**CABVI 2021Annual Report  
CABVI Reimagined**

**A Message from the Chair & President/CEO**

CABVI, like all of us across the globe, entered 2021 ready to return to a sense of normalcy. While it did not have all of the ease we hoped for, CABVI found its way forward by establishing a new path, our future Reimagined.

Following the addition of our new CEO, CABVI’s Board updated the 2020 – 2022 Strategic Plan. The reimagining of CABVI is predicated on the objectives of the new plan:

* Engaging community stakeholders
* Increasing service and impact, particularly to underserved populations
* Assuring sustainability of the mission through revenue enhancement
* Lifting our business operations through system enhancements

As we finished the year, initiatives held within the CABVI Reimagined plan were already taking shape. The agency began a significant renovation of our facilities, beginning with a much-needed exterior remodel. Business growth, the ability to provide more and varied employment to individuals with visual impairments, became a mantra with a new focus on Federal, State, and commercial opportunities. Efforts materialized when the State of Ohio office supply contract to VIE Ability provided a new customer service position for an individual with vision loss.

While facing the continuing challenges of our changing environment, as well as increasing our outreach, and impacting the Greater Cincinnati area through employment and vision services, we were able to accomplish the following:

Our dedicated space for Early Childhood and Youth Services, created in 2020, was finally filled with music, singing, and the rhythmic banging of drums and piano keys that children love.

CABVI’s Low Vision Services redoubled their efforts at the Gilbert location, providing more than 1,000 seniors with qualified low vision exams, instruction from low vision therapists, and prescribed low vision aids needed to maintain their independence.

Individuals across our service area continued to receive safe travel training, social services and counseling, access technology training, and instruction with adaptive daily living skills.

Dedicated volunteers continued their efforts, allowing Radio Reading Services to provide information and access to current, printed information to thousands of listeners.

Amazing moments dotted the months, filling our hearts with the results of a mission fulfilled. We saw the great outdoors opened to individuals with vision loss as Hamilton County Parks, Luke 5 Adventures, and CABVI came together for a “White Cane Day” accessible hike at Sharon Woods. Children visited our office dressed as superheroes, chefs, and even hotdogs for “Trick or Treat”. Families lined up in vehicles to participate in our Santa Parade. Our amazing partnership with West Side Brewing for our Braille Ale fundraiser continued to grow in popularity, well beyond our own community. Over 400 guests gathered at Hard Rock Casino to support CABVI, making the 2021 Dining in the Dark our most successful event ever!

It is through the generous support of so many, the gifts of time, energy and resources, that CABVI continues serving those who are blind or visually impaired. We thank each one of you for keeping us resilient and responsive and we look forward to having an even more significant impact in 2022.

Sincerely, Teri J. Shirk, President/CEO and Glen G. Vogel, Board Chair

**Our Impact - Building Brighter Futures for People with Vision Loss**

Our focus is to offer a variety of vision and information services as well as employment opportunities for individuals with vision loss in the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky area that increase independence and inclusion.

* 4,151 individuals with vision loss served by vision services
* 93% of clients reported increased independence after receiving services
* 12,909 listeners received audio access to print materials through Audio Information Services
* 13,064 podcast downloads and online streams
* 79 individuals with vision loss employed at CABVI (in manufacturing jobs: 43) (in service-based jobs: 30)
* New VIE Ability customer growth: 58%
* VIE Ability office supply sales growth: 33%
* Volunteers gave 30,101 hours of their time equaling the work of more than 14 full-time employees
* Received $828,222 in grants to support our programs and services directly impacting people with vision loss

**G’Ante's Future Reimagined**

G’Ante Porter has glaucoma in his right eye and a prosthetic left eye. He began receiving services from CABVI when he was 5 years old.

CABVI’s Low Vision Service provided prescribed G'Ante with low vision aids, including a hand-held lighted magnifier, a telescope and a paperweight magnifier that he uses for his schoolwork. G’Ante uses a regular laptop with large print keyboard labels and received Orientation & Mobility training to help him learn to navigate unfamiliar places. For instance, he uses his foot to find the edge of the curb and has a few other tools to keep himself safe.

Through CABVI’s Transition Age Youth Program, G’Ante learned about volunteering and employment opportunities. Since he will be graduating from Gamble Montesorri in 2022, he is learning about post-secondary education and job training options. He has participated in outings to CABVI’s Hornbeck Social Enterprise Center to learn about job opportunities and also did some work with Crossroads.

As part of this program, young people like G’Ante are learning more adaptive daily living skills for living independently such as cooking, cleaning, laundry and organizing their finances. G’Ante and the other students in this program are learning about college applications and other adult learning options including student aid options and understanding how accommodations work on campus.G'Ante's mother says, “The program has been good for him. G’Ante seems to enjoy interacting with kids his own age and learning about the possibilities after graduation.”

**Flourishing With Vision Loss**

Six years ago, Dan Dufresne was in a regular eye exam when his eye doctor asked how many fingers he was holding up. They were both surprised when Dan realized that he couldn’t even see the doctor’s hand. He was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa, which is loss of peripheral vision and difficulty seeing at night.

Referred to CABVI through the Ohio Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired, Dan received Access Technology Services to help him maintain his employment. He learned ways to access built in features on his computer for enlarging print on the screen and color inversion for improved contrast. With these short-cuts and many other tools, Dan has grown his career into his current Integration Engineering Management position with Momentum Dynamics.

Dan also received CABVI’s Low Vision Services where he was prescribed vision aids, including a hand-held magnifier to assist him with daily tasks. For reading and other close-up work, Dan uses an iPad. Since he travels nationally, Dan learned to use a white cane when he is in unfamiliar places. This training began with learning to navigate his own neighborhood, including street crossings.

Dan says, “The most important thing for me was learning self-advocacy. When I first lost my vision, I expected that I would be out of work and inactive. With help from CABVI, I have continued doing everything with new tools. This has been the greatest challenge and the greatest part of my success—learning to ask for help.”

**Leading with Integrity**

CABVI’s Mark Foersterling Staff Member of the Year Award recognizes an outstanding staff member who exemplifies CABVI’s core values, and who has set an example of excellence for others in teamwork, innovation, and leadership. The 2021 honoree is Vicki Lorenz.

This award is named in memory of Mark Foersterling, who was instrumental in launching and developing CABVI’s Access Technology Service (ATS). Vicki has worked at CABVI for fifteen years, beginning in low vision services and then evolving into an Early Childhood and Youth Services (ECYS) specialist position and later becoming the ECYS manager.

Vicki is recognized for strengthening her team and building on positive aspects to create bridges between clients and staff as well as encouraging cooperation among various departments. Vicki believes in the ability, skills, and professionalism of her team and her co-workers. She expects everyone to do their best and builds on strengths, while being compassionate to everyday human needs when coworkers struggle.

Vicki says, “At work, I love being able to do big picture thinking that puts us in a position to deliver high quality services. This is a hard job sometimes, but through it I have been able to grow so much as a professional, a leader and an advocate. My colleagues and our clients are what keeps me coming in every morning.”

**Determined to Remain Independent**

CABVI’s Bradley L. Kaylor Blind Employee of the Year Award honors an employee who is blind and working in direct labor or service operations on an AbilityOne contract. The 2021 honoree is Mia Ison.

Mia is an outstanding employee in the Industries Program, working as a gadget assembler for Military Resale. She is responsible for finishing kitchen tools such as can openers, vegetable peelers, and tongs primarily sold by OXO brands in military stores.

When Mia suddenly lost all of her vision, she was determined to continue to live independently and return to work as soon as she could. Referred by her eye doctor, Mia came to CABVI for services and equipment to help her adapt to vision loss. CABVI’s orientation and mobility specialists helped her to learn to travel safely using a white cane. CABVI’s vision rehabilitation therapists taught Mia adaptive methods for cooking, cleaning and organizing her home for independent living.

Mia also worked with the Ohio Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) to

help with funding for CABVI’s access technology equipment and instruction. Mia says, "CABVI has provided a place for me to begin working again and I am so grateful for this opportunity.”

Mia is a very reliable and highly productive worker, always focusing on continuous growth and improving her employment skills. She brings her enthusiasm and a positive outlook to work every day. Her coworkers find her a joy to be around as she is always offering kind words to them. As CABVI’s honoree, Mia will also be recognized by National Industries for the Blind (NIB) as a nominee for the nationally selected 2022 Peter J. Salmon Award.

Volunteers Help Improve Accessibility for Our Clients

CABVI is so grateful for two young volunteers, Keerthana Senthil and Trevor Hay, for bringing their creativity and enthusiasm to the agency. The two University of Cincinnati medical science students volunteered as part of their Health and Community Service Capstone. They had already been volunteering for a year as Radio Reading Services (RRS) broadcast readers and wanted to learn more about other aspects of CABVI. So, Keerthana and Trevor worked as event volunteers for CABVI’s 2021 Dining in the Dark gala at Hard Rock Casino. As part of the Alice in Wonderland theme, they enjoyed working the blindfolded croquet game and experienced eating dinner under a blindfold to further understand the challenges of vision loss.

Keerthana and Trevor also helped to launch the RRS Amazon Echo project. While CABVI provides free radio receivers for listeners within 50 miles of downtown Cincinnati and some listeners access the broadcast via computer, many potential listeners live beyond this range and need an easier way to listen in. With help from Keerthana and Trevor, CABVI hired a programmer to create an Alexa skill (for the Amazon Echo) to access the RRS files. This allows for voice-command accessibility for RRS listeners. They also developed instructions and keywords to increase the efficiency of the program. Keerthana and Trevor were instrumental to the success of this program, even helping one of the first listeners to set up their Amazon Echo.

**An Advocate for Our Clients**

CABVI recently nominated Jennifer Holladay for the Milton J. Samuelson Award through the National Industries for the Blind (NIB). This award is presented to a person who is blind or visually impaired and demonstrates career advancement at an NIB associated agency.

Jennifer began at the agency in 2003 as the Community Relations summer intern. She returned to the agency in 2006 as the One-on-One Volunteer Coordinator, and was promoted to her current position as Manager of Information and Volunteer Services in 2016.

Aside from her day-to-day responsibilities, she currently serves as Chair of CABVI's Mission Commission Committee. This committee provides solutions to improve the independence, inclusivity, connectivity, and work-life balance of employees who are blind or visually impaired. Jennifer currently serves as Treasurer of the Ohio Radio Reading Services and is a member of the Cincinnati Association of Volunteer Administrators and the International Association of Audio Information Services.

Jennifer has performed above and beyond expectations and continues to lead more than 650 volunteers from the heart. She is a true asset to the CABVI team. Jennifer says, "My goal is to continue to grow opportunities for individuals who are blind or visually impaired to have as many ways to access print material as possible."

**Virtual 5K**

Thank you to everyone who participated and fundraised for CABVI’s Yes You Can 5K Walk/Run. With generous community support, CABVI raised nearly $35,000 to help empower individuals with vision loss. It was great to see people from across the country exercising for a good cause.

**Braille Ale**

CABVI was very excited to partner once again with West Side Brewing to promote the one of a kind, limited edition Braille Ale™ Raspberry Gose in one of the first beer cans that has actual raised braille on it! CABVI supporters came out in droves to West Side Brewing on July 8th to hang out with friends, drink beer, and play some fundraising games (split the pot, chance auction, and a blindfolded beer tasting contest). This was truly a win-win event in support of CABVI’s services to help people adapt to vision loss.

**Dining in the Dark... Wonderland**

Thanks so much to all those who participated in CABVI’s 5th Annual Dining in the Dark. With generous community support, CABVI raised over $150,000 to help individuals adapt to vision loss! CABVI honored this year’s Barney H. Kroger Humanitarian Award winner, Marta Bowling. CABVI client, Lillie Baldwin, shared her story of how CABVI’s services have helped her achieve independence. Freddy Mac and Natalie Jones from Q102 emceed the event. Guests learned about the daily challenges faced by individuals with vision loss by eating dinner under the blindfold. Participants enjoyed a silent auction, a live auction, a faux fur coat raffle, a blindfolded croquet game, split the pot, and a Mad Hatter contest.

**To Our Community Partners**

CABVI extends a special thanks to the following groups who helped to raise funds to support services to help people adapt to severe vision loss. Your partnership is greatly appreciated!

* Blind Lady Blankets
* Cincinnati Shirt Shop
* Hard Rock Casino
* Make a Change Foundation
* West Side Brewing

**Business with a Mission**

At CABVI, we strive to make meaningful progress towards reducing the

national 70% unemployment rate of people with vision loss. CABVI operate a variety of social enterprises that offer employment opportunities for

people who are blind and visually impaired. Purchases through our social enterprises help us provide bright futures and economic independence for our employees with severe vision loss.

**Base Supply Center**

CABVI operates a Base Supply Center (BSC), called Office Runway, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base that sells office products. The BSC staff have worked diligently to provide much-needed supplies to their customers.

**Contract Management Support**

Our Contract Management Support (CMS) employees use closed-circuit TVs and ZoomText technology to ensure government contracts are completed correctly and on time. CMS teams are at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, OH and at the Marine Headquarters in Quantico, VA.

**Custom Signage**

At our cutting-edge signage facility, we operate a variety of printing, cutting, and laser equipment that produces superior products that continuously exceeds industry standards. Our lasers are completely accessible for employee operators who are blind or visually impaired.

CABVI collaborated with Kroger to create custom Clicklist signs. CABVI also completed an installation of over 150 ADA compliant braille and directory signs at a State of Ohio district location.

**Industries Program**

As part of Reimagining CABVI, the Industries Program worked to increase inventory, improve product scheduling and planning, and improve capacity. Staff introduced adjustments to the day-to-day processes in our gadget assembly area to create a more functional environment for employees. This included adding equipment to the workplace to prevent physical strain and reorganizing workstations making the space easier to navigate. Through a grant from the National Industries for the Blind, CABVI purchased automated packing machines, which enhanced efficiency for our packing and tape transfer methods, and created two new positions for people who are blind or visually impaired. CABVI manufactures and assembles a variety

of products for the Federal government and commercial markets. We are proud to partner with: 3M, OXO and LumAware.

**VIE Ability**

VIE Ability offers more than 60,000 office, break room, and janitorial supplies through its ecommerce store. VIE Ability customers are pleased with excellent service, quality and competitive prices. Every time someone places an office supply order, our employees are checking inventory levels, managing logistics and making sure the orders are on a truck for next-day delivery. They do all of this with the help of advanced computer magnification and CCTV's. To learn more about our social enterprises, please visit cincyblind.org.

**For the 2021 financial summary please contact C.A.B.V.I. at 513-487-4519.**

Cincinnati Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired

2045 Gilbert Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Phone: 513-221-8558 • Toll Free: 1-888-687-3935

FAX: 513-221-2995 • www.cincyblind.org

C.A.B.V.I. is an Affirmative Action Employer.

C.A.B.V.I. is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Services Provider.

Affiliations: AER; International Association of Audio Information Services; NAEPB; National Industries for the Blind; VisionServe Alliance; United Way Agency Partner of Greater Cincinnati, Butler County and Warren County