a new thread of endeavor
Pick up a new thread of endeavor…make your renewal of effort count for other people. I’ve found that’s the best way to take blindness… because, when you think of the other fellow only and not yourself, your own problem fades into insignificance;

*in unselfishness lies the real thrill of being alive.*

William A. Hadley
1920
Dear Donors and Friends of Hadley:

Each day we gain deeper insight into what a truly remarkable place Hadley is. And, with time, our appreciation grows for Hadley donors, students, volunteers and staff who each add value to William Hadley’s 1920 creation of a “new endeavor.”

Often we are amazed at how much good gets done worldwide by such a small school. We often ask: How could so few do so much, for so many, so efficiently, yet so well? *The answer is quite simple – the people!*

- Our founder, William Hadley, whose 84-year-old endeavor was ahead of its time, provided accessible distance learning not restrained by geographical boundaries.
- Our benefactors generously invest in our students’ futures – with substantial results.
- Our Board leaders ensure fiscal stewardship, accountability and long-term sustainability and, most importantly, lead with their hearts.
- Our volunteers expand our resources through their dedicated efforts – Hadley’s Woman’s Board with significant contributions through both their annual benefit and holiday card sale, and Friends of Hadley who have, over the years, provided valuable student assistance.
- Our staff – only 53 full-time and 29 part-time people – cares deeply, profoundly impacting the lives of our students.
- Our students – 10,000 students from 50 states and more than 90 countries, including 1,000 served by Hadley-China – enrich us by providing the motivation, giving us the privilege and opportunity to be of assistance by inviting us into their lives. As one Hadley student stated emphatically: “Thanks, Hadley – you changed my life!”
These people, Hadley’s most valued asset and critical resource, are responsible for many new substantial opportunities over the past year. It is, therefore, with pride that we highlight this progress and share plans for the future as we update you on the returns on your investment, an investment that will continue to expand William Hadley’s vision.

Hadley is embarking on an exciting new initiative – e-Hadley. In 1920, William Hadley spoke of “a new thread of endeavor” when he looked for a way to reach out to people who were struggling, as he was, with vision loss. In 2004, e-Hadley is our “new thread of endeavor,” using the Internet to expand delivery of our courses. As blind and low vision individuals have clearly demonstrated their proficiency with technology, we have the challenge to address this welcomed demand. As we move forward in reaching out to our students through e-Hadley, we hope you will join us in embracing this new endeavor. We are confident e-Hadley will greatly enhance the lives of our students, while reducing costs because of the inherent efficiencies in online learning.

Clearly focused on our mission – to promote independent living through lifelong distance education programs for blind people, their families and blindness service providers – and guided by our Strategic Plan, we are making progress.

MORE STUDENTS

We continue to see the positive results of our efforts to reach out to more of those in need. Excluding those served by Hadley-China, we have seen a 25 percent increase in students since the 2001 Strategic Plan baseline year – from 7,348 in 2001 to 9,189 at the end of fiscal 2004. The partnerships we have initiated during the past three years have played a key role in our ability to serve more students. These alliances provide Hadley with a very cost-effective way to increase awareness of our programs by benefiting from well-established service networks. Specifically:

• Lions Clubs International provides Hadley with increased local exposure through the worldwide network of local Lions Clubs. Past international director, Wayne Madden, was appointed by the Lions Clubs International president to serve on our Board. In addition, we implemented the “In Touch” program, which recognizes individual Lions Club members who refer blind people in their communities to Hadley.

• The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) has helped Hadley increase the number of Canadian students by 29 percent during the past year. James Sanders, CNIB president, honored seven CNIB staff members by appointing them Hadley Ambassadors to encourage student enrollments throughout Canada.

• The International Council for Educators of People with Visual Impairments and Hadley have developed a new program – GLOBE-All – that is designed to provide training for blindness educators worldwide.

• The National Library of Congress and the American Printing House for the Blind, both organizations that provide significant services to blind and low vision individuals, have been including information about Hadley in their national publications.
BETTER SERVED

We are continually looking to improve our curriculum. The content and quality of our teacher-guided courses are critical.

Twenty-four new or revised courses have been activated since the start of fiscal 2004. In addition, we have 23 courses planned for development, including “Internet: Advanced Topics,” “Diabetes: Toward Self-Management,” “Business Writing” and “Parenting a Child with Visual Impairment and Multiple Handicaps.”

EXPANDED WAYS

e-Hadley is an ambitious new initiative. We are excited about transforming nearly one-third of Hadley courses for online learning. As you read more about e-Hadley and, in particular, meet some Hadley students who are anxious to become e-learners, we hope we will gain your support, which will be critical to e-Hadley’s success.

MORE EFFICIENTLY

Responsible stewardship is a top priority and we are consistently looking for ways to reduce costs without negatively impacting growth. Our staff, guided by our Board, has done just that.

Specifically:

• Hadley continues to show a reduction in the operating cost per student. The cost per student for 2004 was $613, a decrease of 18 percent from 2001 when the cost per student was $745.

• During the 2004 fiscal year, we implemented a streamlining of our course development process, reducing by 25 percent the staff time required for a course to go from inception to activation.

• Again in 2004, Hadley was under budget by $500,000 despite significant growth in the number of students served. Expenditures have increased only 3 percent since 2001. Our staff remains committed to doing more and we continue to find ways to operate more efficiently. As e-Hadley develops and we use the Internet to deliver our courses, we will achieve greater cost savings by reducing the need to produce and mail courses to each of our students.

* In addition, there were nearly 1,000 students served by Hadley’s satellite school in China in 2004.
As we continue to make significant progress toward our strategic objectives, motivated by the success of our students and the thousands whose needs remain unmet, we realize there is so much more to do.

We and our students are ever thankful for the support of our donors. Overall contributions increased 14 percent in 2004 as we raised a total of $1.6 million. Our ambitious goal for next year is $2.1 million.

In fiscal 2004, for the first time, we encouraged Hadley students to consider a gift to the school. We are thrilled with the response and are grateful to our new student donors. As of this writing, 477 students have made a gift in support of Hadley programs. With an average gift of $32, these students have given a total of $15,476 but these numbers will increase as gifts continue to arrive.

As we look back on the past year, we are pleased with the progress that has been made on all fronts. We foresee a new Hadley – one that, through the Internet, reaches out to more students, more efficiently.

With your support, e-Hadley will better meet the needs of the thousands of blind and visually impaired people around the world who have both the ability and the capacity to benefit from advanced technology.

Hadley has established a proud tradition, one that we cherish and will further nurture as we expand our new endeavors. It is our hope that we will have your support as we face the challenge of meeting the needs of the next generation of Hadley students.

Thank you sincerely,

Michael J. Bina, Ed.D.
President

Jeanne M. Denison
Chairman, Board of Trustees
Millions of people use the Internet every day.

At Hadley, we see clear signs that our students, and the larger population of visually impaired people worldwide, are discovering the benefits of this powerful and valuable tool. Our students are ready, willing and able to use technology.
Introducing e-Hadley

e-Hadley is an ambitious three-year initiative that will move Hadley into an e-learning environment. The plan for e-Hadley describes our strategy to provide students with online courses that are accessible. Hadley first became involved in online learning in 2002. We are ready to move to the next level of Internet-based education that is innovative, interactive and accessible.
Today, Hadley’s curriculum includes more than 90 courses. The school continues to serve blind adults, but its audience also includes sighted people who have a visually impaired family member and people who work with visually impaired individuals. Most Hadley courses are available in braille, large print and audio. In this digital age, we have introduced a few courses online and have several more that can be downloaded directly by the student.

Hadley’s Strategic Plan, initiated in 2001, focuses on the key goals of better serving more students in expanded ways with increased efficiency. The first three years of the plan showed success in each of these categories as we expanded our enrollment, demonstrated prudent cost cutting strategies, added to our course offerings with improved curriculum and introduced online access.

From the first Hadley student in 1920 until today, the Hadley School has had the singular purpose of promoting independence for people who are visually impaired. The school began with one course that taught “braille by mail.” Hadley has evolved and broadened its scope over the past 84 years, adding courses, improving access to our courses by including different media and meeting the needs of a variety of audiences.

Hadley students (from left to right): Christie Gilson, Matt Spero and Arthur Krause.
If Hadley is to continue to have a positive impact on blind people worldwide, we must continually look for ways to better serve our current students and the thousands of blind people who we hope will become Hadley students. As we refine our course offerings, we also want to improve the way our courses get to our students. Mail has been the primary means for delivering Hadley materials and, even in a digital age, mail will remain a major delivery method for Hadley courses. However, as technology evolves, we are cognizant of the opportunity to use that technology for the benefit of our students.

Since we began offering the opportunity to enroll online, there has been a steady increase in the number of students using this option. In addition, we see more of them communicating with their instructors via email. We introduced our first online course, “Internet Basics,” in 2002. Since then, enrollment has exceeded our expectations and students continue to sign up.

In addition, we conducted a survey of students enrolled in our Adult Continuing Education Program and found a significant number who utilize technology and say they would like to access Hadley courses online.

...doing more for others

Hadley has had a 25% increase in students since 2001.
Last year, when CHRISTIE GILSON was invited to give two presentations at a special education conference in China, she thought: “What a great opportunity for me to meet other Hadley students!” This forward-thinking, ambitious Hadley student has completed 19 courses since enrolling in Hadley’s High School Program in 1987.

Blind since birth, Christie has come a long way since her early years growing up in Peoria, Ill. In 1988, she earned a bachelor’s degree in social work from Illinois State University, then a master’s in social work from the University of Illinois in 2000. After graduating, she was employed as a youth advocate for the Lake County (IL) Center for Independent Living. Christie is now back at the University of Illinois pursuing a Ph.D. She is active on the boards of organizations in the disability rights movement. Christie says that Hadley has helped her achieve her goals and live independently. “Hadley gave me the self-confidence to seek employment before completing my bachelor’s degree,” she notes. “My Hadley instructors always encouraged me to move forward.”

Although she has not yet taken Hadley courses online, Christie is an avid computer user and is excited about the school’s expansion into online delivery. She sees the benefit for students overseas, such as her counterparts in China, who will be able to access their course materials instantaneously. “Perhaps this will prompt visually impaired people worldwide who are unfamiliar with assistive technology or the Internet to learn to use these wonderful tools.”

Christie’s expertise with assistive technology allows her to do her work anywhere on campus.
“Perhaps this will prompt visually impaired people worldwide who are unfamiliar with assistive technology or the Internet to learn to use these wonderful tools.”

Christie Gilson, Hadley Student

As we have introduced other courses online – “Access Technology: Beginnings” and “Learning Through Play” – we have seen the benefit of using this medium. Students can access course material whenever and wherever they want and there is no need to wait for information to arrive in the mail.

This is of particular benefit to our international students who often wait many weeks for Hadley materials to arrive. Lessons are completed online, making it easier and faster for students to move through a course.

These online courses have been a great learning experience and, with feedback from our students, we are ready to move online education at Hadley to the next level. While we know that e-Hadley will benefit a portion of our current student population, it is critically important, as we must plan for all future Hadley students.

On our doorstep is a generation of sophisticated technology users who cannot remember a time without the Internet. That generation includes those who are born with visual impairment as well as those who will face vision loss as adults. Someone who is 20 years old today and has been visually impaired since childhood is very likely to be computer proficient and have a desire to access services via the Internet.

Other members of that generation face the statistical potential to become visually impaired as they age; it is incumbent on us to be ready with services they both want and need.

continue on page 14

Since the start of fiscal 2004, 24 courses have been activated.
Arthur Krause discusses the startup of a new self-help group with Donna Hicks of the Northbrook Public Library.
ARTHUR KRAUSE has never been one to sit back and just let things happen. After a successful career, Arthur is now an active senior citizen still involved in the business world – still making things happen. In fact, he became a Hadley student this year with a specific goal in mind: to initiate a self-help group for low vision people in his community. Born in 1927, Arthur is a lifelong resident of the Chicago area. Now retired, he does consulting work with Service Corp. of Retired Executives (SCORE), a volunteer group that advises future and current business owners.

About four years ago, Arthur began losing his vision – the result of age-related macular degeneration. “I attended a few low vision group meetings that did not fulfill my needs, so I decided to start my own,” he explains. To that end, Arthur enrolled in two of Hadley’s courses on self-help groups and says they have been invaluable. Although the courses are not yet available online, Arthur handles all his communication with his Hadley instructor via email.

“I envision the new group, which will meet at the Northbrook Public Library, as being proactive and researching the latest information, devices and services for people with low vision. We will highlight technological and medical advances as well as literacy, focusing on improving the overall quality of life.”

Arthur lauds Hadley for the practicality of its courses and believes the school offers a truly unique service. He thinks that Hadley’s expansion into online course delivery will eventually help the school reach substantially more visually impaired people. Arthur uses the Internet to access news and information on a daily basis. “If I found online courses to be convenient and easy to use, I would certainly prefer to go online. I’d like to give it a try.”
How do people who are blind or visually impaired use a computer?

How do they access the Internet, read or send email, use a spreadsheet or write a letter? How do they access the information that appears on a computer monitor or use a mouse?

Fortunately, there is a wealth of assistive technology available to make computers accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired. For those with low vision, there are programs that provide screen magnification. For those who cannot access information on the monitor, keyboard commands take the place of using a mouse. These commands work in conjunction with screen reading programs that read text on the screen, whether it originates from a Web site, email or word processing document. Braille readers have the option to use a refreshable braille display that connects to their computer and produces one line at a time in braille. In addition, there are braille embossers that take the place of a conventional printer for making hard copies of computer documents.

In 2004, Hadley raised $1.6 million for student support and school operations.

Someone who is 40 years old today and faces vision loss in 20 years is very likely to use a computer on a daily basis. When turning to Hadley for help in facing the challenges of vision loss, will that person want to receive Hadley services through the mail or the Internet?

Our strategy for e-Hadley is to provide our students with an online learning experience comparable to what is often found in a corporate training environment. We will be taking advantage of innovations that incorporate audio technology into interactive Internet-based learning. The courses we develop will provide the opportunity for interactivity to allow our students to apply what they learn to real-life situations.
Accessibility for our visually impaired students is the key criterion as we develop e-Hadley courses. Also important is the quality of the learning material we offer.

One of the things that has set Hadley apart from others in distance learning is the teacher-guided nature of our courses and the expertise of our instructors. Although e-Hadley courses will be Internet-based, each course will include interactions with Hadley instructors and, as always, students will be able to contact their instructors as often as needed.

For e-Hadley to succeed, Hadley will work with experienced e-learning experts who will assist us in applying technology to an accessible environment. In addition, we will ensure connectivity to existing technology at Hadley that manages student information and allows students to access their own information online.

The first new e-Hadley course will be “Blindness Basics.” This course is being developed in conjunction with the Lavelle Fund for the Blind, which is providing significant funding. Lavelle is dedicated to supporting programs that promote the spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical development of blind and low vision people of all ages, together with programs that help people avoid vision loss. Priority is given to agencies that concentrate on serving the New York City metropolitan area.

“Blindness Basics” will answer the need for continuing education programs for professionals and paraprofessionals in the New York City area and beyond. It will be consistent with, and responsive to, needs expressed by professionals at a focus group attended by service providers, facilitated by Hadley in June 2004.

Hadley students span the globe – they are found in all 50 states and in more than 90 countries.
“I envision the new group, which will meet at the Northbrook Public Library, as being proactive and researching the latest information, devices and services for people with low vision. We will highlight technological and medical advances as well as literacy, focusing on improving the overall quality of life.”

Arthur Krause, Hadley Student
Through our efforts with Lavelle, we have learned that people who begin volunteer work or employment in support positions in blindness organizations have few resources to help them learn the basics of blindness. Our course is designed to fill that gap by providing practical information about the blindness field, its issues and the etiquette needed to interact with visually impaired individuals. “Blindness Basics” will be a prototype for e-Hadley.

The development and launch of “Blindness Basics” will give us an opportunity to test the technology and evaluate the effectiveness of interactive learning for our students. The next course slated for e-Hadley is “Principles of Job Acquisition.” Designed primarily for blind or visually impaired adults, this course will provide much-needed information on interviewing skills and résumé building.

Our plan for e-Hadley calls for the first two courses to be developed during 2005. What follows is an aggressive plan to increase Hadley’s online educational offerings. Twenty-two courses will be part of the initial implementation to be completed by the end of 2007. Through e-Hadley, we will utilize innovative technology to bring educational resources to our students worldwide.

“It’s not hard to work online. I guess Hadley made things easier for me. I think it could be helpful if Hadley would develop more online courses.”

Matt Spero, Hadley Student
MATT SPERO seems like a typical teenager. He plays computer games and loves to watch TV and listen to the radio. What makes him extraordinary is his work ethic and independence as a visually impaired 17-year-old.

“Matt is one of the best students I’ve ever worked with,” says his vision teacher Lisa Crosby. “He is always prepared and gets good grades. He does an excellent job accommodating his own needs in the classroom.” During the school year, Lisa sees Matt on a weekly basis.

Matt has 20/200 vision and uses large print or a magnifier to see his computer screen. Last December, while a student at Centennial High School in Champaign, Ill., Matt enrolled in Hadley’s “Internet Basics.” In this online course, students learn how to navigate the Internet. Each lesson ends with questions on the information the student has just learned. “It’s not hard to work online,” Matt says. “I guess Hadley made things easier for me.”

Since Matt started the course, surfing the net, using search engines and even purchasing products online have become easier. Typically, Matt spends about three to four hours weekly online. He knows that other students his age would benefit from online courses. “I think it could be helpful if Hadley would develop more online courses,” he says. In 2006, Matt will earn his high school diploma. He plans to learn Japanese and is very interested in the creation and development of Japanese cartoons.

“He’s very independent,” Lisa says. “He takes responsibility on his own and he’s really a very well-rounded individual.”

Students such as Matt can supplement their high school coursework with a variety of courses from Hadley’s High School Program.
Hadley’s Family Education Program was launched in 1984 in response to the need for parents to learn how they can best meet the needs of a visually impaired child. Building on our distance education approach, so our courses could reach parents regardless of where they live, Hadley began developing curriculum that addressed the concerns of parents.

Through e-Hadley, we will significantly increase the effectiveness of our online curriculum for parents as we take advantage of the latest technology.

Innovative online courses will provide parents with real-life simulations that will help them understand the issues their blind child faces in the world.
A parent of a blind child has many questions about child development, literacy, appropriate toys and play, school-related issues and much more. Hadley courses help parents as they learn that their blind child has a world of opportunity ahead of them.

Today, we serve more than 1,000 families annually.

Our current online courses - “Access Technology: Beginnings” and “Learning Through Play” - have both been positively received by our parent-students who find the online approach an easy way to get the information they need.
The Hadley School for the Blind

Statement of Financial Position

June 30, 2004 (with Comparative Totals for 2003)

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<tr>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th>2004 Operating Funds</th>
<th>2004 Endowment &amp; Investment Funds</th>
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Our Board leaders ensure fiscal stewardship, accountability and long-term sustainability and, most importantly, lead with their hearts. Our volunteers expand our resources through their dedicated efforts.

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