



# The Thomas H. Perkins Legacy Society

Fall 2008



From the very first day he started public school in Pittsburg, NH, Frank Hilliard struggled to keep up with his classmates.

Born with extremely low vision, he could not read his school books or the lessons his teachers wrote on the blackboard. Instead, Hilliard – the oldest of four children – did most of his learning at home, when family members had time to read aloud and help him with his schoolwork.

“My mother and grandmother and different people read to me,” recalled Hilliard, now 86. “Whatever I could remember, I managed to get by with. I managed to get through nine grades with what help I could get.”

But as Hilliard grew older and his classwork became more demanding, his family members struggled to keep up with his

## Liberating and Lasting

needs. They decided to seek professional, full-time assistance for their son, and found themselves at Perkins School for the Blind. Hilliard was 15.

“I had never touched Braille,” he said. “I figured I had to learn something.”

Not only did Hilliard learn to read and write Braille, he also discovered he could read some print under a double-lens magnifier. The combined result was a level of independence and self-sufficiency that Hilliard had only imagined. As recently as 1999, he decided to show his gratitude to Perkins by making his first Charitable Gift Annuity.

“Why give? They gave something back to me,” Hilliard said. “If I have any extra income – more than I need – I put some into Perkins.”

He is happy to support Perkins, which he credits not only with teaching him independence, but making it possible to meet his late wife of 45 years, Mildred

Lovejoy, who happened to be in the same economics class. Hilliard has since given five additional times, converting his low-rate treasury bills to gift annuities. While the annuities will ultimately benefit Perkins, each gift also increases his personal monthly income now.

“(Perkins) gives you a guaranteed income, which to me is a convenience,” he said. “I think it’s very good.”

Today, Hilliard maintains his independent lifestyle in the Dorchester home he bought 51 years ago. He uses closed-circuit television (CCTV) to magnify and read books and mail and to write checks. He spends his free time reading and thinking.

“I’m interested in philosophy and stuff and read a few books. I’ve tried to figure out what makes the world go ‘round,” he said. “I’ve been working at that quite a while. I think I’ve got a few answers.”

# The Right Solution: Adaptive Technology



*Macular Degeneration seminar participant reads newspaper with clearer vision.*

Fourteen years ago, Gayle Yarnall launched Adaptive Technology Consulting from inside the extra bedroom of her home.

Today, her dream of growing a company that would serve as a one-stop equipment and training facility for the blind and visually impaired has exploded into something bigger than she had ever imagined.

“The new partnership exposes more people to their options,” said Yarnall, who sold her business to Perkins School for the Blind last April, officially transforming her one-time small company into Adaptive Technology: a Division of Perkins Products. “It’s going to reach a lot more people than I ever could on my own. We can give Perkins the help they need in providing adaptive technology for their students, their staff and the people they work with in the community. We know what technology is out there and we’re going to be able to bring that to Perkins.”

The company’s website offers hundreds of products for sale, including the popular video magnifier –

also known as a CCTV – that enlarges text for a visually-impaired reader. It is used widely across the Perkins campus for teaching purposes, and by individuals such as Frank Hilliard, who is featured on page 1, for everyday living.

Clients are also excited about some of the newest technologies, such as the Victor Reader Stream and the KNFB Reader, both developed within the last few years. The Victor Reader Stream allows individuals who are blind or visually impaired to download audio books from the computer and play them back in digital form – thereby eliminating audio tapes and players. The memory cards used in the Victor Reader Stream are so small that Yarnall, who is blind, carries up to 50 digitally recorded books in her purse at any given time.

“If I had 50 boxes of tapes, I would have a bookshelf filled,” she said. “Moving to this digital format is a really huge step forward.”

The KNFB Reader is a cell phone-sized machine

that scans printed text, such as a magazine or price tag, and reads it aloud. Adaptive Technology also sells another machine very similar in concept: the Colorino, seemingly created for the fashion-conscious.

“You hold it up to something and press a button, and it tells you what color something is,” Yarnall said. “It allows me to go into my closet and find the scarf that goes with the sweater. I also use it to match napkins when I’m setting a table.”

In addition to products, Adaptive Technology staff are available for training and consulting services on the Perkins campus, in Yarnall’s Salisbury office, and in schools and homes around the community. For Yarnall, it’s about helping clients and students find the equipment that works best for their needs, and showing them how much is possible with the right tools.

“We believe very strongly that there is a right product for each person,” she said. “We really try to make that perfect match happen.”



*Gayle Yarnall assists Earle Hutchinson with adaptive technology.*



## From the Chair

Simply put, technology makes a difference in everyone's life. For our students, the advancements that technology brings about are even more significant because they

allow for a more level playing field and as such a greater opportunity for independence, employment and a better quality of life.

For example, screen readers are essential technological tools for students who are blind or visually impaired. This software application allows blind users to hear textual information that is presented on screen via synthetic speech. Perkins students use this software to send and receive email, write papers and conduct research on the internet.

Another technological aid is the Braille embosser that allows students to produce hard copy Braille. Just as an ink printer produces printed pages, a Braille embosser prints or embosses Braille characters and graphics onto thick Braille paper. Students at Perkins use Braille embossers to Braille out papers and other assignments so they can proofread them prior to printing them out for a sighted teacher.

Advances in technology are changing the world every day and so are you when you establish a Charitable Gift Annuity with Perkins. Call the Office of Planned Giving at 617-972-7680 to find out how you can receive guaranteed income for life, even amidst these challenging economic times, while assisting those that are visually impaired to reach their maximum independence with the aid of technology.



## It is Possible...

Even in these uncertain times, it is possible to find comfort in the certainty of a Charitable Gift Annuity, just as Frank Hilliard did (see cover story). Look at the guaranteed returns you will receive:

### If you are age:    You will receive:

60	5.5%
65	5.7%
70	6.1%
75	6.7%
80	7.6%
85	8.9%
90 & over	10.5% ...

For the rest of your life.

To request a Charitable Gift Annuity information pamphlet and/or your free personalized illustration, please call 617-972-7680 or email [Alleather.Toure@Perkins.org](mailto:Alleather.Toure@Perkins.org).

# Celebrate Perkins!

## Holiday Concerts

Thursday, December 11, 2008  
7:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 14, 2008  
3 p.m.  
Dwight Hall

## 2008 Perkins Possibilities Gala

Thursday, May 7, 2009

## Graduation

Friday, June 12, 2009  
Dwight Hall

## Alumni Weekend begins

Friday, June 12, 2009

## A gift that costs so little ...

### Bequest

- Include a provision in your will or revocable trust.

### Life Insurance

- Designate Perkins as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy you own by asking your agent or insurance provider for a "Change of Beneficiary" form.

### IRA

- For a limited time only, make a tax-free gift from your IRA.

...but does so much.

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Founded in 1829

All we see is possibility...

