



Arizona Blind and Deaf Children's Foundation, Inc.

Investing in the future of Arizona's blind and deaf children

Arizona Blind and Deaf Children's Foundation, Inc.

would like to introduce new President, Elaine Cobos. Elaine recently left Motorola where she worked as a Project Coordinator. Her unique talents and high level of energy will enable our foundation to grow and better serve the blind and deaf children of Arizona. Please welcome Elaine into our community!

- **Success for Life** – independence skills, technology and career education
- **Art for Life** – comprehensive fine arts program
- **Literacy for Life** – adaptive reading and writing program
- **Fit for Life** – sports and recreational program

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Building Skills for Success!

Arizona Blind and Deaf Children's Foundation is very proud to announce the successful launching of two new programs promoting skills for success.

Project Freedom is a two-week residential camp that builds independence and self-reliance! Teens, ages 16 to 18, receive training and counseling in career education, daily living skills, socialization, independent travel around the community, adaptive technology and computer skills, and much more.



Alex tackles his laundry at Project Freedom.

The first annual program was held last summer and it was an overwhelming success. This summer, *Project Independence* will be administered at the Tucson campus of the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind, and is primarily financially supported by the Arizona Department of Rehabilitation Services. Critical to the success and acceptance of this program, is the premise that the participants have fun while they are learning!

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Camp Abilities is another wonderful program that was pioneered this past summer and will continue annually. Our kids now have the exciting opportunity to do sports that they never thought they could do before!

This weeklong event is a comprehensive developmental sports camp that provides adaptive sports for the blind, deaf-blind and multiply disabled. It is held at the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind Tucson campus in early June. The camp provides one on one instruction, with various sporting and

recreational activities tailored for the participants' specific needs. Last year's *Camp Abilities* was supported both financially and in planning by Arizona Blind and Deaf Children's Foundation. Twenty-four youth participated, from various socio-economic, ethnic and skill level backgrounds. Camp administrators, sports specialists and adult volunteers worked with the campers all week to enhance the unique sports camp experience.



Tackling the rock climbing wall

Mini-Grant Awards

Resulting in Major Rewards!

When is a little a lot? When you have a great idea that directly impacts our kids! We enthusiastically fund mini-grants, ranging in size from \$25 to \$1,000 to any person or organization working with children that are blind or deaf. Programs and activities must meet the Foundation's mission **to invest in the future success of Arizona' blind and deaf students.** Funds have been awarded to a number of projects including these examples.

The Navajo Rug Weaving Exhibit was adapted so that visually impaired children from all over Southern Arizona were able to experience the art, history and science of Navajo weaving. Proving you don't have to see to appreciate art, the students were allowed to feel the fabrics, looms and tools used to create Navajo weavings. The exhibit was displayed at the Arizona State Museum of Art on the University of Arizona campus.



Braille Blocks is a unique program that benefits both the blind and deaf communities. Braille blocks can be compared to the famous Rubik's Cube. There are three sections that turn or rotate to form different Braille characters. They are educational toys that can be used by teachers of the visually impaired, students, parents and all educators. The blocks can be used in games that make



the learning of the Braille code fun and exciting.

The deaf students at the Phoenix Day School for the Deaf woodworking class create the blocks for the blind. It's a win-win situation. These deaf students hone their woodworking skills creating a product that helps the literacy of the visually impaired community. The proceeds from the sales are placed back into the program and the workshop. Bill Beattie, who designed the blocks and Dave Teague, who supervises the program, reports the kids have great plans to produce enough Braille Blocks for all the vision teachers in the state of Arizona.

Success on the Slopes!

Thanks to the Arizona Ski Council and our Foundation, 13 lucky kids skied at Telluride this past February! Skiing was an experience that many blind and deaf children never dream that they will have. The Telluride Adaptive Sports Program provided two instructors for each student, allowing every student to experience the exhilaration of flying down the slopes.

At the end of the two-day program, participants were awarded a certificate of completion. It is fair to say that each student felt very proud of his or her progress and hopes to have a chance to be on the snow again soon. Excerpts from two of the participants' thank you letters are below:

"I enjoyed the speed when going down the hill and the wind on my face as I rode the ski lift. I never thought I would learn how to ski and now I have!"
R.S., age 15

All of us improved greatly in just two days of instruction, and can't wait to go again next year."
K.M., age 21



A Special Thank You!

All of us at Center for Hearing Impaired Children (CHIC) Phoenix want to thank you for our "Mini Grant" for ink cartridges, photo paper, and laminating paper. These items will enable us all to continue our Gallaudet/Smithsonian project within the classrooms! The teachers will be able to enhance and broaden concepts through fine art pictures, objects and movement activities broadening their language base and vocabulary development.

Thank you for considering and granting our request!

Sincerely,

Teri Allan
Preschool Coordinator

Target Helps Children Read!

This past year we asked the Phoenix Target employees to help us fund a very exciting project – one that has an incredible impact on the literacy of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Target said YES and consequently our foundation has donated funds to "The Shared Reading Project." This project is a cutting-edge program developed at highly respected Gallaudet University. Specifically, it provides mentoring, education and support to parents with deaf and hard of hearing children, from infancy to six years old by employing tutors to go into the home and teach hearing families how to read to their deaf children. The tutor (who is also hearing impaired) brings specific books, materials, and video that are left with the family so they can repeat and practice the story and target vocabulary. Storytelling, love of books, and early literacy are skills that, when encouraged from birth, last a lifetime – we are proud to support these skills with Target's help!

Long Realty Cares about Our Kids!

Each of the last three years, Tucson Long Realty agents have been major supporters of Art for Life, a program that has provided enriching learning experiences for students with vision and hearing loss. These learning experiences contributed directly to academic skills, including vocabulary development, auditory comprehension, math skills, geography and cultural issues, and more.

For example, over 100 blind and deaf children learned drumming, rhythm and movement in music classes, as well as drawing, clay sculpture and digital photography in art classes.

Also, all Tucson campus students participated in the painting of a spectacular mural of an Arizona canyon landscape designed by deaf teacher Tony Nitko. If you visit the Tucson campus, you will see this amazing and very large mural on the outside of the Food Services Building.

Art for Life is intended to provide cross-curricular fine arts and multi-cultural instruction, aligned with Arizona State Standards, to enhance student successes in academic and other domains. Providing creative outlets for students who have hearing, vision, multi-sensory or other impairments, can improve social and cooperative behaviors and can assist students in expressive communications and relationship building.

Other major donors to this program are Target (southern Arizona stores), The Margaret Mooney Foundation, Helen O'Shaughnessy, The American Contract Bridge League and numerous individuals.

Project Freedom *Continued from page 1*

Last year's participants suggested renaming it "Camp Freedom" (previously named Project Independence) because they understood that skills of independence and self-reliance provide freedom in adult life! One of the favorite activities was "Life's Obstacle Course," a scavenger hunt that employed real-life mobility and problem-solving skills in the community. We are proud that through donations from our supporters, Arizona Blind and Deaf Children's Foundation provided the seed money and leadership to plan this incredible opportunity for blind and visually impaired teens! The Foundation hopes to expand this program and include a session for hearing-impaired teens beginning summer of 2006 and also to hold several three-day workshops during the school year to reinforce and expand skills learned in Project Independence.

Upcoming Events

Have fun while supporting the visually and hearing impaired children of Arizona! Join us for a round of golf or an evening of dinner and dancing.

Swing for Success

April 29, 2005

Join us for our first annual golf scramble, at Orange Tree Golf Resort, 10601 N. 56th Street, Scottsdale! The shotgun start is 1 p.m., with dinner afterwards at 6 pm. In addition, there will be a live auction, raffle prizes and golfing awards. The donation is \$175 per player or \$700 per foursome. Sponsorships are available for \$200 and up.

Lariats & Lace

November 19, 2005

Please mark your calendar for our fabulous and elegant dinner dance, Lariats & Lace at Skyline Country Club in Tucson. Last year's Lariats & Lace was an incredible success and we plan to make this year's even better! You will enjoy delicious food, spectacular views of Tucson city lights, silent and live auctions, casino games and fantastic entertainment.

For more information on these events or other Foundation programs give us a call at (602)-954-2460 or visit us on the Web: www.azblinddeafchildren.org.

Unique Ways to Help Our Kids

Buying or selling real estate? Vinny Yackanin, Foundation Board Member and RE/MAX real estate professional, will donate 20% of his brokerage fee to the Foundation from any new client referrals. Vinny has 25 years of experience and ranks in the top 1% of Realtors in Tucson. If you have an established relationship with a Realtor already, maybe they would be willing to do the same?

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We are always looking for raffle prizes and auction items for our fund raising events. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation of a product or service please give us a call.

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