

Arizona Blind & Deaf Children's Foundation, Inc.

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

www.azblinddeafchildren.org

Winter, 2009-2010

Making Dreams Come True for Blind and Deaf Youth



As soon as you start to pursue a dream, your life wakes up and everything has meaning.
—Barbara Sher

Ask any successful person what led to their success, and often they'll say it was because they had a dream they simply had to follow. They'll also say it was because someone believed in them.

At Arizona Blind & Deaf Children's Foundation, we believe in our state's blind and deaf youth, and we're committed to providing programs and resources to spark dreams and help make them come true.

In 2009, our programs, focusing on four key areas of experiential learning, touched the lives of hundreds of youth and their families, making dreams come true, and providing the springboard for new dreams.

Art for Life—Art Shed students on the campus of Arizona School for the Blind re-invented a campus-wide Pow Wow, featuring Native American-inspired art, music, and dance. In the spring, the second annual Artists' Choice awards again brought students, teachers, and guests together to view art created by blind students aged six to 18. In the fall, Art Shed launched a new phase in its programming featuring functional art. Ultimately, students' work will be marketed at Farmers Markets in 2010, making the dream of art as vocation a reality for some youth.

Fit for Life—The dream of confidence and belonging comes to life in *Fit for Life* programs. The "Dance Vibe" dance program for deaf children, officially launched in Tucson and Phoenix through a grant from the Kitay Family Foundation, while the sixth annual Camp Abilities, supported through our partnership with Tucson Sunrise Rotary, brought a week of fun and fitness to 35 youth in June. This fall, the first of four quarterly Super Saturdays gave students and families time for fun and bonding.

Literacy for Life—Reading is a major key to success, and this year, the Foundation unlocked the door to early literacy by re-igniting the Shared Reading Project. In coming months, deaf children from pre-school to second grade in Tucson and Phoenix will, with their parents, share the joy of learning stories using American Sign Language through the support of Cox Communications. On campus, local children's author Peter Rossi shared his newest story with both blind and deaf children, paving the way for some imaginative projects and in-class sharing.

Success for Life—This year, the Foundation began outreach to businesses and groups looking to support our youth in the areas of financial literacy and leadership. In 2010, look for new programs supporting the dream of independence for our youth.

Emergency Grants—Through two grant rounds during the spring and fall, several programs received support including: wood shop at ASB, Childsplay Theatre for deaf children, an International Studies trip abroad, a senior trip, anti-drug education, culinary arts, a Family Day for deaf children and their families, and a fitness program at the University of Arizona.

In all, thanks to donor support, the dreams of more than 2,500 young people and their families came true.



From top: Art Shed instructor Dawn Smiddy with student; "Dance Vibe" instructor Lindsey Wright with young deaf dancers; ASDB reading students share illustrations based on local author Peter Rossi's story; Arizona School for the Blind Pow Wow student leaders consider details of their event.

Arizona Blind & Deaf Children's Foundation, Inc.

Arizona Blind and Deaf Children's Foundation invests in the future of Arizona's blind and deaf children by ensuring access to experiential learning in key areas that encompass, and expand upon traditional education, including:

-Art for Life - Comprehensive arts programs aimed at cultural enrichment, while providing experience in necessary life and communication skills

-Fit for Life - Sports and recreation programs to help blind and deaf youth reach their physical potential, and ensuring healthy, active lives

-Literacy for Life - Programs which provide access to adaptive communication tools, ways of accessing information, and which provide support for adult and/or peer mentorship in literacy, thereby reinforcing communication skills

-Success for Life - Independent living skills, technology & career technology programs for teens making the transition to adulthood

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info@azblinddeafchildren.org
and we'll add you to our e-mail list!

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Donate online: www.azblinddeafchildren.org

Fit for Life—Where Fitness Meets Fun for Youth and Families

Physical fitness is more than simply fun and games for blind and deaf youth. Consider the fact that nearly 80% of blind adults, and 70% of deaf adults suffer from chronic illness and isolation due to lack of physical activity, and it's clear why the Foundation focuses significant efforts on our *Fit for Life* programs.

In 2009, the Foundation celebrated six straight years of supporting **Camp Abilities**, a week-long summer sports and recreation camp held on the Tucson campus of Arizona Schools for the Deaf and Blind. "A loss of sight, but never a loss of vision" is the camp's motto and its mode of operating. During the camp, 35 youth participated in everything from beep ball to bowling, dancing to climbing, and swimming to cycling.

"Camp Abilities exposes kids to activities they can do throughout their lives," notes

camp director, Megan O'Connell. "Once they learn what they can do, they're more likely to pursue fitness and health."

Camp Abilities provided that special boost toward fitness at the end of the school year, but what about during the school year?

That's where **Super Saturdays** comes in. Thanks to the Sundt Foundation, Super Saturdays, once an ad-hoc event staged by devoted Foundation Board members, is coming into its own, with the first "new, improved" event launched by ASDB's Barry Breen and other school staff and volunteers. The event was a welcome break from holiday festivities in November, with school residential and non-residential students and their families enjoying a day of bowling and bonding.

"Everyone loved it, and it let families see their kids in a different, more independent light," said Breen.



From top: Camp Abilities youth, whether grade school or high school, swam, bowled, danced and climbed their way to fitness in activities they can enjoy throughout their lives.

Events Important Part of Foundation Fundraising in 2009



Four events raised more than \$145,000 in funds to support programs for blind and deaf children in 2009.

As beneficiary of the **Tucson Sunrise Rotary Trail Ride** in April, the Foundation earned \$8,000 in support of *Fit for Life* programs.

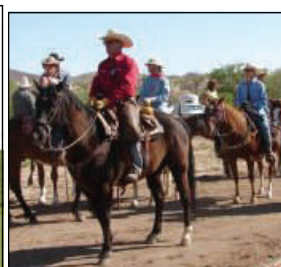
In May, the **Swing for Success** golf event broke previous records, with nearly \$63,000 in proceeds, thanks to title sponsor Salt River Project and national presenting sponsor Xena Homes. S4S Chairs Dave Allan, Stephanie Spain and Murry Everson took the event to a new level in its 7th year, with The Raven as the venue, and a post-golf event featuring the Aussie Golf Trick Shot Show, and live music with Delcoa, a Phoenix rock fusion band.

August found the Foundation honored to be the beneficiary of the first annual

Dave Trout Memorial Golf Tournament, organized by Coffin & Trout Fine Jewellers of Chandler.

The seventh annual **Lariats & Lace** gala rounded out the year at Skyline Country Club in Tucson. More than 200 guests turned out for an extravagant silent auction, great dinner and entertainment, and award ceremony honoring Salt River Project as the White Hat award winner, five ASDB teachers, and a surprise award recognizing outgoing Board Chairman Joe Hayden.

"We've been very fortunate this year," noted Executive Director Rita Weatherholt. "Even though we had to work harder, and had a downturn in sponsorships, thanks to hard work and careful planning, we are still able to support our mission."



From top: Winners from Swing for Success, May, 2009. Michael Sherman and Russell Smolden of Salt River Project accepted the 2009 White Hat Award at Lariats & Lace in November. The late Dave Trout whose Memorial Golf Tournament benefited the Foundation in August. Tucson Sunrise Rotary's Los Vaqueros de la Tierra Trail Ride provided \$8,000 in funds for *Fit for Life* programming.

Help Us Shoot for the Moon in 2010!



**Donate to Arizona Blind & Deaf Children's Foundation
and help make dreams come true for
our state's blind and deaf children and youth —
now and throughout the year**

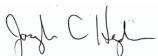
Dear Foundation Supporter,

If you're receiving this newsletter, chances are you already know some of the realities blind, low-vision, deaf, and hard-of-hearing children and their families face. As you read our year-end report, you'll get a sense of the challenges, and the victories the children we reach face each day. And hopefully, you'll understand just how important it is for them to broaden their horizons, to take chances, to dream...and then have the wherewithal to make those dreams come true.

Arizona Blind & Deaf Children's Foundation is dedicated to *investing in the future* of our state's blind and deaf children—in other words, helping them to dream, and making those dreams come true. When you donate to our Foundation, you can be assured that it will support programs in art, fitness, literacy and life skills that will make our children's futures brighter.

Imagine being blind and having the confidence to run a marathon, or being deaf and being able to dance to the beat of music. We invite you to join us in turning those imaginings into reality.

Wishing you the happiest of Holidays, and a New Year filled with dreams come true.


Board Chairman



Your donation means so much

- **\$25** art and cultural education for ten youth
- **\$50** provides support to a deaf mother and her child to chart the child's reading progress
- **\$100** allows 70 students access to special SMART board technology in their classroom
- **\$250** will help launch a new financial literacy program for blind and deaf youth
- **\$500** helps send a blind or deaf child to Camp Abilities sports camp

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could make the difference
to a blind or deaf child!**