

2022 Annual Report

*Expanding Our Impact*

**A Message from CABVI's Board Chair & President/CEO** CABVI entered 2022 with a dynamic strategic plan aimed at Reimagining CABVI and completed the year by Expanding our Impact. With intention, effort, a focus on innovation, and the support of all, we saw a significant return to service among members of our community.

* Vision Services redesigned our low vision program, hiring a full-time Optometrist for the first time in the agency’s history, and adding two new occupational therapists. Low vision services are in high demand as our aging population expands. Individuals received magnifiers, telescopes, task lighting and sun filters prescribed by our knowledgeable staff and experienced improved quality of life.
* CABVI partnered with the Cincinnati Eye Institute Foundation (CEIF) to build a full-service vision clinic at our Gilbert location. CABVI’s Low Vision Services team attended CEIF clinics hosted at the downtown St. Vincent De Paul. Partnering with CEIF on site allows clients with profound vision needs to get immediate support from our Low Vision Specialists.
* CABVI worked with the State of Ohio’s Independent Living program for older adults to serve individuals 55 and older with vision loss. This year, the program helped 168 individuals with in-home services such as tactile marking and retraining with appliances, provision of adaptive technology, and safe travel instruction with a white cane.
* CABVI's Access Technology Services team worked with our partners at National Industries for the Blind (NIB) and NSite, as well as the Transportation Intermediaries Alliance (TIA), to develop a comprehensive logistics training program creating a new career path for individuals with vision loss.
* We engaged our partners at NIB to restructure our production floor and capabilities. NIB engineers assisted us in achieving greater efficiencies and better accessibility for those with vision loss and other physical challenges.
* In a historic move, as outlined in our strategic initiatives, CABVI purchased Route Transportation & Logistics, a Florida-based company, in May 2022. The new partnership has already created opportunities for individuals with vision loss and will provide many more as we grow our mission together. CABVI is actively working with our supporters to generate additional freight brokerage opportunities and increase the creation of career opportunities.

The ability to sustain our mission is quintessential to our ability to continue Expanding Our Impact.

* In conjunction with the Federal AbilityOne program, CABVI employed 50 individuals with vision loss contributing 90,126 hours of employment in the effort to provide the federal government with Contract Close-Out Services, our Base Supply store at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the manufacturing of tape and paper products, as well as the assembly of kitchen gadgets for military resale. Our social enterprises directly support the provision of vision services.
* Those who attended CABVI’s Fun Fest, Braille Ale, Braille Bourbon and Dining in the Dark events witnessed an atmosphere of giving and an opportunity to appreciate the challenges for our community members who experience vision loss. Community support for these events benefitted CABVI’s services.

2022 proved to be a transformative year for CABVI, one where we are Expanding Our Impact! Thank you for your contributions of time, resources, and effort as we look forward to a more wide-reaching and impactful future.

Teri J. Shirk

*President/CEO*

Glen G. Vogel

*Board Chair*

**A Brighter Future for Evelyn**

Evelyn Risser is three years old and has mild Cerebral Palsy and a visual impairment. She was referred to CABVI from Help Me Grow, Ohio’s parent support program.

Working with Early Intervention Specialists at CABVI, she enjoys toys with sound and lights. She especially likes a mixing bowl that plays music and lights up when she puts items into the bowl. Her favorite is a drum that lights up green, yellow and red.

Music is a great motivator and Evelyn likes to play on the family piano at home. CABVI Music Therapists helped Evelyn achieve the following goals in her sessions: navigating obstacles in her path, following directions in songs and activities, and improving knowledge of body parts such as Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes. She also likes If You’re Happy and You Know It and enjoys when the therapist pauses in her singing to allow Evelyn to sing the body part name.

According to her mother Shelby, “Receiving services at CABVI has been so good for her. Evelyn enjoys interacting with the friendly staff and we have learned so much about her abilities and potential for growth."

Her family has learned many activities and songs that they can practice at home with Evelyn. Evelyn played drums, egg shakers, tambourine, guitar, ukulele and piano with CABVI's Music Therapist and enjoyed singing Old McDonald and the Wheels on the Bus. Her verbal skills grew quickly and some books were incorporated into the music as well.

**Regaining Independence**

Thomas Davis was fully sighted until 2006 when he lost most of his vision to glaucoma. Although he has some remaining vision, his “tunnel vision” makes many things difficult for him.

After moving to Covington from the Hampton Roads, VA area, Thomas was referred to CABVI by a TANK paratransit driver who thought CABVI might help him adapt to his new surroundings. Working with CABVI's Orientation and Mobility Specialists, Thomas became more familiar with the area, even learning a three-mile walking route back and forth across the bridge and through Mainstrasse. Thomas also received instruction to help him learn to navigate using his white cane and how to listen for traffic at street crossings.

CABVI’s Low Vision Services prescribed vision aids including a hand-held magnifier and a telescope that he can use for reading signs. Since Thomas is a musician who travels nationally, he learned that the local paratransit could forward his information and connect him with the paratransit in any city.

Thomas received Access Technology Services to connect his computer to his large screen TV and also received Vision Rehabilitation Therapy to place tactile markers on his stove, oven and microwave. Specialists also provided writing guides and instruction in the "Select to Speak app" to make it easier to use his phone.

Thomas says, "I am now comfortable traveling on my own and my colleagues are often complimentary that I can come and go with ease. I really hit the jackpot with CABVI."

**Team Member Awards and Nominations**

*CABVI’s Mark Foersterling Team Member of the Year Award* - This award recognizes a team member of CABVI who exemplifies CABVI’s core values and sets an example of excellence for others. It is named in memory of Mark Foersterling, who was instrumental in launching CABVI’s Access Technology Service. The 2022 honoree is Sue Guagenti, Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist and Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist for nearly 30 years.

Coworkers often seek Sue’s input with accessibility issues, lighting, design, and braille –she is deeply respected and always ready to help when needed. Sue’s work has impacted generations of clients and many people ask for her by name for additional training. She expects positive outcomes for clients and works very hard to ensure they are achieved. Numerous clients have reported restored hopefulness following instruction with Sue.

Congratulations to the following nominees of this award: Aaron Bley, Todd Farmer, Chad Hyder and Mandy Van Cleave.

*CABVI’s Bradley L. Kaylor Blind Employee of the Year Award* - This award honors an employee who is blind and working in direct labor or service operations on an AbilityOne contract. The 2022 honoree is Mary Booker. Mary is an out-standing 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 commissaries around the world.

Mary joined CABVI at age 18 in 1975. Her knowledge and on-the-job experience distinguish her work. She is an integral team player and brings her enthusiasm and a positive outlook to work every day. As CABVI’s honoree, Mary will also be recognized by National Industries for the Blind (NIB) as a nominee for the nationally selected 2023 Peter J. Salmon Award.

*National Industries for the Blind Milton J. Samuelson Award* - CABVI recently nominated Melinda Plunkett for the Milton J. Samuelson Career Achievement Award through the National Industries for the Blind. Melinda was an LPN Nurse for eleven years before she was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa at the age of 36. She stopped working a year later due to safety concerns for her patients.

When she came to CABVI, Melinda had been unemployed for six years so she had to relearn her computer skills along with adaptive technology. She joined CABVI’s VIE Ability office supply social enterprise when it was an incubator project and helped it grow through her determination and sales expertise. Melinda currently works as an Account Manager and has been with CABVI for 6 ½ years.

*CABVI Reimagined* **-** Recognizing CABVI’s commitment to growth and innovation, our 2021 – 2022 Strategic Plan, CABVI Reimagined, created a new vision for the agency’s future. New for 2022, the agency will recognize an individual who contributed significantly to developing that vision and the implementation of our strategic initiatives.
 For 2022, we are proud to present Aaron Bley, VP of Community Relations & Development/Chief Development Officer with our inaugural award for strategic planning contributions, CABVI Reimagined. Through partnerships and special events, Aaron brings community attention to the mission and impact of CABVI. Aaron helped launch Braille Ale and Braille Bourbon, products that raised CABVI’s profile among agencies serving people with vision loss; Aaron created Dining in the Dark and our new Fun Fest, heavily attended and incredibly impactful events. Aaron recreated the CABVI brand. Over past years, Aaron rebranded CABVI, modernizing our look and position in the community. The rebranding, displayed throughout our space and even on the Gilbert facade is indicative of the changes happening within the agency, our new strategic direction. All that Aaron does for the agency is founded in sharing our mission, internally and externally. He brings his gifts to the table every day to better the lives of individuals with vision loss.

**The Heart of CABVI: Our Volunteers**

CABVI is so grateful to Kevin Levya-Gardner, one of the agency’s most flexible volunteers, for bringing his many talents, dedication and enthusiasm to the agency. Since he lives in the neighborhood, Kevin noticed the agency on his daily walks and offered his assistance in whatever way would be useful. Kevin has served as a One-on-One volunteer, helping an individual read his mail and he also reads the grocery ads for Radio Reading Services broadcasts. He works as a volunteer receptionist at the front desk and also helps with administrative projects such as organizing and overseeing mailings.

With a professional background in the health insurance industry, Kevin uses his personal interaction skills to help with listeners’ surveys for Audio Information Services and client surveys after individuals complete services.

Kevin says, “I’ve recommended volunteering at CABVI to many of my acquaintances since it’s easy to make an instant connection and they provide great training and ongoing support. It’s very fulfilling and my efforts always seem much appreciated.”

**The CABVI Community**

Throughout 2022, CABVI activated its local community through a variety of unique fundraisers to support our programs and services.

* *Fun Fest* - CABVI hosted its first-ever Fun Fest in Washington Park on June 4, featuring live music, carnival games, and an accessible cornhole tournament. The winning team received a hand-made cornhole set. CABVI raised over $30,000 to help individuals adapt to vision loss. Fun Fest will be held on June 10, 2023 at Washington Park from 12-4 pm. To learn more, visit cincyblind.org/funfest.
* *Braille Ale® Release* - CABVI and West Side Brewing partnered once again to introduce one of a kind, limited edition Braille Ale® in a bigger can and new flavor – Tangerine Juicy IPA! CABVI supporters came to West Side Brewing on August 11 to enjoy the Braille Ale. This was truly a win-win event in support of CABVI’s services to help people adapt to vision loss.
* *Braille Bourbon Whiskey with Northside Distilling Company* - In early summer 2022, CABVI reached out to Northside Distilling Company about creating a Braille Bourbon Whiskey. The first-ever, hand selected 108 proof single barrel bourbon with braille on the label was released on September 28, 2022 at Northside Distilling Co. and sold out in record time. A portion of the proceeds was donated back to CABVI to help individuals adapt to vision loss. Braille Bourbon aims to raise awareness around inclusivity for people who are blind or visually impaired in our community as well as raising awareness of CABVI services.
* *Dining in the Dark... Superheroes* - CABVI hosted its 6th Annual Dining in the Dark on November 12. With generous support from more than 500 guests, CABVI raised over $200,000 to help individuals adapt to vision loss. Guests learned about daily challenges faced by individuals with vision loss by eating with a blindfold. CABVI honored the Barney H. Kroger Humanitarian Award winner, Steve Eberly. CABVI client, Tracy Wilson, shared her story of how CABVI’s services helped her achieve professional success. Freddy Mac and Natalie Jones from Q102 emceed. Participants enjoyed a silent auction, a live auction, a wine raffle, a bourbon raffle, split the pot, and a costume contest. All proceeds support CABVI’s services. Dining in the Dark... A Night at the Disco will be held on November 11, 2023 at Hard Rock Casino from 6-10 pm. For sponsorship opportunities, please contact Aaron Bley at 513-487-4233.

**Business with a Mission**

CABVI is Expanding our Impact through social enterprises providing employment opportunities for people who are blind or visually impaired both locally and remotely. Since 1911, CABVI has been providing employment and continues providing more jobs to reduce the national 70% unemployment rate for people with severe vision loss.

* *Route Transportation & Logistics, Inc., Expanding Opportunity* - In 2022, CABVI acquired Florida-based Route Transportation and Logistics, as a way of offering new job opportunities for people with vision loss. Route’s remote-first approach eliminates transportation concerns, a common work barrier to individuals with vision loss. We are excited about this partnership and how it will provide more career opportunities for individuals with vision loss as well as helping support the cost of services.
* *Industries Program, Expanding Efficiencies* - CABVI produces over 200 different paper, tape and assembled products for the government and commercial market. CABVI has been assembling kitchen gadgets for over 30 years and also assembles batteries and locks. CABVI is proud to partner with OXO, 3M, and other companies to produce high quality, competitive products. Team members at the Hornbeck Center have been working with CABVI Vision Services to improve accessibility in all areas for people who are blind or visually impaired. With help from the National Industries for the Blind engineers, CABVI employees are now able to do more tasks adaptively. CABVI has moved the packaging lines closer to production lines and found other ways to improve efficiencies without decreasing the number or quality of jobs.
* *VIE Ability, Expanding Sales* - VIE Ability had a break-out year with $5.6 million in sales, in connection with the State of Ohio contract. This success continues to grow crucial customer service jobs for people who have vision loss. With 60,000+ items available, VIE Ability customers are pleased with competitive prices, next day free delivery, and no minimums. 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. This is done with the help of advanced computer magnification and screen reading software. VIE Ability is a purpose-driven initiative of CABVI with 75% of all team members having a visual impairment.
* *Base Supply Center, Expanding Creatively* - CABVI operates a Base Supply Center (BSC), called Office Runway, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base that sells office products and employs people with vision loss. The BSC staff continue working diligently to provide much-needed supplies to their customers at the Base.
* *Custom Signage, Expanding Accessibility* - At our cutting-edge signage facility, CABVI employees operate a variety of printing, cutting, and laser equipment that produces superior products that continuously exceed industry standards. Our full service signage center includes ADA compliant, braille, and tactile signage as well as customized signage in a wide variety of indoor and outdoor sign options. These include PVC, banners, corrugated, polymetal, and aluminum. Using the latest design, printing and cutting technology including larger monitors, our lasers have become increasingly accessible for operators with vision loss. Signage purchases support CABVI’s mission.
* *Contract Management Support, Expanding Remotely* - CABVI provides employment for people with vision loss in Contract Management Support at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and at the Marine Headquarters in Quantico, VA. All of these employees have adapted to working remotely from home to close out federal government contracts.

**2022 Donors**

CABVI gratefully acknowledges the significant contributions of our donors whose cumulative giving in support of our mission totals $100 or more. These gifts have a tremendous impact on the programs and services we provide for people with vision loss. Thank you for your generosity to CABVI.

**For the 2022 financial summary, please contact CABVI at 513-520-4519.**

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

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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