

**A.V.R.E. Short Stories**

**Annual Report**

**2011 - 2012**

## President and Board Chairs' Letter

Dear Friend:

**I**t's been said that a picture is worth a thousand words, but it takes both to tell a good story. The picture draws the eye in, and the words trigger imagination. A.V.R.E. has written many stories over the past two years about success, growth, and challenges.

**W**e celebrated our 85th Anniversary, albeit a little late! The 2011 flood delayed our celebration and challenged the entire community, while demonstrating our strength and commitment to our neighbors. An A.V.R.E. employee was recognized nationally for her drive to succeed and her commitment to excellence. Young consumers took on the challenge to live healthier, better lives – two of them even traveled to Colorado to play sports with blind athletes from around the country. Staff, consumers, their families, and elected state representatives forged ahead to advocate for the benefits of vision rehabilitation and to protect consumers through professional licensure.

**S**o much was achieved, but much more remains to be accomplished. We are committed to investing our strengths and confronting our weaknesses to make the next two years even more successful and productive. We look forward to serving our entire community and thank those who support us and have confidence in our ability to carry out our mission. We hope you enjoy reading our stories and that you will make opportunities to share them with others.



Robert K. Hanye  
President & CEO



Kelly Storm  
Association Board Chair



Thomas Sbarra  
Foundation Board Chair



## **Governance and Management**

### **Association Board of Directors**

Kelly L. Storm, Chair  
Jack Houseknecht, Vice Chair  
Marena G. Gonz, Secretary  
Paul Komar, Treasurer  
Sister Mary Anne Brawley  
Brian Kessler  
James Lewis  
Samuel K. Levene, Esq.  
Melvin E. Rhinebeck  
Maura Santangelo, MD  
Thomas K. Sbarra  
Maureen Wilson  
Richard Wu, MD

### **Senior Management Team**

Robert K. Hanye, President/CEO  
Kenny Fernald, Vice President-Operations  
Beverly Docteur, Chief Financial Officer  
Richard McCarthy, Director-Health and  
Rehabilitation Services  
Jennifer Cubic, Director-Development  
and Communications

### **Auditor**

Johnson, Lauder and Savidge, LLP

### **Council of Record**

Hinman, Howard and Kattell, LLP

### **Foundation Board of Directors**

Thomas K. Sbarra, Chair  
Beverly Majka, Vice Chair  
Elizabeth Keyes, Secretary  
Ferris Akel III, Treasurer  
Sian Allen, Esq.  
Peter Cronk  
Jeff Ditchek  
Tina Fernandez, Esq.  
Marena G. Gonz  
Joyce Hyatt  
Mary John, DDS  
Paul Komar  
Nancy Phillips  
Betsy Pietriyk  
Melvin E. Rhinebeck  
Jennifer Schorr

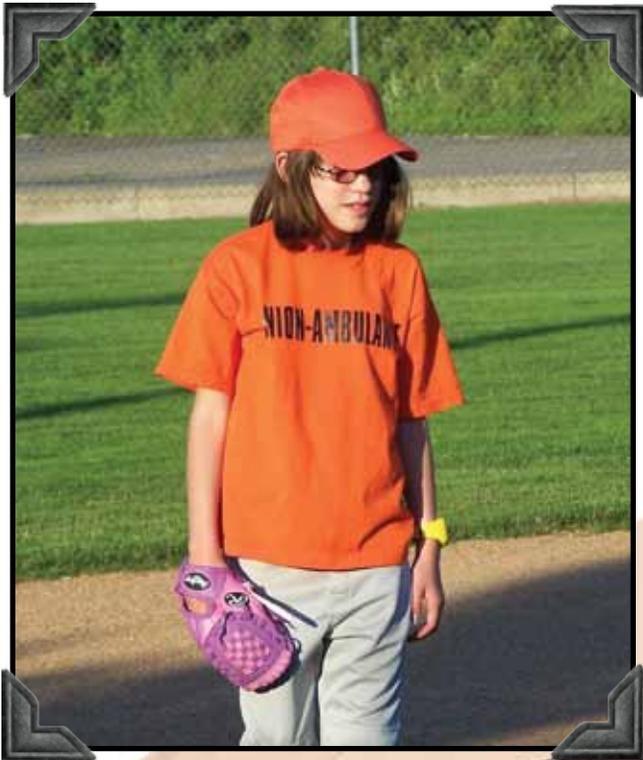
### **Key Affiliations**

National Industries for the Blind (NIB)  
Industries for the Blind of New York State  
National Association of Parents of the  
Visually Impaired  
NYS Vision Rehabilitation Association  
National Association for the Employment of  
People Who Are Blind (NAEPB)  
VisionServe Alliance  
New York Council of Non-Profits, Inc.  
Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce  
Otsego County Chamber of Commerce  
Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce

## Active Kids are Healthier Kids!

**P**hysical activity and participation in sports are critical factors to being healthy. Being healthy is key to a high quality of life. For kids who are blind or visually impaired, participating in sports can appear out of reach. Research shows that students who participate in sports do better in school, are better adapted socially, and are more successful professionally. That's why it's so important to connect kids with programs that bring sports into reach and help them build skills for a healthy life.

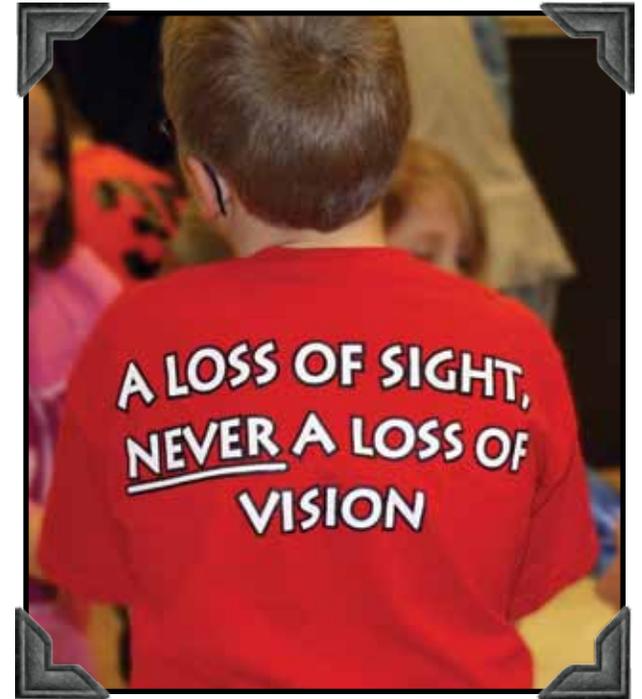
**C**amp Abilities at SUNY Brockport is a one-week program offering kids with sensory disabilities the opportunity to learn about and participate in various sports, like Judo and tandem biking.



There are also sports specifically designed for people who are visually impaired, like Beep Ball and Goalball.

Trained staff work one-on-one with kids to teach them special adaptations for different sports, making participation in sports less daunting. When sports become a reality, kids become more focused, more confident and more independent.

**T**he Challenger Little League of the Southern Tier is a baseball program for kids with disabilities. Each player wears a uniform, bats, runs the bases, and plays in the field. They learn turn-taking skills, how to follow directions, improve their ability to concentrate, and the meaning of good sportsmanship. It's a great way for kids with special needs to learn a sport and have fun!



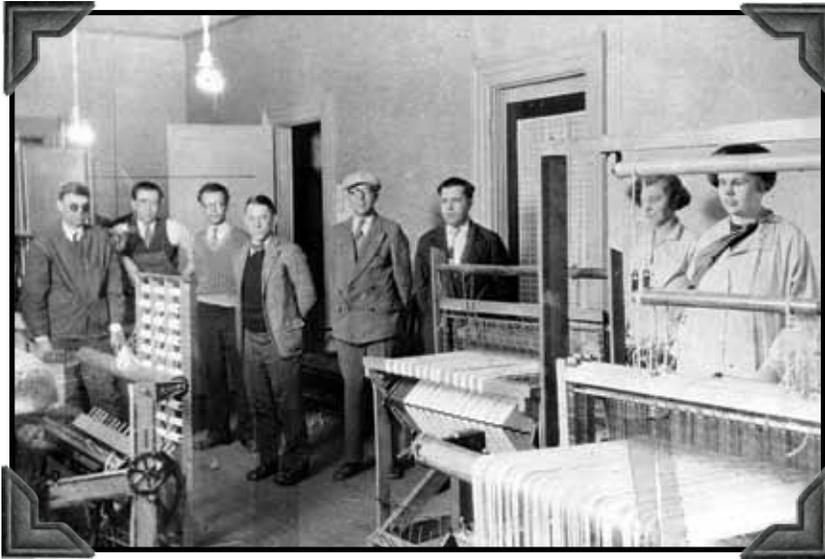
**T**he United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) hosted the National Sports Education Camp in Colorado Springs in June 2012. Two young A.V.R.E. consumers met Olympic and Paralympic athletes, toured the U.S. Olympic Training Center and participated in a variety of sports, including Goalball! The camp was the conclusion of USABA's National Fitness Challenge, which motivated almost 700 visually impaired youth from around the country to reduce their Body Mass Index and become more active in sports.



**T**andemonium! is a homegrown event for A.V.R.E. Thanks to a loan from Camp Abilities, we had access to eight tandem bikes for the event. To generate some energy, we set up a closed course adjacent to the staging area for our Race For Sight. Ten kids who are visually impaired and their families learned about bike safety and then took to the course to see who could do the most laps. They met serious cyclists who participated in the Race For Sight, and some had the chance to actually ride a tandem with a racer. Most importantly, participants experienced something new and exciting and left the event more confident.

## We Still Thrive at 85!

**A** lot has changed in 85 years, but we continue to create opportunities for success and independence with people who have sustained vision loss. What started as an idea to create jobs for people in Binghamton who are blind has grown into an organization that provides comprehensive vision rehabilitation services to consumers in nine New York and three Pennsylvania counties. And, of course, we still create jobs.



**B**y 1930, the organization grew from just one blind Employee to eight. Early production at the State Street facility included chair caning, weaving, and sewing. World War II brought with it opportunities for the Blind Work Association to make pillowcases and combat boot buckles – the very beginning of our work with the federal government. BWA even managed a retail shop to sell blind-made products. Despite significant fluctuations in the economy over the years, the Association continued to grow.

**B**y 2011, the renamed Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc. employed 65 people and was manufacturing manila file folders and copy paper for the federal market and operating switchboards at three Veterans Administration hospitals. For one notable contract, we produced 17 million manila file folders for the Census Bureau!



**E**arly vision rehabilitation services and home visits were implemented in the late 1930s. Some consumers even worked at sewing and weaving in the home to earn money. Services grew to include vision screenings in schools, cooking classes, and safe travel skills.

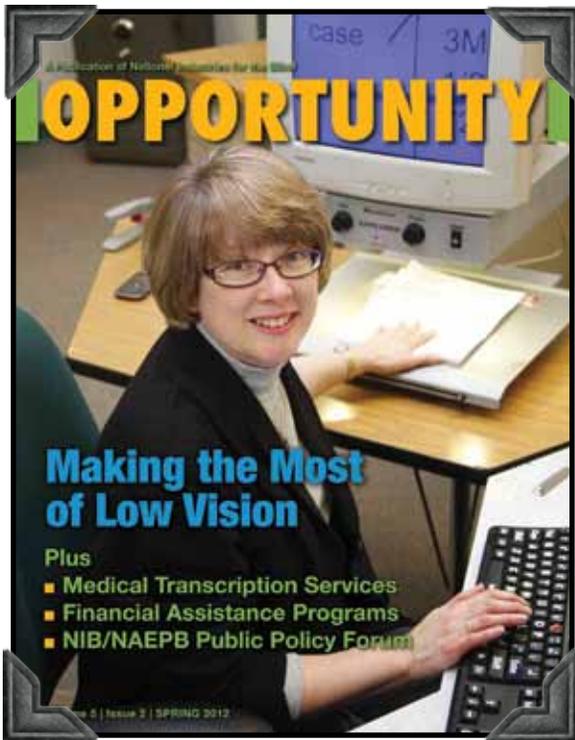
**T**oday, comprehensive health and rehabilitation services are available for people of all ages, infants through seniors. Our professional staff members still make home visits, but they also work with consumers at school, work, and in our on-site Low Vision Center. They work with each individual to determine which skills will help them to be successful and independent. Infants are encouraged to explore their



environments, young people prepare for college, work spaces are adapted to retain employment, and seniors are staying where they belong – in their own homes.

**S**uccess stories abound, but there is always more to do and more people to reach. We rely on support from our communities to support programming and to spread the word about the benefits of vision rehabilitation. As Helen Keller once said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much!" We intend to thrive for another 85!





A.V.R.E. and employee Michele LaComb were featured in NIB's Opportunity magazine.



Binghamton University School of Management students conducted a Strategic Improvement Study with A.V.R.E. staff and consumers.



Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo (left) met with A.V.R.E. staff members to talk about ways she can help us advocate for vision rehabilitation.



We celebrated 85 years of providing services and employment opportunities with a gala Open House and party!



A.V.R.E. employees waved a huge "Thank You" to our sister agencies who went above and beyond to offer assistance to our employees and our local community after the September 2011 flood.



In 2011, our VA Hudson Valley Medical Center switchboard operations at the Montrose and Castle Point campuses celebrated ten successful years.



With help from A.V.R.E., a Norwich consumer advocated for an Audible Pedestrian Signal in her community.



NIB and NAEPB recognized A.V.R.E. supplier and customer Enterprise Group as their 2011 Large Supplier of the Year at the Opportunity Forum in Denver, Colorado.



Our Bronx VA Switchboard Supervisor, Nina Bektic-Marrero, received NIB's 2011 Milton J. Samuelson Career Achievement Award.



A.V.R.E. Accounting Associate Stephen Comency (center) was chosen to represent our industry as an NIB Public Policy Advocate.

## Consolidated Financials -- FY 2011 & 2012

Consolidated Statement of Activities for the Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc. and the Foundation for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc.

Revenue	2011	2012
Public Support	\$190,329	\$295,087
Health & Rehabilitation Services	\$500,255	\$422,108
Sales Revenue	\$8,920,116	\$7,380,227
Investment Income	\$139,678	\$177,657
Realized Gain (Loss) on Securities	\$229,508	(\$101,257)
Market Appreciation/Depreciation	\$600,618	(\$20,766)
Other Income	\$35,303	\$24,843
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$10,615,807</b>	<b>\$8,177,899</b>

Expenses	2011	2012
Business Operations	\$8,044,961	\$6,675,177
Health & Rehabilitation Services	\$780,779	\$832,445
Flood Relief	\$0	\$30,005
Support Services	\$702,244	\$717,837
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$9,527,984</b>	<b>\$8,255,464</b>

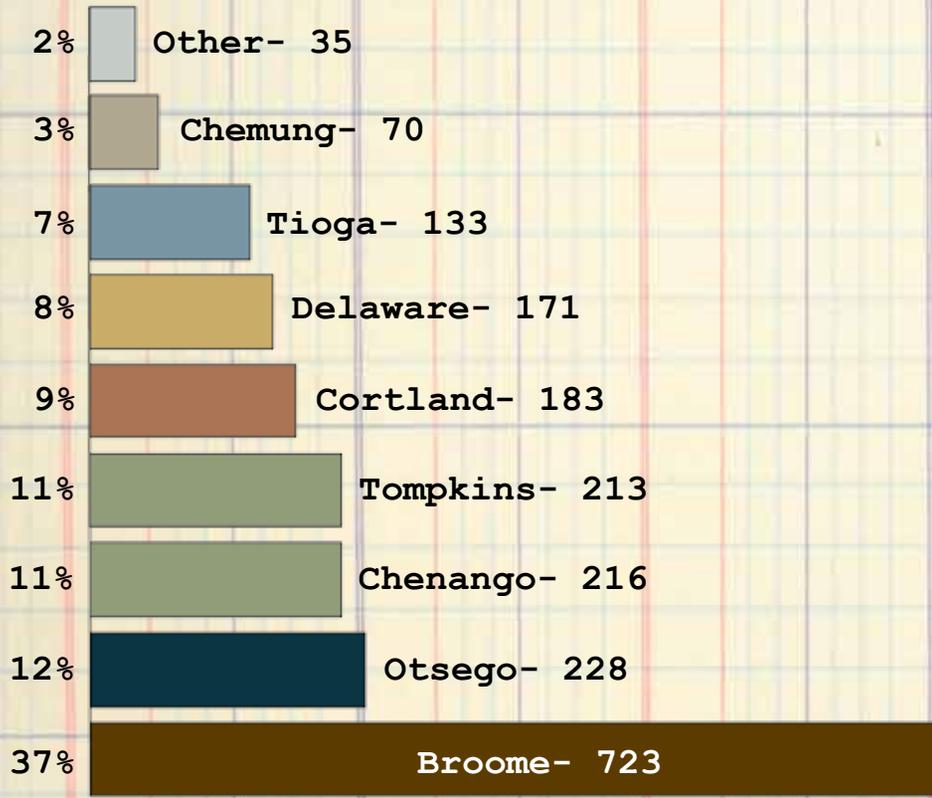
	2011	2012
Payroll	\$2,056,869	\$2,139,615

### Local Impact

A.V.R.E. is committed to helping grow the local and regional economy. We place a priority on doing business with local companies and organizations. Dollars spent locally are dollars invested in the community and its future.

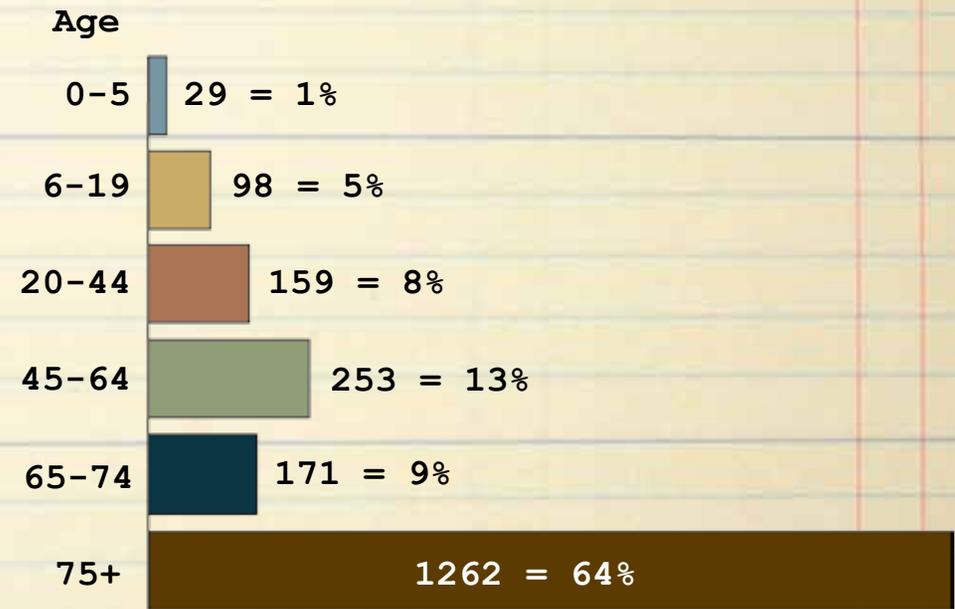
	2011	2012
Purchases	\$445,296	\$569,245
Sales	\$486,913	\$552,749

### Consumers By County

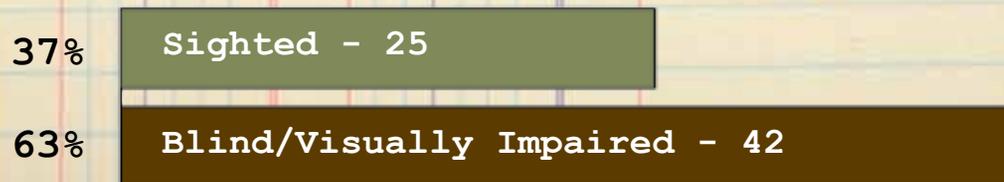


Total Consumers Served  
1,972

### Consumers By Age



Total Labor Force - 67



**Our Mission -- To create opportunities for success and independence  
with people who have sustained vision loss.**

**Our Vision -- To be first in choice and quality in services and employment  
for people with vision loss, and to be a model for the community.**



**Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc.**

**Foundation for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc.**

**174 Court Street, Binghamton, NY 13901**

**Phone: (607) 724-2428**

**E-mail: [info@avreus.org](mailto:info@avreus.org) ~ Website: [www.avreus.org](http://www.avreus.org)**

**Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm**