

See the difference!



2016-2017 ANNUAL REPORT





Experts predict that by 2030, rates of vision loss will double along with the country's aging population.

American Foundation for the Blind

OUR MISSION

Empower, educate, and enhance the lives of individuals impacted by vision loss through all of life's transitions.

Dear Friends,

This past fiscal year was one of great accomplishments for Vision Forward and the people we serve. Your support is making a difference! We saw an increase in the number of clients—children and adults—who received vision services, and an increase in the number of community members who benefited from our outreach programs. The specialized services we provide are critical for people with vision loss and we are the only local organization that provides comprehensive programming for people of all ages.

It has truly been an honor to witness the difference in skill development and independence that has helped so many of our clients reach new milestones. Two individuals who stand out are:

- Nora, a three-year-old, took her first steps independently, foregoing the help of her walker, and then exclaimed, "That was excellent!" Today she is successfully using her white cane to explore the world.
- Lorraine, an 84-year-old living with macular degeneration, learned to use her remaining vision so she could continue to live on her own and accomplish the tasks of everyday life. She shared her successful experience at Vision Forward with other seniors so they also can learn to lead active, safe and independent lives, despite vision loss.

These accomplishments are life changing, and you helped make them possible through your support and belief in our mission.

Thank you.

Terri Davis Executive Director

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Seeing the Difference at A

The difference for children

Because of your support, **134 children achieved life transforming developmental milestones** through extended service hours, expanded music therapy and engaging with typically developing peers, who can now enroll in our program. Our specialized staff were able to help children and families prepare for school by providing **6,228 hours of direct service.**

Meet James

James was born at less than 35 weeks with Dandy-Walker Syndrome leaving him with vision loss, including blindness in one eye and significantly limited vision in the other. James's doctors did not expect him to ever walk on his own.

At just four weeks old, James began receiving vision services and occupational, physical and speech-language therapy through Vision Forward.

James worked hard with our staff and at home with his family, progressing from using the leg braces, parallel bars, a walker and eventually just a pair of crutches to walk on his own.

Today, James is four, walking with only a white cane, and learning to master running, jumping and climbing stairs. He carries himself with confidence and can now walk independently to his classroom using tactile landmark labels positioned on the doors to identify the different rooms.

On a recent family outing, James and his family met another child from his class at Vision Forward. James's family put him face to face with the other child so he could say hello. He quickly became ecstatic, said "Hi," stomped his feet, threw back his head and squealed with delight.

"Before that day, we had never seen James excited to see another kid," said his mother. "This was the first time we felt like James truly had a friend."

"We know this is owed to all the work you do with James at Vision Forward. You make such a difference for him."

— James's Mother



James graduated from Vision Forward's Preschool Program recently and began school this fall.

94%
of children
had improvement
in their
motor skills.

All Ages



Chris is using screen magnification on his computer and smart phone to increase his employability and maintain personal connections.

The difference for adults

654 children, youth, adults and seniors with vision loss were able to access services at Vision Forward and begin to see past their vision loss and move forward to meet their personal milestones and goals.

Meet Chris

Chris came to Vision Forward last year looking for a way to reenter the working world. Chris has Leber's hereditary optic neuropathy, an eye disorder affecting the optic nerve, that has left him visually impaired for more than 20 years. After losing his job in 2009, at the height of the recession, Chris began to feel very isolated. He didn't know what opportunities existed for him as a visually impaired person. After meeting others in a discussion group at Vision Forward and beginning assistive technology training, Chris began to see the possibilities that still existed for his life.

"When I chose to work with Vision Forward," said Chris, "Everything clicked. It was the right time. The right place. The right people. It has been truly life changing. From the staff to the others in the discussion group, I have never felt more comfortable in my life. I am gaining confidences and am able to interact with others who can relate to my struggles and triumphs alike, and I am now more comfortable than ever with my computer knowledge."

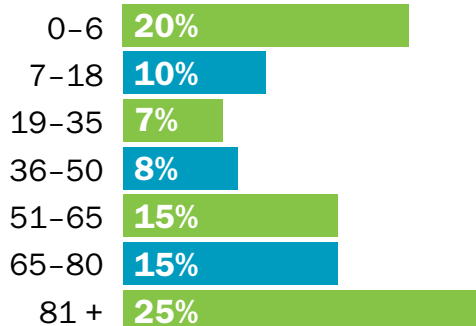
"I'm grateful to have met so many people who support me in my pursuit of reentering the working world."

— Chris, Vision Forward Client

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of each person we have helped see past their vision loss and focus on opportunities.

We are grateful for all our donors' gifts that make a difference in the lives of people of all ages living with vision loss. For a complete list of our supporters, please visit www.vision-forward.org/annualreport17.

Serving Clients of All Ages

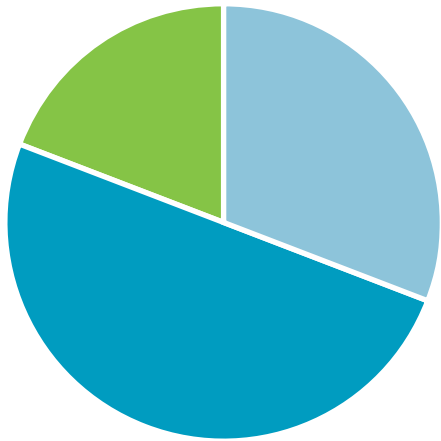


Statement of Activities

YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2017

Total Assets	\$ 8,877,700
Total Liabilities	\$ 158,100
Net Assets	\$ 8,719,600

REVENUE



- Programs and Services 31%
- Contributions 50%
- Other 19%

EXPENSES



- Programs and Services 81%
- General and Administration 19%

Your support is making a difference in the community!

- **2,222 residents of Southeastern Wisconsin** were provided education and outreach seminars on vision loss with special emphasis on supportive resources and fall prevention strategies.
- Children’s Program staff **travel to the homes** of infants and toddlers who are blind or visually impaired, providing education and vision services, as well as medical therapies to help address developmental delays and foster skills in non-visual methods of learning.
- Ensuring school-age children have access to vision services, our Youth Program **staff work with local schools** to help students experience a smooth transition from our program to the academic setting.
- Clients with low vision receive **in-home follow-up visits** by our Certified Low Vision Therapists to ensure the effective transfer of their newly acquired skills and techniques obtained from training in our offices. **96% of individuals made progress or achieved their goals.**
- Losing sight means re-learning how to safely walk through one’s environment. Our Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist **trains individuals on how to navigate their surroundings** by learning how to walk with a white cane, whether that is to one’s home, a job setting, grocery store or university campus. **85% of individuals achieved their mobility goals gaining independence.**



are blind or visually impaired, our **vans travelled more than 20,400 miles**, up 11% from last year, and covered an **80 mile radius** in Southeastern Wisconsin.

Reaching Those Most in Need

Children from **42 zip codes**, including six of the highest poverty zip codes in Wisconsin.

- 53205** **53233** **53206**
- 53212** **53204** **53208**

Thank You!

All of the work and successes highlighted in this report would not have been possible without the support of our donors. Philanthropic support helps Vision Forward continue to have an impact on the lives of thousands of people each year who have vision loss. Just as a little vision goes a long way, so does every contribution to Vision Forward. Thank you for your support.

INDIVIDUALS

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Fay Colberg

Vision Forward Association is truly grateful for every gift, in whatever amount, which helps support our vital work. Every effort has been made for accuracy. Should there be any errors or omissions, we apologize and ask that it be brought to our attention by calling the Philanthropy Department, 414-615-0120.

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Turek Charitable Trust
Vilter Foundation, Inc.
Gil & Linda Vraney Foundation
Waukesha County Community
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We Energies Foundation
Weyco Group Charitable Trust

TRIBUTE GIFTS

Tribute gifts are made in honor of or in memory of someone who has added special meaning to a donor's life. Vision Forward Association is pleased to honor the following people, along with their generous family and friends.

IN HONOR

Imre Anderer
Ginger and Phillip Ryback
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Cathy and Mitch Marks

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Audrey Ziegel
Beatrice Nerad

BEQUESTS

By including Vision Forward in their estate planning, this past year the following individuals provided support past their lifetimes for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Delores Christeck
Ruth Peplinski
Helmuth Herchert

LEGACY SOCIETY

The Legacy Society recognizes those who have included Vision Forward Association in their estate planning, providing lasting support for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Anonymous
Pat & Kathy Brockman
Patrick Brown
Daniel & Mary Corcoran
Dr. Herbert & Ruth Giller*
Dr. & Mrs. David Hoffman
Patricia Keating
Barbara Stein
Paul & Lisa Sweeney
Ed & Anne Weiss
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