Your Help Is Needed

by Tracy Scheyer, CFRE
VP of Development

ABVI is extremely self-sufficient. Our business model covers 70 percent of the revenue needed to run our programs and services. This is an extraordinary amount of self-sufficiency. It is very rare for a non-profit to generate this level of revenue to support its programs.

We are very proud of the fact that our entrepreneurial business model not only creates great careers for people who are blind, it generates revenue to support vital programs and services. Unfortunately, the funds resulting from our businesses are being diverted away from vital services to cover unfunded government cost increases.

Being hit with unpredicted cost increases, for which we have no control, make it difficult to continue some of the important services those in our community need. Our worker’s compensation expense has gone through the roof due to changes in how the government classifies a large group of our employees. We have seen our costs double, by a staggering $365,000. The minimum wage increase has had an impact of an additional $300,000, and our healthcare expense to cover our employees has gone up by $133,000 or 16 percent this year.

We have sufficient revenue to cover the majority of our costs. However, we are coming up short for funds for our programs and services, and are turning to our friends. We have sharpened our pencils and done our best at making financial adjustments, however we need your help to make sure that none of our vital services for 2016 will have to be reduced or interrupted.

While we are currently in a tough situation, all is not lost. We are working very hard to grow and improve our manufacturing, call center and donated

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Project Eye Care Turns 20

by Kimberly Lawrence, Coordinator
Vision Wellness & Preventive Services

Project Eye Care has examined over 4,330 patients since the year 2000, when ABVI adopted the program.

Changes over the years

When Project Eye Care began in 1995, eye exams were provided at various church soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and community health centers. We did the best we could with the surroundings we were in in an effort to bring free eye exams to the community where our patients lived, worked, and socialized.

Over time it became clear that the majority of Project Eye Care patients were receiving their health care from St. Joseph’s Neighborhood Center and the Mercy Outreach Center, both community health centers in the downtown Rochester area. Our eye exam equipment is permanently fixed in an exam room designated specifically for Project Eye Care. More importantly, our patients have access to other health care providers at these two sites, making their general health care more person-centered and accessible.

Most significant impact of the program

Saving people’s vision and their lives. Not only have we detected many patients with blinding disorders like glaucoma, but we have also been able to diagnose individuals with life threatening diseases such as diabetes. Many of our patients have not been to a primary physician in years because they do not have medical insurance. Through a dilated eye exam we have been able to detect diabetes in many patients who never knew they had it.

If the program didn’t exist

If Project Eye Care did not exist, hundreds of individuals would go without the eye exams and glasses they need because eye exams and eyeglasses are cost prohibitive. There is no other program in our area that provides free eye care services. Many of our patients have obtained jobs as a result of receiving the glasses they need and finally being able to read a job application.

Project Eye Care is helping to enhance the quality of life for the individuals we serve, as well as saving people’s lives.

Listed below are all donors to Project Eye Care since 2000. Also included (and noted) are those donations to the Vision Wellness program as this encompasses Project Eye Care.

Albert C. Snell Memorial Fund
Barbara L. Rafoth
Carolyn Friedlander
Christine C. Platt
Constellation Brands
CooperVision, Inc.

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Need

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goods/retail businesses. Things will get better and we will be able to restore and expand services. But for right now, we need your help by making a donation to ABVI.

Your gift will help us continue providing programs like our Early Vision Screening program that provides vision screenings for children from six months old through kindergarten. This program prevents permanent vision loss by identifying potential debilitating conditions early on and helping parents to secure the proper treatment before it’s too late.

We don’t want to have to cut vital programs such as Early Vision Screening, employment and training, orientation and mobility instruction, adjustment to vision loss, and children’s programming. Please use the enclosed envelope, call (585) 697-5711 or go to www.seegreatthings.com to make your tax-deductible donation. We’ll be deeply grateful for your assistance.
Our Wish List

The kindness and generosity of our donors help us to offer the best and most up-to-date services possible. The following is a list of much needed items that are not covered by ABVI and Goodwill of the Finger Lakes’ budget. To donate funds to purchase any of these items, or to donate the items themselves, please contact Tracy Schleyer, CFRE, at tschleyer@abvi-goodwill.com or (585) 697-5780.

PAL-ID: $335
For many people who have experienced vision loss, the correct pair of glasses can help them read their mail, check their blood sugar, or look at a photo of their grandchildren. This instrument would allow our Low Vision doctors to evaluate a pair of glasses in order to locate the exact position where a prism needs to be located, resulting in the most accurate and effective prescription for the individual.

Books and DVDs for Family Resource Center: $25 - $200
Our new Family Resource Center is a comfortable and cozy place where families of children who are blind or visually impaired can access information specific to the needs of their child, as well as have a quiet family-friendly place to meet with our Vision Rehabilitation staff for support.

Materials for our Multi-Media Center
Our Multi-Media Center is located at our main campus in Rochester, but people who are blind or visually impaired from around the country can access this very special service. Our dedicated group of Braille transcribers volunteer their time to create materials in Braille such as utility bills, restaurant menus, and entire books. Even though individuals can access a wealth of information through current technology, Braille remains the only form of literacy for those who are unable to see regular or large print. It is truly the window to the world!
- Braille Paper: $1,000 (15,000 pages brailed each year)
- Braille Labelling Materials: $162 (clear adhesive sheets to create Braille labels for books, etc.)
- Book Covers: $348 (1000 covers for Braille books)

Rugged iPad Case: $90
An iPad has been a wonderful addition to our children’s programming. The iPad is in need of a rugged case to protect it from drops, water, sand, and all of the other messy things that children use. This case would even allow the iPad to be used outside in our new outdoor area, the Exploration Station!

Examination Equipment for Project Eye Care
Project Eye Care is one of our outreach programs that provides eye exams and glasses free of charge for adults in our community who lack appropriate health insurance. The following items are needed in order for our volunteer eye doctors to provide the most efficient eye exams for those who turn to this program for support.
- Lenses to be used during dilated eye exams: $750 (3 lenses at $250 each)
- A slit lamp: $7,000

Wegmans or Tops Gift Cards
Throughout the year, we provide a variety of recreation events for children who are blind or visually impaired. These gift cards help to provide refreshments and other items that are used at programs such as holiday parties, Game Night, summer picnics, and much, much more.

Books for the GoodGuides® Youth Book Club: $50 per book reading session for 4 youth
GoodGuides® youth book club will provide program participants the opportunity to read books focusing on overcoming challenges they face, and allow time together to discuss these issues, and how to overcome adversity and succeed. The special thing about this book club is each member will be able to keep the books read, building their personal library at home and encouraging the love of reading.
It’s Never Too Late to Learn New Skills

“I remember we would cry during the entire car ride there,” Carlene said.

The four-hour car ride was from a small Pennsylvania town to a school for the blind just outside of Philadelphia. It was the only place that Carlene’s parents were aware of that would educate their twin daughters and provide them with skills like sewing and cooking.

Over time, the school became their second home and the students and teachers became their second family, congratulating the girls upon graduation.

It was after graduation, while attending business school, that Carlene first realized that she was different from others.

“Unlike at the school for the blind, the professors at the business school didn’t know how to teach me,” Carlene said.

However, she was determined. She worked to finish the business school program and began her employment search knowing that her opportunities would be limited. Carlene moved to Rochester, where she found and completed a program that taught people who are blind to operate vending businesses.

“Between work and my kids, I was always busy doing something,” Carlene said.

Although she lived in Rochester, she never reached out to ABVI for services or programming. Carlene utilized a dog guide to get around, but the dog’s health became an issue and had it had to be returned. She then had to use a white cane, which was something entirely new to her.

“I learned how to do everything at the school for the blind,” Carlene noted, adding; “When I was growing up, they never taught kids with some vision, like me,

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how to use a white cane. So, I had to learn to use one if I wanted to get around.”

She turned to ABVI for this guidance. While at ABVI setting goals for her vision rehabilitation services, Carlene learned about a new program called New Skills, New Vision, a group training program for people who are at least 55 years old and who have vision loss.

“Being around other people just isn’t my thing, and I don’t like going to new places. But I decided I would give it a try,” Carlene said.

Six decades later, Carlene felt like the little girl heading to the school for the blind. The difference was that there were no tears. And just as she did at the school, she found family once again at ABVI. “Being with other people who are blind was so comfortable. We were able to help each other and share things sighted people just don’t understand,” Carlene said.

The New Skills, New Vision program has helped Carlene to feel connected. She knows she can count on anyone at ABVI or anyone in the group when she needs to learn something new.

“This program is so important, whether you lost your sight a long time ago, or just a few months ago. I hope it can continue,” Carlene said.

Thanks to the WaldronRise Foundation and the Mary S. Mulligan Trust, the New Skills, New Vision program is made possible and is changing lives and bringing hope to those individuals with vision loss who are like Carlene.

How to Give “Stuff” Instead of Cash to ABVI

We are always grateful for cash donations to fund the work that supports our mission and we encourage you to support us in this way. We understand, too, that cash is not the only way to sustain ABVI. You may want to consider supporting ABVI in an entirely different way.

There are many benefits to giving ABVI “stuff” instead of cash.

Think outside the box about your stuff, which could consist of valuable artwork, real estate, antiques, and/or collectibles. The best part is that giving stuff doesn’t have to cost you a lot of out-of-pocket cash today.

How to Gift Your Stuff

You can give us your stuff now, or another simple way to give us an asset is a bequest where you specify which stuff you’d like to bequeath to ABVI.

When you donate your art, antiques, and collections, we sell them on our online auction site or in our Goodwill stores and use the revenue generated to fund valuable vision rehabilitation and employment training services.

Donating art, antiques, and other collectible objects can provide you with the following possible benefits:

– An immediate income tax deduction

– Avoidance of the tax on capital gains on appreciated assets

– An estate and gift tax deduction

To learn more about non-cash giving, contact Tracy Schleyer, CFRE, Vice President of Development at (585) 697-5780 or tschleyer@ABVI-Goodwill.com
A memorial or honorary gift is a wonderful way to celebrate special occasions, honor a loved one, or pay tribute to the memory of family members or friends. Many generous people have found a way to express their caring spirit while helping to ensure the success of ABVI. As a thank you for your gift, ABVI will list your name and the names of those who you are honoring in our newsletter. We'll also send a note acknowledging your gift according to your wishes. For more information about making a memorial or honorary gift donation, please contact ABVI's Development Department at (585) 697-5711. Thank you to the following friends who have made tribute contributions from July 16, 2015 through October 31, 2015.

**In honor of Murray R. Belknap**
Glenn Roat and Shirley E. Renner Roat

**In memory of Jane Deluca**
Adrienne Condon
Ronald and Mary D’Amico
Thelma DiLaura
Thomas and Maxine Nicholson

**In memory of Leonard Haas**
Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.

**In memory of Martha Hinton**
Kim and Julie Kline

**In memory of Jean Hoeve**
Timothy and Lori Giarrusso
Gidget and John Hopf

**In memory of Joseph R. Kashmir**
The Visionaries

**In honor of Jennifer Lake**
Jane L. Miholland

**In honor of Kimberly Lawrence**
Tracy L. Schleyer

**In memory of Arthur E. Lowenthal**
Joseph and Nancy Briggs
Steven and Diane Feldon

**In memory of Joan Magee**
Richard Stein

**In honor and appreciation of Ellen G. Neisner**
Sally McGucken
Betsy Garson Neisner

**In memory of Marion W. Neun**
Mary Ellen and Peter Parry

**In memory of Norma Thompson**
Monroe Plan for Medical Care, Inc.

**In memory of Joanne M. Weaver**
Lisa M. Contestabile
Kim Fina
Kim Green
Kim Joyal
Yvette Markwitz
Jim Mazza
Ann Marie Rotter
Timothy J. Skelly
Annette Smith
Kathy Warren

**In honor of Vera S. Wheten**
Wilma Wheten

**In honor of Larry Wirth**
Harvey and Elaine Nusbaum

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**Honoring a Quarter Century of Service**

Wendy Micca always knew that she wanted to make a difference in her career. Twenty-five years ago, she made the choice to do just that when she joined the staff of The Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ABVI).

“I moved here from Milwaukee, Wisconsin to get married. And I stay here because the work I do is very rewarding,” Wendy said.

Wendy is one of the Low Vision Opticians in our Low Vision Center. Her job consists of filling prescriptions for magnifiers, glasses, telescopes, sun lenses, and biopic telescopes for driving. Although there is a clinical aspect to what she does, Wendy prides herself on giving each person she sees a high level of customer service.

“I treat each person I see like I would treat my own family member if they came to get services at ABVI,” Wendy said.

After 25 years of service, Wendy said she would like to think she made a difference in the lives of anyone who received any service she provided. Everyone at ABVI knows she has.
Recognizing Visionary Support

ABVI created the Visionary Society to thank and honor those who have demonstrated a strong and steadfast commitment to empowering those who are blind or visually impaired. The following members have supported ABVI for the last 10 or more consecutive years.

Visionary Society Members as of November 23, 2015

Beverly T. Andersen  Dorothy Green  Shirley S. Preston
Velma P. Anderson  Steve and Julie Gutch  Marty and Grace Quinn
Norman J. Aroesty  David and Frances Hall  John and Bonnie Sale
Richard and Valerie Baum  Nancy L. Hanushek  Kenneth and Betty Schirmuhly
Christian A. Beltram  Robert J. Hawes  Tracy L. Schleyer
Kenneth and Carolyn Berner  Frederick and Rosanne Holbrook  Dr. and Mrs. David M. Schrier
Robert and Nancy Blackmun  Gidget and John Hopf  Edward and Lisa Schwarz
Ezio Bonanni  Ruth R. Huboi  Robert and Ruth Shone
Raymond C. Bottner  Louis and Betty Iacona  Leslie and Margaret
Richard and Joan Boy  Michael and Sarah Iacobucci  Shuttleworth
Joseph and Nancy Briggs  Joseph and Patricia Istvan  Robert and Mary Jane
Paula D. Briggs  Mary and Ray Jacobi, Jr.  Skarzynski
George and Catherine Browning  Barbara J. Jones  Shirley and Iris Skinner
John and Betsy Carver  Eleanor K. Kreutter  David W. Smith
Paul and Joan Casterline  Pierre and Dorothy Loncle  John Stabile
Donald and Linda Chapman  William and Sara Love  Gwen and Richard Sterns
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David and Donna Cole  Barbara E. Marshall  Virginia Trout
Kathryn M. Cummings  Richard C. Mathner  Frank and Esther Van Beltram
Robert and Joann Dale  William and Betty McCullough  Harry C. Van Beurden
Gerald and Elaine Daley  Richard and Theresa Mengel  Edward and Joan Vanzo
Janet T. Davis  Robert and Jane Morello  Rudolph and Margaret Warren
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Calvin S. De Golyer, Jr.  Harvey and Elaine Nusbaum  Dan E. Waterstraat
Ralph G. Dimmick  Barbara Nussmann  Katherine White-Hitchcock
Sue A. Draves  James and Mary Palmer  and Richard Hitchcock
Michael and Carol Eagan  Mary Ann Palozzi  Patricia A. Wolfe
Steven and Diane Feldon  Ruth E. Peck  Robert D. Zarcone
Anthony and Beverly Giuliano  John D. Pfluke  James and Karen Zielinski

Project Eye Care Donors  Continued from page 2.

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Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation  Lions Clubs of New York State and  The Warburg Pincus Foundation
David J. Cole  Bermuda MD-20 Region 1  Tina T. Reeves
David Lawrence  Mary Boland  Tracy L. Schleyer
Excellus BlueCross BlueShield*  Monroe Plan for Medical Care, Inc.  *Vision Wellness Program Donors
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Fred & Floy Willmott Foundation  Rochester Gas & Electric
Ian G. Cox  Rochester Optical*
Katherine White-Hitchcock  Rochester Primary Care Network*
THANK YOU!!!