Assistant technology is the array of products, equipment, and systems available to enhance the activities of daily living for the blind and visually impaired. From a simpler eReader to the more technical Sunu Band, an abundance of items are available for use. Ever vigilant of the needs of our clients, we strive to constantly explore new options for them as we stay on top of what is available in today’s techno-world.

The best place to start our exploration is to ask our clients what they need, technically-speaking. Many of our clients are aware of the assistive technology available and are eager to be introduced to the products and the positive changes that can be added to their lives. Once we identify who is interested and which items they would like information or instruction on, we put together a "game plan" for disseminating the information to the largest group possible or on an individual basis, as necessary.

Assistive technology can be categorized into two types: low-tech and high-tech. The low-tech end might include lighted hand-held magnifiers, large-print calendars, audio labels, signature guides, talking or low-vision calculators, vibrating alarm clocks, and bump dots. The high-tech end of the spectrum includes smartphone apps such as LookTel, which can identify currency and its denomination, or Seeing AI, a talking app that has face recognition, the ability to read text & bar codes, and distinguishes colors. Also, on the high end are Sunu wrist bands that can detect objects in your path between your waist and head, reader/scanners that will read entire books, or a voice-activated telephone with voice recognition and auto-dial. However, the pricier options bring economic challenges to accessibility. Even in streamlined technology, the more bells & whistles on the device, the higher the cost, and the lower accessibility to the average client. Regardless of cost and accessibility, we are constantly assessing our client’s needs and their levels of interest to be able to educate them in assistive technology.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, staff, and most importantly, our clients, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to everyone who has contributed in making FY 2017-2018 a success!

Mary Lou Wascavich, Executive Director
250 individuals received 2021 sessions of independent living services in their homes or in a community setting to maintain or improve their activities of daily living

223 individuals received 757 sessions of educational information regarding healthy eating

21 individuals were assisted for 65 sessions of Transportation/Escort Services to Medical Appointments

26 individuals participated in 146 sessions of Support Groups

69 individuals were assisted with grocery and personal needs shopping in 381 sessions of shopping trips

206 individuals received 368 community connections/referrals made on behalf of individuals and families to address their specific health/safety/welfare needs

250 individuals received 542 sessions to enhance utilization of technology services and resources to maintain their independence

Above, LBA clients enjoying the Sensory Development program which is held every Tuesday during the year.

Our new driver, Rich Mikolayczak, above right, helping Bob DeLuca, above left, off the mini-bus. Rich joined the LBA staff in March of this year.

PELL RADIO READING SERVICES

1352 hours of service were logged by 20 volunteers

762 hours of news, health tips, and agency and community events were broadcast on WUSR-FM 99.5 FM, Monday through Friday, 8 am - 10 am

At right, Paul Trama, Radio Program Manager

*All statistics represent unduplicated numbers of persons served.*
SOCIAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS

21 clients shared and learned in 12 Book Club meetings and enjoyed 12 descriptive movies together
41 clients attended 15 outings and Social Club events
25 clients took part in 492 sessions of Exercise classes

LBA clients and staff attending and enjoying our many get-togethers and outings during the past year.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS

1970 children at 64 sites were screened for vision problems
277 adults at 17 sites were screened for vision problems
962 children at 31 sites were educated about eye care and safety
299 adults at 11 sites were educated about eye care and safety
235 children and 22 adults were referred for follow-up care

2520 3rd-grade students at 98 sites participated in the Magic World of Vision Eye Safety Education Program

Above, the 2018 winners of our annual Magic World of Vision eye safety and health poster contest celebrate with LBA staff and Damian, the magician. Everyone enjoyed pizza, cake, and a magic show.

EYEGlasses

157 individuals received low-cost eyeglasses
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FY 2017-2018
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Karl Pfeiffenberger, 1st Vice-Chairman
Noreen Burke, 2nd Vice-Chairman
Paula DePeters, Secretary
Sharon Byrne, Treasurer
Mary Lou Wascavich, Executive Director
Judy Pronko, Immediate Past Chairman
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Mary Lou Wascavich, Executive Director
Mary Claire Boylan, Case Work Coordinator
Anne Lawler, Prevention of Blindness Coordinator
Janet May, Office Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator
Lisa Walter, Caseworker/POB
Rich Mikolayczak, Minibus Driver
Paul Trama, Radio Manager
Peggy Suarez, Administrative Support

Light the Way Legacy Society
The Light the Way Legacy Society was formed in 2012 as a way to invite our community members to include the Lackawanna Blind Association in their estate planning and to honor those who notify us that they have done so. Members of the Light the Way Legacy Society can have the special satisfaction of knowing that their life’s efforts will continue to make a difference. Legacy gifts become a permanent part of LBA’s endowment, ensuring that LBA can continue to provide compassionate care for its blind and visually impaired family. Legacy gifts also may be designated for a specific purpose or as a memorial or tribute to loved ones.

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OPERATING INCOME
FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018
$360,669*

OPERATING EXPENSES
FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018
$327,772*

*Income and Expenses estimated, pending FY17-18 Audit