December 1, 2015

Mr. John Doe

Executive Director

The Generous Foundation

235 East Money Lane

New York, NY 10001

Dear Mr. Doe:

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) of [YOUR STATE] is requesting support in the amount of $10,000 from the Generous Foundation for the NFB Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning (BELL) Academy. By joining in our work, your foundation has a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to education and opportunity for all people, and specifically for those with disabilities.

Today, fewer than 10 percent of blind children are learning Braille in US schools. It is an unfortunate fact that our nation’s blind children have become victims of a broken educational system that assumes their inability to read and write. Too many blind students are denied Braille literacy because teachers and administrators falsely believe that audio can replace reading, or that extreme print sizes and slow reading speeds are justifiable alternatives to the burden they believe Braille presents to young learners. Furthermore, parents of young blind children are frequently unaware of methods and resources for introducing Braille to their children early, and unnecessarily delay Braille exposure beyond age-appropriate milestones.

However, the NFB of [YOUR STATE] is working to reverse the missteps that have created an illiteracy epidemic among blind people in this state. The NFB of [YOUR STATE] provides educational programming for blind youth and adults, as well as parents and educators of blind children. One such program, the NFB BELL Academy, has delivered Braille education and resources to hundreds of blind students and their parents in states across the country since 2008. For two weeks, children ages four through twelve participate in hands-on activities designed to introduce students to Braille and encourage its use in everyday life. A parent piece accompanies the program wherein parents learn strategies to support their child in the learning and use of Braille. The NFB BELL Academy began as a model initiative in Maryland in 2008 and has since expanded to twenty-six states in 2015, including [YOUR STATE].

Founded in 1940, the NFB is the nation's largest membership organization of blind persons. With fifty thousand members, the NFB has independent affiliates in all fifty states plus Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico, and over five hundred local chapters. The mission of the NFB is to serve as a means for blind people to come together to work collectively to improve our lives. By providing public education about blindness, information and referral services, scholarships, literature and mate­rials, specialized aids and appliances, and support for blind people and their families, the NFB promotes the fact that the blind are normal individuals who can compete on equal terms with their sighted peers. The NFB knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people, because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back.

The NFB of [YOUR STATE] is the local affiliate for the national organization in our state. While our affiliate receives some resources and support from the national organization, we are an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit with our own budget, leadership, and suite of programs impacting blind children and adults in our state. Often, our affiliate performs programs that have been modeled at the national level and have a proven track record in other states.

Our organization is supported by our volunteer membership; in fact, the NFB of [YOUR STATE] has no full-time employees. We are committed volunteers because we are working to create opportunities and better lives for other blind people just like ourselves. Securing funding for the NFB BELL Academy for blind children of our state is one of our top priorities for the coming year, and I hope that we can count on the Generous Foundation to make that goal a reality.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of inquiry. I have also included a copy of our 501(c)(3) nonprofit determination letter from the IRS and our most recent annual report. Should you desire, we would be happy to provide you with a full proposal for your consideration. In the meantime, if you have any questions or if you would like to learn more about the National Federation of the Blind, please do not hesitate to contact me at [YOUR PHONE NUMBER], or at [YOUR EMAIL].

Sincerely,

[YOUR SIGNATURE]

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR TITLE]

National Federation of the Blind of [YOUR STATE]

Enclosures