



# InSight

Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc.

## Breaking Ground on White Cane Training Area

Construction officially began on a new white cane training area at AVRE! The new project will afford people who are blind or visually impaired the opportunity to learn how to use a white cane in a controlled environment. Located on the corner of Court and Jay streets, the training area will be a wonderful addition to our Health and Rehabilitation department and organization as a whole.

The space will be equipped with different surfaces and obstacles, mimicking street corners and intersections. It will allow Orientation and Mobility Specialists to provide varied instruction in one location.

Director of Health and Rehabilitation Services Teri Chamberlin shared her excitement, "It gives our participants real life scenarios where they can safely build skills and confidence before venturing onto busy sidewalks and street crossings, which can be a harrowing experience."

While it serves as a safe place to provide white cane training, it will create an additional space for employees to sit and enjoy the outdoors.

This project is made possible thanks to the generosity of private community donors and grants from the Stewart W. and Willma C. Hoyt and Ahearn Family Foundations. We are appreciative of all of the hard work that has already gone into making this dream a reality.

Stay tuned for updates and photos on AVRE's Facebook page!



Above: An excavator removes old pavement to make way for new sidewalks and blacktop. Construction will be managed by Fahs Construction Group.



Above: Teri Chamberlin and Orientation and Mobility Specialist Margaret Opalka answer questions at AVRE's press conference in June.

### *Our Mission:*

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

# AVRE Manufactures and Sells Face Shields

In response to the Covid-19 outbreak, AVRE partnered with local plastics manufacturer, Eck Plastic Arts, Inc., to manufacture and assemble polycarbonate face shields for sale and distribution to area hospitals and health care providers. Initially, Eck was fielding customer orders and AVRE was handling assembly only. Eck continues to cut the raw materials, but AVRE is handling all orders and distribution. Due to high demand in all markets, AVRE is pursuing customers in the New York State government market, as well as commercial business in the Binghamton area. Competition for federal government business is intense, but we will continue to look for opportunities in that market, too.

The face shields are reusable and made of high-quality polycarbonate. The adjustable elastic band and foam strip allow for customized comfort. With proper care, the shields are made to last! Thus far, several local doctors and dentists offices, hair salons, and school districts have purchased the shields. We expect that restaurants and retail stores will find them useful as they slowly reopen at reduced capacity.



The face shield project presents new opportunities for employment at AVRE and helps us diversify our product offerings. AVRE is already looking to purchase equipment that will enable us to cut the polycarbonate shields and foam strips. This will give us more control over production and create more jobs for people who are blind or visually impaired. If you are interested in purchasing face shields, contact us at **607-724-2428** or email **SalesOrder@AVREus.ORG**.



Above: Employee of the Year Jason Evans packs reams of copy paper into boxes to prepare for delivery.

## Meet Jason: AVRE's Employee of the Year

We are pleased to announce Jason Evans is AVRE's 2020 Employee of the Year!

Jason joined AVRE in 2011 after being declared legally blind in 2009. Although he has experience working on various product lines, he found a home in our copy paper department. Despite health challenges, Jason gives 100% in everything he does and is known for making people laugh throughout the work day.

When Jason isn't packing reams of paper, he enjoys listening to music, eating out, and spending time with his family. His greatest pleasure is sharing joy with others. He has expressed that his main goal in life is "to supply all with lollipops and to keep people happy and laughing."

We are very lucky to have Jason as a member of our team and we look forward to his future accomplishments!

Follow us on social media!



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# Providing Vision Services from Home with UberConferencing

Many AVRE employees transitioned to working from home at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Thanks to new technology, our Health and Rehabilitation department adapted to providing vision rehabilitation services over the phone and computer. Of the resources available, UberConference By Dialpad allowed staff to stay connected to the people that they work with in an easy, innovative way.

UberConference is a free, user-friendly conferencing interface that is accessible from any phone, computer, or smartphone device. The benefit to using an interface like UberConference is its accessibility. Anyone can use it from anywhere.



Above: Vision Rehabilitation Therapist Shawna Armstrong demonstrates how to navigate an iPhone to a consumer from home.

UberConference quickly became a helpful resource to run support groups during the stay-at-home order. Support group members would receive a reminder text message five minutes before the call, followed by a phone call at the time of the meeting. It's simplicity allows those with low vision to join groups and remain connected.

"It helps us stay in touch with other people and know we're not alone," said one support group member.

It is important to continue providing vision rehab services during these unknown and challenging times. Safety is our utmost priority. Thanks to innovative technology like UberConference, our staff is able to continue working with consumers from the safety of their homes.

For more information on UberConference, go to [www.uberconference.com](http://www.uberconference.com).

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## New Wheels On the Road!

By now, you may have seen one of our more recent additions to the AVRE family - our new delivery truck!

On-time delivery is important to us. After more than ten years with our previous truck, it was time to invest in something new. We also wanted to bring a fresh look with new employee photos and our "Define Your Vision" tagline.

When we asked our delivery driver, Jim Lampman, what excited him most about a new truck, he simply replied, "the tailgate!"

If you see our truck on the road, be sure to give us a wave!



Above: Delivery Driver Jim Lampman stands with the new delivery truck before taking it on the road for the first time.

AVRE ViewPoint  
Store Coupon  
**10% Off**  
TOTAL PURCHASES UP TO \$100

GOOD ON:

MANY LOW VISION AIDS  
PRINTER & COPIER PAPER  
MANILA FILE FOLDERS  
JAWS CLEANING PRODUCTS  
BATTERIES

One coupon per customer.  
One times use per current purchase.

AVRE serves visually impaired individuals 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 Equal Opportunity Employer.

If you would like more information about AVRE and its services, please feel free to contact us.



Association for Vision Rehabilitation  
and Employment, Inc.  
174 Court St.  
Binghamton, NY 13901-3514

Address Service Requested

Editor: Cassie Burgess

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

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

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