



## Audio & Braille Literacy Enhancement, Inc.

Providing alternative ways for people with print disabilities to read

Spring 2019

Central Library Building 803 W. Wells St. Milwaukee, WI 53233  
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### See You At the Luncheon!

ABLE's Annual Volunteer Recognition and Benefit Luncheon is coming up fast! Please join us from 11:15 a.m to 1:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, May 1, 2019**, at the Italian Conference Center to honor our ABLE volunteers, support our mission and meet some of ABLE's student recipients. Register at <https://www.ablenow.org/news-events/annual-luncheon>. Complimentary parking and wheelchair access. Details on our website. Sponsorships available!

This year's luncheon will feature a presentation by Milwaukee Public School students who are blind or visually impaired, providing them with the opportunity to meet and thank the donors and volunteers who make it possible for them to receive classroom materials at the same time as their sighted peers. Our volunteers receiving awards this year are:

250 plus hours: Chris Hansen, Audio  
250 plus hours: Ceri Hartnett, Audio  
250 plus hours: Carol Hioki, Braille  
250 plus hours: Susan Knorr, Audio  
250 plus hours: Dale Kuehn, Braille

250 plus hours: Gregory Warner, Braille  
1,000 plus hours: Janet Kiekhofer, Office  
1,000 plus hours: Leonard Zaworski, Braille  
2,500 plus hours: Cheryl Esquilin, Braille



*Meet several of last year's Volunteer Award recipients, pictured with 2018 Board President Harold Mester (far left). Next to Harold, left to right: Tony Szymborski – Braille Volunteer  
Barbara Althoen – Braille Volunteer  
Megan Hindman – Audio Volunteer  
Tom Littelmann – Audio Volunteer  
Janet Kiekhofer – Office Volunteer*

### Summerfest 2019!

We are excited to be working once again with the Summerfest staff as our audio team develops audio formats of the Summerfest schedule. Several options will help us reach as many visually impaired and print disabled individuals as possible. Please spread the word so that our community has full access to this information for Summerfest! Options will include:

- Audio recordings of Summerfest info & daily schedules will be available on our website this summer;
- NFB Newslines™ subscribers: press 2 on the phone keypad, then 3 to get to the ABLE Channel for Summerfest info;
- Download the accessible Summerfest app on a smart phone;
- At Summerfest, audio info will be available on an MP3 player at four info booths and the respite area.

We also produce accessible materials for PrideFest, Wisconsin State Fair and Irish Fest. If you have another festival in mind, give us a call!

## Office Redesign: A Dream Come True!

Twelve years ago, ABLE was staffed by three employees with four computers; today we have nine employees and twenty-two computers. Six years ago, we made a deliberate shift to focus on the need for quick turn-around brailled learning materials for school-age children. We added staff and volunteers to produce handouts, worksheets, and other daily assignments to ensure that blind children have their educational materials at the same time as their sighted peers. Four years ago, we created the ABLE Sound Center, which allowed us to significantly improve the quality of the audio books we record and make accessible to 550,000 National Library Service patrons across the U.S.

However, along with more production came more noise, which was creating an unpleasant and distracting work environment for our staff and volunteers. Noise mitigation efforts would significantly reduce that noise. We also needed to address efficiency and productivity so that staff and volunteers who needed to collaborate were no longer separated. In 2017 we launched a capital campaign to raise funds to completely redesign our workspace as well as mitigate noise. Mission accomplished! Our redesign not only increased productivity but also allowed us to add eight workstations for use by our growing team, as well as a sound mitigation room for our noisy embossers and carpeting to further reduce noise. With a more healthful and efficient work environment, we are poised to build additional capacity in 2019.

Our sincerest thanks to these generous donors, without whom our significantly improved work environment would never have come to fruition:

Alvin and Marion Birnschein Foundation, Inc.

Industries For the Blind, Inc.

Schoenleber Foundation, Inc.

Conoco Philips Company

Pilot Club

Anon Charitable Trust

Ziemann Foundation, Inc.

Melitta S. and Joan M. Pick Charitable Trust

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Lori and Gene Batchelder

Beverly Doherty &

Thomas Hamilton

Dan Jambura

Lenore Tesch

Holly Loveland

Barbara Nevers

Pollyanne Mather

Kathryn Lorrigan

Andrew & Paula Holman

## Another Delightful Braille Games

Braille Games is truly a collaborative event! On March 14th, ABLE once again partnered with Vision Forward Association, the Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library and the Milwaukee Public Museum, in cooperation with the Milwaukee and suburban school districts, to host this intergenerational event. This year's event featured "Exploring Africa" at the Museum through games adapted with braille.



*Getting a feel for the African desert*



*Textures of textiles: a braille puzzle!*