

# BUILDING FOR OUR FUTURE SUCCESS

2019 Annual Report



**ACB**  
• • •

**American Council  
of the Blind**

Together for a bright future

# ACB



**The American Council of the Blind strives to increase the independence, security, equality of opportunity, and quality of life for all blind and visually impaired people.**





## **CORE VALUES**

Integrity & Honesty

Respect

Collaboration

Flexibility

Initiative

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we reflect on our accomplishments of 2019, the moments that stand strongest are the countless hours of preparation our leaders and volunteers undertook in order to lay the foundation for our future success. Amelia Earhart said it best when she proclaimed, “Preparation is rightly two-thirds of any adventure.” Her words are quite prophetic as we remain flexible toward whatever adventures lay on the other side of the horizon.

2019 marked a pivotal year for the American Council of the Blind. For the first time in many years, we ended the year with a net gain and significant growth in our reserves and newly established endowment. The strategic planning we underwent from 2016-2018 identified nine critical mission areas that we were able to lift up through newly formed steering committees. These nine initiatives provide the tangible framework for our mission, guided by our vision and core values.

In order to assist with building up this framework, we welcomed a new director of advocacy and governmental affairs, who helped mold our agenda and strengthen our influence on Capitol Hill. And we made a significant investment in our greatest asset, which is that of our ACB members, by hiring a full-time membership coordinator.

ACB is proud to continue its collaborative approach toward finding real solutions that improve accessibility and inclusion for Americans who are blind and visually impaired. This architectural approach to advocacy is rooted in our initial design, building a house where all are welcome. Advocacy is at the heart of our mission, and this heart beat strongly in 2019 as we secured access in the sky, on the Internet, on our streets, and in our homes.

Furthermore, through expanding our Information, Referral and Peer Support activity, we were able to not simply advocate on a macro level, but personally touch the lives of so many individuals struggling to overcome obstacles in search of independence and opportunity. Collectively, this work has allowed us to feel the pulse of our community, drafting an agenda that amplifies and respects the voices of those we serve.

Of course, no success will come without the hard work and dedication of those laboring throughout our state and special-interest affiliates. We are a member-driven body of empowered voices across the country. Therefore, integrity and honesty are paramount toward effectively serving the voices we embody. This is why we have spent considerable time in 2019 bridging ACB National with its members. Through on-boarding a new membership services coordinator, we now have enormous potential to strengthen the capacity of affiliates and usher in the next generation of leaders in our community.

Finally, securing our financial footing is the cornerstone toward building our long-term success. It is not only good stewardship, but we must also plan for future generations in an ever-changing global climate. The smart and prudent actions of our officers and directors reaffirmed these ideals, carving out a financial bedrock in 2019 capable of withstanding the challenges of 2020 and beyond.

While the broader future of our society is never fully known, we are excited by the adventures that lay ahead. We have prepared ACB to weather challenging times, and we will continue to build upon our success for generations to come.



**Dan Spooone**  
President



**Eric Bridges**  
Executive Director

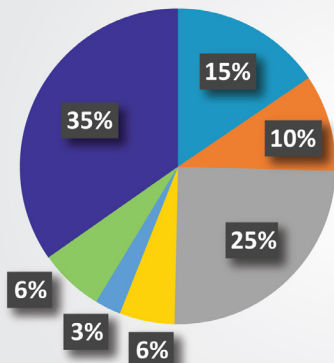
# 2019 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

As of December 31, 2019

REVENUE	
Contributions	\$500,875
Program Fees	\$547,406
Net Investment Return	\$565,764
Other Income	\$219,112
Thrift stores	\$336,641
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,169,798</b>
EXPENSES	
Programming	\$1,381,258
Management & General	\$191,322
Fundraising	\$103,335
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,675,915</b>
<b>Total Net</b>	<b>\$493,883</b>

ASSETS	
Current Assets	\$436,575
Investments	\$4,477,199
Other Assets	\$13,794
Property & Equipment	\$115,862
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,043,430</b>
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities	\$352,405
Net Assets (Restricted)	\$3,173,453
Net assets (Unrestricted)	\$1,517,572
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,043,430</b>

## Program Expense by Percentage



- Advocacy
- Membership Services
- Conventions
- Audio Description Project
- ACB Radio
- Scholarships
- Other Programs

# MEASURING OUR SUCCESS – 2019

## 2019 Program Achievements

### ADVOCACY

Congress introduced H.R. 4129 to create a Medicare pilot for low-vision devices, while DOT released final enforcement statement protecting travelers with guide dogs, and advocacy yielded fruit in the Supreme Court, who refused to hear Domino's v. Robles, affirming ADA protection online.

### INFORMATION, REFERRAL & PEER SUPPORT

IRPS Steering Committee is established with board guidance on metrics, identifying most relevant FAQs and other material to assist inquiries.

### MEMBERSHIP

Cindy Hollis hired as Membership Coordinator, rallying 165 hours of volunteer member engagement.

### AUDIO DESCRIPTION PROJECT

Marked 10th anniversary of ADP with ACB/World Blind Union international survey and refreshed ADP website, now with over 3,350 titles.

### CONVENTION

Rocked Rochester for the 2019 national conference & convention, returning back to the east coast for the first time in 20 years

### PUBLIC AWARENESS

Steering committee established with initial focus on our communications channels.

### ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Board established fiscal policies for contributions to legacy endowment while management restructuring for ACBES (thrift stores) resulted in increase of net revenue.

# 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 &  
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

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 Assn. 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 Assn. 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 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

## **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

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