

Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI)
Report of Services for Town of Fairlee

The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired's 2017 Fiscal Year was an exciting one. We served more clients than ever before. We jump started our online communications activity and we have made some advances in our efforts to fund our mission and work.

It's clear to us at VABVI that our mission and services will continue to play a critical role in the lives of many Vermonters well into the future. We are working harder than ever to ensure that all Vermonters know that we are here to support anyone living in Vermont who is experiencing vision loss.

PALS (Peer Assisted Learning and Support) Groups

PALS Groups are held in 14 counties throughout the state, where members meet each month to discuss the practical, social and emotional challenges of vision loss. They also share coping strategies with each other on how maintain their independence! This past year, PALS Groups held events such as Dining in the Dark and Bowling in the Dark where they raised over \$1,000 and awareness for VABVI's services. We owe a huge thank you to PALS for all their time, effort and thoughtfulness!

HAPI (Helping Adolescents Prepare for Independence)

The HAPI program enables Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) and Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (CVRTs) to work one-on-one with students to practice daily living skills. The transition aged student will be able to improve their abilities to complete many day to day activities such as, preparing and cooking meals, shopping independently at the grocery store, organizing, matching and washing clothes, cleaning in the home, managing finances, exploring careers and so much more. Grants for this program are matched by The Gibney Family Foundation to help our HAPI students gain their independence. Thank you Gibney Family Foundation!

IRLE Summer Camp (Intensive Residential Life Experience)

This summer, VABVI brought the students sailing on Lake Champlain and they learned how to steer a sail boat for the first time. Students also went bowling, and for many it was their very first experience! While staying at University of Vermont, students explored career options by interviewing various UVM staff and inquiring about their roles. IRLE participants also had the opportunity to practice their independent living skills away from home, and establish new friendships with others through group challenges and activities.

During Fiscal Year 2017, VABVI served 1,731 clients from all 14 counties in Vermont, including 1 adult and 1 student in Fairlee and 40 adults and 12 students in Orange County.

For more information about VABVI's services, or to volunteer, please contact Katie Shappy at (800) 639-5861 ext. 219, or at kshappy@vabvi.org or visit us our website at www.vabvi.org. Feel free to "like" us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/vabvi.org.