



# SOCIEVEN, Deafblind of Venezuela: 15 years



January 20th is our 15th anniversary of existence, which is a perfect moment to make a retrospective of our achievements and our evolution as an organization.

SOCIEVEN, Deafblind of Venezuela, is a non-profit association founded in 1995 by María Luz Neri de Troconis. As a member of Deafblind International (DbI), SOCIEVEN aims to improve communication skills and quality of life of deafblind people and their families.



In 1995, Deafblindness was an unknown condition for the affected and the community in general. Through great efforts we raised an organization that now in days manages four of the most important programs for deafblindness in Venezuela: "National Net SOCIEVEN and Rehabilitation Based on the Community," "Capacitating and Assistantship to Parents, Professionals and Institutions," "Give Knowledge about Deafblindness" and "Five Senses in Action (5SA), this last one created by Tactus Production for SOCIEVEN. Deafblindness has grown to be a reality in a positive way, and the deafblind people have now been understood as people who even though do not see or hear (some with visual and auditory remains,) have the possibility of communicating by different means and a great potential to be integrated efficiently in different areas.

In the last fifteen years, SOCIEVEN has located 678 deafblind people, among these, children, youngsters and adults of congenital or acquired origin. Has diagnosed 444 new cases, educated 3.320 professionals, parents and students, and has supported 465 deafblind people in special institutions of the Department of Education in 16 states. The goals set for 2015 are to diagnose and assist correctly the 4.000 estimated deafblind people in our country.

It is important to highlight that our collaborators are an essential part of this project that strives towards a Venezuela with better possibilities for disabled people. Our group of almost 1.000 ambassadors (artists, athletes, social communicators, businessmen, photographers, etc.), allied companies and institutions, state promoters, mediators, volunteers and media that have supported us from the first moment that we decided to let people know about deafblindness.



SOCIEVEN is going to celebrate its anniversary throughout the entire year. The organization started off 2010 with the publication of the "Guide to support Deafblindness" with the help and support of Polar Foundation. This guide is the first Venezuelan publication about deafblindness that is designed to family and professionals in order to inform and offer simple tools to work with this community in our country. In the same way, SOCIEVEN is going to initiate the Specialization in Deafblindness and Multiple Dissabilities in Venezuela in the Pedagogical Experimental Libertador University UPEL that has the support of International Program Hilton Perkins, the Christoffel Blindenmission (CBM) and the Special Group ICEVI. It also creates the Generically Laboratory for people with Usher Syndrome in the Orient University (UDO) located in the state of Nueva Esparta, thanks to the Organic Science Law, Technology and Innovation (LOCTI); that is supported by Fund of Property Values, LOPCO of Venezuela, and Property and Values Caracas and the Corporation OFL.

Our calendar "Five Senses in Action 2010" with the actress Elba Escobar and a congenital deafblind child, Yuralpi Contreras in the cover, continues to make an impact in the public about deafblindness. SOCIEVEN will also be teaching braille this year, manual alphabet and typewriting (dactilologic) as a communication system for deaf-blind people.



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We have to emphasize the participation of Anabella Troconis during these last 5 years. Actress, producer and leader of the Deafblind Ambassadors, and creator of the "Five Senses in Action" program, who's philosophy is: "the vision and audition of the artist, the touch and the sense of smell of the deafblind people." As a gift after 15 years, Tactus Pro and Infocus Production has given us a beautiful documentary that resumes our work in images and testimonies that you can enjoy in the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4DjfCP2vPo>

With all this said, we begin the year of our anniversary full of joy and strength, starting the year with our mission to improve the communication and quality of life of the deafblind people in Venezuela. This is a great opportunity to express our gratitude to all the staff that has been a part of SOCIEVEN, to the national and international institutions that have supported us through all these years, to the parents, professionals, deafblind children and adults in our country and the Latin-American region, to the population we have benefited and will continue to do so.

