



Report of Services for Town of Charlotte

During the 2024 Fiscal Year, The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired saw continued success in client services, innovative programs, and community outreach initiatives. Moving forward, it is exciting to imagine the strides we will make in enabling blind and visually impaired Vermonters to be more independent, develop adaptive skills, and improve their quality of life.

SMART Device Training Program: 584 Vermont residents received SMART training in FY24, the highest number in the program's five-year history. In order to fully fund SMART, VABVI has launched the several-year Second Century Endowment Campaign.

PALS (Peer-Assisted Learning and Support) Group: PALS Groups, held throughout Vermont, are monthly meetings where members share coping strategies and discuss the practical, social and emotional challenges of vision loss. While many clients have been pleased with the reintroduction of in-person meetings in FY24, opportunities to join virtually remain available for maximum flexibility. 90 clients attended PALS meetings in FY24.

HAPI (Helping Adolescents Prepare for Independence): The HAPI program enables Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapists to work one-on-one with students to practice daily living skills.

IRLE Summer Camp (Intensive Residential Life Experience): IRLE camp helps VABVI students develop social skills, meet fellow visually impaired peers, learn independent living skills, and improve self-advocacy skills. This June, IRLE brought 10 visually impaired students to Jay Peak Resort. Activities included beep baseball, disc golf, and ice skating. Fun was had by all!

Community Outreach

VABVI continues to innovate new projects which will connect the local community to our services and cause. After more than two years of development, an accessible tactile sign was installed in Burlington's Waterfront Park in June of 2024. Additionally, VABVI's New Americans Project has offered free vision screenings for local refugee community members.

In Fiscal Year 2024, the agency provided services to a total of 1,048 Vermont residents. This total includes 3 adults and 2 students in Charlotte, and 218 adults and 61 students in Chittenden County.

For more information about VABVI's services or volunteer opportunities, please contact Samantha Gougher, Development Associate, at sgougher@vabvi.org. Thank you very much for your support!