

Even when care is available, people experiencing homelessness face significant barriers to meaningful eye care, including prohibitive treatment costs, limited transportation options, lack of identification, unpredictable living situations, and lack of health insurance.

Through the Free Eyeglasses for People Experiencing Homelessness Program, POB and So Others Might Eat (SOME), a nonprofit that helps unsheltered people around the DC region - will partner to ensure that unsheltered individuals receive prescription and reading eyeglasses. Our goal is to equip unsheltered people with the tool of corrected vision so that they can persist on the path to economic self-sufficiency.

The program meets an urgent need in our community. During the past program year, we exceeded our program participation target by 337%. Further, reports indicate that failure to receive timely services results in more severe and persistent conditions, which require more extensive and expensive interventions later – ultimately imposing greater direct and indirect costs on individuals.

##### Detailed Project/Program Description

Free Eyeglasses for People Experiencing Homelessness Program is a formal collaboration between POB and SOME that started in 2019. Our goal is to equip people with corrected vision as an extra tool on their journey to self-reliance. Together, we have served close to 300 people.

Through the initiative, SOME provides eye exams and diagnoses, while POB meets the need for eyeglasses. POB holds an eyeglasses clinic at SOME premises every Wednesday. Our optician meets clients, discusses their prescription eye care needs, and helps them select suitable frames. The optician then measures and fits eyeglasses, works

with vendors to process orders and distributes filled prescriptions. The optician also remains on hand to adjust frames and help with minor repairs.

POB carefully customizes eyeglasses to ensure they cater to individual needs, preferences, and vision prescriptions. Furthermore, we are dedicated to providing efficient and timely service, guaranteeing that clients receive their filled eyeglass prescriptions within three weeks.

The clinic will benefit approximately 150 people facing homelessness in DC. By providing free, full-cycle services from screening to eyeglasses acquisition in a central location for a harder-to-reach population, the program knocks down barriers to care among individuals who would otherwise have to delay or forgo care as they prioritize meeting other more urgent needs such as food and shelter. Beyond the gift of proper sight, improved vision is critical in unlocking new opportunities, fostering economic self-sufficiency, and promoting a brighter future for the people we serve.

#### Evaluation and Sustainability

POB collects qualitative and quantitative data using sign-up and sign-in sheets, phone records, and feedback surveys. POB and SOME also have frequent conversations to identify areas of improvement to ensure our clients receive a lasting impact. Further, we utilize client interactions and informal discussions with program participants to streamline and improve program delivery. Data tracked includes:

- a) Program reach – POB maintains a monthly record of the number of program participants receiving services. We anticipate serving 150 SOME clients during the funding period.
- b) Services provided – POB monitors the types of glasses most requested to help us plan for future needs. We use intake forms and follow-up services to track clients receiving prescriptions and reading eyeglasses. All data is saved to an encrypted client database management system.
- d) Client satisfaction via feedback surveys – POB encourages all program participants to provide feedback through informal conversations to improve service delivery.

POB and SOME rely on philanthropic support from public and private sources. Both organizations remain committed to meeting the eye healthcare needs of people experiencing homelessness through the Free Eyeglasses for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness Program.

#### Funding Sources

Mary and Daniel Loughran Foundation - \$2,000

Dimick Foundation - \$2,000

#### **Recommendation/Notes**

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**Prevention of Blindness Society**  
of Metropolitan Washington®

**Eyeglasses for People Experiencing Homelessness FY24 Operating Budget**

<b>Expense Category</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Salaries, wages, benefits, and payroll taxes (Optician and Program Director)	\$12,400
Eyeglasses (Lenses and Frames)	\$37,500
Eyeglass Cases and Lens Cloths	\$450
Staff Transportation	\$250
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$50,600</b>

# Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington

## FY'24 Operating Budget

<b>REVENUE</b>	
Contributions	\$87,000
Grants from Foundations	\$334,000
Special Events	\$37,600
Glasses	\$42,000
Children's Program	\$15,000
Trust Income	\$50,000
Misc Income	\$7,000
Rent - Tenants 415 2nd Street	\$209,467
Shops	\$70,710
Dividends - Endowment	\$375,000
Endowment Drawdown (minus dividends)	\$724,063
<b>Total Support / Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,951,840</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Salaries	\$1,125,526
Employee Benefits	\$174,211
Payroll Taxes	\$91,042
<b>Employee Sub-total</b>	<b>\$1,390,779</b>
Consulting ( Audit, Payroll, Other)	\$60,725
Supplies	\$8,200
Telephone / Internet	\$12,000
Postage / Shipping	\$4,425
Occupancy / Property Maintenance	\$161,931
Equipment Rental/Maintenance	\$3,870
Printing	\$17,750
Travel	\$12,275
Conferences/ Training/Seminars/Meetings	\$19,450
Glasses	\$48,000
Insurance	\$32,870
Website Development	\$2,800
Subscriptions/Memberships	\$6,135
Bank / Credit Card Fees	\$2,080
Professional Services	\$20,600
Awards & Grants	\$134,000
Purchase of Equipment	\$13,950
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,951,840</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS SOCIETY OF METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES: JULY 1, 2023 – JUNE 30, 2024 (FISCAL YEAR 2024)**

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**OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

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Jennifer Valentine, FACHE  
Executive Director, Financial Planning & Performance, Kaiser Permanente  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

**President**

Christine Rocchio, RN, FNP  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

**First Vice President**

Jane Settle Stanley  
Attorney (Retired), U.S. Dept. of Agriculture  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

**Second Vice President**

Melissa Loughlin, Ph.D.  
Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

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Mindi Sauter  
Legal Advisor, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

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Vanessa Tyson  
Associate Vice President of Human Resources, Partnership, Strategy, and Operations EarthJustice  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

**Member-At-Large**

Jennie Kronthal  
Independent Law Practice Professional  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

**Past-President**

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**TRUSTEES:**

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Jeffrey Y.H. Chung, M.D.  
Ophthalmologist, The Offices of Jeffrey Y.H.  
Chung, M.D.  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Rachel Foster, FACHE  
President, Fostering Innovation LLC  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Reena Garg, M.D.  
Ophthalmologist, Visionary Eye Doctors  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Alice Wendy Gasch, M.D.  
Ophthalmologist and Director, Uveitis Clinic,  
MedStar Washington Hospital Center  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Nina Glasner, LCSW-C  
Low Vision Therapist  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

John Guzik  
Partner, The Franklin Partnership LLP  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Maxwell Helfgott, M.D.  
Ophthalmologist, Eye Physicians of Washington  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Mohamad S. Jaafar, M.D.  
Chief Emeritus of Ophthalmology, Children's  
National Hospital  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Leslie S. Jones, M.D.  
Associate Professor and Chair, Department of  
Ophthalmology, Howard University Hospital  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

James Jorkasky  
Executive Director (Retired), National Alliance of  
Eye and Vision Research  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Luke Joyce  
Vice President (Commercial Division), McWilliams |  
Ballard  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Jay M. Lustbader, M.D.  
Chairperson, Department of Ophthalmology,  
MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and  
MedStar Washington Hospital Center  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Maria Maestros  
Owner, Moda Optic  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Donna Oser  
Ophthalmology Medical Practice Manager  
(Retired)  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Sally A. Pilkerton  
Registered Nurse (Retired)  
415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006



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Dorothy Weinstein

Adjunct Faculty in Health Policy and Writing in  
the Health Sciences, George Washington  
University School of Medicine and Health  
Sciences

415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

L. Scott Wertlieb

Director of Business Development, Vista  
Management

415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Marcia Williamson

Accounting Manager, Katten Muchin Rosenman  
LLP

415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006

Edward (Woody) Woodard

President, Virginia Lions Eye Institute  
Foundation

415 2<sup>nd</sup> st NE Suite 200  
Washington DC 20006