



MOVING MOUNTAINS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND
2021 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dan Spoone
President



Eric Bridges
Executive Director

In 2021, the American Council of the Blind (ACB) celebrated its 60th anniversary. The year afforded us a chance to reflect on our 60 years of success, offering enough distance to admire the rising range that we built in the name of independence and opportunity. This horizon, drawn with its peaks and valleys, is a reminder of the long journey that often accompanies advocacy and the heights we can achieve.

This past year served as the summit for our long journey. The introduction of the COVID-19 vaccine offered us great hope, but at the same time, the blind and low vision community lacked access to in-home COVID-19 tests that could be used safely and independently. In July, the ACB community rallied together for our second virtual conference and convention, embracing voice, choice and collaboration. And thanks to our newly retooled communications across the organization, the whole world could finally see the progress that ACB and its members continue to make toward expanding equal opportunity, inclusion and independence for all people who are blind and low vision.



Of course, our successful climb was made possible through the many volunteer hours donated by our members, who helped launch over 5,000 virtual community meetings and lead the expansive growth of the ACB Media Network. At the same time, our private sector partners continue to help strengthen our bedrock and elevate our advocacy. From our Health Heroes who came on board for the Get Up & Get Moving campaign, to the industry giants in the entertainment and tech industry who contributed to the inaugural ACB Audio Description Awards Gala, we were able to reach new audiences across the globe and make new friends who now walk alongside us in our journey.

Indeed, looking back on the past 60 years, we have a lot to be thankful for as we continue on our journey. Yes, there will be mountains and valleys along the way. But by traveling together, we know that true equality will meet us all on the other side of the mountain.



Celebrating 60 Years of Success

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021

- Members contributed more than \$1M in volunteer hours
- Held the first ACB Audio Description Awards Gala, featuring celebrity guests and streamed live on the NBC Peacock platform
- Received a significant in-kind contribution from Verizon Media, which provided free advertising space on Verizon and its subsidiary platforms
- Celebrated a year of community, hosting over 5K events
- Landmark agreement with HBO Max initiated the release of audio described content and enhanced accessibility of web and mobile platforms
- Commemorated our 60 year anniversary and hosted the 60th annual conference and convention virtually in July
- Launched newly branded ACB Media Network along with a new website to support ACB Media content

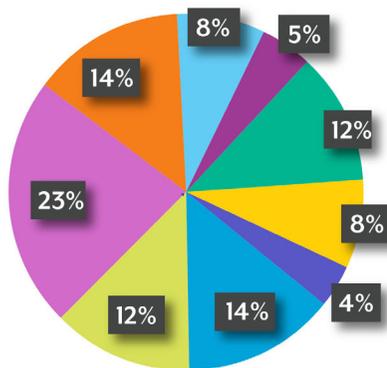


FINANCIALS

REVENUE	
Contributions & Grants	\$503,237
Program Fees	\$482,006
Membership Dues	\$57,535
Net Investment Return	\$522,048
Other Income	\$649,624
Thrift stores	\$194,479
Total Revenue	\$2,408,929
EXPENSES	
Program Services	\$1,526,760
Management & General	\$263,276
Fundraising	\$163,908
Total Expenses	\$1,953,944
Total Net	\$454,985

ASSETS	
Current Assets	\$365,140
Investments	\$5,523,118
Other Assets	\$27,454
Property & Equipment	\$83,732
Total	\$5,999,444
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	\$592,485
Net Assets (Unrestricted)	\$3,827,018
Net assets (Restricted)	\$1,579,941
Total	\$5,999,444

Program Expense by Percentage



- Fundraising
- Scholarships
- Convention
- Audio Description Project
- Information & Peer Support
- Advocacy
- Membership Services
- Public Awareness
- Management & General

ACB PROGRAM UPDATES



ADVOCACY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Worked closely with federal, state and corporate partners to further key policies impacting people who are blind and low vision. Successes include expanding healthcare protections amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing access to remote accessible voting, advocating for greater availability of audio-described content, promoting pedestrian safety through the installation of accessible pedestrian signals, and improving access to accessible health and wellness resources.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION PROJECT (ADP)

Maintained robust enrollment in the virtual Audio Description Institute, held the annual BADIE (Benefits of Audio Description in Education) contest and ADP Achievement Awards, partnered with the National Park Service and University of Hawaii's UniDescription Project to promote accessibility in national parks, and posted information on thousands of streamed programs, television listings, and DVDs to the ADP website.

CONVENTION

Held virtually in July 2021, the 60th Annual Convention featured over 150 workshops, seminars, and business meetings held throughout the convention. Attendees participated by attending sessions live or listening later to podcasted sessions. There was a virtual exhibit hall and many virtual tours for registrants to attend. For the first time, all ACB eligible members had the opportunity to vote during ACB's business meeting.

INFORMATION, REFERRAL AND PEER SUPPORT

Provided vital information to people who are blind and low vision as well as supporters. Informational and advocacy related inquiries range from accessible and assistive technology, local blindness resources, federal and civil disability rights related laws and regulations, and many other vital areas.

MEMBERSHIP

Building connections through the Be My Eyes app, ACB Media, Clubhouse, and community activities with our affiliates widened our reach to the blind community and elevated the overall member experience. Through ACB's community platform, volunteers learned how to host and manage over 5K community events ranging from social to educational, peer support, and topic-driven.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Implemented a strategic communications plan in 2021, along with an editorial calendar. ACB Radio was rebranded as the ACB Media Network, with significant focus on podcast distribution of ACB programs and streaming over Alexa-enabled devices.

ACB SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Awarded \$97,000 across 24 scholarships to blind post-secondary students. Other award programs, such as the JPMorgan Chase Leadership Fellows and DKM First-Timer awards, foster future leaders through mentoring, training, and peer development.

STATE AFFILIATES

Alabama Council of the Blind

Arizona Council of the Blind

Arkansas Council of the Blind

California Council of the Blind

Colorado Council of the Blind and
Visually Impaired

ACB of Connecticut

Delaware Council of the Blind and
Visually Impaired

District of Columbia Council of
the Blind

Florida Council of the Blind

Georgia Council of the Blind

Hawaii Association of the Blind

Illinois Council of the Blind

ACB of Indiana

Iowa Council of the United Blind

Kansas Association for the Blind &
Visually Impaired

Bluegrass Council of the Blind

Kentucky Council of the Blind

Louisiana Council of the Blind

ACB of Maine

ACB of Maryland

Bay State Council of the Blind

Michigan Council of the Blind &
Visually Impaired

ACB of Minnesota

Mississippi Council of the Blind

Missouri Council of the Blind

ACB of Nebraska

Nevada Council of the Blind

New Jersey Council of the Blind

ACB of New Mexico

ACB of New York

North Carolina Council of the Blind

North Dakota Association of
the Blind

ACB of Ohio

Oklahoma Council of the Blind

ACB of Oregon

Pennsylvania Council of the Blind

South Dakota Association of
the Blind

Tennessee Council of the Blind

ACB of Texas

Utah Council of the Blind

Vermont Council of the Blind

ACB of Virginia

Washington Council of the Blind

Mountain State Council of the Blind

ACB of Wisconsin

Wyoming Council of the Blind

SPECIAL-INTEREST AFFILIATES

Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss

American Association of Blind Teachers

American Association of Visually Impaired Attorneys

ACB Diabetics in Action

ACB Families

ACB Government Employees

ACB Lions

ACB Next Generation

ACB Radio Amateurs

ACB Students

Blind Information Technology Specialists

Blind LGBT Pride International

Braille Revival League

Council of Citizens with Low Vision International

Friends-in-Art of ACB

Guide Dog Users, Inc.

Independent Visually Impaired Entrepreneurs

Library Users of America

Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America

Visually Impaired Veterans of America

ACB wishes to extend a special thanks to all our generous contributors with particular thanks to the following foundations:

Aid Association for the Blind of the District of Columbia

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