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Prevent Blindness Receives Transformative Legacy Gift of \$9.7 Million

National Patient Advocacy Organization Prevent Blindness to Use Significant Gift to Invest in Long-term Strategic Growth and Expansion of its Eye Health Efforts

CHICAGO (Jan. 16, 2025)- [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation's leading nonprofit eye health and safety organization, is pleased to announce it has received a generous multi-million dollar donation from the Estate of Pamela Behrens, a long-time Florida resident and previous Prevent Blindness donor. The gift of \$9.7 million, the largest in the organization's 117-year history, will support the Prevent Blindness mission to prevent blindness and preserve sight for all U.S. residents and the organization's commitment to be an active partner with similar organizations addressing eye health across the globe.

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness has a long legacy of promoting eye health through public awareness, education, and advocacy. The organization serves individuals of all ages and addresses a wide range of eye conditions. Its initiatives focus on early identification of vision problems, improving equitable access to quality eye care, enhancing public understanding of eye health and encouraging preventive actions, advancing public policy that improves our nation's eye health, integrating eye health into public health systems through training and technical assistance, addressing the potential mental health implications of vision loss, and engaging patients and care partners as advocates for their own eye health and that of others. Through these efforts, Prevent Blindness and its partners touch the lives of millions of Americans each year.

The organization is developing its 2025-2030 Strategic Plan, focusing on a rapidly evolving eye health landscape shaped by innovations in research, advancing technologies such as artificial intelligence, rising threats to children's vision like increasing myopia rates, shifting demographics, and an aging population.

This Behrens gift will significantly strengthen the capacity of Prevent Blindness to implement its strategic initiatives, including:

- **Expanding technical assistance efforts in children's vision:** Strengthening programs that ensure early identification and treatment of vision problems in children across the United States, supporting their overall health and development.
- **Promoting eye health awareness and access to care:** Enhancing public education on the numerous vision and eye-related conditions that people may face throughout their lives; emphasizing the importance of early detection and routine eye care to prevent

vision loss and improve quality of life; and facilitating access to eye care for those without the means to obtain it on their own.

- **Advancing public policy efforts:** Supporting advocacy initiatives that seek to improve access to vision care and protect vision health for all U.S. residents, particularly those in underserved communities.
- **Providing support for individuals impacted by vision issues:** Increasing efforts to empower individuals, build community, and offer resources for people who are visually impaired or at risk of vision loss, and their care partners.
- **Contributing to global eye health:** Engaging with partners across the globe to advance a collective vision of eye care for all.

In addition to these vital initiatives, Prevent Blindness will launch a comprehensive awareness campaign to better inform the public about the resources available through the organization and ways to contribute to its mission. The campaign will aim to reach individuals, families, and communities, helping to prevent vision problems before they occur and offering support to those in need. Improvements in the organization's IT infrastructure will also be made to support the expansion.

Pamela Behrens named Prevent Blindness as a beneficiary in her will in honor of her late husband, Richard Behrens, who served on both the Prevent Blindness national and [Prevent Blindness Texas](#) boards of directors in the 1980s, eventually holding the position of national Treasurer.

"We are deeply grateful for Richard's service on behalf of our mission, and for Pamela Behrens' incredible generosity in memorializing his commitment," said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness. "This extraordinary gift comes at a pivotal time for Prevent Blindness, empowering us to expand our reach, elevate public awareness, and better support those most vulnerable to vision loss in an era of rapid change."

"For more than a century, Prevent Blindness has been advancing its sight-saving mission, evolving as the times dictate," shared Jim McGrann, chair of the Prevent Blindness Board of Directors and CEO of Advancing Eyecare. "This has only been made possible through the generosity of our donors—whether it's a gift of \$5, \$500, \$1 million, or more, all donations are valued and support the millions of people across the country impacted by eye health."

For more information about Prevent Blindness and its sight-saving mission, please visit [PreventBlindness.org](#). To make a gift to Prevent Blindness, please visit [PreventBlindness.org/donate](#).

Estate of Pamela Behrens donates \$9.7 million to Prevent Blindness in honor of her husband Richard Behrens, who served on Prevent Blindness national and Prevent Blindness Texas boards of directors.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training,

community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, visit us at [PreventBlindness.org](https://www.preventblindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), [LinkedIn](#), [TikTok](#) and [YouTube](#).

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