



# InSight

Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc.

## AVRE's 2014 - 2018 Impact Report

It's been a few years since we published an annual report. A lot has changed – new leadership, new programs, new manufacturing equipment and product lines. We are excited to share our story with our supporters and our community, but we wanted to keep it simple. Rather than the traditional annual report, we've opted for an Impact Report. Simply put, a sketch – visual and written - of what's been going on at AVRE over the last five years and the impact we've made across New York State and in our local community.

Everyone loves heartwarming success stories. Those are still provided in our newsletter throughout the year. We also invite you to learn more by visiting our website at [www.avreus.org](http://www.avreus.org) or calling us at (607) 724-2428 and arranging a personal tour. AVRE staff and employees are proud to show off what we do and to talk about how, as a team, we make a difference where we live.

(See page 2)

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## Take Me Out to the Ball Game

Earlier this year AVRE was asked to participate in the Binghamton Rumble Ponies' "We Care Wednesday" event. The promotion highlights non-profits and their mission during a regular season ballgame.

We were able to raise awareness and funds, with a portion of each ticket sold by AVRE going toward AVRE's programs and services. Ken Fernald stole the show by throwing out the first pitch with the help of a verbal cue from Rumble Ponies' player, Levi Michael.

Ken stated, "It's important for AVRE to connect with our community to be sure we are getting the message out about the vision rehabilitation services and employment opportunities we offer."

We are happy to have shared this night with board members, staff, and all the baseball fans in the stadium who may or may not have heard of AVRE before. Our hope is to bridge that gap in the years to come.

(Above Right) CFO Anthony Saccento and Association Board Member Ed Gent enjoying We Care Wednesday night at the ballpark.

(Below Right) CEO Ken Fernald and guide dog Winnie say a few words at NYSEG Stadium before the start of the baseball game.



### *Our Mission:*

***"To create opportunities for success and independence with people who are blind or visually impaired."***

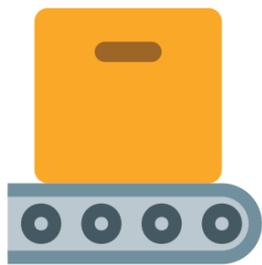
Since 2014:

- Created 20 new jobs
- Sales are up 29%
- Expanded product lines



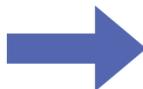
- Provided services to people who are blind in nine New York counties.

- In 2015, we invested \$1.8 million\*\* in modern equipment that can be fully accessed by employees who are blind or visually impaired.



### Manufacturing

- Business revenue offsets the cost of providing vision rehabilitation services.



### Consumers

- In 2018, we worked with 248 consumers to help them maintain their independence.

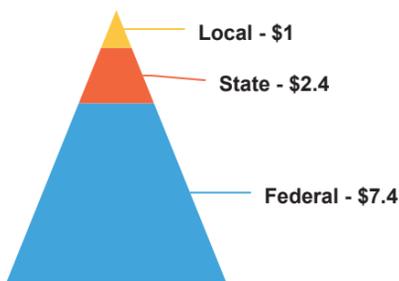


- In 2018, we took Functional Vision clinics on the road and implemented the 20/70 program for people who have low vision, but are not legally blind.



### Customers

2018 Sales, in millions



- AVRE conducts business with federal and state agencies as part of mandatory source programs in each market. We also sell into local and commercial markets.

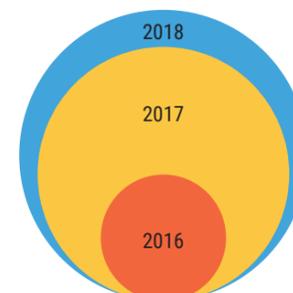


### AVRE

Voted One of the Best Non-Profits to Work For in 2018! \*



### Donors



- Private funding comprises individual donations, local and regional foundation grants, and event sponsorships.



### Local, Local, Local Economy!



- And, we spent \$2.1 million with New York State companies.



- In fiscal year 2018, we paid \$2.8 million in New York State wages.



- This contributes to almost \$50 million\*\*\* being recirculated throughout New York State and our community!

\*\* Funds were secured from the NYS Empire State Development agency and four local foundations - Decker, Hoyt, Klee, and Mee.

\*Survey conducted by The NonProfit Times

\*\*\* A multiplier of 10 is based on a national MPC of 90%.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Only 10-15% of people who are blind see total darkness.

Less than 2% of Americans who are blind or visually impaired use a cane for orientation and mobility.

Source: <https://dsb.wa.gov>

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# Serving our Country: Then and Now

By Dianne Cappiello

A news story from over fifty years ago and our current ongoing work projects remind us about AVRE's commitment to this country.

On May 10, 1962, the Sun-Bulletin and Binghamton Evening Press published a story about how AVRE, then known as the Blind Work Association, was awarded a \$1,024,852.32 contract by The United States Defense Department for fallout shelter sanitary kits. While today we may wonder at such a project, we have to remember that the country was fighting the Cold War. The Communists in East Germany had completed the Berlin Wall just a few months earlier and Castro was now leading Cuba. The Kennedy administration's Defense Department needed 121,428 sanitation kits and awarded the contract to BWA under President Kennedy's Committee on the Handicapped. The Binghamton papers noted that the agency would need to hire more workers and rent more space in order to package the kits quickly. Employees would package items such as plastic containers, gloves, and toilet tissue into fiber drums destined for fallout shelters.



Employee Danny Collins prepares Contigo hydration bottles for shipping.

Today, AVRE continues to serve its country by employing veterans and providing products and services to the federal government. In AVRE's Light Assembly Department, employees package such items as hair accessories, mirrors, and hot and cold beverage travel mugs for sale in military commissaries. In addition, AVRE employs sixteen switchboard operators, fourteen of whom are legally blind, at VA Medical Centers in the Hudson Valley and the Bronx. These operators offer quality service to our veterans every day, building on AVRE's patriotic legacy.

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## Honoring Our Flag



Talk of wanting to construct and build a space for a flag pole have been around for many years. With the help and generosity of the Binghamton Lions Club, we were able to bring the project to fruition and dedicate a space for our flag on the corner of Jay and Court street.

Earlier this month we held a flag raising ceremony with assistance from employee Kevin Snow, the Johnson City Cub Scout Pack 100, and the Boy Scout Troop 110. Both groups assisted in the presentation of the flag and the pledge of allegiance.

Kevin stated, "By raising the flag, we as an organization are able to show our American pride."

We want to thank the Binghamton Lions Club, our board, and our employees who were in attendance to witness the ceremony and celebrate another AVRE achievement!

(Above Left) The Johnson City Cub Scout Pack assist in the raising of the American flag at AVRE's flag ceremony.



(Below Left) Boy Scout Troop 110 salute the flag.



Association for Vision Rehabilitation  
and Employment, Inc.  
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174 Court St., Binghamton, NY 13901  
607-724-2428

Email: [avreinfo@avreus.org](mailto:avreinfo@avreus.org)  
[www.avreus.org](http://www.avreus.org)

Editor: Cassie Burgess

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AVRE serves individuals who are visually  
impaired of all ages who live in the New York  
counties of Broome, Chemung, Chenango,  
Cortland, Delaware, Otsego, Tioga, Tompkins and  
Schuyler.

AVRE is an Affirmative Action and  
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