



# InSight

Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, Inc.

## AVRE's Giant Walk

On September 11th, AVRE Board Member Bill Emmons and two of his closest friends, Michael Clayton and Bryan Novitske, set out on a once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage to help raise awareness and funds for AVRE.

“AVRE is important to this community. People need to know about the great work that they do. Many people don't know what AVRE is for one reason or another and we're hoping this event and fundraiser raises a lot of awareness and money for these good people here,” said Emmons.

The eight day 154 mile walk began at AVRE's offices at 174 Court Street, Binghamton and ended at Met Life Stadium on September 18th for the New York Giants' home opener.

The threesome were joined by various colleagues throughout their journey. Armand George, Senior Vice President and Resident Director at Merrill Lynch in Binghamton supported AVRE by walking on Day One. The walkers were joined on Day Two for the challenging 22 mile walk by Team Lead and visually impaired AVRE employee, Thomas Addley. Chief Operating Officer Jennifer Small and Executive Assistant Christina Dorunda walked the 18 mile trek with Team AVRE on Day Five. CEO Ken Fernald, Board Member Tina Fernandez, and Chris Dorunda walked the final stretch on day eight and were joined by Board Chair John Martin, Director of Development Jaclyn Bombard, Marketing and Development Specialist Cassie Burgess, and Emmons' wife Laura as they walked into Met Life Stadium and straight onto the field.

As awareness of AVRE's Giant Walk increased throughout the week, so did the donations in support of the effort and AVRE's mission. In total, AVRE raised over \$20,000! These generous donations will be used to support programs and services throughout our nine-county service area.

The support of our community, staff, and Board has been humbling for all involved in this effort. When asked what he took away from the experience, Bill Emmons stated, “What was most inspiring to me, was how many families and small business's recognized the good that AVRE does for our community, and proactively reached out to me to find out how they could support us. We enjoyed a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and we had Broome County behind us, motivating and supporting us the entire way.”



(Above) AVRE board members, employees, and walkers on the field at the NY Giants home opener.



(Above) Bill Emmons, Mike Clayton, and Bryan Novitske arriving at Met Life Stadium after finishing 154 miles.

### *Our Mission:*

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

## Microsoft releases “Seeing AI” application

Microsoft recently released a new, free iPhone application called “Seeing AI” available for people who are visually impaired. The app is designed to narrate an individual’s physical surroundings by capturing images through the camera lens. It has several options available including:

- **Short Text** - speaks text as soon as it appears in front of the camera
- **Documents** - provides audio to capture a printed page, recognizes the text, along with its original formatting
- **Products** - gives audio beeps to help locate barcodes and then scans them to identify products
- **Person** - recognizes friends and describes people around you, including their emotions
- **Scene** - an experimental feature to describe the scene around you

iPhone users can navigate the application with Siri’s voice output and use it to assist with identifying food items at the grocery store or reading menus at restaurants. Employees who are visually impaired have found the app helpful with reading text on paper.

Production Manager Luigi DiRusso stated, “The app has allowed me to be more independent and not always ask my family what my mail says.” Microsoft will be releasing another channel soon that will assist in reading currency.



(Above) Luigi DiRusso demonstrating Seeing AI’s document feature on AVRE’s copy paper price list.

*For more information on Seeing AI and how to use the application, go to [www.microsoft.com/en-us/seeing-ai/](http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/seeing-ai/).*

---

## Thank you for your support!

The Rick McCarthy Professional Development Fund was created to support continuing education for AVRE’s Health and Rehabilitation staff. As an organization, our mission is supported through our commitment to provide the highest quality, comprehensive vision rehabilitation services possible. In order to maintain these high standards, we are dedicated to the development of the professionals who work directly with our consumers every day to enhance their personal success and independence.

Since 2014, the fund has raised over \$14,765. The impact on our staff, consumers, and communities we serve is immeasurable.

All of the staff members at AVRE sincerely thank you for your generosity and for joining us in supporting this important effort. For additional information, please call or e-mail Jaclyn Boushie-Bombard at (607) 724-2428 or [jboushie@avreus.org](mailto:jboushie@avreus.org).

**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

**Studies show that over the next 30 years aging baby boomers will double the current number of blind or visually impaired Americans.**

**Among working-age blind adults, 70% remain unemployed.**

Source: [www.NFB.org](http://www.NFB.org)

Follow us on social media!



[facebook.com/AVREBing](https://facebook.com/AVREBing)



[@AVREBing](https://twitter.com/AVREBing) 2

## Now Available!

Our 2018 large print calendars are now available for purchase in our on-site Viewpoint store!

They are a great purchase for those who need a calendar larger than the standard size or one to write dates and appointments in. Calendars can be purchased in store or by phone for delivery by mail (subject to fee).

For more information on our calendars or any of our low vision aids and devices, contact Patrice Lumdsen at (607) 724-2428 or [plumdsen@avreus.org](mailto:plumdsen@avreus.org).



## CONNECT TO 2017 NIB/NAEPB Training Conference and Expo

This year's conference was a little different than years past. Employee of the Year festivities have traditionally been a part of the annual conference. Those events were combined with the Public Policy Forum held earlier in the summer. This conference focused more on the business side of operations, including sales and business development. The Expo provided an opportunity to showcase our wares and to network with other NIB affiliated agency staff and AbilityOne authorized distributors.

AVRE Assistive Technology Instructor, John Ellzey, and CFO, Anthony Saccento joined us for the Expo and experienced some immersion learning about the business side. Several years ago John completed NIB's Business Management Training program (BMT). Working the Expo gave John a better understanding of some of the practices and issues he learned during BMT.

John also joined our COO, Jenn Small, for a visit to Capitol Hill to visit our Congressional representative, Claudia Tenney. The AbilityOne Program has been challenged on several fronts in recent months with the most pressing being the Veterans Administration's implementation of the Rule of Two for product and service procurement within the VA system. NIB affiliated agencies are working to garner support for the AbilityOne Program from our elected officials to protect its integrity and viability relative to federal government purchasing. Rep. Tenney met with us personally and conveyed her full support of the AbilityOne Program and the issues it faces.

The conference also includes a variety of training sessions for attendees, including distribution partners - everything from Energizing Your Sales Team to Succession Planning! During the General Session, the Executive Director of the AbilityOne Commission, Tina Ballard, gave the audience an update on some of the challenges the program is facing, including a tentative distribution agreement with Amazon and the VA's Rule of Two implementation. The update was informative and put to rest many unanswered questions.

Overall, it was a great event and we look forward to attending again next year!



(Above) Anthony Saccento, John Ellzey, Jenn Small, and Amanda Elam at the 2017 NIB/NAEPB Training Conference and Expo in Arlington, VA.



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

FREE MATTER  
FOR THE  
BLIND

Address Service Requested

**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 time use for current purchase.**

**Store hours: Monday—Friday  
8:00 AM—4:30 PM  
607-724-2428**

**InSight** is published quarterly by the

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

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

**InSight** is available in the following formats:

Large Print (14 pt), Braille, emailed text,  
Word document on disk or CD,  
and regular audio cassette.

If you would like to receive InSight in a different  
format, please call us.

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.