



Audio & Braille Literacy Enhancement, Inc.
Providing alternative ways for people with print disabilities to read
Central Library Building 803 W. Wells St. Milwaukee, WI 53233
(414) 286-3039 www.ablenow.org

Autumn 2022

Celebrating 57 Years of Service to the Community!

Announcing ABLE Annual Awards Luncheon & Benefit

Audio and Braille Advocate Sponsors:
Industries for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Inc.
Beyond Vision

Wednesday, October 19, 2022
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (registration at 11:15 a.m.)

You won't want to miss the 2022 ABLE Annual Awards Luncheon & Benefit! Together we will celebrate 57 years of serving the audio and braille needs of blind and visually impaired people in our community and beyond. Join us in honoring and acknowledging our dedicated and loyal volunteers.

Volunteer awards and Milwaukee Public Schools students celebrating braille and audio services will be a memorable part of this event.

The Italian Conference Center – Festa Ballroom

631 East Chicago Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Complimentary Parking and Wheelchair Access

Visit our website at www.ablenow.org for more details and registration information.

Register by October 5th.



Milwaukee Public School students provided delightful entertainment at our 2019 luncheon!

Opportunities to Support the Luncheon!

Would you like to show your support by sponsoring this annual event? Your sponsorship will enable us to continue bringing information and literacy into the lives of so many. See our sponsorship levels on Page 6. Please confirm your commitment by calling Cheryl at (414) 286-3026 or sending an email to corgas@ablenow.org. Thank you!

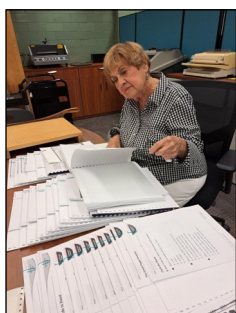
ABLE's Work is Going Strong!

Our high-quality audio books, produced in the ABLE Sound Center, are available to blind and print disabled patrons of the National Library Service throughout the country. We have already reached our goal of 50 books for The Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library, a goal usually reached closer to the end of the year.

ABLE is excited to report that books recorded in our studio circulated 33,501 times from 2016 through 2021, including over 11,000 times in 2021 alone! One of the books we recorded in 2020, *The House on Foster Hill* by award-winning Wisconsin author Jaime Jo Wright, has already been accessed 2,689 times.



Merete Mohs recording in the ABLE Sound Center



In the braille and tactile department, we have worked with 14 school districts in Wisconsin over the last two years. In the first six months of 2022, ABLE's very busy team of staff and volunteers produced 9,142 pages of brailled learning materials for students, including 1,732 tactile diagrams (raised line drawings). This represents 76% of our goal for the entire year.

Lenore Tesch proofreading brailled assignments

Say Goodbye, and Say Hello!

As sad as we are that Andrew Jambura moved on from ABLE, we wish him well in his new job. Andrew was with us 7 ½ years, first editing books, then taking on more responsibilities after the ABLE Sound Center was built, and finally serving as audio manager. The audio program is much stronger because of Andrew's talents and influence. With his leaving, we were able to promote Dylan Shanahan to audio manager. Dylan brings his own strengths and talents to the position, continuing to grow our audio books in quality and quantity.

We are delighted to welcome Stephen Strupp as our audio assistant. We are so pleased to have Stephen on staff. Here is a little bit about Stephen, in his own words:



*Welcome to ABLE,
Stephen!*

My name is Stephen Strupp and I am the new audio assistant at ABLE. I started in February, 2022, and am happy to be part of the audio team here. I grew up in Milwaukee and received my bachelor's degree from the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design in 2012. I enjoy playing and recording music in my free time and have been glad to have an opportunity to use some of my audio recording and editing skills at ABLE. I've been enjoying working with the amazing volunteer readers to make books and other print materials accessible to the blind and print-disabled. ABLE has a wonderful mission and I am happy to be part of it!

Braille Books for Children

ABLE is continuing our initiative to get more books into the hands of blind children. Beyond schoolbooks, blind children often have little access to books they can read for pleasure. Just as with sighted children, reading expands their vocabularies, improves their communication abilities, enhances concentration and promotes logical thinking skills. But blind children do not have the luxury of perusing and selecting books from the shelves of a library.

With funding from the Forest County Potawatomi Foundation and the Glen Stacey Fund, our ABLE staff and volunteer team will provide 180 free copies of two brailled books to blind students throughout Wisconsin. Each brailled book will be accompanied by a print copy to allow parents, grandparents, guardians or siblings to read along with the blind child.

Geared for elementary school readers, these books feature main characters who are blind. Blind children seldom see themselves in the characters of the books they read.



Photo of the book covers

In *Two Canes on the Tundra*, a blind Yupik boy living in Alaska overcomes his resistance to using a cane after his grandfather sets up a ceremony in which stories of ancestors using tools to survive the Alaskan wilderness are told. If Apu's great uncle could overcome a dangerous injury while delivering mail by dogsled up and down the Yukon river, he can surely ignore some teasing—especially if it means he won't need his rotten-walrus cousin to guide him anymore. Apu comes to appreciate his cane as a tool for independence and self-determination. This book highlights Native Alaskan Culture.

Blooming Besties is about friendship, growing pains and predicaments. What could a blind fourth grader possibly do to get suspended from school? And was it her fault? Readers will warm up to the fun banter between Ruby and her best friend and sighted sidekick, Charleigh, as they decide important things like which color to dye their hair, whether or not to lie to their moms or if they should let other girls into their friendship circle.

These characters give the gift of relevance in literacy, inspiring blind children with their courage, insight, and resilience.

Author Mary Tellefson is a retired Teacher of the Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Specialist working in Wisconsin for 37 years. She is still working in the field, giving another six years to the blindness community.

Both books have also been read in our ABLE Sound Center by longtime volunteer, Celeste Baldassare. WTBBL will be making them available through the BARD site, thus available to over 310,000 individuals and organizations throughout the whole country.

Author Mary Tellefson will be speaking at ABLE's upcoming Awards Luncheon.

Treasure Hunt

Speaking of getting braille books into the hands of children, earlier this year nearly 150 braille and print copies of *Your Treasure Hunt: Disabilities and Finding Your Gold* by Katherine Schneider, PhD, were given to blind children and youth throughout Wisconsin and the country. Kathie Schneider, who funded ABLE to do this project said:

I wrote *Your Treasure Hunt* for parents and children like you and yours, and am proud to report that it received a Moonbeam award.

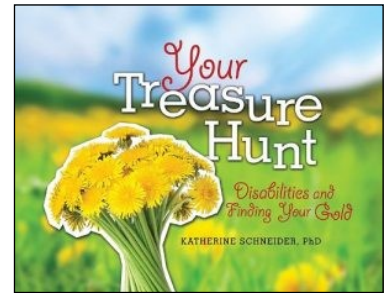


Photo of book cover

Getting through life is pictured as a treasure hunt in this book for young children with and without disabilities. Realities of having a disability—like working extra hard, being teased, and asking for, accepting and giving help—are pictured. Constructive ways of dealing with the frustrating parts of having a disability are featured, as well as techniques for building a positive self-image that includes the disability. Although obstacles are squarely faced, this book emphasizes that each child can find both small and big treasures on his/her life's treasure hunt.

This book is written for children ages four to twelve. It is unique because of its forthright discussion of the hassles of having a disability and for the simple concrete suggestions it makes for dealing with each hassle. The focus is on using each child's strengths to move forward on life's treasure hunt.

As a lifelong braille reader, I would love to give you and your children the joy of reading this book together.

—Katherine Schneider, PhD, Senior Psychologist, Emerita Counseling Service, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Mightier Than the Sword: Rebels, Reformers & Revolutionaries Who Changed the World Through Writing

Milwaukee writer's new book for kids offers many examples of the power of writing.



Photo by Laura Dierbeck

Rochelle reading Mightier Than the Sword in ABLE's Sound Center

We are excited to share that Rochelle Melander read her own book in ABLE's Sound Center. Rochelle features many famous writers and activists. What is special to us at ABLE is that two of those writers/activists are Louis Braille and Helen Keller. Louis Braille gave us the reading and writing tool that puts us on a level playing field with our peers. Helen Keller gave us a voice through her strong advocacy and writings. Check out Rochelle and her book at her website, <https://rochellemelander.com/>.

Later this year this audio book will be available through the Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library and it will be on BARD.

Braille Games, Another Great Success!

After being virtual in 2021, we were all excited to have Braille Games in-person this year.

ABLE again collaborated with the Milwaukee Public Museum, Vision Forward, the Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library and Beyond Vision to put on Braille Games, an annual event that provides activities emphasizing the importance and relevance of braille for blind children. We were grateful once again to be at the Milwaukee Public Museum with a theme of cultures around the world.

As in the past, blind students worked with adult blind mentors and museum staff. Children took a pretend trip to India, shaking dice to see how many rupees they would get to buy things for their family and for themselves; they played Chinese zodiac bingo, after which they received a braille and tactile zodiac book for home created by MPM and ABLE; and, they created their own art project after studying mola art and writing their dream celebration once they learned about celebrations around the world.

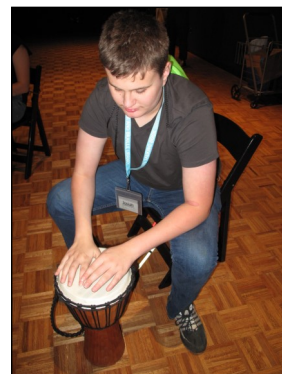
A good time was had by all, as these photos show!



Student creating mola art



Student exploring a sculpture with hand



Student playing drum



Student playing drum



Student using braille writer



Student playing Chinese zodiac braille bingo



Student playing drum

This Year's Award Recipients!

The following volunteers will be recognized for their award-winning volunteer service at this year's luncheon. Please join us in thanking them for their outstanding service!

2,500 hours David Raasch: Audio	1,000 hours Tony Szymborski: Braille
2,000 hours Janet Kiekhofer: Braille	500 hours Chris Hansen: Audio
1,500 hours Paula Lund: Braille	500 hours Meghan Hindman: Audio
1,500 hours Jean Peerenboom: Audio	250 hours Dan Jambura: Audio
1,000 hours Diana Pine: Audio	250 hours Jackie Meagher: Audio
1,500 hours Leonard Zaworski: Braille	250 hours Merete Mohs: Audio
1,000 hours Kathleen Bruening: Braille	

The Value of Volunteers

The time, skills and energy that our volunteers provide are invaluable to us and to those we serve. While we don't think about our volunteers' service in terms of dollars and cents until it's time for our annual financial review, the Independent Sector (www.independentsector.org) calculated a value of \$28.54 per volunteer hour for 2021. We can't possibly thank each and every one of our volunteers enough.

Opportunities to Support ABLE's 57th Annual Luncheon

Audio & Braille Advocate (\$3,000)

Public acknowledgement and display of logo during event
 Table for up to 8 guests
 Public acknowledgement on ABLE's 57th Annual event webpage, Facebook, Twitter, and email blasts about the event.
 Full page message in program booklet (5.5" x 8.5")
 Name recognition on table

Book Builder (\$2,000)

Table for up to 8 guests
 Public acknowledgement on ABLE's 57th Annual event webpage, Facebook, Twitter, and email blasts about the event.

Book Builder (\$2,000) cont'd.

Half page message in program booklet (5.5" x 4.25")
 Name recognition on table

Literacy Leader (\$1,000)

Table for up to 8 guests
 Quarter page message in program booklet (5.25" x 2.12")
 Name recognition on table

Education Enhancer (\$500)

Table for up to 8 guests
 Name recognition in program booklet and on table

Please send your logo to kduerr@ablenow.org. Thanks!