

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Introduction

The National Center for Leadership in Visual Impairment (NCLVI) is a collaborative community of practice in the field of blindness and visual impairment established in order to increase the number of leaders in public policy, research, higher education, administration, and curriculum development. It consists of a consortium of all 14 Carnegie doctoral/research-intensive and doctoral research-extensive universities that offer doctoral degrees with an emphasis in blindness and visual impairment; a Public Advisory Council (PAC); a staff based at Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO); and two cohorts of fellows (one to begin fall 2005 and another to begin fall 2006). NCLVI is increasing leadership capacity by offering doctoral-level fellowships, including full tuition and stipends, to new full-time students committed to the education of children who are blind or visually impaired, and by providing an added-value training program to enrich their preparation as leaders.

Unsolicited Proposal

“National Center for Leadership in Visual Impairment: An Investment for the Future” was submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs in March of 2004. It was an unsolicited proposal and, although it followed the RFA format for Projects of National Significance (Fiscal Year 2002) and referenced the Blue Ribbon Committee’s preliminary recommendations for the OSEP leadership application process (February, 2004), the NCLVI proposal was not developed in response to a specific OSEP Priority. Rather, it was developed as an innovative response to the critical shortage of leadership personnel in blindness and visual impairment. It was hoped that this effort might become a model to be used by other areas of special education.

Goal, Mission and Objectives

The goal of NCLVI is to develop a collaborative leadership-training program in education of students with visual impairments as a way to address the critical shortage of leadership personnel in this field. In its first face-to face meeting in December of 2004 the NCLVI University Consortium refined this goal into its mission statement: **“To increase, through specialized doctoral training, the number of quality leadership personnel competent in the areas of research, public policy, advocacy, administration, and higher education to improve services for individuals with visual impairments from birth through age 21.”**

The objectives of NCLVI are to:

1. Develop a collaborative model for producing leadership personnel in special education with an emphasis on VI through the establishment of a national consortium of Carnegie doctoral/research-intensive and doctoral research-intensive institutions.
2. Facilitate the preparation of leadership personnel in education of students with visual impairments to increase the numbers of doctoral graduates available for positions in one or more areas of emphasis, such as higher education teaching and research, public policy, administration at national state and/or local levels, curriculum development and supervision and/or general research. In particular, prepare sufficient leadership personnel to meet the needs of university personnel preparation programs.
3. Enhance the training of leadership personnel by the creation of enrichment activities such as special topic seminars, special meetings, specialized lectures, or listserv discussions developed for the cohort of doctoral students.
4. Increase the capacity of HECSE members and other universities that have existing doctoral programs, by helping them to establish new minors and emphases in visual impairment.
5. Conduct an evaluation of the collaboration --both outcomes and process -- that will provide formative and summative data to assist in improving the project, and detailed information about the development of the collaborative model for replication purposes.
6. Disseminate information about the model, including evaluative findings, for possible replication in other areas of leadership training.

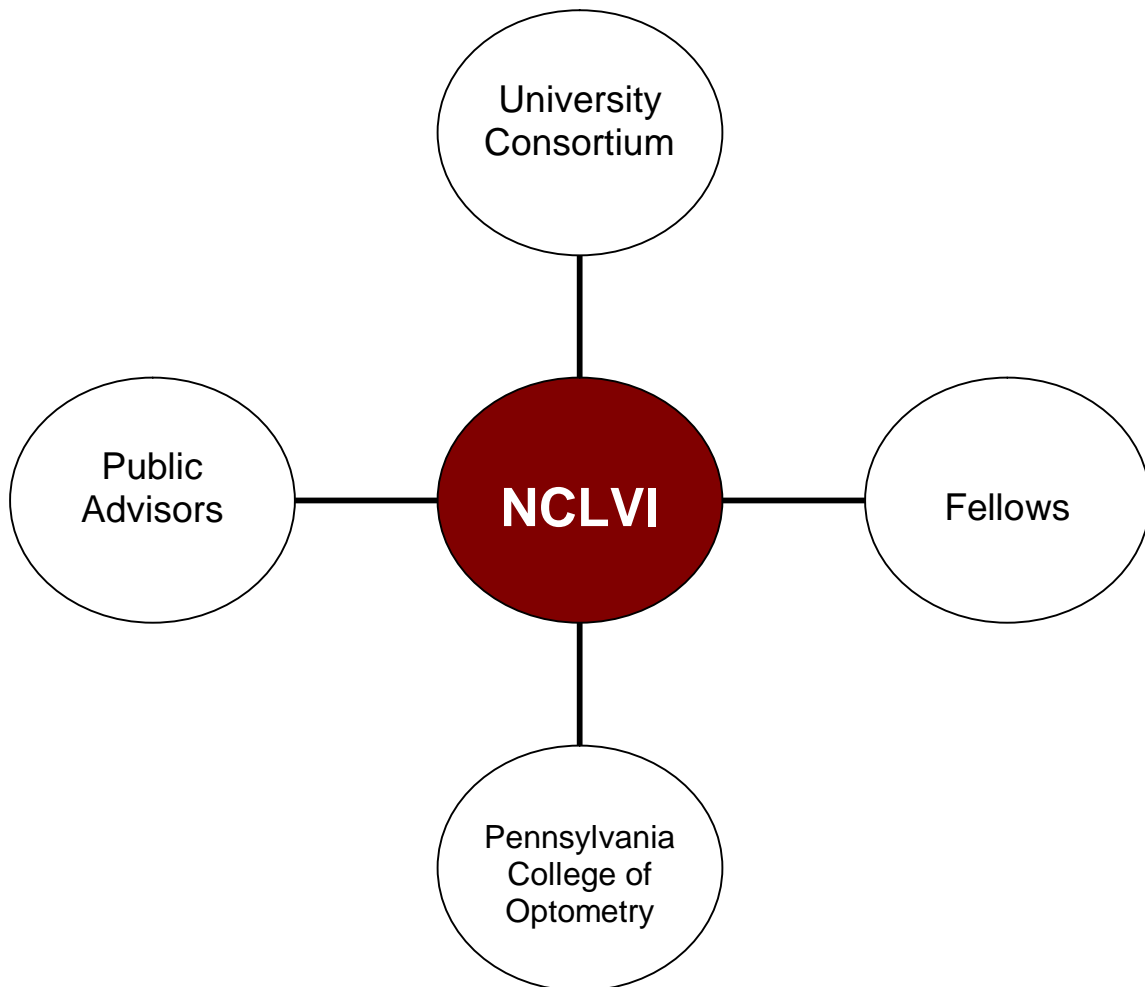
Key Personnel

Pennsylvania College of Optometry. The NCLVI Staff at Pennsylvania College of Optometry includes two Co-Directors, a Project Coordinator, an Administrative Assistant, and a Technology Manager. See Figure I-1.

Kathleen M. Huebner, Ph.D., (.33 FTE) Project Co-Director. Dr. Huebner is responsible for the overall management and supervision of the day-to-day operations of the National Center for Leadership in Visual Impairment. These include hiring and supervising the project employees, assuring that policies and guidelines developed by the NCLVI consortium are followed, ensuring application of up-to-date research to practice, ensuring quality and consistency of communications with the NCLVI Consortium and Public Advisors, and

troubleshooting to maintain the quality of the NCLVI. Dr. Huebner also oversees the development of the enrichment program along with the NCLVI Consortium. She is responsible for approving all project documentation including federal reports, formal communications with Consortium members and NCLVI fellows, and presentations and publications about the project. She assists the Project Coordinator with contract negotiations and contributes to the development, implementation, and analysis of formative and summative evaluations. She attends all NCLVI meetings.

Figure I-1
Key Personnel: NCLVI Organization Chart



Diane P. Wormsley, Ph.D., (.35 FTE) Project Co-Director for Evaluation and Fiscal Management. Dr. Wormsley is primarily responsible for the evaluation component of NCLVI including formative and summative, qualitative and quantitative research. She has worked with the external consultant to design the evaluation components of the project. Dr. Wormsley also serves as Fiscal Manager for this project, coordinating fiscal activities with the college's Office of Sponsored Programs and managing project day-to-day financial affairs. She works with other project staff on day-to-day operations and attends all NCLVI meetings.

Missy Garber, Ph.D., (.85 FTE) Project Coordinator. Dr. Garber is primarily responsible for the day-to-day operation and coordination of the NCLVI. She supervises the project Administrative Assistant and is the primary liaison between the NCLVI Consortium members, NCLVI Fellows, and Public Advisors. Dr. Garber coordinates all matters dealing with the NCLVI Consortium meetings, sub-committee meetings, travel, consultants, Public Advisors, and enrichment activities. She is responsible for the project website and, with assistance from the NCLVI Administrative Assistant, for maintaining all group e-mail, mailing lists, and other communication tools. She is the primary communicator for the project, develops information materials about the project, coordinates the recruitment effort, and works with Dr. Huebner on the enrichment program and Dr. Wormsley on evaluation. She directs and supervises the Administrative Assistant on developing files in a manner that facilitates efficient data collection and analysis. She is also responsible for ensuring that all project materials and efforts are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Tina Fitzpatrick, (1.00 FTE) Administrative Assistant. Ms Fitzpatrick works full time on NCLVI activities and is directly supervised by the Project Coordinator. She carries out secretarial and administrative activities for the Project Co-Directors and Project Coordinator. She is responsible for assisting with the design of the data management systems, all correspondence, phone and e-mail communication, and data entry and data file management.

Gen Ohkawa, Technology Manager. Mr. Ohkawa is primarily responsible for designing and setting up the NCLVI data systems for all project evaluation activities. He is available for technical assistance to NCLVI staff, Consortium members, PAC members, and Fellows working on enrichment activities through distance learning. This may include instruction on how to use the Blackboard platform. Mr. Ohkawa is working on a consultant basis for the following three months and will assist NCLVI in recruiting a permanent Technology Manager.

Pennsylvania College of Optometry does not have a doctoral program and the institution makes no financial gain from housing NCLVI. However, PCO

supports NCLVI by releasing faculty from other responsibilities to facilitate the project; funding the construction and furnishing of the NCLVI suite of offices; and allowing NCLVI to utilize PCO departments for specific project-related purposes. These departments include Word Processing, Finance, Sponsored Programs, and Computing Services.

University Consortium. Each of the 14 universities participating in the NCLVI Consortium is represented by a faculty member from that institution. Table I-1 lists the NCLVI Consortium universities and their representatives.

Table I-1
Key Personnel: NCLVI University Consortium

Consortium University	Representative for NCLVI
California State University	Sharon Sacks, Ph.D.
Florida State University	Sandra Lewis, Ed.D.
Northern Illinois University	Gaylen Kapperman, Ed.D.
Ohio State University	Peter Paul, Ph.D.
San Francisco State University	Amanda Hall Lueck, Ph.D.
Teachers College, Columbia University	Virginia Stolarski, Ed.D.
Texas Tech University at Lubbock	Nora Griffin-Shirley, Ph.D.
University of Arizona	Jane Erin, Ph.D.
University of Louisville	William Penrod, Ed.D.
University of Northern Colorado	Kay Ferrell, Ph.D.
University of Pittsburgh	George Zimmerman, Ph.D.
University of Utah	Jan Day, Ph.D.
Vanderbilt University	Anne Corn, Ed.D.
Western Michigan University	Robert Wall, Ph.D.

The role of University Consortium members is to

- Disseminate information about the project
- Recruit potential Fellows
- Participate in the doctoral student application process at their respective universities
- Direct doctoral student/Fellow's course of study at their host institution
- Participate in on-going communications through listserv and discussion boards used to develop NCLVI policies, practices, stipend and scholarship formulas, enrichment activities, and project evaluations
- Convene face-to-face annually
- Vote on matters affecting the development, policies, and operations of the Consortium
- Serve on NCLVI subcommittees
- Participate in the development and implementation of NCLVI recruitment plan, enrichment program, and project evaluation
- Contribute to and participate in enrichment activities
- Facilitate Fellows' participation in NCLVI enrichment and evaluation programs
- Mentor faculty members at new Consortium Universities
- Participate in evaluation of NCLVI activities.

In addition to the role University Consortium members fill individually and as a group, there are currently four NCLVI University Consortium committees. The **Steering Committee** consists of six individuals elected by the Consortium as a whole to represent the wishes of the group when a decision needs to be made quickly and when communication with the entire Consortium is not possible. Authority for decision-making by this group was granted by the Consortium at its first face-to-face meeting. This committee is key to the successful operation of the project. The members of the Steering Committee are Kay A. Ferrell, University of Northern Colorado; Dr. Nora Griffin-Shirley, Texas Tech University at Lubbock; Dr. Kathleen M. Huebner, Pennsylvania College of Optometry; Dr. Sandra Lewis, Florida State University; Dr. Diane P. Wormsley, Pennsylvania College of Optometry; and Dr. George Zimmerman, University of Pittsburgh.

The NCLVI **Application Form Committee** developed the fellowship application form and application evaluation form used by the **Application Review Committee** to rank and select NCLVI Fellows. The **Enrichment Committee** focuses on the enrichment component of the project.

Public Advisory Council (PAC). Fifteen individuals representing national organizations, institutions, or projects participate as members of the NCLVI Public Advisory Council. See Table I-2

Table I-2
Key Personnel: NCLVI Public Advisory Council

Organization	Representative for NCLVI
American Council of the Blind (ACB)	Melanie Brunson, Executive Director
American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)	Susan Spungin, Vice President, International Programs and Special Projects
American Printing House for the Blind (APH)	Bob Brasher, Vice President, Advisory Services and Research
Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER)	Mark Richert, Executive Director
Association of State Education Consultants for the Visually Impaired	Karen Blankenship, Representative and Iowa State Vision Consultant
Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB)	William Daugherty, President and Superintendent, Kansas State School for the Blind
Early Intervention Training Center for Infants and Toddlers with Visual Impairments	Deborah Hatton, Principal Investigator
Gallaudet University	Tom Jones, Professor, Department of Education
Higher Education Consortium in Special Education (HECSE)	Herbert Reith, President and Professor, University of Texas at Austin
National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (NAPVI)	Mary Zabeliski, President and Parent

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDE)	Bill East, Executive Director
National Center on Low-Incidence Disabilities (NCLID)	Kay Ferrell, Project Director
National Council of Private Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NCPABVI)	Chris Tompkins, Executive Director Foundation for Blind Children
National Federation of the Blind (NFB)	Betsy Zaborowski, Executive Director, Jernigan Research Institute
National Organization of Parents of Blind Children (NOPBC)	Barbara Cheadle, President and Parent

The role of NCLVI Public Advisors is to

- Serve as entry points into greater community of practice in blindness and visual impairment
- Participate in all communication related to the NCLVI PAC
- Convene face-to-face at least twice during project
- Host PAC meetings and face-to-face meetings of Fellows
- Communicate to constituencies about NCLVI project
- Participate in development of recruitment, enrichment, and evaluation components of NCLVI
- Recruit potential Fellows
- Assist in the development, facilitation and implementation of enrichment activities
- Host Fellows for short-term residencies and/or internships
- Participate in evaluation of NCLVI activities
- Participate in continuous revision of objectives and activities of NCLVI
- Participate as agents of change in the field of blindness and visual impairment
- Link the blindness and visual impairment community of practice to organizations and agencies in other disability areas.

Fellows. Fourteen scholars accepted NCLVI Fellowships beginning in academic year 2005-2006. See Table I-3.

Table I-3
Key Personnel: NCLVI Fellows (2005 Cohort)

Fellow	Home State	Consortium University
Jennifer Arnold	Georgia	Florida State University
Shawn Barnard	Oregon	University of Northern Colorado
Donna Brostek	Michigan	University of Pittsburgh or University of Louisville
Julie Durando	Florida	University of Northern Colorado
Stacy Haack	Illinois	Northern Illinois University
Beth Harris	Georgia	University of Arizona
Lori Johnson	Kentucky	University of Louisville
Holly Lawson	Arizona	University of Arizona
Heather McDonough	Tennessee	Vanderbilt University
Derrick Smith	Alabama	Texas Tech University
Tilly Steele	Georgia	Florida State University
Eric Sticken	North Carolina	University of Arizona
Sharon Summers	Texas	Texas Tech University
Tiffany Wild	Ohio	Ohio State University

The role of NCLVI Fellows is to

- Proceed fulltime through the doctoral program at their University Consortium host institution and complete their degree within four years
- Participate in the community of practice in field of blindness and visual impairment
- Receive full tuition funding and annual living stipend
- Agree to and fulfill OSEP Payback Agreement

- Remain students in good standing at their host institutions
- Travel to two national conferences per year (supported by NCLVI) and participate in an additional day of NCLVI enrichment activities attached to each conference
- Participate in a three-day concentrated enrichment seminar annually
- Participate in all NCLVI enrichment activities, including face-to-face seminars, online discussion boards, monthly topic board, and listservs
- Participate in all evaluation of NCLVI activities
- Participate as agents of change in field of blindness and visual impairment
- Serve as leaders.

Key Personnel Changes

Key personnel Drs. Huebner and Wormsley have been working as scheduled since the time of award (October 15, 2004). NCLVI hired Tina Fitzpatrick for the position of Administrative Assistant to start on November 29, 2004. Dr. Missy Garber was hired for the position of Project Coordinator beginning January 20, 2005. Gen Ohkawa was just recruited for the position of Technology Manager to begin on June 13, 2005. His position is the only change at this point in NCLVI Staff and was due to lack of candidates for that .50 FTE position (see "Challenges and Solutions").

An Evaluation Consultant, Dr. Lizanne DeStefano, was contracted with to serve as External Evaluator to the project. OSEP will take over the external evaluation of the project and will continue to use Dr. DeStefano for that purpose.

In addition to hiring all key personnel, NCLVI added Vanderbilt University to the University Consortium; added five organizations to the Public Advisory Council*; and selected the 2005 cohort of NCLVI Fellows.

*American Council of the Blind; Association of State Education Consultants for the Visually Impaired; Early Intervention Training Center for Infants and Toddlers; National Center on Low-Incidence Disability; and National Organization of Parents of Blind Children.

Timeline of NCLVI Activities

At the time this briefing binder is being created, NCLVI is in its eighth month or Quarter 3 of Year 1. Table I-4 lists the timeline of project activities, with activities accomplished so far indicated in red. All anticipated activities for that time period have been accomplished. Major project activities will be discussed further in "Activities and Accomplishments."

Budget

Table I-5 shows the original budget that was submitted with the NCLVI unsolicited proposal. The largest lines are for Fellowships. Travel also includes money for Fellows to travel for participation in face-to-face enrichment activities. The Detailed Budget from the original proposal can be found in Appendix A. The budget will require modification in order to adhere to the changes in numbers of fellowships provided in years 2 and 3 and the length of the time supported as recommended by OSEP and reviewers.

Staff Loading Chart

The Staff Loading Chart is included in Appendix B. The total percent of effort for the project is 3.13 FTE for the NCLVI Staff housed at Pennsylvania College of Optometry. In addition, the NCLVI effort includes hiring consultants for the implementation of the Enrichment Program. These consultants will provide seminars and workshops for the Fellows. Consortium and PAC members have expressed their willingness to be used as consultants but also to give of their time and experience to NCLVI, as can be seen by their roles in the project (see "Key Personnel"). The actual percentage of effort that goes into this project is difficult to quantify but is substantial.