

# Annual Report

# 2021



EYE TO EYE



Unlocking Greatness in the 1 in 5 who Learn Differently

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## WELCOME LETTER FROM EYE TO EYE STUDENT, PEYTON

Growing up with a learning difference is hard. You have to deal with never really knowing if you are reading and spelling words correctly and you feel bad for distracting the class because you cannot keep your leg from bouncing. Then you add the fact that no one understands what you're going through. But for me the worst part of it was that my teachers told me not to tell anyone — not even my closest friends — **so I felt like I had to go through everything alone.**

No one should have to keep their learning difference a secret and have to try to figure out how to cope without a support group. That is why Eye to Eye is so important. Growing up, **I never imagined there could be an entire community of people like me**, people who could help me from feeling so alone. Keeping my Eye to Eye chapter running during the pandemic was so important to make sure that we could keep some support systems in place both for mentors and mentees to keep us feeling like we were part of a community. In California, we went to school remotely for an entire year, making it impossible to have our art rooms in person. It didn't even cross my mind that we would put Eye to Eye on pause for the year. I knew there had to be a way to keep it running. It was a lot to ask of everyone to spend extra time on Zoom but **our community showed up** every week ready to work on projects in the **stress and judgment-free environment** that Eye to Eye provides. The organization was dedicated to helping us make the art room virtual by sending everyone their art supplies and figuring out how to help mentees make the art without being in the same room. Was it the ideal situation? No. Would I do it again? Yes, in a heartbeat!

To whomever you are in the Eye to Eye community — a mentor, financial supporter, or program advocate — I want to say thank you. **You're helping me be the person I wish I had in my life when I was younger.**

- Peyton Krause, Eye to Eye mentor, Sterne School



# THE NEED REMAINS BUT THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE ATTAINABLE

In the United States, 1 in 5 students learn differently. This includes those with ADHD, specific learning disabilities like dyslexia, and other challenges related to learning.



## Our education system was not setting students with learning differences up for success, even before COVID-19:

- 33% of students have been held back a grade
- 20% of students drop out of school
- Students hold negative beliefs about their academic abilities, achievements, and potential
- Underrepresented and underserved schools face challenges in implementing services for students who learn differently

## Educators' and parents' misunderstanding of learning differences marginalizes students:

- 51% of educators don't feel confident they can implement IEP or 504 plans, and 33% of educators say that sometimes what people call a learning or attention issue is really just laziness
- 43% of parents say they wouldn't want others to know if their child had learning disabilities

These students were already experts in resilience before the COVID-19 pandemic began. They have strong problem-solving skills, unique talents, grit, and creativity. They have leveraged these strengths to persevere and find new ways to engage in their education. Now it's our turn to build back an educational system that meets their needs and elevates their potential.

# MEETING STUDENTS WHERE THEY ARE

Eye to Eye is dedicated to improving the educational experiences and outcomes of students who learn differently by supporting students and educators. We see the limitations that our educational system places on our students and educators, and our programming therefore works to:

- Support middle schoolers to gain a greater sense of self and belonging
- Support high school and college students to gain a greater sense of their leadership potential and abilities
- Support general educators to implement practice shifts in their classrooms
- Reach intended impact for all active members of our community, regardless of demographics



Strong Social & Emotional Skills



Effective Accommodations



Supportive Environments



Expanded Leadership & Organizing Capacity



## Since our founding over 20 years ago, we have:

- Transformed 12,000+ students through our near-peer mentoring program
- Impacted 40,000+ parents and educators through professional learning, school assemblies, and speaking engagements
- Reached hundreds of thousands of individuals through awareness-raising and stigma-fighting campaigns

# REACHING AND IMPACTING 12,000+ IN 2020-21:

## WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER

Innovations in our programming last year accelerated our efforts to broaden our reach and deepen our impact. We pivoted to deliver our programming to meet our students and educators across the country by:



**Launching our near-peer mentoring program mid-year and engaging students in campaigns and events.**

- **71%** of students reported having a better understanding of learning differently
- **50%** of students felt more comfortable talking about their learning difference



**Developing professional learning offerings for educators.**

- **78%** of educators said they had a better understanding of learning differences after Eye to Eye's professional learning course



# GROWING THE MOVEMENT OF STUDENT VOICES



## Virtual Young Leaders Organizing Institute

This year, we held two virtual Young Leaders Organizing Institutes (January 2021 and August 2021). Through these events, we brought together 240 students hosting 20 hours of programming across both events.



## Letter to the Incoming Biden Administration

Our students shared their vision of what an education system that serves students who learn differently could be. We stewarded their thoughts and sent an open letter to the incoming Biden Administration to elevate their voices to the highest office.



## Graduating Differently

We held our second virtual event celebrating students who were graduating from middle school, high school, and college.



## LD Day of Action

On June 22 and 23, our students participated in a virtual LD Day of Action and town hall to directly share their needs as students who learn differently. They met with U.S. senators and members of congress who are policy leaders on disabilities: Chris Van Hollen, Chris Murphy, Matt Huffman, Suzanne Bonamici, and Bob Casey.



Alexandra Clarye  
Senior Manager of Special Projects



Cole Hendricks  
Young Adu Impact Manager

## ENHANCED PROGRAMMING OFFERED



**Near-Peer Mentoring:** We will continue our classic near-peer mentoring program, pairing middle school students with LD/ADHD with high school and college mentors who are similarly identified in weekly programming.

**Professional Learning for Educators:** Professional learning will focus on providing functional strategies to improve empathy and understanding of students with LD/ADHD, and creating supportive learning environments.

### Student-Led Clubs - Introducing the LD Alliance:

This year, Eye to Eye will pilot the launch of 10 student-led identity-based clubs, inspiring a new generation of empowered advocates committed to educational equity and civic engagement.

**Young Adult Guiding Coalition:** This year, we are bringing a group of young adults together to leverage their voices and leadership to inform our collective work.



Rachel Carey  
Development Manager  
Annual Campaigns

## EXPANDING REACH AND IMPACT IN 2021-2022

We are focused on reaching more students and deepening our impact. This includes ensuring that all schools serving historically and predominantly underserved and/or underrepresented communities are aware of and can take advantage of our programs.



56,000  
students



1,800  
educators

### Expected Outcomes:

- **Middle school students:** 10% increase in using their interests and skills to make the community better and believing that they can improve
- **High school & college students:** 80% will report an increase in civic action and engagement
- **Educators:** 85% will feel as though their learnings will lead to practice shifts in supporting those who learn differently



Katherine Kelly  
Director of Marketing and  
Communications

## CELEBRATING KEY LEADERS IN OUR COMMUNITY

### STUDENT CHAMPION AWARD: CARLYE RAABE

Each year during the Young Leaders Organizing Institute, the Eye to Eye staff and community select a standout student to award the **Jess Ettenger Student Champion Award**. This prestigious recognition is presented to a student who exhibits exceptional enthusiasm, compassion, and spirit for supporting students who learn differently, and we could imagine no better recipient than Carlye Raabe.

Carlye is now a senior at George Washington High School in Denver, Colorado. Her passion for Eye to Eye started in 2019 when she advocated for her school to open an Eye to Eye mentoring chapter. Carlye - along with her co-leader - went on to serve as the founding chapter leaders for their school's mentoring program. Most recently, she addressed educators from an entire district on what it really means to be a student with learning differences. Carlye has taken every opportunity to further her involvement in Eye to Eye and support her community.

It's safe to say that Carlye will leave a memorable legacy for students who learn differently at her high school; we are excited to see where her next steps take her as she begins her journey into higher education.



## CELEBRATING KEY LEADERS IN OUR COMMUNITY

### ALUMN'EYE HERO AWARD: ISAIAH WALKER

Eye to Eye's Alumn'Eye Hero Award is presented each year to an outstanding representative of the Eye to Eye community. The individual selected gives our current students a positive role model and success story that they can aspire towards. This year's Alumn'Eye Hero Award was awarded to Isaiah Walker.

This year, Isaiah is recognized because of his continued work to support students who learn differently. Isaiah's experience in leading the Columbia University mentoring chapter was one of the top reasons that he decided to go into education. Now, Isaiah is the principal at KIPP Philadelphia Charter School. Isaiah is paying it forward by supporting a mentoring chapter at KIPP and bringing in professional development opportunities to better support students who learn differently!

From supporting the mentoring program at his school, to bringing in professional learning opportunities to the educators he supports, Isaiah is committed to creating a supportive environment that benefits all students that come into contact with it.



## CELEBRATING KEY LEADERS IN OUR COMMUNITY

### EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT: LISA KREMPA

Lisa Krempa was awarded Eye to Eye's 2021 Educator Champion Award for acknowledging the importance of creating understanding and building empathy to support students who learn differently.

With nearly two decades of experience in school administration at Uncommon Schools in Rochester, New York, Lisa has driven the movement forward by acknowledging and promoting the value, opportunity, and necessity of supporting students who learn differently. Lisa was instrumental in the adaptation and success of Eye to Eye programs with the Uncommon Schools network in Rochester. Seeing the value in Eye to Eye programs recently, Lisa organized 139 educators to complete Eye to Eye's Learning Differently 101 for Educators program.

Our community of educators, administrators, students and parents are incredibly grateful for Lisa for championing our movement. Thank you for bringing us closer to a world where all learners are seen, heard, valued, and celebrated for their powerful differences.



## CELEBRATING KEY LEADERS IN OUR COMMUNITY

### SCHOOL CHAMPION SPOTLIGHT: UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

The University of Wisconsin-Madison was awarded Eye to Eye's 2021 Near-Peer Mentoring Chapter Award. This award recognizes UW-Madison School for renewing their partnership with Eye to Eye to support students who learn differently through our near-peer mentoring model.



The UW-Madison mentoring chapter has been a long time partner with Eye to Eye. Starting in 2016, the chapter has gone above and beyond in all aspects of programming from hosting regional events for students, UW-Madison staff leading sessions at our virtual Young Leaders Organizing Institute in 2020, winning Strike Out Stigmomth competition, and producing amazing alumni who went on to work directly for the LD/ADHD community.

The longevity of UW-Madison's partnership with Eye to Eye has made a lifelong impact on students, and inspired so many to continue to share that impact and empowerment with others. We are so grateful for their partnership and look forward to our continued success together.



# GET INVOLVED

## BRING US TO YOUR SCHOOL

### Mentoring, Professional Learning, Student Clubs

Do you or someone you love attend a middle school, high school, or college? Eye to Eye's programs are available to launch at your school! We are now accepting inquiries for the mentoring program, student-led clubs, and professional learning for educator programs.



## SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

David Flink and Marcus Soutra are available for speaking engagements — including commencement speeches, parent group talks, workplace trainings, and school-wide events — either virtually or in-person. As leaders in this movement, their proximate experience to this work can be leveraged to help support the movement more broadly.



## VOLUNTEER

Do you want to volunteer with Eye to Eye as a person who learns differently, or as an ally in this movement? We are launching new volunteer opportunities in 2021-22 that can be done virtually or in-person. Contact us today for more information!



## FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Apply for a self-directed and self-designed program to explore a topic of your choosing in the learning disability landscape. Fellows work closely with an Eye to Eye staff member to develop a capstone project and create a portfolio demonstrating their findings to our community. This program includes the opportunity to network and practice professional communication.



## FOLLOW US & SPREAD THE WORD

-  @EyetoEyeNational
-  @E2ENational
-  @e2enational
-  @Eye to Eye National

## CONTACT US!

Want to learn more about any of these opportunities? Send us an email at [info@eyetoeyenational.org](mailto:info@eyetoeyenational.org) and a member of our team will be in touch!



# ACCOUNTABILITY: STEWARDING RESOURCES

Our promise to our students is to be here for them when they need us. Our primary financial objective is to create a sustainable model that makes good on that promise. As Eye to Eye expands to serve more students, sustainability requires diverse sources of funding and a watchful eye on expenses to ensure a high return on your investment — more students with learning differences achieving their full potential.



## REVENUE

● Private Foundations & Corporations	\$538,688
● Individuals & Family Foundations	\$847,111
● Government, Schools & Other Support	\$347,394
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>\$1,733,193</b>

## EXPENSES

● Program Services	\$2,300,349
● Management & Supporting Services	\$695,156
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$2,995,505</b>

## ASSETS

Cash & Investments	\$2,142,275
Pledges Receivable	\$1,058,812
Furniture & Equipment, Net	\$14,073
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$3,215,159</b>

## LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Accounts Payable & Accruals	\$478,083
Net Assets	\$2,737,076
<b>Total liabilities &amp; net assets</b>	<b>\$3,215,159</b>



# AMPLIFYING THE MOVEMENT

Eye to Eye Founder and Chief Empowerment Officer David Flink named 2021



Eye to Eye was thrilled and honored to learn in the spring of 2021 that Chief Empowerment Officer David Flink was named a 2021 CNN Hero! CNN has honored social movement leaders doing life-changing work in their communities through their Heroes event since 2007, and 2021 is our year! CNN highlighted the impact of Eye to Eye's programming and featured Eye to Eye's program pre-COVID-19 pandemic. It also detailed the innovations Eye to Eye executed while the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools and isolated students nationwide, including virtual workshops for students and educators. While David was selected as the individual honored, we at Eye to Eye know the true heroes are the countless students who learn differently and who fearlessly fight for their rights and acceptance every day.



## ADDITIONAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



**JULY 28, 2021**  
Making a Difference for Students With Learning Differences 1 on 1



**JUNE 7, 2021**  
Interview with David Flink



**APRIL 12, 2021**  
Building Empathy for All Learners with Eye to Eye



**DECEMBER 7, 2020**  
Giving attention to ADHD & different learning styles



**DECEMBER 2, 2020**  
Our Interview with David Flink Founder and CEO of Eye to Eye

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Jim Balfanz** - President, City Year

**Rhett Bennett** - Managing Director, Minot Capital, LP

**Joanna Burleson** - Managing Director, Monitor Institute by Deloitte

**Ben Chesler** - Co-Founder, Imperfect Foods

**Amory Donohue** - Founder, Language in Action, LLC

**David Flink** - Founder & Chief Empowerment Officer, Eye to Eye; Author "Thinking Differently"

**Inger Dewey Golob** - Co-owner, PhotoBall; Learning Disability Advocate

**Kevin Greer** - Partner, Learn to Earn Fund, New Profit

**Carol J. Hampf, JD** - Education and Learning Disability Advocate

**Alan Harlam** - Adjunct Lecturer in International and Public Affairs, Brown University

**Tim Hebert** - CEO, Trilix

**Alisha Howell** - Vice President, Lillian Lincoln Foundation; former Eye to Eye Chapter Leader

**Jesse Sanchez** - Senior Enterprise Account Manager, Culture Amp; former Eye to Eye Chapter Leader

**Lester Strong** - President, Courtney Strong, Inc.



# LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

**Shawn Jacqueline Bohan** - Social Impact Strategist

**Ross Buffington** - Chief of Staff, Arc Touch and former Eye to Eye Board Member

**Steve Carnevale** - Executive Chairman, Sawgrass Technologies

**Beth Cogan** - Partner, Goldman Sachs

**Shari Crotty** - Advisory Council, University of Notre Dame DeBartolo Performing Arts Center, Advisory Council, Cure Alzheimer's Fund & Learning Disability Advocate, and former Eye to Eye Board Member

**Susan Donahue** - Board Member, Boston Medical Center, Museum of Fine Arts, and Health Leads

**Dean Flanagan** - Managing Director, Goldman Sachs

**Jess Flanagan** - Parent Advocate

**Roch Hillenbrand** - Founder and Managing Director, Stony Brook Investments

**Marc Hoffman** - LD Advocate and Former Eye to Eye Board Member

**Vanessa Kirsch** - Founder and Co-CEO, New Profit

**Laura Giadorou-Koch, JD, LLM** - CEO, Dolium Wines

**Adam Koplewicz** - Director, EJS Development, backed by LS Power Group

**Jenny Krause** - Behavioral Intervention Specialist and University Lecturer

**Rick Lavoie** - Special Educator and LD Advocate

**Tammy Mobley** - LD Advocate and Co-Founder, Every Kind of Mind

**Stephen Neidich** - Artist and Eye to Eye's 2015 Artist-in-Residence

**Elizabeth Alda O'Heaney, EdD** - Special Educator and Learning Disability Advocate

**Stacy Parker-Fisher** - Education Consultant

**Gail Propp** - Founding Board Member of Eye to Eye

**Anne Schneider** - Founder and President LD Access Foundation, Founding Eye to Eye Board Member

**Susan Segal** - Parent Advocate

**Susan Kurz Snyder** - Founder, Principal, & Senior Legal Recruiter, Greene-Levin-Snyder Legal Search Group





**EYE TO EYE**

## **OUR MISSION**

is to improve the educational experience and outcomes of every student with a learning disability (LD) and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).



## **OUR VISION**

is a world in which people who learn differently are fully accepted, valued, and respected - not just by society, but by themselves - and they live ready, able, and eager to apply their unique strengths to whatever they encounter in school and life.

50 Broad Street, Suite 1702  
New York, NY 10004  
(212) 537-4429

[eyetoeyenational.org](http://eyetoeyenational.org)

