

THE VERMONT ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

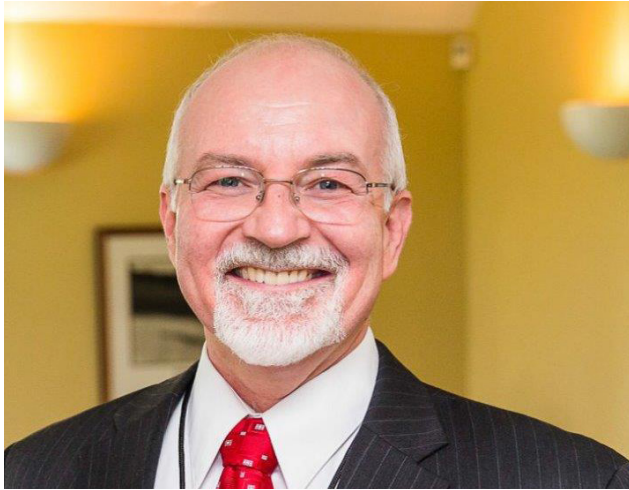


FY2017
Annual Report



“Our mission is to enable Vermonters with vision problems, whether blindness or impairment, to achieve and maintain independence.”

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired's 2017 Fiscal Year was an exciting one. We served more clients than ever before. We jump started our online communications activity and we have made some advances in our efforts to fund our mission and work.

The number of clients we serve has increased by 65% in the last 12 years. In fiscal year 2017, we served over 1,250 adults. There are an estimated 13,000 Vermonters who are currently blind or visually impaired. As the "Baby Boomer" generation ages this number is expected to increase to at least 25,000 by 2030. People are living longer and

longer so we anticipate that the increase in demand for our services will continue well into the future. As a result, our neighbors, family and friends are among those who may be coping with vision loss.

It's clear to us at VABVI that our mission and services will continue to play a critical role in the lives of many Vermonters well into the future. We are working harder than ever to ensure that all Vermonters know that we are here to support anyone living in Vermont who is experiencing vision loss.

In order to ensure people all over Vermont are aware of our services, we have increased our online presence and will continue to do so into the future. We now have a dedicated staff person to manage our communications program, and have increased our activity on social media by starting a monthly blog, e-newsletter, and twitter account. Stay tuned for more exciting advances to our online communications efforts. If you want to receive our e-newsletter please subscribe by visiting our website, under "Contact Info" and click the Subscribe button!

Our efforts to provide our services to as many Vermonters with vision loss as we can would not be possible without support from individuals, businesses, foundations and service clubs. Our fiscal year 2017 brought a close to our 90th Anniversary Fundraising Campaign. We reached our goal of \$90,000 and we could not have done it with the support of all our donors!

On behalf of our staff, Board and volunteers I would like to thank you for your support of our efforts to ensure that every Vermonter with a visual impairment can achieve everyday independence.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven Pouliot". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Steven Pouliot
Executive Director

ADULT SERVICES



Program Updates

- Adult Services bid farewell to a long time employee this past year. Jeff Schroeder has retired after over 30 years as a VABVI employee. We are very excited for him and want to thank him for all his hard work and dedication over the years. We wish you a happy and relaxing retirement Jeff!
- Adult Services welcomed Jerry Doody, Aldona Petrenas-Mann, Sharon Willie-Padnos, Jack Trainor and a volunteer assistant, Monica Sanchez.
- Our annual Technology Fair was held in April of 2017 in Winooski at the Middle and High School. Many vendors provided hands-on demonstrations of classic and new assistive technologies. There were special breakout sessions focused on the adjustment process to vision loss, iPhone accessibility and emergency preparedness.



PALS Groups

(Peer Assisted Learning and Support)

PALS Groups are held in 14 counties throughout the state, where members meet each month to discuss the practical, social and emotional challenges of vision loss. They also share coping strategies with each other on how maintain their independence! This past year, PALS Groups held events such as Dining in the Dark and Bowling in the Dark where they raised over \$1,000 and awareness for VABVI's services. We owe a huge thank you to our PALS Groups for all their time, effort and thoughtfulness!

CHILDREN SERVICES



Program Updates

HAPI

(Helping Adolescents Prepare for Independence)

The HAPI program enables Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) and Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (CVRTs) to work one-on-one with students to practice daily living skills. The transition aged student will be able to improve their abilities to complete many day to day activities such as, preparing and cooking meals, shopping independently at the grocery store, organizing, matching and washing clothes, cleaning in the home, managing finances, exploring careers and so much more. Grants for this program are matched by **The Gibney Family Foundation** to help our HAPI students gain their independence. Thank you Gibney Family Foundation!

IRLE Summer Camp

(Intensive Residential Life Experience)

This summer, VABVI brought the students sailing on Lake Champlain and they learned how to steer a sail boat for the first time. Students also went bowling, and for many it was their very first experience! While staying at University of Vermont, students explored career options by interviewing various UVM staff and inquiring about their roles. IRLE participants also had the opportunity to practice their independent living skills away from home, and establish new friendships with others through group challenges and activities.



OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS

In 2017, volunteer recognition luncheons were held in the Northern and Southern part of the state. Volunteers were recognized for their achievements, contributions, and help supporting VABVI'S mission. A luncheon was held at the South Burlington office and VABVI'S President's Award was presented to Bob Mallabar of Colchester, VT. The Northern Volunteer of the year award was presented to Kuno Olson of Burlington, VT. The Southern luncheon was held at River Valley Technical Center where the Southern Volunteer of the year was presented to Priscilla Lindberg of Cavendish, VT.

If you are interested in volunteering, contact Vicki Vest at (802) 863-1358 ext. 243 or vvest@vabvi.org



Kuno Olson accepts the Northern Volunteer of the Year Award from Steven Pouliot (Executive Director) and Vicki Vest (Volunteer Coordinator). Congratulations and thank you Kuno!

Currently, VABVI has 200 active volunteers serving many roles throughout the state. Drivers, Clerical Office Support, Development Helpers, Readers and Bingo Volunteers all play a part to make the lives of individuals with vision loss more manageable.

3,513 hours of time and talents donated by volunteers in 2017.

110,343 miles logged by volunteer drivers.

4,240 trip requests fulfilled by volunteers.

Thank you to all our volunteers!

2017 ANNUAL DINNER



Thank You to all who joined VABVI at our 2017 Annual Dinner & Auction at The Burlington Country Club on May 25, 2017. With your help we are able to continue our mission. This year, we introduced mobile bidding and sold over 80 exciting items, many of which are local to Vermont or handcrafted by clients. Thank you to all of our Silent & Live Auction Sponsors for supporting blind and visually impaired Vermonters. We hope to see you all next year!



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ENABLING VERMONTERS EVERYDAY

“ I recently worked with an 84 year old client who had developed severe diabetic retinopathy; his main goal was to be able to once again see photographs of his family. He had lost his wife a few years earlier and couldn't view his family pictures anymore. He also wanted to be able to read the sports section of the local paper and didn't want to have others read it to him. The solution was a desktop electronic magnifier called a CCTV. I brought the device in and set it up for him. I showed him how to adjust the zoom and focus on the device, and he put a picture of his wife under the camera. I'll never forget the look on his face as he began to smile and tear up. I'd be lying if I said I didn't do the same. Such a simple thing truly made all the difference in the world to this man, that day. I was then treated to the latest news about his local high school sports team. ”

Daniel E. Norris

M. Ed. Supervisor of Adult Services

“ Timeka Giroux, 9th grade braille student submitted her artwork entitled “Carving Bubbles by Touch”, in the 2017 American Printing House for the Blind InSights Art Competition, and won Honorable Mention in the category for Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Grades! Because her artwork won an award, she has been invited to travel to Louisville, Kentucky in October to receive her award in person. Congratulations Timeka! ”



Amy Gates, South Burlington TVI

Congratulations to our 2017 Client College Acceptances!

- TVI Steph Carmichael reported that client **Jack C.** was accepted into the **College Steps Program at Johnson State College.**
- TVI Sara Dessau reported that client **Abshiro I.** was accepted into **Johnson State College to major in Business and minor in Arts.**
- TVI Dan Howarth reported that client **Hunter B.** will be attending **Johnson State** and client **Myles R.** is leaning towards **Lyndon State.**

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

Online Giving

We are now accepting online donations, where donors can enjoy hassle-free donations and the knowledge that your donation is put to work immediately.

It's easy to donate online.

1. First, go to our simple, secure online donation form at <http://www.vabvi.org/make-a-donation/>
2. Next, click the Donate Here button.
3. Choose your amount. Every dollar helps.
4. Provide your contact info, your payment method and any optional details.

VABVI Leadership Circle

Initiated in 2017, the Leadership Circle recognizes individuals and families whose annual giving to VABVI is \$500 and above. By making an annual gift at the leadership level, you provide VABVI with the greatest flexibility in responding to the needs of all our clients across Vermont.

If you are interested in joining our Leadership Circle please visit <http://www.vabvi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Leadership-Circle-Letter.pdf>

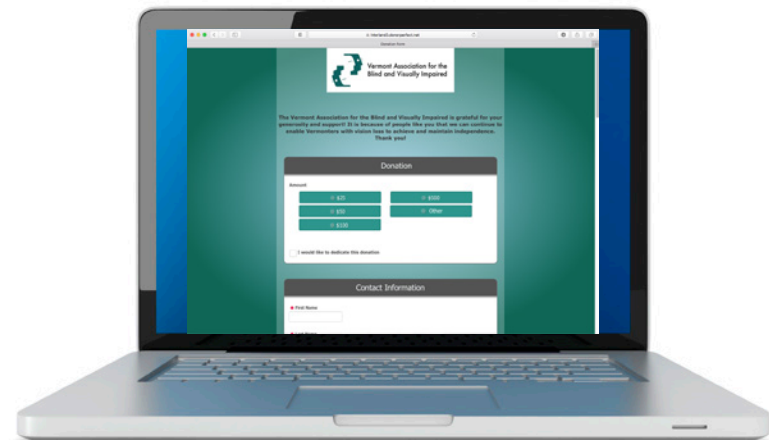
Leave Your Legacy

Many of our supporters have discovered that with a little planning, you don't need to be wealthy to make a profound difference to VABVI's mission. We're here to help you explore the various donation methods to ensure your future gift is tax effective and takes your family's needs into consideration. For more information on making VABVI a beneficiary in your Will please visit <http://www.vabvi.org/planned-giving/>

Become a VABVI Corporate Partner

If you are interested in becoming a Corporate Partner please visit <http://www.vabvi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/VABVI-Corporate-Partnership-Program.pdf>

For more information on ways you can support VABVI, please contact Erika Farmer, Development Director at efarmer@vabvi.org or 802-863-1358 ext. 224.



COMMUNITY NEWS



VABVI is now active within the Twitter community at: www.twitter.com/VABVI_
Follow us to stay up to date on events and news!

#HowEyeDolt Campaign Launch: Dan Norris (Supervisor of Adult Services) started the #HowEyeDoIt online campaign to create awareness and feature visually impaired or blind individuals showing their independence. This online campaign is featured on our Blog, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter in hopes to start a national trend that shows the world that people who are visually impaired or blind can do the same things everyone else can, just in a different way.

VABVI Blog: Our updated website now features a Blog – where visitors can view the most recent news, resources, success stories, updates and events happening within the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Visit today at www.vabvi.org, under “Community&News!”



To sign up for our monthly eNewsletter, visit our website and click the subscribe button under “Contact Info”.

Donor Recognitions

SymQuest: “SymQuest Group, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Konica Minolta Business Solutions, U.S.A., Inc., recently hosted their 21st Annual Golf Tournament to benefit VABVI. “For 21 years SymQuest has been giving back to the community through our annual tournament.” commented SymQuest President and CEO, Larry Sudbay. “This year we were deeply honored to support VABVI, and help expand their mission to every Vermonter in need of their services.” VABVI wants to issue a very sincere thank you to SymQuest, for their support and donation of \$9,050. We are so grateful!



Order of the Eastern Star – Grand Chapter of Vermont

This past year, VABVI was chosen as the Stars of Service project recipient, and they donated \$16,514 to our cause. We want to give The Order of the Eastern Star a very heartfelt thank you for supporting our mission! The Order of the Eastern Star is an international fraternal organization in which both men and women may belong. Eastern Star is a social Order comprised of persons with religious convictions and spiritual values, but is not a religion. Its appeals rest in the true beauty of the refreshing and character-building lessons that are portrayed in its ritualistic work. A deep fraternal bond exists between its members. Each year, the Grand Matron and Grand Patron choose a charity to support.

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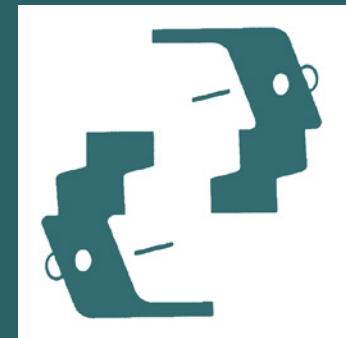
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Kevin Wood



FINANCIALS

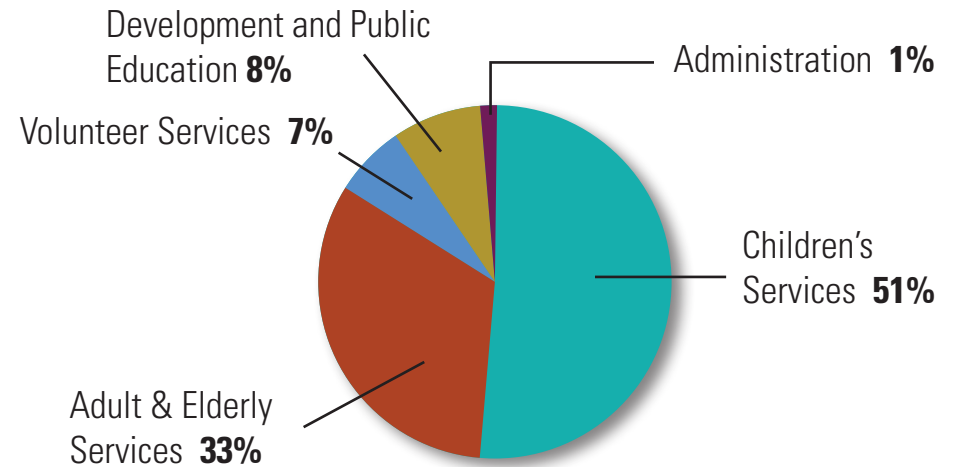
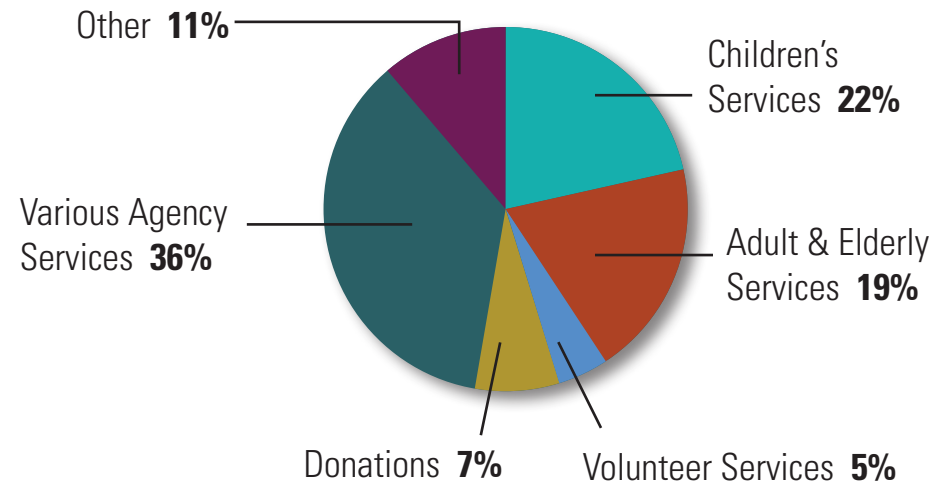
July 2016 through June 2017

Revenue

Children's Services Grants	646,973
Adult & Elderly Services	569,717
Volunteer Services	139,207
Donations	223,143
Various Agency Services	1,085,317
Other	335,624
Total Revenue	2,999,981

Expenses

Children's Services	1,572,213
Adult & Elderly Services	998,862
Volunteer Services	200,415
Development and Public Education	254,367
Administration	34,740
Total Expenses	3,060,597



*“Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.”
– Mark Twain*



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Annual Report Creation

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