

**ANNUAL REPORT 2012**  
**The American Council of the Blind of Ohio**



**Mission and Purpose**

The American Council of the Blind of Ohio is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality and equality of life for persons who are blind or visually impaired.

We offer information and referral for resources, training programs, emotional support, recreational opportunities, scholarships, and more.

Our purpose is to support a sense of community and to ensure full participation in all aspects of life for persons who are blind or visually impaired, leading to an increased quality of life.

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## **Summary of Accomplishments in 2012**

(Quoting from our Goals and Objectives for 2012)

### **Goal:**

**Be a support and source of information to families of children who are blind or visually impaired.**

### **Success:**

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual Family Seminar, held Saturday, September 29, at the Ohio State School for the Blind (Columbus) and sponsored by the Ohio Lions Foundation, was a day of workshops and activities for families and teachers of blind or visually impaired children. In addition to parents and teachers, others involved included speakers, presenters, and vendors. Volunteers from Ohio Lions and OSU Rotaract assisted with registration and activities to engage and entertain the children while the parents were attending the workshops. In addition to the workshop speakers, four experts presented technology options for parents of students who are blind or visually impaired. Children enjoyed games and activities while parents shared their stories and learned how to work with teachers and administrators to effectively advocate for their children. With approximately 75 in attendance, the event was the largest ever and a huge success.

### **Goal:**

**Partner with other agencies and organizations to provide a stronger support system and a more prominent profile to people who are experiencing vision loss.**

### **Success:**

The American Council of the Blind honored its Ohio chapter in 2012 by selecting ACB-Ohio to host the annual ACB national conference and convention. It will be held in Columbus at the Hyatt Regency in July 2013. This is the first time Columbus has been chosen to host the event.

Our executive director, Ann Gazelle, LSW, and many ACB-Ohio members around the state served on advisory boards and committees for entities that serve people who are blind or have other disabilities. New in 2012, the ACB-Ohio director sits on the recently formed Disability Community Planning Group (DCPG) via OSU, as well as the Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB) Advisory Panel. DCPG is charged with developing and strengthening health-related programs for people with disabilities. ACB-Ohio's support helped secure a three-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control to fund this endeavor.

When the State Board of Education recommended that OSSB develop an advisory group of diversified stakeholders, ACB-Ohio was invited to join. This advisory group works with the superintendent to provide input and

recommendations relative to the school's facilities, budget, programming, technology and other matters that directly enhance the education, achievement, progress and life of students at OSSB.

Ongoing committees still include advisory committees for the Rehabilitation Services Commission, Solidarity 2012, the Columbus Advisory Committee on Disability Issues, the ADA Advisory Committee for the office of the Secretary of State, the State Library Consumers Advisory Committee, and other similar groups dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with vision loss or other disabilities.

The American Council of the Blind of Ohio has shown its support with financial gifts to the following:

\$380 grant for software for Newsreel Magazine for the Blind

\$500 Chapter Matching Grant to Columbus Chapter for its People Helping People program assisted in purchasing adaptive aids and technology for visually impaired individuals

This is our second year to be a member of Community Shares of Mid Ohio, which conducts workplace giving campaigns for small, nonprofit organizations that have similar philosophies. We have had the opportunity to host exhibits in workplaces, such as the Charity Fair in the Licking County Administration Building, thus educating many people about the work ACB-Ohio does for its members. These exhibits and presentations have been a valuable tool in educating the general public about blindness and related issues. Our profile will continue to increase as we continue to participate in the Community Shares campaigns. In 2012 we received a total of \$1400. In order to receive the most campaign dollars in any given year, each member charity must accumulate 100 task points. ACB-Ohio surpassed this figure again in 2012.

In 2012, we nominated the Ohio Lions Foundation (OLF) for Community Shares of Mid Ohio's Donor of the Year Award for its ongoing support of the annual ACB-Ohio family seminar. Thanks to Marc Guthrie's efforts, the Ohio Lions Foundation has donated \$1,000 to ACB-Ohio for six consecutive years to our Building Blocks for a Brighter Future Family Seminar. The money is used by us to provide stipends to TVI's (teachers of students with visual impairments). We are proud to report that the award was presented to Jeff Branter of OLF at the August Community Shares of Mid Ohio awards ceremony.

Congratulations to Marc Guthrie, ACB-Ohio's Director of Outreach and Advocacy, on his appointment by President Barack Obama to the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Access Board. On November 16, President Obama announced his intent to appoint several individuals to key Administration posts. In the press release from the White House, President Obama said, "I am honored that these talented individuals have decided to join

this Administration and serve our country. I look forward to working with them in the months and years to come.”

Because of our initial success in 2011 when we were selected by the marketing firm SparkBox, our organization now has a new look, logo and two brochures which it is using to better promote itself to the public. SparkBox graciously extended its efforts into 2012, working with ACB-Ohio to update its Web site to include, for example, the option to make a donation online, etc.

**Goal:**

**Be the primary resource for newly blinded individuals around the state.**

**Success:**

Our toll-free information and referral line 1.800.835.2226 is answered personally by our executive director. She fields approximately 130 inquiries per year. Too often, when people are diagnosed with legal blindness due to disease or lose their sight suddenly due to an accident, the hospital releases them with no information about what to do next as a legally blind person. They have no resources, no one to turn to for guidance, and consequently feel that their lives are over. They feel helpless and hopeless. When they call ACB-Ohio, our executive director spends as much time as is necessary to educate them about the services available to them and to counsel them in dealing with vision loss. She often refers them to other services and agencies which can provide direct rehabilitation service. When possible, she gives them contact information for someone in their part of the state who can assist them further.

We have a brochure called “What Should I Say, What Should I Do,” designed especially for friends and families of people with vision loss. It explains in a friendly way how to overcome the fear of saying or doing something wrong around people who are blind. It is designed to help them deal with the blindness themselves.

We have two annual, recreational opportunities for blind and sighted people to engage in athletic and leisure activities together, thus promoting better understanding of how people who are blind can still ski, hike, swim, canoe, and ride a bike.

Our newsletter, “The Ohio Connection,” is published four times per year. It is distributed to all our members in large print, on cassette, or via e-mail. It is also available on our website and The Ohio Telephone Reader, a dial-up newspaper service, sponsored in part by ACB-Ohio. Copies are also sent to all the sight centers in Ohio.

Our website, [www.acbohio.org](http://www.acbohio.org), is the way many people find us. They see what we offer and contact us with their questions.

## **ACB-Ohio Annual Conference and Convention, October 26-28**

Approximately 100 people were part of ACB-Ohio's annual conference and convention last year. Attendees heard educational and informative speakers, participated in workshops, tried out the latest adaptive technology, and enjoyed fellowship with old and new friends. Eight workshops over the three-day event reflected this year's theme: "Learning Inspires Health, Growth and Technology." Six awards were presented at the Saturday evening banquet to those who have contributed to improving the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired in Ohio. After the banquet there was a rousing auction that raised funds for ACB-Ohio and local chapters. At the Sunday breakfast, ACB-Ohio scholarships were presented to eight worthy university students from Ohio. For the first time, parts of the conference were streamed live on ACB Radio, which gave those who could not attend a way to join in.

### **Scholarships and Awards**

At our 2012 annual state conference and convention, the following scholarships were awarded:

Max Edelman Scholarship \$2,000 to Elizabeth Adams of Cincinnati  
David Newmeyer Scholarship \$2,000 to Kyle Perkins of Mason  
JoAnn Fischer Scholarship \$2,500 to Robert Campbell of Akron  
Linwood Walker Scholarship \$2,500 to Stacy Border of Canton  
Nola Webb-McKinney Scholarship \$2,000 to Emily Pennington of Cincinnati

In addition to these five ACB-Ohio sponsored scholarships, we have established endowed scholarships at three major universities in Ohio. Two of them, The Ohio State University and the University of Toledo, are specifically for students who plan to teach blind children. These two endowments were established to encourage more students to become teachers of children who are blind or visually impaired. The third, Wright State University, is for a student who is blind or visually impaired. The recipients of these scholarships are as follows.

OSU-ACBO Endowed Scholarship to Jenni Remeis of Columbus  
University of Toledo/ACBO Endowed Scholarship to Rachael Spangler of Toledo  
Wright State-ACBO Endowed Scholarship to Mallory Hollar of Dayton

One of the highlights of our annual state conference and convention is to present awards to people who have made a significant contribution to improving the quality of life for blind or visually impaired Ohioans.

The Ken Morlock Award, which is given to a person who is blind or visually impaired who has worked tirelessly and selflessly for people who are blind, was presented to Jill Noble of Cleveland.

The Ruth Davidson Award, which is given to a sighted person who has worked to enhance the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired, was presented to Chris Schumacher of Cincinnati.

The Ambassador Award, which is given to an ACB-Ohio member who has worked tirelessly for ACB-Ohio and the blind community, was presented to Nolan Crabb of Columbus.

The Arlene Cohen Art of Teaching Award, which is given to a teacher of blind or visually impaired children, was presented to James Duffield of Columbus.

Deborah Kendrick, of the Cincinnati Enquirer, received the Media Award, which is given for writing or reporting about blindness or issues that concern blind or visually impaired persons.

The Employer of the Year Award, which is given to an Ohio employer who has hired and made accommodations for employees who are blind or visually impaired, was presented to Scott Lissner, director of The Ohio State University ADA Office, on behalf of the OSU.

The Community Service Award was presented to the Ohio Lions Foundation for their outstanding efforts to enhance the lives of blind or visually impaired people in the community. The Lions have financially supported our annual Family Seminar for six years. Jeff Brantner, Secretary of the Ohio Lions Foundation, accepted the award.

### **2012 ACB-Ohio Annual Report**

#### **Jan - Dec 12**

#### **Income**

<b>401 · Membership Dues</b>	1,470.00
<b>402 · Summer/Winter Retreat</b>	6,815.00
<b>403 · Convention</b>	4,960.54
<b>404 · Vehicle Donation</b>	995.83
<b>405 · Fund Raisers</b>	331.21
<b>406 · Donations</b>	3,310.47
<b>408 · Coffee Fundraiser Income</b>	3,475.02
<b>412 · Interest and Dividends</b>	.04
<b>413 · Specialty Seminar Income</b>	170.00
<b>414 · Grants</b>	1,000.00
<b>415 · Grants – Community Foundation</b>	60,000.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>82,528.11</b>

#### **Expense**

<b>501 · Salaries</b>	33,400.08
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<b>502 · Wages</b>	8,462.50
<b>505 · Utilities</b>	999.96
<b>506 · Telephone and Fax</b>	1,478.09
<b>507 · Licenses</b>	35.00
<b>508 · Insurance</b>	3,905.00
<b>510 · Office and Committee Expense</b>	673.09
<b>512 · Bank Charges</b>	38.50
<b>513 · Legal and Accounting</b>	1,475.00
<b>515 · Newsletter Expenses</b>	1,070.60
<b>516 · Postage</b>	110.59
<b>518 · Dues &amp; Subscriptions</b>	212.00
<b>520 · Payroll Expenses</b>	986.38
<b>521 · FICA Tax</b>	3,202.50
<b>523 · Worker's Compensation</b>	143.20
<b>525 · Health Insurance</b>	1,500.00
<b>544 · Maintenance &amp; Repairs</b>	50.00
<b>549 · Board Meeting Expense</b>	2,376.21
<b>550 · Legislative Seminar Expense</b>	3,573.05
<b>552 · Meals &amp; Lodging</b>	7.00
<b>553 · Travel</b>	853.50
<b>555 · Fund Raising</b>	161.00
<b>556 · Summer/Winter Retreats</b>	8,791.85
<b>557 · Donations from ACB-Ohio</b>	108.39
<b>558 · Scholarships</b>	11,000.00
<b>560 · National Convention</b>	984.71
<b>561 · ACBO Convention</b>	10,506.86
<b>563 · Chapter Support Grants</b>	500.00
<b>564 · Specialty Seminars</b>	997.43
<b>567 · Coffee Fundraiser Expense</b>	3,239.35
<b>569 · Website Expense</b>	257.01
<b>570 · Sub-Contract Services</b>	3,030.00
<b>572 · Professional Development</b>	95.00
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>104,223.85</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-21,695.74</b>

**AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND OF OHIO  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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