**American Council of the Blind (ACB)**

**Strategic Action Plan**

**April 2017**

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# Introduction

The American Council of the Blind (ACB) is committed to continuous improvement in its efforts to increase the independence, security, equality of opportunity, and quality of life, for all blind and visually-impaired people. To help achieve this objective, ACB has developed a Strategic Action Plan to help guide the organization across five critical focus areas, including:

* Advocacy, Legislation, and Policy
* Affiliates and Membership
* Convention and Meetings
* Development
* Marketing and Communications

The ACB Strategic Action Plan was developed by the ACB Board of Directors, the ACB Executive Director, ACB National Office staff, and select representatives from ACB Special Interest Affiliates. With guidance given from the ACB Board of Directors in October of 2016, the action planning teams participated in a two day workshop in January of 2017 to refine priorities and begin to develop the individual action plans. In a continuation of these efforts, the action planning teams continued to develop the action plans through March of 2017, at which point the action plans for each focus area were consolidated into the overall ACB Strategic Action Plan.

Each of the five action planning teams will be responsible for the implementation of the action plans developed within their focus area. Each action planning team identified a set of goals, associated actions, timeframes, and accountable leaders to help drive change within the focus areas. Additionally, the action planning teams identified any resource requirements (e.g., people, funding), measures of success, and an evaluation process for each goal to ensure that the organization is well positioned to achieve the goals of the ACB Strategic Plan.

The individual action plans are presented by focus area, and each focus area can be accessed directly by selecting the hyperlink below:

* [Advocacy, Legislation, and Policy](#_Advocacy,_Legislation,_and)
* [Affiliates and Membership](#_Affiliates_and_Membership)
* [Convention and Meetings](#_Convention_and_Meetings)
* [Development](#_Development)
* [Marketing and Communications](#_Marketing_and_Communications)

# Summary of Goals

**Advocacy, Legislation, and Policy**

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| **Goal 1:** Develop short and long-term strategies on a variety of civil and equal rights policies, including but not limited to, voter access, transportation access, special education, medical care, employment, vocational rehabilitation services and environmental access. |
| **Goal 2:** Increase information accessibility and usability of products and services. |
| **Goal 3:** Work with the Federal Courts and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to gain accessible currency. |

**Affiliates and Membership**

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| **Goal 1:** Facilitate the establishment and maintenance of robust and well managed affiliates through training related to financial viability, membership, fundraising and advocacy issues. |
| **Goal 2:** Facilitate development of a more knowledgeable and engaged membership and an increase in ACB membership through training teleconferences and webinars. |
| **Goal 3:** Increase overall ACB membership by 3% year to year and diversify ACB’s membership community through actions designed to target the minority, senior, non-English speaking, and youth communities. |

**Convention and Meetings**

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| --- |
| **Goal 1:** Provide virtual attendance to ensure opportunity for a more diverse group of people to participate and take advantage of the many workshops, seminars and other learning opportunities available at the National Convention. Additionally, provide the ability to register and measure attendance of virtual attendees for sponsors, continuing education, and targeted programming. |
| **Goal 2:** Implement continuing education credits program at the ACB National Convention to attract counselors, O&M Specialists, TVI’s and other professionals as they seek to fulfill their continuing education requirements. |
| **Goal 3:** Better accommodate the needs of convention attendees, including various subsets of convention attendees such as scholarship winners, DKM winners, senior attendees, leadership fellows, attendees needing reasonable accommodations. |

**Development**

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| **Goal 1:** Develop 24 relationships with new foundations (i.e., corporate, family, and private foundations) and grow the number of individual donors by 15%. |
| **Goal 2:** Finalize and implement the ACB Advisory Council Strategy, including the development of supporting resources (e.g., Council Charter, ACB Information Packet) and the identification of potential Advisory Council Members. |
| **Goal 3:** Expand the MMS by at least 20 new participants and expand the Planned and Major Gifts Programs to include the addition of at least 10 new donors, the hosting of at least two “Get Acquainted” meetings, the publishing of at least three articles related to planned giving, and the briefing of 25 affiliates, including six in person, on the MMS program. |

**Marketing and Communications**

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| **Goal 1:** Publish an integrated ACB Communications Plan, including key messages (e.g., ACB Elevator Speech, ACB Value Proposition), style guidance, roles and standard processes, target audiences, communication channels, and recurring communication campaigns. Design and institutionalize standard templates (e.g., MS Word, MS PowerPoint, print materials). |

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# Advocacy, Legislation, and Policy

Working towards ACB’s longstanding advocacy goals, the organization is determined to impact current and future civil and equal rights policies. Additionally, ACB is committed to working with the Federal Government and corporations to ensure equal access and usability of products and services.

**Goal 1**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

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| --- |
| Focus: Advocacy, Legislation, and Policy |
| Goal/End Result: Develop short and long-term strategies on a variety of civil and equal rights policies, including but not limited to, voter access, transportation access, special education, medical care, employment, vocational rehabilitation services and environmental access. |
| Accountable Leader: ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

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| --- | --- |
| Action 1 (Voter Access): Design an action planning toolkit (Voter Rights Guide) with a focus on voter accessibility for people who are blind, to be used by state and local affiliates in effectively lobbying with their Secretary of State. The toolkit will contain background information on the different types of accessible machines, best practices, and what regulations are still holding and withstanding for states on a national level; and will be distributed in all accessible communication formats.  Timeframe: Q1 2018 | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, Advocacy Team |
| Action 2 (Transportation): Assure that autonomous vehicles are accessible and usable by people who are blind through participation in government and private sector meetings moving toward the launch of autonomous vehicles and by working to ensure that safety standards put in place do not cause harm to pedestrians who are blind.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, ACB Transportation Committee, ACB Environmental Access Committee |
| Action 3 (Transportation): Petition Congress to develop a Congressional sign-on letter requesting that the Department of Transportation move forward on rulemaking to prohibit the acceptance of fraudulent service animals on aircraft.  Timeframe: No later than August 1st, 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, Guide Dog Users, Inc., Advocacy Team |
| Action 4 (Transportation): Continue to work with the Department of Transportation on the implementation of accessible in-flight entertainment systems through the continued participation in a working group focused on completing a report on best practices for the accessibility of in-flight entertainment systems.  Timeframe: Mid-November 2017 Report to DOT, then ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, ACB Information Access Committee |
| Action 5 (Transportation): Continue to engage the Federal Aviation Administration on airport accessibility for people who are blind or visually impaired.  Timeframe: May 2017 – September 2018 | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, Guide Dog Users, Inc., ACB Transportation Committee |
| Action 6 (Transportation): Advocate against discrimination by Transportation Networking Companies (e.g., Uber, Lyft) against blind passengers, including the denial of rides to those who use service animals.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, Guide Dog Users, Inc., ACB Transportation Committee |
| Action 7 (Transportation): Continue outreach to passenger rail providers (e.g., Amtrak) to ensure the accessibility of new rail cars that are to come out in the next four to five years.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, ACB Transportation Committee |
| Action 8 (Transportation): Develop an action plan for paratransit sustainability.  Timeframe: TBD based on input from partnering organizations | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, ACB Transportation Committee, transit and disability partners |
| Action 9 (Special Education): Continue ongoing educational activities for various audiences on special education topic areas of concern, including updating resource materials and teleconferences around areas of concern for ACB members; assisting the American Foundation for the Blind in amplifying advocacy efforts around the Cogswell-Macy Act; continuing to monitor the political climate around special education and amplify advocacy efforts when appropriate; and engaging with such entities as Vision Serve Alliance, American Foundation for the Blind and other stakeholders around their outreach to parents, children who are blind, and all those they serve to build a coalition around securing appropriate pre-employment transition services for youth who are blind/visually impaired.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Special Education Task Force |
| Action 10 (Vocational Rehabilitation): Continue to work with coalitions around Ability One and homemaker outcomes, push for a legislative solution to refresh the Older Individuals with Blindness Program, and advocate for protection of the Randolph-Sheppard Program priority.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Staff, ACB Rehab Taskforce, Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss Affiliate |
| Action 11 (Employment): Reengage the participation of the ACB Employment Committee to develop an action plan around expanding employment opportunities for individuals who are blind; work with National Industries for the Blind on efforts to increase domestic employment opportunities for people who are blind; continue to advocate for Federal employment programs for people who are blind; and engage with the Marketing and Communications team to develop short success stories of people who are blind and employed.  Timeframe: Employment Action Plan, January 2018; ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, ACB President, ACB Executive Director, ACB Employment Committee |
| Action 12 (Healthcare): Conduct outreach to state affiliate leadership about healthcare reform priorities and develop state grassroots advocacy plans, reintroduce efforts around the passage of the Low Vision Devices Demonstration Project; take steps to ensure that CMS is providing their materials in accessible formats; work with Congress to put forward a GAO report on the CMS issue, continue legal and structured negotiation efforts around access to healthcare; and engage with the ACB Healthcare Taskforce to review Access Board rules concerning medical equipment and develop comments supporting inclusion of accessibility for people who are blind/visually impaired.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Staff, ACB Healthcare Taskforce |
| Action 13 (Environmental Access): Continue to work with stakeholders on international standards for wayfinding and associated technologies; continue advocacy efforts around the expansion and standardization of accessible pedestrian signals and roundabouts; and monitor industry’s timelines for implementation of quiet car sound standards.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): Environmental Access Committee |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

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| --- |
| People: ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, Advocacy Team, ACB Transportation Committee, ACB Environmental Access Committee, ACB Staff, ACB Healthcare Taskforce, ACB Employment Committee, Marketing and Communications team, ACB Rehab Taskforce, Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss Affiliate, ACB Special Education Task Force, and Guide Dog Users, Inc. |
| Funds: Miscellaneous funds related to advocacy work and outreach – TBD |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

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| --- |
| Evidence of Success: ACB will have developed short and long-term strategies on a variety of civil and equal rights policies, including but not limited to, voter access, transportation access, special education, medical care, employment, vocational rehabilitation services, and environmental access. |
| Evaluation Process: The ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, the ACB Executive Director, and the ACB Board of Directors will determine the extent to which the advocacy-related strategies have successfully been developed. |

**Goal 2**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

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| --- |
| Focus: Advocacy, Legislation, and Policy |
| Goal/End Result: Increase information accessibility and usability of products and services. |
| Accountable Leader: ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Advocate for the release of Department of Justice (DOJ) final rules applying requirements for web accessibility to Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs |
| Action 2: Work with private sector entities to increase accessibility of information across channels including the web and mobile devices.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, ACB Legal Team, Information Access Committee |
| Action 3: Continue working with manufacturers to make home electronics and appliances accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, ACB Legal Team, Information Access Committee |
| Action 4: Continue building and enhancing relationships with mainstream technology companies, educating them on how to make their products and services more accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Executive Director, others as designated |
| Action 5: Continue building and enhancing relationships with specialized assistive technology companies, working collaboratively to ensure that their products and services are affordable and available to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Executive Director, others as designated |
| Action 6: Continue working with organizations such as museums, television and internet content providers, and others to increase the amount of audio described content available.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Audio Description Project, Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

|  |
| --- |
| People: ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, ACB Executive Director ACB Audio Description Project, ACB Legal Team, and ACB Information Access Committee |
| Funds: Miscellaneous funds related to advocacy work and corporate outreach – TBD |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

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| Evidence of Success: The Federal Government and major corporations will make accessibility and usability a key component in the development of products and services. |
| Evaluation Process: The ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, the ACB Executive Director, and the ACB Board of Directors will evaluate, on an annual basis, the organization’s efforts to impact change. |

**Goal 3**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

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| --- |
| Focus: Advocacy, Legislation, and Policy |
| Goal/End Result: Work with the Federal Courts and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to gain accessible currency. |
| Accountable Leader: ACB Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Continue to work with ACB counsel on the currency case and on its appeal as well as its legal strategies for the court to require action by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.  Timeframe: Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Legal counsel, ACB Executive Director, ACB President |
| Action 2: Continue to work with the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing on the distribution of talking currency readers to people who are blind or visually impaired.  Timeframe: Ongoing through January 2020 | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Executive Director, Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, ACB President |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

|  |
| --- |
| People: ACB Legal Counsel, ACB Executive Director, Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, and ACB President |
| Funds: Miscellaneous funds related to advocacy work and distribution of talking currency readers – TBD |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

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| --- |
| Evidence of Success: The Bureau of Engraving and Printing will circulate accessible U.S. currency. |
| Evaluation Process: The ACB Executive Director, Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs, and ACB President will evaluate, on an annual basis, the organization’s efforts to gain accessible U.S. currency. |

# Affiliates and Membership

In support of ACB’s affiliates and membership, the organization is committed to providing relevant training and resources to affiliate leaders and ACB members. Additionally, ACB will work to promote membership growth through various actions designed to increase membership at all levels of the organization.

**Goal 1**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

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| --- |
| Focus: Affiliates and Membership |
| Goal/End Result: Facilitate the establishment and maintenance of robust and well managed affiliates through training related to financial viability, membership, fundraising and advocacy issues. |
| Accountable Leader: Membership Committee Chair |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Examine, and if necessary reconfigure, the Membership Committee to support this goal.  Timeframe: 30 days following the 2017 National Convention | Accountable Leader(s):  ACB President |
| Action 2: Establish a training template for conducting a series of teleconferences on best practices for maintaining healthy affiliates and special interest affiliates.  Timeframe: 3 months following the 2017 National Convention | Accountable Leader(s):  ACB President, ACB  Chief Accountant |
| Action 3: Establish an e-mail list (as well as an alternative means for affiliate leaders who do not communicate by e-mail) for affiliate and special interest Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers, and Executive Directors for the specific purpose of informing them of opportunities for affiliate training teleconferences.    Timeframe: August 1, 2017, and when updates are made moving forward | Accountable Leader(s):  Larry Turnbull, Braille Forum Editor |
| Action 4: Conduct, record, and post the initial affiliate and special interest training teleconference.  Timeframe: January 15, 2018 | Accountable Leader(s):  Membership Chair |
| Action 5: Employ a dedicated affiliate and special interest relations staff person to support affiliate and special interest maintenance and growth.    Timeframe: January 1, 2019 | Accountable Leader(s):  Executive Director |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

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| --- |
| People: Chief Accountant, Braille Forum Editor, ACB President, Larry Turnbull, Membership Committee Chair |
| Funds: Costs related to the utilization of a commercial conference line, costs associated with the additional staff member, and costs associated with the production and distribution of supporting materials. |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

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| --- |
| Evidence of Success: ACB will see an increase in the number of affiliates meeting Federal and state guidelines, an increase in the number of affiliates and participation in teleconferences, and membership growth within participating affiliates. |
| Evaluation Process: Working with the ACB Minneapolis staff, determine the number of affiliates that are meeting Federal and state guidelines, analyze the attendance statistics from the conference calls and from the list of affiliates attending the calls, and determine any membership growth within the participating affiliates. |

**Goal 2**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

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| --- |
| Focus: Affiliates and Membership |
| Goal/End Result: Facilitate development of a more knowledgeable and engaged membership and an increase in ACB membership through training teleconferences and webinars. |
| Accountable Leaders: Affiliate & Membership team, Membership committee, Executive Director and ACB President |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Develop focus group questions to obtain member and potential member input and insight.  Timeframe: Mid-May to Mid-June 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, Membership Committee |
| Action 2: Conduct a series of teleconferences, online and in-person focus groups during the national convention, to determine what topics will encourage and empower members and potential members to become active and productive contributors to ACB.  Timeframe: July to October 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, Membership Committee |
| Action 3: Assess the input from teleconferences, online discussions, and focus groups to establish topics for training and webinars.  Timeframe: November 2017 to January 2018 | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, Membership Committee, ACB Executive Director |
| Action 4: Develop member training and webinars based on the identified topics.  Timeframe: February to March 2018 | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, Membership Committee, ACB President |
| Action 5: Conduct membership training and webinars.  Timeframe: April 2018 and quarterly thereafter | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, Membership Committee |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

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| --- |
| People: Affiliate and Membership team, Membership Committee, ACB Executive Director, ACB President |
| Funds: Costs related to the utilization of a commercial conference line, miscellaneous funding related to the Executive Director’s time, and costs associated with the production and distribution of supporting materials. |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

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| Evidence of Success: Members will actively participate in teleconferences and webinars, there will be an increased interest from the membership in serving on committee and participating in ACB-sponsored events and activities, and membership will increase. |
| Evaluation Process: Analyze the attendance statistics from teleconference calls and webinars, review membership statistics, and review the number of attendees at ACB events and activities. Additionally, work with the ACB President to ascertain any increased interest in committee participation. |

**Goal 3**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

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| --- |
| Focus: Affiliates and Membership |
| Goal/End Result: Increase overall ACB membership by 3% year to year and to diversify ACB’s membership community through actions designed to target the minority, senior, non-English speaking, and youth communities. |
| Accountable Leader: Affiliate & Membership team and Membership committee |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Working with the Marketing and Communications team, define the benefits of ACB membership, develop an ACB Elevator Pitch, catalog and publicize experiential events across all ACB affiliates (e.g., Rose Bowl Parade in California, audio described plays in Massachusetts); and consider the development of new membership benefits (e.g., online and merchant discounts, continuing education credits at the National Convention).  Timeframe: April to December 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, Membership Committee, Marketing and Communications team |
| Action 2: Work with the ACB Membership Committee to establish a subcommittee dedicated to non-English speaking members, with an initial emphasis on Spanish speaking members.  Timeframe: May 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, Subcommittee Chair, Membership Committee Chair |
| Action 3: In conjunction with the newly formed subcommittee, consider the establishment of a special interest affiliate for persons whose primary language is Spanish.  Timeframe: June to August 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, Subcommittee Chair, Membership Committee Chair |
| Action 4: In partnership with the newly formed subcommittee, begin the process of establishing Spanish language resources, including, but not limited to, Spanish language option on ACB phone line, Spanish language version of the Braille Forum, Spanish language station of ACB radio, and a Spanish language option for ACB.org (e.g., installation of Google Translate).  Timeframe: June to Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate & Membership team, ACB Technology Lead(s) (for website, radio, and phone), ACB Braille Forum Lead(s) |
| Action 5: Identify points of contact at AARP to engage the organization in discussions related to ACB and how the organizations can work together; additionally, work with to have a representative from the organization attend the ACB National Convention.  Timeframe: 2018 ACB National Convention | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, ACB Executive Director, Conventions Committee Chair |
| Action 6: Design and launch a membership campaign aimed at the adult children of recently blinded or visually-impaired seniors, including specifically designed brochures, booklets, and other marketing materials.  Timeframe: January 2019 | Accountable Leader(s): Affiliate and Membership team, Marketing and Communications team |
| Action 7: Conduct an exploratory study on how membership size could be impacted by the changing of ACB’s name to include a reference to “visually-impaired.” Specifically, include an analysis of state and special interest affiliates that have gone through this process (e.g., Colorado, Kansas) as well as any potential negative impact on ACB’s brand recognition.  Timeframe: July 2017 to February 2018 | Accountable Leader: Affiliate and Membership team, ACB Executive Director, ACB President, ACB Board of Directors, Marketing and Communications team |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

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| --- |
| People: Affiliate and Membership team, Membership Committee Chair, ACB Technology Lead(s), Convention Committee Chair, Marketing and Communications team, representatives of special interest affiliates, ACB Executive Director, ACB President, and ACB Board of Directors |
| Funds: Funding will most likely be required for the addition of a Spanish language option on the ACB phone line, a Spanish language version of the Braille Forum, a Spanish language station of ACB radio, and a Spanish language option for ACB.org. Additional funding may be required for the membership campaign aimed at the adult children of recently blinded or visually-impaired seniors |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

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| Evidence of Success: ACB will have increased the total membership by 3% year to year. |
| Evaluation Process: Working with the ACB Finance Office in Minnesota, annual membership numbers will be analyzed at the end of the calendar year to determine changes in the number of ACB members. |

# Convention and Meetings

To enrich the convention experience and expand opportunities for attendance, ACB is focused on increasing virtual attendance capabilities and offering a continuing education credit program at the ACB National Convention. Furthermore, the organization has outlined a plan to better accommodate the various needs of convention attendees.

**Goal 1**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

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| --- |
| Focus: Convention and Meetings |
| Goal/End Result: Provide virtual attendance to ensure opportunity for a more diverse group of people to participate and take advantage of the many workshops, seminars, and other learning opportunities available at the National Convention. Additionally, provide the ability to register and measure attendance of virtual attendees for sponsors, continuing education, and targeted programming. |
| Accountable Leader: Convention Coordinator or designee |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

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| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Adapt Convention software to accommodate virtual registration and management. Upon login, choose on-site or virtual track, modify event file to handle on-site or virtual, and to price on-site or virtual, modify reporting to account for on-site or virtual.  Timeframe: Mid-2017, with testing in early 2018 | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Minneapolis staff, Electric Eye |
| Action 2: Technology enhancements to ACB Radio, ACB Link, ACB Events, Audio Now, etc. to accommodate virtual attendance. Plan recording and streaming of needed sessions in cooperation with Convention Committee.  Acquire needed personnel and recording resources.  Timeframe: 2018 ACB National Convention | Accountable Leader(s): ACB Radio lead, ACB Link lead |
| Action 3: Enhance ACB.org to accommodate and archive virtual programming.  Timeframe: 2018 ACB National Convention | Accountable Leader(s): ACB IT Committee Chair, Louisville Web Group |
| Action 4: Add a communications focused person to the Convention Committee to communicate and distribute information provided by Convention Coordinator on this project as well as general convention information to membership through various ACB communication channels.  Timeframe: Mid-2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Janet Dickelman, Marketing and Communications team |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

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| --- |
| People: Convention Coordinator, Convention Committee, Minneapolis staff, ACB Radio, ACB Link, Social Media staff, Electric Eye, Louisville Web Group. |
| Funds: Fund the modifications to the websites, ACB Radio, ACB Link, etc. Fund needed personnel to attend convention to do needed recording. Fund any needed recording equipment. Funding is not an insurmountable issue. |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

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| --- |
| Evidence of Success: Ability to attend the 2018 National Conference virtually and the number of virtual registrants. |
| Evaluation Process: Track virtual attendance over ACB Radio, ACB Link, and Audio Now. |

**Goal 2**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

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| --- |
| Focus: Convention and Meetings |
| Goal/End Result: Implement continuing education credits program at the ACB National Convention to attract counselors, O&M Specialists, TVI’s and other professionals as they seek to fulfill their continuing education requirements. |
| Accountable Leader: Convention Coordinator or designee |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Work with Association for Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind (AER) to determine program basics.  Timeframe: No later than Q3 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Leslie Spoone, Carla Ruschival |
| Action 2: Determine sessions and programs applicable to the CEC program. Submit applications 90 days before convention, including documentation of each program (speakers, topics, class outline) and a separate application for each program.  Timeframe: January 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Leslie Spoone, Carla Ruschival |
| Action 3: Develop internal policy and procedures to legitimize the program, including management process, an accounting of people registering, issuing of materials, managing attendance, issuing certifications and maintaining historical records (5 year retention).  Timeframe: December 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Janet Dickelman, Leslie Spoone, Carla Ruschival, ACB Minneapolis Staff |
| Action 4: Add communications person to Convention Committee to communicate and distribute information provided by Convention Coordinator on this project as well as general convention information to membership through various ACB communication channels.  Timeframe: Mid-2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Janet Dickelman, Marketing and Communications team |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

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| --- |
| People: Janet Dickelman, Leslie Spoone, Carla Ruschival, DC Staff, Minneapolis Staff, and Marketing and Communications team |
| Funds: $225 application fee. $50 per class day submission fee. Funding could be underwritten with sponsorship opportunities. Funding is not prohibitive. |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

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| --- |
| Evidence of Success: The availability of CECs at the ACB National Convention and the number of people registering for the CEC program. |
| Evaluation Process: Each attendee will be asked to complete an evaluation of each class. |

**Goal 3**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

|  |
| --- |
| Focus: Convention and Meetings |
| Goal/End Result: Better accommodate the needs of convention attendees, including various subsets of convention attendees such as scholarship winners, DKM winners, senior attendees, leadership fellows, attendees needing reasonable accommodations. |
| Accountable Leader: Convention Coordinator or Designee |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Develop policies to mentor scholarship winners and DKM winners attending convention to better monitor their activities while at the convention and to facilitate more involvement for the scholarship and DKM winners.  Timeframe: December 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Janet Dickelman, Garrett, Simeon, Carla Ruschival,  Leslie Spoone, Lane Waters, Lori Sarff |
| Action 2: Revisit and revise National Convention Volunteer Policies.  Timeframe: December 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Benjamin, Janet Dickelman, Carla Ruschival, Leslie Spoone, Lane Waters, Lori Sarff |
| Action 3: Develop a program to offer personal assistants on an hourly or daily basis who would be paid by recipient and who would be qualified to provide certain types or levels of services. This would be a professional relationship, including an evaluation process by attendees utilizing service.  Timeframe: 2018 National Convention (Pilot) | Accountable Leader(s): Benjamin, Janet Dickelman, Carla Ruschival, Leslie Spoone, Lane Waters, Lori Sarff, Convention Committee |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

|  |
| --- |
| People: Scholarship Committee Leadership, DKM Committee Leadership, Convention Committee Leadership, Minneapolis Staff, and Alexandria Staff. |
| Funds: Costs could be underwritten by a combination of sponsorships and charges to attendees. Possible affiliation with a third-party provider. |
| Other: Liability concerns need to be addressed. Background checks of providers would need to be considered. |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

|  |
| --- |
| Evidence of Success: Successful implementation of programs into convention and utilization of programs by attendees. |
| Evaluation Process: Evaluation of programs by attendees. |

# Development

In recognition of the critical role a sound development strategy plays in a successful ACB, the organization will focus on expanding its donor base with foundations, planned and major gifts, and the ACB Monthly Monetary Support (MMS) program. Additionally, ACB will launch an Advisory Council to provide subject matter expertise from outside leaders and organizations.

**Goal 1**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

|  |
| --- |
| Focus: Development |
| Goal/End Result: Develop 24 relationships with new foundations (i.e., corporate, family, and private foundations) and grow the number of individual donors by 15%. |
| Accountable Leader(s): Development Lead, ACB Director |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Research and identify both large and small foundations, with a focus on family foundations, in the Minneapolis, Minnesota area to engage in development-related conversations.  Timeframe: Calendar Year 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Jo Lynn Bailey-Page |
| Action 2: Research and identify both large and small foundations on the west coast of the United States to engage in development-related conversations and to increase ACB’s brand recognition.  Timeframe: Calendar Year 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Jo Lynn Bailey-Page |
| Action 3: Research and identify corporations, such as Ford and Reader’s Digest, that could be potential donors to ACB.  Timeframe: Calendar Year 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Jo Lynn Bailey-Page |
| Action 4: Develop a plan to engage and leverage other ACB leaders (e.g., ACB President, former ACB President, ACB Board of Directors) in the development process that accounts for the geographic dispersion of ACB leaders and identifies those best qualified for the task.  Timeframe: To be determined | Accountable Leader(s):  Development Lead, ACB Executive Director |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

|  |
| --- |
| People: Development Lead, ACB Executive Director, Jo Lynn Bailey-Page |
| Funds: Miscellaneous expenses related to research and outreach to foundations and corporations – TBD |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

|  |
| --- |
| Evidence of Success: ACB will have developed 24 relationships with new foundations (i.e., corporate, family, and private foundations) and have grown the number of individual donors by 15% year over year. |
| Evaluation Process: The Development team will work with ACB’s Finance Office, Minneapolis, to measure growth in individual donors and existing foundation donors. The Team will rely on the Development Director to confirm the establishment of new relationships with foundations. |

**Goal 2**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

|  |
| --- |
| Focus: Development |
| Goal/End Result: Finalize and implement the ACB Advisory Council Strategy, including the development of supporting resources (e.g., Council Charter, ACB Information Packet) and the identification of potential Advisory Council Members. |
| Accountable Leader(s): Advisory Council Strategy Chair, ACB Executive Director, ACB Development Director |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Develop the Advisory Council Charter, including, but not limited to, operating rules, roles and responsibilities, ACB staff involvement, Council governance, and Council structure.  Timeframe: April to May 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Advisory Council Strategy Chair, Development Action Planning Team |
| Action 2: Identify the potential positions on the Advisory Council (e.g., a fundraising focused role, a marketing and communications focused role), develop associated position descriptions for each role, and determine desired team/subcommittee structure.  Timeframe: April to May 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Advisory Council Strategy Chair, Development Action Planning Team |
| Action 3: Conduct a meeting with the ACB Executive Director and ACB President to review, and set expectations for, all materials and objectives related to the ACB Advisory Council.  Timeframe: May 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Advisory Council Strategy Chair, Development Action Planning Team |
| Action 4: Develop a brief (i.e., 1-2 pages) document outlining the expectations of Council members that will be shared with potential members to provide them insight into what will be expected of them.  Timeframe: No later than June 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Advisory Council Strategy Chair, Development Action Planning Team BD |
| Action 5: Develop, or refine an existing, ACB Information Packet to describe who ACB is, what the organization’s mission is, and to provide other relevant background information (e.g., ACB Strategic Plan, ACB Annual Report) to potential Council members in print and digital formats.  Timeframe: No later than June 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Advisory Council Strategy Chair, Development Action Planning Team |
| Action 6: Identify and recruit Advisory Council members whose characteristics align with the position descriptions and overall Advisory Council objectives.  Timeframe: No later than August 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Advisory Council Strategy Chair, Development Action Planning Team |
| Action 7: Officially launch the ACB Advisory Council, conduct member onboarding (e.g., meeting with Executive Director and/or Board President), and hold the first Advisory Council meeting.  Timeframe: No later than October 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Advisory Council Strategy Chair, Development Action Planning Team |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

|  |
| --- |
| People: Advisory Council Strategy Chair, ACB Executive Director, ACB Development Director, ACB Development Action Planning Team members |
| Funds: Miscellaneous expenses related to standing up the ACB Advisory Council – TBD |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

|  |
| --- |
| Evidence of Success: ACB will launch the Advisory Council, including a complete package of supporting documentation (e.g., Council Charter, Council Overview one-pager, position descriptions) and buy-in from both the ACB President and ACB Executive Director. |
| Evaluation Process: The ACB President and ACB Executive Director will evaluate the supporting documentation for the Advisory Council and determine that the Advisory Council has been launched. |

**Goal 3**

Identify the focus area and goal/desired end result.

|  |
| --- |
| Focus: Development |
| Goal/End Result: Expand the MMS by at least 20 new participants and expand the Planned and Major Gifts Programs to include the addition of at least 10 new donors, the hosting of at least two “Get Acquainted” meetings, the publishing of at least three articles related to planned giving, and the briefing of 25 affiliates, including six in person, on the MMS program. |
| Accountable Leader(s): Development Director, ACB Executive Director |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Hold “Get Acquainted” meetings for potential planned and major gift donors, including at least 10 total participants across both meetings.  Timeframe: Calendar Year 2017 | Accountable Leader(s): Development Director, ACB Executive Director |
| Action 2: Identify individuals to write an article (e.g., testimonial) for the Braille Forum and/or Inside ACB and include at least three articles related to planned giving.  Timeframe: Calendar Year 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Development Director |
| Action 3: Identify attorneys, estate planners, financial planners, or organizations (e.g., Washington Lawyers Committee) who could influence donors to gift to ACB.  Timeframe: Calendar Year 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Development Director, ACB Executive Director |
| Action 4: Conduct an MMS education campaign to raise awareness of the program and the benefits for state affiliates. The campaign will include:   * A one page information sheet, including FAQs and rebuttals to common push backs * ACB Board of Directors Talking Points * ACB board members presenting at state conventions * A table set up at state conventions where individuals can sign up for the MMS program after the associated presentation * ACB board members presenting during calls with state affiliates   Timeframe: Calendar Year 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Development Director,  Dan Dillon and Jo Lynn Bailey-Page (Information Sheet and Talking Points),  Allan Peterson to work with the Board Liaison group |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

|  |
| --- |
| People: Development Director, ACB Executive Director, Dan Dillon, Jo Lynn Bailey-Page, Allan Peterson, ACB Members |
| Funds: Miscellaneous expenses related to Get Acquainted meetings – TBD  Miscellaneous expenses related to MMS Education Campaign – TBD  Miscellaneous expenses related to Planned Giving articles – TBD |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

|  |
| --- |
| Evidence of Success: ACB will have expanded the MMS pool by at least 20 participants, added 10 new Planned and Major Gifts donors, hosted two “Get Acquainted” meetings, published at least three articles related to planned giving, and briefed 25 affiliates on the MMS program. |
| Evaluation Process: The Development Action Planning Team will work with ACB’s Finance Office, Minneapolis, to measure new MMS participants and new planned/major gifts participants. The Team will rely on the Development Director to confirm MMS program meetings with Affiliates and the hosting of the Get Acquainted meetings. |

# Marketing and Communications

To help lay a solid foundation from which to grow, ACB is committed to developing a high caliber Marketing and Communications Plan. The integrated plan will be crucial in supporting both regular ACB communications as well as communications related to meeting the various goals outlined throughout the ACB Strategic Plan.

**Goal 1**

Identify the focus area and goals.

|  |
| --- |
| Focus: Marketing and Communications |
| Goal/End Result: Publish an integrated ACB Communications Plan, including key messages (e.g., ACB Elevator Speech, ACB Value Proposition), style guidance, roles and standard processes, target audiences, communication channels, and recurring communication campaigns. Design and institutionalize standard templates (e.g., MS Word, MS PowerPoint, print materials). |
| Accountable Leader: Kelly Gasque |

**Actions**

Describe the actions, timeframe, and the accountable leader.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action 1: Establish a purpose statement for the ACB Communications Plan.  Timeframe: March 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team |
| Action 2: Develop a list of target audiences, including the purpose of communications and their preferred communication channels.  Timeframe: March to April 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team |
| Action 3: Determine a set of key messages, which should be communicated consistently throughout ACB communications, including, but not limited to, ACB elevator speech, ACB values, value proposition statements, and tag line (e.g., Together we can do anything).  Timeframe: March to May 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team |
| Action 4: Identify communications roles and responsibilities (e.g., Sponsors, Communicators) for 10 to 15 programs.  Timeframe: April to May 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team |
| Action 5: Identify recurring ACB communication campaigns, including the purpose, schedule/timing, standard messaging, target audience(s), and communication channel(s) for 10 to 15 programs.  Timeframe: April to June 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team |
| Action 6: Develop Style Guidelines, including instructions for a consistent use of the ACB logo and tag line, templates (e.g., MS Word, MS PowerPoint), font style, and organizational colors. Encourage affiliates to use the same standards and templates if they choose.  Timeframe: April to September 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team |
| Action 7: Develop guidance for using ACB’s communication channels (e.g., email list, ACB.org), including recommended uses, point(s) of contact (POC), and the step-by-step process.  Timeframe: May to June 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team |
| Action 8: Research best practices related to evaluating Communications Plans; establish the evaluation method for the ACB Communications Plan to determine the effectiveness of various communication channels and messages; and evaluate the ACB Communications Plan using the establish evaluation method.  Timeframe: June 2017 to Ongoing | Accountable Leader(s):  Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team |
| Action 9: Establish an ACB subcommittee responsible for tracking and disseminating communications at the National level. Establish ACB aliases (e.g., Communications@ACB.org).  Timeframe: May 2017 to September 2017 | Accountable Leader(s):  Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team |

**REsources**

Describe the resources needed to be successful.

|  |
| --- |
| People: Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team, ACB Board of Directors, ACB Key Communicators (as identified), ACB Executive Director |
| Funds: Little to no funding required for the development of the Marketing and Communications Plan; however, future funding may be required to implement tasks in the plan, such as costs associated with operating, maintaining, or acquire communication channels. |
| Other: None |

**Success Measures**

Describe the ways you will identify evidence of success, and how you will measure progress overall.

|  |
| --- |
| Evidence of Success: The Marketing and Communications Action Planning Team will have developed a comprehensive ACB Communications Plan that is used as the exclusive framework for ACB communications. |
| Evaluation Process: The ACB Executive Director will evaluate the ACB Communications Plan for thoroughness and completeness. |