



AMERICAN
ACTION FUND
for Blind Children
and Adults

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Friends:

I am delighted to share with you the latest annual report from the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults. This report showcases our continuing positive impact on the lives of blind people, made possible through your unwavering support and dedication to our mission.

Our signature Free Braille Books for Blind Children Program continued to flourish, bringing the joy of reading to thousands across the nation. The program benefits not only blind children, but also blind parents who want to read to and with their kids. In 2023 alone, we distributed over 50,940 books to 4,245 participants, enriching their lives with literacy and independence. Our annual summer Braille Book Fair, conducted in partnership with the National Organization of Parents of Blind Children, played a role as well. Importantly, the free books we provided now belong to the people who received them, so that they can keep them or share them with others in a future Braille Book Fair or through our [ShareBraille.org](https://www.sharebraille.org) website.

Our efforts to foster literacy and independence extended beyond books, as we provided 6,663 Braille pocket calendars, aiding daily planning for many. We conducted the annual Braille Readers Are Leaders contest, allowing participants of all reading levels and ages to improve their Braille skills through a fun challenge to read for the most minutes over the contest period. With your help, we also supported the dreams of an outstanding blind student, Trisha Kulkarni of Ohio, as part of the largest scholarship program in the world dedicated to blind people pursuing higher education. Trisha plans to pursue a career in educational technology, and we have no doubt that she will make outstanding contributions both to that field and to the blind community, which she calls her “second family.”

As I reflect on these achievements, I am reminded of the vital role your support plays. It is your generosity that empowers us to unlock opportunities and champion Braille literacy, tactile fluency, and independence for blind people of all ages.

All of us are grateful for your partnership and belief in our mission. Your contributions continue to enable us to push boundaries and expand what is possible for blind people. Thank you for being a part of our community and for your continued support. We look forward to achieving even more together in the years to come.

Very sincerely,



Mark A. Riccobono, Executive Director
American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults



YEAR IN REVIEW

“The American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults is an educational charitable organization committed to giving blind individuals access to literacy, tactile fluency, and, most importantly, independence.”

– Mark A. Riccobono, Executive Director

A CHAMPION OF LITERACY

Braille Books Fair

An annual event that provides hundreds of Braille readers of all ages the rare opportunity to build their very own collection of Braille and print/Braille books free of charge.

Braille Books Program

Every month we send a free Braille book from a popular children’s reading series to blind children across the country. This past year, we sent **50,940 books to 4,245 participants.**



“The American Action Fund gives out thousands of books a month to families with blind children. It’s also great for blind parents who want to read to their blind or sighted children. This program makes it possible for families to share the love of literacy all around.”

– Terry, blind parent

UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BLIND PEOPLE

Support for Higher Education

Each year the American Action Fund provides the largest scholarship of its kind to a blind student who is changing the public perception of the capabilities of blind people.



“You might be wondering what your gift will do to help the American Action Fund. Big or small, your gift will help blind people across our nation learn Braille and be successful at whatever they choose to achieve their dreams.” – Cassandra McKinney, blind mom and Treasurer of the American Action Fund

Braille Calendars

These pocket calendars are a valuable informational tool for everyday use. This past year, we produced **6,663 Braille calendars** and sent them free-of-charge to blind people.

HOW CAN YOU HELP

- Contribute online today at www.actionfund.org/donate or to give over the phone, please call us at 410-659-9315.
- Mail checks to American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults, attention Outreach, 1800 Johnson Street, Baltimore, MD 21230.
- Leave a legacy that will help future generations of blind and deafblind children. Call 410-659-9315 and ask for Patti Chang for planned giving options.



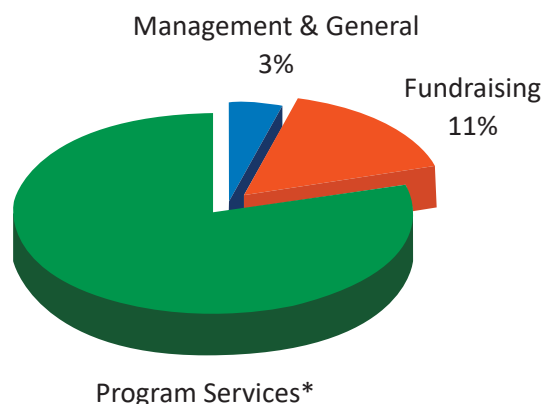
FINANCIAL STATEMENT & TRANSPARENCY

The American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code and completes an annual audit of activities. Learn more at www.actionfund.org/about.

Together, we will continue to positively impact the lives of both blind children and adults for decades to come. If you have any questions or want to learn more about our work, please contact us at 410-659-9315, explore www.actionfund.org, or email us at actionfund@actionfund.org.

**All contributions and gains received in the year not spent on management and general or fundraising are available for program services.*

Percentage of Total Revenue and Gains



ABOUT THE AMERICAN ACTION FUND

The American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults is a national service agency that specializes in providing help to blind people that is not readily available to them from government programs or other existing service systems. The Action Fund has been serving blind people since 1919 and is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland.

The mission of the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults is to assist blind and deafblind people in securing reading material, to educate the public about blindness, to provide specialized aids and appliances to the blind, to give consultation to governmental and private agencies serving the blind, to offer assistance to those losing vision in their later years, to offer services to blind children and their parents, and to work toward improving the quality of life for the blind and deafblind.

LEADERSHIP

The American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults operates through countless volunteers across the country who are overseen by a volunteer board and a full-time executive director.

The board members of the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults are blind and receive no financial compensation for their services. The Action Fund's executive director is also a blind individual with extensive experience in educational programming for the blind.

Executive Director

Mark A. Riccobono - Baltimore, Maryland

Board of Directors

- Barbara Loos, President - Lincoln, Nebraska
- Julie Deden, First Vice President - Littleton, Colorado
- Sandra Halverson, Second Vice President - Arlington, Virginia
- Gary Mackenstadt, Secretary - Sequim, Washington
- Cassandra McNabb-McKinney, Treasurer - Jackson, Tennessee
- Chancey Fleet - Brooklyn, New York
- Mary Ellen Gabias - Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada
- LisaMaria Martinez - Union City, California
- John G. Paré, Jr. - Baltimore, Maryland
- Bennett Prows - Kirkland, Washington
- Pam Schnurr - Indianapolis, Indiana
- Gary Wunder - Columbia, Missouri

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended December 31, 2023

REVENUE AND GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Public Support | |
| Contributions | \$3,237,973 |
| Donated Services | 963,358 |
| Total Public Support | 4,201,331 |
| Revenue | |
| NET Investment Income | 3,560,088 |
| Total Revenue | 3,227,943 |
| Total Revenue and Gains and Other Support | \$7,761,419 |

EXPENSES

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Program Services | |
| Braille publications and programs | \$790,167 |
| Tools for Independence | 82,803 |
| Specialized programs and services | 3,213,870 |
| Total Program Services | 4,086,840 |
| Supporting Services | |
| Management and General | 221,488 |
| Fundraising | 825,878 |
| Total Supporting Services | 1,047,366 |
| Total Expenses | \$5,134,206 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Changes in Net Assets | \$2,627,213 |
| Net Assets - Beginning of Year | \$33,456,964 |
| Net Assets - End of Year | \$36,084,177 |