

# ACB



## CHARTING NEW HORIZONS



**AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND**  
ANNUAL REPORT 2020

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**The events that unfolded during 2020 were nothing short of historic. Like so many other organizations, our voice and purpose have been challenged through unprecedented times, which thankfully have guided us toward new opportunities and ways to come together.**

And while it feels like we have traveled so far, we remain rooted in the same values that have carried us the whole way. Knowing this, we are humbled by those who have gone ahead of us, particularly those who we have lost because of the pandemic. Their stories, along with those who will lead us into the future, give context for why we are all here to serve one another, and why 2020 will be a year that we will never forget.

This ACB spirit was formed over six decades of work, empowering individuals who are blind and visually impaired to ask for more, to demand equality, with ACB as our united voice. Our core values have continued to serve as a compass to guide us through the difficult days ahead. And they have forged a path forward for us even when it feels like we are entering uncharted territories.

Chief among our values this past year was flexibility. When the world came to a grinding halt, ACB stepped into the void and redefined the way our community interacts and shares our experiences. We ventured into the first virtual convention of its kind, which allowed us to expand our audience and our reach. Embracing honesty and integrity, we did everything we could to ensure that every voice within ACB could not only be heard but also be respected. And when our members responded so positively to this newly formed virtual community, ACB's leadership demonstrated great initiative by adapting in a manner that would sustain this new voice within the organization for years to come.



Of course, we could not achieve the success of 2020 alone. Our collaboration with long-time friends, partners, and advisory board helped to both push and pull us in the right direction to strengthen our resolve and rise above the fear of the unknown. We listened not only to our members and the larger blindness community for their advice, recommendations and support, but we also strengthened this organization in a manner that will help us to be prepared for what may come.

Where ACB stands today is quite different from where we stood at the end of 2019. And yet despite all these life-changing moments, the American Council of the Blind experienced a renaissance that redefined our purpose in the 21st century and allowed us to build our community together. This is the year that will forever be remembered as the one where the world was forced to keep a distance from one another, but we as an organization instead found new ways to remain connected.



**Dan Spooner**  
*President*



**Eric Bridges**  
*Executive Director*

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2020

- Over \$1,000,000 worth of volunteer hours
- Peloton collaboration for accessible equipment
- 1,500 virtual convention registrants with overwhelming corporate sponsorship contributions
- Over 100 conference breakout sessions with podcasted content
- Adopted the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS)
- Established the newly formed Advisory Board
- Over 2,500 Community Events March – December
- ACB partnered with Procter & Gamble to distribute 2,000 emergency care packages in six metropolitan regions for individuals who were blind and negatively impacted by the pandemic

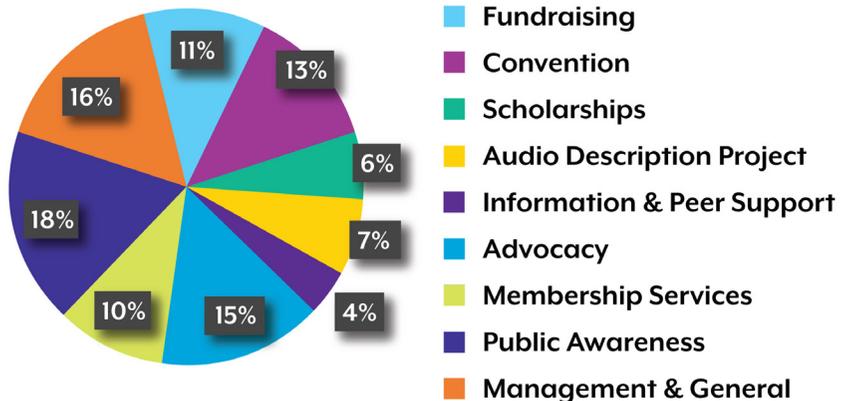


# FINANCIALS

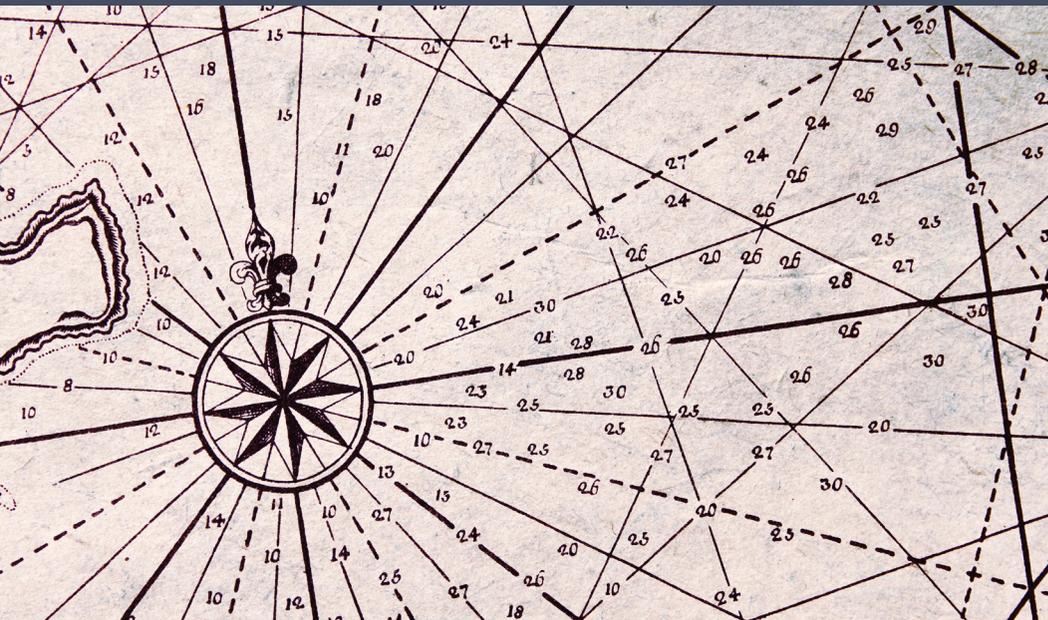
REVENUE	
Contributions & Grants	\$543,355
Program Fees	\$421,507
Membership Dues	\$58,493
Net Investment Return	\$430,438
Other Income	\$554,064
Thrift stores	\$59,008
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,066,865</b>
EXPENSES	
Program Services	\$1,324,041
Management & General	\$284,125
Fundraising	\$197,750
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,805,916</b>
<b>Total Net</b>	<b>\$260,949</b>

ASSETS	
Current Assets	\$357,271
Investments	\$5,045,540
Other Assets	\$28,054
Property & Equipment	\$81,825
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,512,690</b>
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	\$560,716
Net Assets (Unrestricted)	\$3,420,340
Net assets (Restricted)	\$1,531,634
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,512,690</b>

## Program Expense by Percentage



# ACB PROJECT UPDATES



## ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

An organizational process commenced enabling ACB to have a forward-focused vision, to base decisions utilizing the strategic plan, and track progress towards completion of each goal. Tony Stephens was hired as Development Director to oversee ACB's fundraising.

## ADVOCACY

ACB's advocacy throughout the COVID-19 pandemic strived to increase access to accessible voting; accessible COVID testing and vaccine information; and reasonable accommodations to ensure students and employees with disabilities maintained access to education and employment in distance learning and remote work environments, respectively.

## **AUDIO DESCRIPTION PROJECT**

ADP celebrated its 11th year with a record of 40 entries to the BADIE contest (Benefits of Audio Description in Education), an Audio Description Project Conference with multiple sessions held virtually, and thousands of described streaming programs, television listings, and DVDs posted to the [ADP website](#).

## **CONVENTION**

Held first-ever virtual ACB conference and convention, enabling greater participation in the annual event, whether actively contributing at the meetings or listening on ACB's radio streams.

## **INFORMATION, REFERRAL & PEER SUPPORT**

ACB's IRPS efforts include responding to resource outreach; establishing Be My Eyes Specialized Support as a communication channel; and hosting community calls, conference and convention events, and publishing blogs and Braille Forum articles on topics of interest for ACB members and the broader community.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

We have been reminded that membership is all about relationship building. This is something we've been doing through connections made in our daily community events via Zoom, peer-to-peer support with our affiliate leaders every week, and by providing other opportunities for people to learn and connect with us as a Friend of ACB (a program introduced this year), finding us as a resource on the Be My Eyes app, or hearing us on ACB Media.

## **PUBLIC AWARENESS**

The public awareness steering committee guides content featured on ACB's communication channels as well as strategies for event promotion. In 2020, the committee developed the ACB Voices Blog and ACB-Conversation list.

# 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

D.C. 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 Assn. for the Blind and  
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  
and Visually Impaired

ACB of Minnesota

Mississippi Council of the Blind

Missouri Council of the Blind

Montana Blind & Low Vision Council

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

ACB of South Carolina

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 & 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, Inc.

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  
special thanks to all our  
generous contributors,  
with particular thanks to  
the following foundations:

Aid Association for the Blind of the  
District of Columbia

Delta Gamma Foundation

Dr. Scholl Foundation

The Max & Victoria Dreyfus Foundation

Macular Degeneration Foundation

## **ACB OFFICERS**

### **PRESIDENT**

Dan Spooner

### **FIRST VICE PRESIDENT**

Mark Richert

### **SECOND VICE PRESIDENT**

Ray Campbell

### **SECRETARY**

Denise Colley

### **TREASURER**

David Trott

### **IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT**

Kim Charlson

## **ACB BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Jeff Bishop

Donna Brown

Sara Conrad

Dan Dillon

Katie Frederick

James Kracht

Doug Powell

Patrick Sheehan

Michael Talley

Jeff Thom

## **BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS**

Deb Cook Lewis

Paul Edwards

Zelda Gebhard

Susan Glass

Penny Reeder

## **ACB STAFF**

### **Eric Bridges**

*Executive Director*

### **Nancy Feela**

*Administrative Assistant*

### **Kelly Gasque**

*Executive Assistant & Multimedia  
Design Specialist*

### **Cindy Hollis**

*Membership Services Coordinator*

### **Erika Keller**

*Human Resources*

### **Sharon Lovering**

*Editor*

### **Nancy Marks-Becker**

*Chief Financial Officer*

### **Clark Rachfal**

*Director of Advocacy &  
Governmental Affairs*

### **Claire Stanley**

*Advocacy & Outreach Specialist*

### **Tony Stephens**

*Director of Development*