

Visually Impaired Preschool Services

Louisville, Kentucky

When Visually Impaired Preschool Services (VIPS) was founded in 1985, resources were sparse. Never would the founders have imagined that there would be such a demand for services and that they would one day have a need to raise \$2.3 million for a new facility on a new campus.

VIPS has grown from serving about 25 infants and preschoolers and their families in 1985 to over 300 today. Founder and Executive Director, Sharon Bensinger, explained the need that grew out of their success. "I wish we could find the technology to cure blindness and eliminate the need for VIPS, but the reality is that our numbers are skyrocketing. The Victorian home we were working out of was simply not large enough to handle our needs."

When it became obvious that VIPS had outgrown its facilities, Sharon Bensinger turned to The Covenant Group for help. "We had very little fundraising history or experience. With the help of Dr. Len Moisan and his team at The Covenant Group, we organized and then embarked on a capital campaign to raise sufficient funds to secure a larger facility," Bensinger said. "We set a stretch goal of \$2.3 million, and we are well on our way to exceeding it. To date we have nearly \$1.7 million with enough asks pending to exceed our goal."

Despite a difficult economy, VIPS has had great success during their capital campaign and Bensinger is confident that they will soon exceed their goal. "I will honestly say that it's been a tough economy. But with the help of The Covenant Group, we have developed and implemented a great plan. During the campaign, we have submitted quite a few grant proposals to foundations and corporations, and we have had the opportunity to meet with a lot of new people. Len has done a great job helping us plan and work through this process."

Bensinger is quite pleased that The Covenant Group helped raise the sight of the VIPS Board and helped them expand their capacity during their campaign. "I am absolutely pleased with The Covenant Group. I think Len and his team are wonderful, and their help has been invaluable to our campaign. I have said many times that we could not have done nearly as well on our own."