



**AMERICAN
ACTION FUND**
for Blind Children
and Adults

A resource. A community. A commitment. Since 1919.

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Friends:

As we reflect on our work over the past year, I am struck by the power of a simple but transformative idea: that access to Braille is not just about literacy—it is about belonging, independence, and community. At the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults, our work continues to center on supporting Braille literacy at every stage of life, and your partnership makes that work possible.

In 2025, we strengthened a cycle that builds and sustains a vibrant Braille community. It begins with our Braille Books program, through which we send free Braille books to thousands of blind children and to families with blind parents. These books are not temporary resources—they are meant to be kept, treasured, and read again and again, forming the foundation of a lifelong relationship with literacy.

From there, that foundation grows. Through the Braille Readers Are Leaders contest, children (along with adult Braille learners) are encouraged to deepen their engagement with reading, building confidence and fluency. Our annual Braille book fair brings families together, creating a fun and lively space where books are shared, discovered, and celebrated. And through ShareBraille, our online community, those same books can find new life in the hands of other readers, extending their impact far beyond a single household.

We also recognize that literacy and independence go hand in hand. Our Braille pocket calendars enable practical, everyday planning, while our free white cane program ensures that blind individuals have the tools they need for safe, confident travel and exploration. Together, these programs reinforce the same core principle: that access to Braille and nonvisual tools empowers blind people to live their best lives. What makes this work especially meaningful is how interconnected it has become. A book sent to a child today may be shared at a book fair tomorrow and passed along through ShareBraille in the future. A young reader who builds literacy by participating in the Braille Readers are Leaders contest grows into an adult who contributes to their community. This is not just a collection of programs—it is a living, evolving ecosystem of literacy, opportunity, and connection.

None of this would be possible without you. You are behind every book distributed, every contest participant encouraged, every cane placed in someone's hand, every free Braille calendar, and every connection made through our community. You are helping to build not only readers, but a stronger, more inclusive future grounded in the belief that Braille is essential.

Thank you for your continued commitment to this mission. Together, we are ensuring that Braille literacy remains the key to opportunity for generations to come.

Warm regards,

Mark Riccobono
Executive Director
American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults



YEAR IN REVIEW

“Access to Braille is not just about literacy—it is about belonging, independence, and community. At the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults, our work continues to center on supporting Braille literacy at every stage of life.”
– Mark A. Riccobono, Executive Director

Supporting Braille Literacy

Braille literacy is the foundation of opportunity for blind people. In 2025, the American Action Fund continued to expand programs that strengthen reading skills, provide accessible materials, and connect blind individuals with a nationwide community built around Braille.

From early childhood readers to adults rediscovering literacy, these initiatives ensure that Braille remains a powerful tool for learning, independence, and participation in everyday life.

Braille Readers Are Leaders Contest – 383 children and adults participated in this annual contest to set reading goals, track progress, and celebrate achievement—empowering participants to see themselves as capable, successful Braille readers.

Expanding Access to Braille Books

Braille Book Fair – An annual event that provides hundreds of Braille readers of all ages the rare opportunity to build their very own collection of Braille and Twin Vision® books free-of-charge.

Braille Books Program – Every month, we send a free Braille book from a popular children’s reading series to blind children and families, as well as teachers and libraries, across the country. This past year, we sent **23,699 books** to participants.

Share Braille – Share Braille brings readers together through a national community centered on Braille literacy. By connecting people who want to exchange Braille books, the program helps extend the life of each book while expanding access to new titles and strengthening connections among readers.

“Receiving these books has changed the way my child sees herself. She knows now that Braille belongs in her life every day.”



Tools that Support Daily Life and Independence

Braille Calendars – These pocket calendars provide an accessible way to keep track of important dates and commitments, supporting organization and independence throughout the year. This year, we produced **4,809 Braille calendars** and sent them free-of-charge to blind people.

“My Braille calendar helps me manage my life on my own. It’s a small thing that makes a big difference.”

Free White Cane Program – The American Action Fund provided support for **6,048 free white canes** to be sent to blind people in 2025. For many recipients, a white cane represents an important step toward greater independence and confidence in travel and exploration.

How You Can Help

- Contribute online today at www.actionfund.org/donate, or to give over the phone, please call us at 410-659-9315.
- Mail checks to American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults, attention Outreach, 1800 Johnson Street, Baltimore, MD 21230.
- Leave a legacy that will help future generations of blind and deafblind children. Call 410-659-9315 and ask for Patti Chang for planned giving options.

Financial Statement & Transparency

The American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code and completes an annual audit of activities. Learn more at www.actionfund.org/about.

Together, we will continue to positively impact the lives of both blind children and adults for decades to come. If you have questions or want to learn more about our work, please contact us at 410-659-9315, explore www.actionfund.org, or email us at actionfund@actionfund.org.

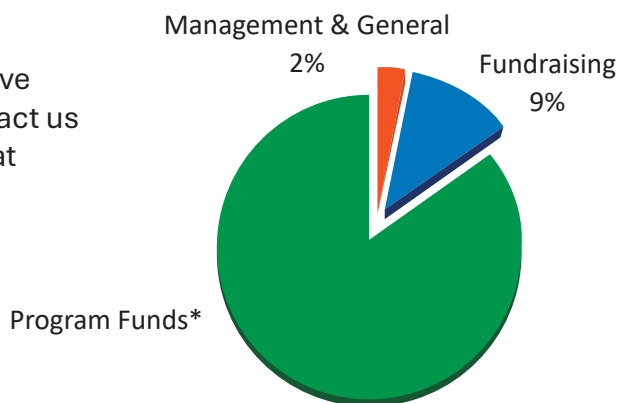
**All contributions and gains received in the year not spent on management and general or fundraising are available for program services.*



“I was afraid to leave my house alone. My white cane changed that and gave me the confidence to step back into the world and start living independently again.”



Fundraising and Management and General Expense as a percent of Total Revenue and Gains and Other Support



ABOUT THE AMERICAN ACTION FUND

The American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults is a national service agency that specializes in providing help to blind people that is not readily available to them from government programs or other existing service systems. The Action Fund has been serving blind people since 1919 and is headquartered in Baltimore, Maryland.

The mission of the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults is to assist blind and deafblind people in securing reading material, to educate the public about blindness, to provide specialized aids and appliances to the blind, to give consultation to governmental and private agencies serving the blind, to offer assistance to those losing vision in their later years, to offer services to blind children and their parents, and to work toward improving the quality of life for the blind and deafblind.

LEADERSHIP

The American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults operates through countless volunteers across the country who are overseen by a volunteer board and a full-time executive director.

The board members of the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults are blind and receive no financial compensation for their services. The Action Fund's executive director is also a blind individual with extensive experience in educational programming for the blind.

Executive Director

Mark A. Riccobono - Baltimore, Maryland

Board of Directors

- Barbara Loos, President - Lincoln, Nebraska
- Julie Deden, First Vice President - Littleton, Colorado
- Sandra Halverson, Second Vice President - Arlington, Virginia
- Gary Mackenstadt, Secretary - Sequim, Washington
- Cassandra McNabb-McKinney, Treasurer - Jackson, Tennessee
- Chancey Fleet - Brooklyn, New York
- Mary Ellen Gabias - Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada
- LisaMaria Martinez - Union City, California
- John G. Paré, Jr. - Baltimore, Maryland
- Bennett Prows - Kirkland, Washington
- Pam Schnurr - Indianapolis, Indiana
- Gary Wunder - Columbia, Missouri

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended December 31, 2025

REVENUE AND GAINS AND OTHER SUPPORT

Public Support:	
Contributions	\$3,620,844
Donated Services	1,006,399
Total Public Support:	4,627,243
Revenue:	
NET Investment Income	5,299,920
Total Revenue and Gains and Other Support	\$9,927,163

EXPENSES

Program Services:	
Braille Publications and Programs	\$735,287
Tools for Independence	160,935
Specialized Programs and Services	3,609,520
Total Program Services:	4,505,742
Supporting Services:	
Management and General	209,944
Fundraising	891,872
Total Supporting Services:	1,101,816
Total Expenses	\$5,607,558

Changes in Net Assets	\$4,319,605
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	\$42,420,026
Net Assets - End of Year	\$46,739,631