

VISability

Visually Impaired Preschool Services (VIPS)
Quarterly Community Newsletter

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Newsletter Highlights

Firefighter Bryce Carden: Hometown Hero & Proud VIPS Father

By Ashley Ross

“A story of bravery and community spirit captured our hearts this past spring. Bryce Carden, a dedicated firefighter and proud VIPS Dad whose daring rescue on the Clark Memorial Bridge has earned him national acclaim and our deepest gratitude.” Read more on [page 3](#)



Introducing the Donor Recognition Societies

By Justine Aycock

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Leading the Way for Best Practices

By Kathy Mullen

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Mark your calendar

*indicates an event for VIPS families only

All events are open to participants from any state.

08/16-18 Pickleball Classic (Louisville, KY)

08/16 Cupcake Classic (Lexington, KY)

09/28 The Lynn Family Stampede for VIPS (Louisville, KY)

09/30 VIPS Golf Tournament (Louisville, KY)

11/01-11/02 *Annual VIPS Family Retreat (Louisville, KY)

In Memoriam

This issue of VISability is dedicated to the memory of:

Hawke Anthony Faloon, age 5, of Osceola, IN passed away on Thursday, May 2, 2024 at his home in the arms of his family, after a short lifetime of courageously battling the effects of a rare genetic mutation, ATP6V1A Encephalopathy. Hawke was a VIPS graduate and son to Jon and Brynne Faloon.

Our hearts go out to those who loved Hawke.

Firefighter Bryce Carden: Hometown Hero & Proud VIPS Father

By Ashley Ross

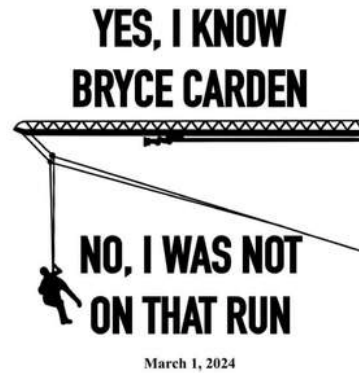


A story of bravery and community spirit captured our hearts this past spring. Bryce Carden, a dedicated firefighter and proud VIPS Dad whose daring rescue on the Clark Memorial Bridge has earned him national acclaim and our deepest gratitude.

On March 1, 2024, Bryce faced a life-threatening scene as he responded to a semi-truck teetering on the bridge's edge, with a woman trapped inside. With nerves of steel and determination, Bryce executed a daring rescue that not only saved a life but unified the Louisville community.

The aftermath of Bryce's heroic act was nothing short of inspiring. Louisville rallied around him and his family, showing unwavering support through a special t-shirt campaign initiated by his fellow firefighters. These shirts, proudly worn around town, symbolized collective appreciation for Bryce's selfless dedication to keeping our community safe.

Soon after the accident, Bryce, accompanied by his wife Caitlynn and their adorable daughter Oaklynn, presented VIPS Executive Director, Diane Nelson with a heartfelt donation of \$1,885 for VIPS. This generous contribution, raised through the t-shirt campaign, highlighted Bryce's commitment to causes dear to his heart, like VIPS.



The t-shirt design for the fundraiser

Bryce's dedication and support of VIPS didn't end there as he gave our organization a shoutout during his interview with retired Jefferson County Judge David Holton on The Blind Judge Podcast. During the interview, Bryce spoke highly of the services his daughter receives through our program, inspiring Judge Holton to set up a link for listeners to be able to donate to our organization in honor of the Carden family.

Throughout this whirlwind of recognition, Bryce remained humble, emphasizing the importance of teamwork and the rigorous training that prepared him for such critical moments. His courage and compassion testify to the spirit of service that defines our firefighting community. Bryce shared, "I was just doing my job." His story has touched our VIPS team deeply, reminding us of the everyday heroes among us who embody the best of Louisville.



Spotlight on VIPS Children

Sharing updates from the amazing children served by VIPS!



Check out VIPS kiddo Roxanne and her dad, Steven, who is a VIPS graduate! Roxanne has begun eating purees. In this photo, Dad feeds her and she does amazing opening her mouth

for the spoon and closing her lips around it. She has really been enjoying mealtime!



Demi and her VIPS teacher, Ms. Paige, were working on climbing at a park this past spring. Then when Demi visited her grandparents' house, she could climb the ladder on their play set all by herself!



Jensen has been working with a Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist to use a white cane to help him confidently navigate the world around him. Learning to use his cane to walk along curbs and sidewalks to notice the elevation and texture changes will let him know where he is traveling.



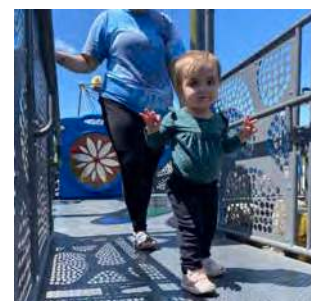
Everyone knows that imitation is the best form of flattery, and in our VIPS world, imitation is a milestone! Sonny had a blast with his VIPS teacher, Sarah, as she made a popping sound with her lips and Sonny imitated the action and sound. There were LOTS of laughs! Good job, Sonny, for spreading joy through imitation.



Itzel has recently learned to press a button to turn on her light box! Learning cause and effect is an essential, foundational skill, and she is on her way. Her family and intervention team could not be more proud of the progress Itzel has made!



Brynn is getting the hang of using her voice buttons while sitting in her new chair with a tray. She uses her vision to see the button and then her eye-hand coordination to press the button. Just like Itzel (above), it is important that Brynn learns cause and effect.



Luna loved visiting the park this summer! Sunny days make for a perfect time to explore new environments and unexpected terrains. Luna was cautious about the slide and ramps on the playground but was quickly on the go!



Amir has been working on visually focusing on a target and in this picture, he's checking out a Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI)-friendly book (high contrast, black and white with red)! He's also working on grasping and reaching with his hands as he hits the red beads hanging over him. Amir has been practicing self-soothing as well— he always has his soft puppet beside him so he can feel its softness. These are all such important steps in development. You are doing phenomenal, Amir!



Want to share about your child?

Send in your photos and updates to Ashley Ross at aross@vips.org or to your VIPS teacher/interventionist.

Reflecting on the Year at Kids Town Preschool

By Juanita Miles & Ashley Ross



As we reflect on the 2023/2024 school year at Kids Town Preschool, we're thrilled to share that we welcomed 32 bright young students between two and four years of age. It's been a joy to watch them grow and learn at VIPS. We're especially proud of our 12 graduates who are moving on to kindergarten. We wish them all the best in this exciting new chapter of their lives!

Throughout the school year, our students had enriching experiences, including music sessions courtesy of the University of Louisville Music program, and dance lessons provided by the talented instructors at the Louisville Ballet. We also had monthly visits from the children's librarian at the Louisville Free Public Library, and a special visit from our local mail carrier, who captivated our students with his stories and taught them about his profession.

During our summer program, we had twelve enthusiastic students join us. Thanks to the UofL medical students, who joined us twice a week for engaging group activities, and the UofL music students who joined us once a week for music class, filling the summer with fun and learning. Our students also participated in the summer reading program with the Louisville Free Public Library, earning prizes for their reading achievements. Throughout the summer, we were delighted to host practicum students from the University of Kentucky TVI program, who brought fresh perspectives and experiences to our preschool.

Looking ahead, we're thrilled to announce that we already have 24 students enrolled for the 2024-2025 school year at Kids Town Preschool. We can't wait to welcome them on August 29th for their first day of school. It's sure to be another year filled with learning, growth, and lots of fun!

Info for VIPS Families

Parent Recommendation From VIPS Mom, Jordan

Our VIPS children may need high contrast to see their food or items on their high chair tray, so caregivers often put black laminated paper on top of a white tray.

But Jordan found this all-black high chair on Amazon, making it not only accessible for mealtime but cleanup is much more simple, too! Find it on Amazon at [a.co/d/020cvfrq](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08CQVFRQ).



Annual VIPS Family Retreat & Conference



The annual VIPS Family Retreat & Conference will take place November 1 & 2 in Louisville, KY! The Family Retreat is a time for VIPS parents and caregivers to connect with other VIPS families all while learning during our various sessions planned specifically for them and their needs. In the past, these sessions have included a parent panel of children who are blind or have low vision, orientation & mobility, visual discrimination activities, and hearing from adults who are blind or have low vision to learn from their experiences. While the parents and caregivers are learning, their children will go to Kids Camp at VIPS with our trained providers and nurses at the VIPS Kids Town Preschool. The kids will have plenty of time to play as well as make crafts, engage in learning activities, and explore our amazing accessible space at Kids Town!



Families can register at bit.ly/VIPS2024Retreat.

STEMIE Learning Trajectories

The STEMIE Center focuses on ensuring young children (ages 0-5) with disabilities can learn STEM subjects like science and math by providing expert help and training to teachers and others who work with young kids to create better STEM learning experiences. The center also works with different groups and businesses to involve them in making STEM learning more inclusive for young children with disabilities.

Visit their website to find more information, stemielearningtrajectories.fpg.unc.edu/activites

Introducing the Donor Recognition Societies

By Justine Aycock

Last year, we established four new donor recognition societies: the Illumination Circle, the 1985 Society, the Visionary Society, and Bourbon for Blindness. These esteemed groups consist of VIPS' most dedicated benefactors. Through these societies, we honor the profound impact of their generosity on our mission to empower families and children with low to no vision to achieve their fullest potential. Each society comes with various membership perks, [click here](#) to learn more. Donors are listed on [page 13](#).



Illumination Circle

The Illumination Circle represents an exclusive, essential group of annual supporters who share a vision for VIPS. Each commitment provides inspiration and financial leverage to accelerate advances toward greater learning experiences and opportunities for the children and families we serve. Membership begins at \$500 annually or if you are a monthly donor at any level. Membership is based on personal giving or company giving if they are the primary contact.

- VIPS Sustainer Monthly Donor
- VIPS Friend \$500
- VIPS Partner \$999
- VIPS Ambassador \$2,499
- VIPS Champion \$5,000+

1985 Society

The 1985 Society at VIPS includes those donors with cumulative gifts totaling \$19,850 or more. With such generosity, these donors have been instrumental in providing outstanding learning opportunities to children who are blind or visually impaired, and for that, we are very grateful. Members of this prestigious society will be honored with a 1985 Society Pin.

Visionary Society

When you make a planned gift to VIPS, you will be recognized in the Visionary Society. It honors individuals who seek to advance the mission of VIPS by investing in its future through a documented planned or deferred gift arrangement. Please let us know if you have included VIPS in your estate plans. Doing so will ensure that we understand your wishes and can use your gift exactly as you intend. It also allows us to make note of your gift as we plan for the future - and finally, and most importantly, it allows us to thank you, and show our appreciation for your generosity.

Bourbon for Blindness

Bourbon for Blindness is a commitment to donate a bottle of bourbon monthly. This initiative is inspired by the bourbon pull activities at our Gala and Golf events, where pull tickets are sold at \$100, ensuring each participant leaves with a bottle of bourbon valued at \$40 and beyond.

Thank You to our Funders

The following foundations and organizations have granted or raised funds to cover programming, operations, technology, and more.

- Anonymous - \$20,000
- The Gilbert Foundation - \$3,000
- Kosair for Kids - \$175,000
- Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) - \$30,000
- MacAdam Early Childhood & Literacy Fund at Blue Grass Community Foundation - \$7,000
- Sheehan Charitable Foundation - \$20,000
- United Way of the Bluegrass - \$8,000
- V.V. Cooke Foundation - \$4,000
- WHAS Crusade for Children - \$107,000
- William E. Barth Foundation - \$1,000

Lace Up for a Cause: The Lynn Family Stampede for VIPS

By Justine Aycock

Get ready to hit the pavement for a great cause! The Lynn Family Stampede for VIPS will be returning at the Brown-Forman Amphitheater at Waterfront Park on September 28, 2024. This special event promises an exhilarating day of fun, fitness, and philanthropy, making it a must-attend for runners and supporters alike.



The Lynn Family Stampede for VIPS is a unique, inclusive, and pet-friendly race held in the Louisville Metro area, proudly standing out as the only race in the region to feature a dedicated division for runners who are blind or visually impaired. Funds from this event will help VIPS provide critical early intervention services and educational support, empowering children to reach their full potential despite their visual challenges.

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to make a difference.

Register today and see you at the starting line!
vips.org/event-calendar/lynn-family-stampede-for-vips/

Welcoming Back Our Title Sponsors

We are thrilled to welcome back Dr. Mark and Cindy Lynn as title sponsors for this year's event. Their unwavering support over the past decade has been instrumental in making the Lynn Family Stampede for VIPS a success year after year.

The Lynns' dedication to helping children with blindness and low vision is truly inspiring, and we are deeply grateful for their continued commitment.



What to Expect

Participants can look forward to a vibrant, inclusive race experience. Your registration fee includes:

- A commemorative t-shirt
- A finisher's medal
- Awards for winners in each category
- Post-race refreshments
- Entry to win exciting door prizes

We are expecting over 250 runners and walkers to join us, creating a lively and supportive atmosphere.

The event isn't just for serious runners. The Kids Fun Run, a 1/4-mile race, is perfect for young participants and will feature family-friendly activities like bubbles, chalk, and yard games. It's a great way for the entire family to get involved and support a worthy cause.

Upcoming Events

VIPS Pickleball Classic, August 16-18



The 2024 Pickleball Classic kicks off Friday, August 16 with a Welcome Party and Open Play Night. Attendees will enjoy complimentary snacks, drinks, and entertainment, including a special pickleball demonstration by Lainie Talbott, a VIPS graduate who has low vision. This night is free to all registered VIPS Pickleball Classic tournament players, bring a friend for \$10.

- Saturday, August 17- Doubles Tournament
- Sunday, August 18- Mixed Doubles Tournament

vips.org/event-calendar/vips-pickleball-classic/

Cupcake Classic, August 16



Join us for the Annual Cupcake Classic in Lexington! Run for young children with vision loss, and earn a race shirt and a delicious BabyCakes cupcake!

The 7th Annual Cupcake Classic 3K will be held on Friday, August 16, 2024, at Wellington Park in South Lexington (565 Wellington Way Lexington, KY US 40503)

vips.org/event-calendar/cupcake-classic/

Lynn Family Stampede for VIPS, September 28

The Lynn Family Stampede for VIPS will be held at the Brown-Forman Amphitheater at Waterfront Park on September 28, 2024.

vips.org/event-calendar/lynn-family-stampede-for-vips/

VIPS Golf Tournament, September 30

Our Golf Tournament will be held at the beautiful, newly renovated Wildwood Country Club in Louisville, KY on Monday, September 30, 2024. Participating in the tournament supports



our mission to provide critical early intervention and educational services to young children with vision loss in Kentucky. All funds raised from the event will go toward their education. We hope to see you on the course!

one.bidpal.net/2024vipsgolf/welcome



Want to sponsor an event?

For event sponsorships, reach out to Justine Aycock at jaycock@vips.org (KY) or Meredith Howell at mhowell@vips.org (IN).

Volunteer Shoutouts

The Blended Church Youth Group

We were excited to host 12 kids from Awakening Youth with The Blended Church to teach them all about our mission here at VIPS! The 7th-12th graders



had a tour of our Family Resource Center in Indianapolis, participated in sleep shade activities, were taught how to write braille, located words on the braille wallpaper, ate a snack with the sleep shades, and made a "Welcome to VIPS" card for our Welcome Bags for the new VIPS families! We had such a fun time with this group and are grateful for all our friends at the Blended Church!

BCCLT Consulting Engineers

For the third year in a row, BCCLT Consulting Engineers have transformed our sensory garden into a beautiful array of sensory enjoyment!

They weeded, planted new flowers, herbs, and vegetables, laid down new wood chips, and brought us melodic chimes for the children and staff to enjoy.



The children love to pick the ripe veggies and smell the herbs, and everyone at VIPS is encouraged to take home the vegetables or herbs to use in their cooking!

The group also power-washed all the playground equipment and chairs in the classrooms. We appreciate this group so much as many hands make the load light—especially when it comes to cleaning!

GE Volunteers

A special shoutout to the GE Appliances Empower Women ERG small group mentoring program who came to the VIPS Louisville office on May 29th!



We are so grateful for this group who purged files and prepared books to be brailled for our Lending Library. These large projects are usually put on the back burner, but this group of women was so enthusiastic to help that they even took books home to continue the project! One woman scheduled another day of volunteering with her team from GE Appliances after she was moved by our mission. We appreciate this support!

VIPS Day of Giving



We had an awesome time with our volunteers who came out to celebrate our VIPS Day of Giving on June 21! Thank you to our groups from GE Appliances in Louisville and the United Way of Central Indiana in Indianapolis for gifting us with their time!

In Louisville our volunteers made slinky lights, octopus lights, and rattles for providers to use with VIPS kiddos; then in Indianapolis, the volunteers made welcome and birthday cards to be sent out to VIPS families!

We are so grateful to all those who made our first VIPS Day of Giving such a success!



Want to volunteer with VIPS?

To help in the Kentucky offices, contact Kirsten at kschmidt@vips.org, and for the Indiana office contact Rita at rdevore@vips.org.

Leading the Way for Best Practices

By Kathy Mullen



The VIPS community was well-represented at the 2024 AER Biennial International Conference this year. Five team members traveled to Charlotte, North Carolina in late July to share news on the exciting things happening within the VIPS community and to learn from our amazing collaborators from across the country and well beyond. AER or Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind/Visually Impaired is the overarching professional agency supporting individuals working in fields serving those who are blind or have low vision.



While at the conference, we learned of new practices in the field, including updated assessments, screeners, and diagnoses; ways to embed the Expanded Core Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments into the preschool day; new strategies used in low vision clinics and with vision devices; mental health care for our young children and their families; funding sources for continuing education; and much, much more. VIPS team members were able to share information on our podcast, "Feeling This Life" and our ongoing work in developing a curriculum resource for the ECC, "Every Child Can". There were many opportunities to visit with friends, make new friends, and celebrate the friends who came before us. And there was FUN! Lots of fun! As it should be with any conference, our VIPS team came back with minds full of new information and hearts full of eagerness for the future!

NEW ARRIVALS



We want to welcome these children to our program!

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Alexis (IN) | James (IN) | RaeLynn (KY) |
| Alice (KY) | Jaxxo (IN) | Raylnn (IN) |
| Anthony (IN) | Jersey (IN) | Rosabehl (IN) |
| Aubrey (KY) | Joslynn (IN) | Rowdy (KY) |
| Blair (IN) | Juniper (IN) | Ryker (IN) |
| Caden (KY) | Ky'Mir (IN) | Samuel (IN) |
| David (KY) | Lincoln (IN) | Saylor (KY) |
| Dravon (IN) | Margot (KY) | Seven (IN) |
| Elise (IN) | Matthew (IN) | Silas (IN) |
| Emery (KY) | Maverick (KY) | Theo (IN) |
| Emma (KY) | Maximus (IN) | Vaden (IN) |
| Everly (KY) | Michael (KY) | Vivian (KY) |
| Gianna (IN) | Mila (IN) | Waylon (KY) |
| Grayson (IN) | Miracle (IN) | William (IN) |
| Gregory "Trey" (KY) | Mylan (KY) | William (IN) |
| Gunner (KY) | Noah (IN) | Wyatt (IN) |
| Harshiv (KY) | Oliver (KY) | Zyair (IN) |
| Heyli (KY) | Pierre (IN) | |

Training is one of the most impactful ways VIPS can share knowledge on the abilities of students with special needs, especially students with vision loss. If you are interested in scheduling a training with the VIPS team, please reach out to Kathy Mullen, VIPS Director of Education, at kmullen@vips.org.

Beacon Awards + End of Year Celebration

This past June, we gathered for breakfast at the Kosair Shrine Center to host our annual Beacon Awards and End of Year Celebration.

This was a special time to honor those individuals, groups, and organizations who have profoundly impacted our agency and celebrate VIPS' successes as we wrap up another fiscal year. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who joined us! Thanks to all of you, we are [#VIPSstrong!](#)



Congratulations to the following 2024 Beacon Award winners:

- Bryce & Caitlynn Carden, Ambassador Award
- Indiana Deaf-Blind Services Project, Collaborative Partner Award
- Indiana State Senator Fady Qaddoura, Ambassador Award
- Leadership Louisville Center Encore Group, Ambassador Award
- LeAnn Moore, Parent Ambassador Award
- Sullivan University, Corporate Benefactor Award
- UPS Import Brokerage, Corporate Volunteer Award
- Jake & Hillary Warren, Parent Ambassador Award
- MaryBeth Wott, Individual Volunteer Award



Some Good News!

Lexington TVI Active Learning Session



Thank you to the Teachers of the Visually Impaired in the Central Kentucky cadre for inviting VIPS to join their spring meeting in Lexington. The teachers participated in a training on Active Learning as a

strategy to include students of all abilities in classroom learning. After the training, the teachers made Active Learning sets for their own students!

Cookout for the Crusade

We kicked off the summer with our annual Cookout for the Crusade at our VIPS Louisville campus to support WHAS Crusade for Children! We want to thank the team from UPS Global Small Package Brokerage who helped run our cookout for the 5th year in a row!

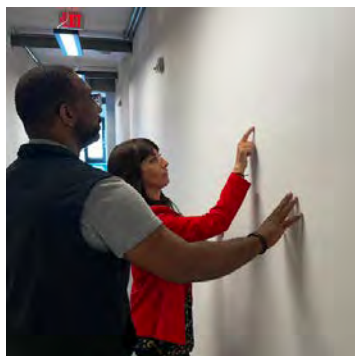


Jim Jury and his team helped set up tents, tables, and chairs, grill hamburgers, veggie burgers, and hotdogs, serve food, AND clean up! This was our largest turnout with 110 customers. We couldn't host the cookout without their help and we appreciate this group so much.

UWCI's President & CEO Tours the Family Resource Center

Meredith Howell, Indiana Director of Community Outreach & Advocacy, had a recent visit from Fred Payne, President & CEO of the United Way of Central Indiana (UWCI) at our VIPS Family Resource Center.

Fred was interested in learning more about the work VIPS is doing to support young Central Indiana children who are blind or have low vision and their families and seeing our unique space that was specifically designed for them. During the tour, Fred asked many important questions so he could have a deeper understanding of our mission and the impact of our programs on the children and families.



VIPS has been an accredited UWCI partner since 2021 and we couldn't be more grateful for the opportunities that have unfolded because of that partnership. A heartfelt thanks to Fred and all of the incredible folks at the UWCI for everything they do for the Central Indiana community!

Target Circle

We are honored and excited to announce that we have been chosen to participate in a special charitable giving campaign, sponsored and funded by Target. And you have the chance to help direct a portion of Target's donation to us!



Now through September 30, vote for us through the Target Circle program to help determine how Target's donation will be divided up. Find out more about Target Circle here: www.target.com/circle.

We're asking our supporters to help us make the most of this incredible opportunity. Every vote counts to help us receive a portion of the available Target funds as we continue our mission!

Don't forget, as you earn more votes, you can keep voting multiple times during the campaign! Thank you for your support!

VIISA training at the Early Intervention Conference

VIPS Director of Education, Kathy Mullen and VIPS Teacher of Children with Blindness/Low Vision, David Sterne led the first session of the VIISA (Vision Impaired In-Service in America) training at the Early Intervention Conference in Bloomington, IN.



They gave presentations on "Early Development of the Visual System and How it Can be Damaged" and "Impacts of Vision Loss on Early Development." We are proud of our team for continuing to teach best practices to early intervention professionals, ensuring young children with blindness or low vision receive the quality services they need to thrive.

Celebrate October as Blindness & Low Vision Awareness Month!

October was chosen as Blindness & Low Vision Awareness Month to coincide with World Sight Day, observed on the second Thursday of October each year, along with White Cane Safety Day on October 15. This global event aims to draw attention to blindness and low vision as major international public health issues. It serves as a reminder of the importance of vision care and the need for accessible services for those affected by vision loss.

At VIPS, our mission is to empower families by providing early intervention services to children with blindness or low vision. Through personalized support, education, and advocacy, we help children reach their full potential and navigate the world with confidence.

During October, we will share resources, provide a platform to share experiences and connect with the low vision community. We hope this month empowers VIPS families to advocate for their children's needs while also building a community of understanding and acceptance.

As we commemorate this important month, we invite you to join us in raising awareness and advocating for individuals with vision loss. Here are a few ways you can participate:

1. **Educate:** Learn more about vision loss and its impact on individuals and families.
2. **Spread Awareness:** Share information about the awareness month on social media and within your community. Check out the VIPS Facebook and Instagram pages for content to share!
3. **Support VIPS:** Consider donating or volunteering to help us continue our vital work with children who are blind or have low vision and their families.



Keep up with VIPS!

Follow us @vipsorg

Feeling This Life Podcast

VIPS is excited to partner with Anchor Center for the Blind once again to bring you a FOURTH season of the Feeling This Life podcast this fall. The theme for Season 4 is "Stories Beyond Sight: The Power of Perspective". The podcast will feature guests who are part of the blind/low vision community and who have diverse experiences, allowing them to tell their unique stories!



Be on the lookout as episodes are released on the first Monday of each month. In the meantime, you can listen to past episodes wherever you get your podcast and they are also now available on YouTube!

Indiana Brewery Running Series + Ash & Elm Cider Co.



On a hot, hot, HOT day this July, the Indiana Brewery Running Series and Ash & Elm Cider Co. came together to host a Cider Run for VIPS! It was a toasty morning but that didn't stop the runners from showing up and participating in the run held at Ash & Elm. Meredith Howell, Indiana Director of Community Outreach & Advocacy, and Rita DeVore, Special Projects & Volunteer Coordinator, were present to raise awareness about VIPS, teach people how to braille their names, and share the impact VIPS is making on Indiana's youngest children who are blind or have low vision.

Thank you to the Indiana Brewery Running Series and Ash & Elm Cider Co. for selecting VIPS as the beneficiary of the Cider Run!

VIPS Leadership Updates



We have some exciting news to share! Our VIPS Leadership Team has changed and we added a new member. Justine Aycock, previously Assistant Director of Development has been promoted to Director of Development and Meredith Howell, previous Director of Development has now become the Director of Community Outreach and Advocacy—concentrating on our Indiana efforts. Kelly Easton will remain Director of Community Outreach and Intake—concentrating on our Kentucky efforts.

This change will fill a void in our organizational structure in Indiana and we are thrilled. Meredith’s efforts are best utilized in the realm of advocacy and outreach where she will continue as our legislative liaison and growth across the state of Indiana. Justine is the perfect person to assume the development directorship because of her two degrees in philanthropy and wealth of experience. We are also thrilled to announce that Christina Welsh has been promoted to Director of Finance from her previous role of Controller.

We believe these changes are a huge win for VIPS!

Donor Society Recognition

Please join us in celebrating the exceptional supporters from the 2023 calendar year and the current members of each society.

*Kindly note that while membership lists are refreshed at the start of each calendar year, records predating 1998 might not be fully comprehensive. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us should you require any further clarification. Donor lists are based on calendar year 2023 donations.

Illumination Circle

Ms. Shirlyn Adams
 John & Amy Anders
 Anonymous (3)
 Mr. & Mrs. Jay Arington
 Mr. Alex Baldwin
 Megan & Aaron Barnes
 John & Vaughn Bell
 Bob & Leslie Bender
 Sharon & Charlie Bensinger
 Niran Bhatt-Scharpf
 Dr. & Mrs. Jerry Bizer
 Dr. & Mrs. Wayne Bizer
 Mr. Greg Blackman
 Mr. Thomas Blackman
 David & Louise Booth
 Phillip, Jessica, Ashlyn, & Jacob Brann
 Mr. Jennifer Bratton
 Tom & Sabina Briggs
 Jack Brown
 Mr. Eric Bruun
 Liz Bryant & David Watson
 Patty & Joe Burkland
 Dr. & Mrs. Frank Burns
 Ms. Kathleen M. O’Neil
 Harold & Anne Butler
 Mr. Alex G. Campbell
 T. Rowan Candy, MCOptom, Ph.D., F.A.
 Mrs. Nancy Cannon
 Ms. Jennifer Cast
 Sr. Faith Cirre
 Joe Clarkson
 Bob & Terri Connolly
 Mr. Jed Cornforth
 Mark & Chris Corrigan
 Eugene Dacus
 Carol & Mitch Dahmke
 James & Cate Darmstadt
 Brian & Annie Davis
 Mr. Steve Deeley
 Gary & Claire Detraz
 Mr. & Mrs. Dhesi
 Julia & Jason Doffin
 Mr. Mike Dorne
 Ms. Cherie Dorsey
 Dr. & Mrs. Craig Douglas
 Mr. Donnis Drago
 Dr. Jitander S. Dudee

Ed & Nancy Dudley
 Scott & Jenifer Duncan
 Greg & Jenny Dutton
 Mr. & Mrs. Glenial Dutton
 Kelly & Todd Easton
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 Ms. Dani Harper
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 Mr. Steven Henderson
 Mr. David Henson
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 Mr. & Mrs. Tim Holloway
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 Mrs. Lillian Honza
 Ms. Shari House
 Mr. Graham Jenkins
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 Mr. Robert Keeling
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 Ms. Shari House
 Mr. Graham Jenkins
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 Tracy Webb
 Ms. April Weihe
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 Mr. Steve Deeley
 Dr. & Mrs. Craig Douglas
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Visionary Society

Sharon Bensinger
 Meredith Howell
 Diane M. Nelson
 Kirsten Schmidt

Bourbon for Blindness

Mr. Thomas Gillespie
 Mrs. Katrina Reppen



2022-2023 VIPS Impact Report

We are extremely proud to share the highlights of our most recent fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

Check out the Visually Impaired Preschool Services (VIPS) 2023 Annual Impact Report available at vips.org/financial-documents

Louisville

1906 Goldsmith Lane
Louisville, KY 40218

local: (502) 636-3207
fax: (502) 636-0024
toll-free: (888) 636-8477

info@vips.org

Central Kentucky

350 Henry Clay Blvd.
Lexington, KY 40502

local: (859) 276-0335
fax: (859) 276-4379
toll-free: (888) 254-8477

vipslex@vips.org

Indiana

1212 Southeastern Ave
Indianapolis, IN 46202

local: (317) 961-5001
toll-free: (888) 824-2197
fax: (317) 924-5469

vipsindiana@vips.org



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