



LINKS

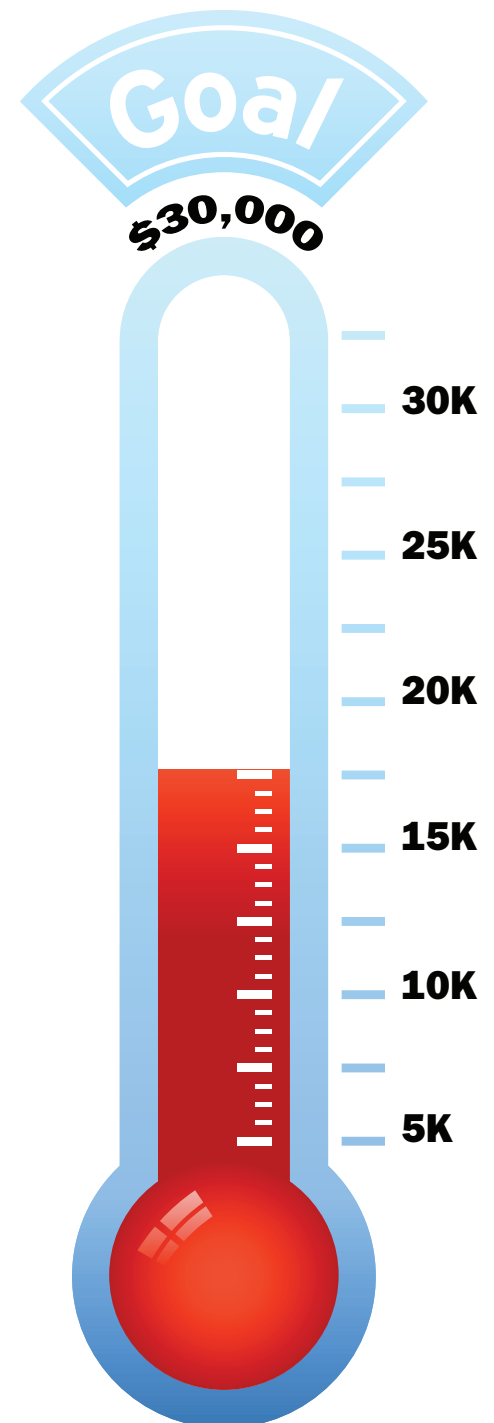
Learning • Innovation • Networking • Knowledge • Sharing

And the Challenge is On

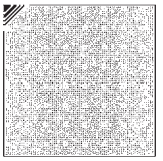
Board Member Erika Petach has challenged Board Members and Fundraising/Revenue Enhancement committee members to pledge an amount with the number 30 in it in recognition of VisionServe's 30th year of incorporation! Members took her **30/300/3000** challenge seriously, raising in one afternoon nearly \$17,000 towards the committee's \$30,000 goal in support of building capacity. Some pledged personally,

some from their organizations, some from both, and here are some of the ways they did it: **\$30** paid one time on PayPal, **\$30** each month for a year, \$100 for **3 months**, **\$300** every year for **3 years**, and **\$300** written on a check, and **\$3,000** pledged before year-end.

The challenge took a fun twist when Michael Monteferrante challenged Mike Gilliam and John Mitchell to meet his contribution. They both exceeded it! Then Mark Ackermann challenged Michael Monteferrante to continue his contribution for 3 years. Michael accepted, but only if Mark visits Envision within 30 days.



To make your own **30/300/3000** contribution, or to challenge another member, go to www.visionservealliance.org. How will your contribution be used? To close the gap between 110 current members and a pool of 150 potential members, to facilitate conversations across the broad spectrum of service delivery systems, and to take VisionServe to the next level of organizational maturity operationally, programmatically, financially, and technologically.



CEO CORNER

Roxann Mayros, VisionServe Alliance, St. Louis, MO

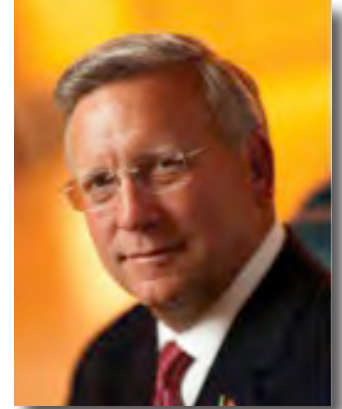
Last month, we had the opportunity to come together at our 2017 CEO Summit. As I listened to our amazing learning leaders and witnessed extensive networking, I realized more now than ever in my career, that in this digital age we all need a way to connect with real people face-to-face, to explore new ideas and new ways of thinking with leaders from organizations like and unlike the one we lead. Throughout these pages you will see the results of our recent face-to-face meeting in Charleston. There was time to learn, time to network, time to think, and time to relax. The bottom line: VisionServe members may provide a variety of services to a variety of ages and with varying budgets, but we find our commonalities of purpose when we have the opportunity to talk, to explore, and to ask questions together. We hope you, and the top leadership of your organization, will join us in New Orleans for our Annual Meeting and Fall Conference, November 5th – 8th.



Chairman's Message

Mark G. Ackermann

The 2017 CEO Summit was a huge success. There is always a tidbit or two that one brings back to the office, however, I think I brought back a dozen or more concrete ideas about transformational leadership that I am already using. Thanks to our great speakers and especially to Roxann and Wendy for pulling off yet another flawless meeting. For those of us in attendance, I don't think we will ever forget the historical and gracious city of Charleston, nor the sounds of Miss Lynette and the Plantation singers.



I'd also like to thank Erika Petach, CEO of the BVRs, who launched VisionServe's 30/300/3000 Campaign in celebration of our 30th anniversary of incorporation and to the campaign committee and board members for starting the campaign off so generously. There were even a few personal challenge gifts which added a bit of fun to the effort. We hope every member will make a commitment to the campaign.

2017 Board of Directors

Chair: Mark Ackermann, Lighthouse Guild

Vice-Chair: Bernadette Kappen, New York
Institute for Special Education

Secretary: John Mitchell, Cincinnati Association
f/t Blind and Visually Impaired

Treasurer: Steve Pouliot, Vermont Association
f/t Blind and Visually Impaired

Immediate Past Chair: Miki Jordan, Junior Blind

CEO: Roxann Mayros, VisionServe Alliance

Erika Arbogast, Blind and Vision Rehab of Pittsburgh

Mike Bina, Maryland School for the Blind

Lauren Branch, NewView Oklahoma

Wells Jones, Guide Dog Foundation

Reinhard Mabry, AlphaPointe

Mike McGowan, NOAH

David Morgan, New Hampshire Association f/t Blind

Jim Phipps, The Iris Network

Renee Vidrine, Lighthouse Louisiana

Transformational Leadership Take-Aways

CEO Summit attendees heard a powerful keynote address and participated in an even more powerful interactive learning session from two experts in Transformational Leadership. Here are some take-aways from both:

Joe Ripp, Executive Chairman of Time Inc. “Transformational Leadership in the Digital Age”

- Mobile phones are key as the average user checks their mobile phones 100 times a day.
- Our attention span has decreased from 12 to 8 seconds (1 second less than a goldfish).
- Each generation shows preferences in media platforms, but visual media is essential for reaching Millennials and Gen Z’s (ages 1 – 20).

Knowing this will affect how your nonprofit gets its message across and who delivers it. The public now prefers shorter news stories and more video content. So, as your organization’s leader, ask yourself, have we invested in the right staff to deliver our message, does our organization’s culture embrace this new strategic change, are we keeping pace with the changing media environment? Don’t just keep doing things as you have always done them—embrace strategic change!

Gidget Hopf, CEO, ABVI Goodwill “CEO Focus — Transformational Leadership”

- The difference between good and great leaders is often defined as the difference between transactional leadership and transformational leadership.
- Transactional leadership is the exchange of something of value the leader controls and that the follower wants.
- Transformational leadership changes an individual or

“The media industry is in transition, And the changes going on in media will impact how you get your (nonprofit) message across.”

– Joe Ripp



“Nothing changes until the leader changes, and when the leader changes, everything changes!”

– Gidget Hopf



culture with an end goal of developing followers into leaders.

The culture of an organization includes the 90% of the iceberg that isn’t seen easily by visitors. For example, a visitor is greeted by a smiling, friendly receptionist, but later overhears him/her gossiping about another employee. The strength of the culture is partly in the connection between the espoused values and the lived values. If the lived values are farther away from the espoused values, the culture is weak. To promote a positive culture, a transformational leader develops important leadership traits within themselves and within their employees that includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.

Greg Donnelly, CEO, The Carroll Center for the Blind, 1st-Time Attendee:

“Great experience hearing from leader to leader. Transformational leadership must be a piece of your everyday so that transactional leadership does not become a barrier to greatness.”



Malachy Fallon, Executive Director, Xavier Society for the Blind, 1st-Time Attendee: “Leaders need to know their limitations and ensure they have the right people in the right places. Mission comes first. Allow disagreement and discussion, but get commitment to move forward.”



Elly du Pre, Executive Director, FAASB:

“The meeting in Charleston was so inspiring. I woke up at 3 a.m. unable to go back to sleep, thinking about Gidget’s questions and information, so I pulled out my laptop and took a fresh look at things I’ve been working on.”



To access speaker PowerPoints, articles and to watch videos of both presentations, log into Membership Access of our website and go to the Conferences/Materials and Presentations tab, then select 2017 CEO Summit conference materials.

2nd Annual CEO Summit

May 7—10 in Charleston, SC

VisionServe Alliance's 2nd Annual CEO Summit was attended by 56 member CEOs who gained valuable leadership training, networked with colleagues, and discussed topics pertinent to our field all while enjoying the beautiful weather and history of Charleston. Make plans to join us for our fall conference November 5 – 8 in New Orleans, LA.



Mark Ackermann (Lighthouse Guild) and Roxann Mayros (VisionServe Alliance) welcome First Time Attendees.



Erika Petach (BVRP-Pittsburgh) and Mike May (Seattle Lighthouse) in an executive coaching session.



Networking on a carriage ride. Front Row: Ken Warkentin, Diana Trapani, Roxann Mayros; 2nd Row: Lou Tutt, Mark Lucas, Erika Petach; 3rd Row: Mike Walsh, Becky Kirsh, Diane Nelson; 4th Row: Malachy Fallon, Bob Scheffel, Dave Ekin.



Diane Nelson (VIPS) networking with a four-legged Charlestonian.



The Magnolia Plantation Tour. Front Row: Pam Brandin, Denise Jess, Dan Needham; Back Row: Ken Warkentin, Doug Fowler, Indira Vonburen, Wendy Hymes, Alex Roach, Dan Mann, Diane Nelson, Betty Mann, Lou Tutt and Elly du Pre.



Happy Birthday wishes at the Old Exchange and Dungeon. Mike Bina (Maryland School f/t Blind), our dungeon guide and Miki Jordan (Junior Blind).



Dine Around Team #5: Mike Bina, John Mitchell, Mary Bina, Dave Ekin, Erika Petach, Bob Scheffel, Bernadette Kappen, Renee Vidrine and Miki Jordan



Mike McGowan (NOAH) and Mark Ackermann (Lighthouse Guild) share words of wisdom.



Keynote address by Joe Ripp, Executive Chairman of Time Inc.



Meeting Mentors Rock! 1st Time Attendee, Stacy Butts of Sight Center of NW Ohio told Mentor, Lois Modell of Savannah Association, "Thank you SO much for being an amazing mentor during the VisionServe Alliance CEO Summit! You definitely made me feel like part of the group and I truly enjoyed getting to know you."

BVA Develops Blind Hockey



In 2016, the Blinded Veterans Association (BVA) received a grant from the Veterans Administration Adaptive Sports program to teach ice skating to Veterans who are visually impaired and to develop a blind hockey program in the United States. They hired a coach with 10-years experience coaching adaptive sports, and 20 years teaching ice hockey and figure skating.

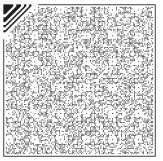
How does a blind person play hockey? For starters, the puck is twice the size of a regular puck, and it is made of metal with bells inside. Three different sounds are used so players can orient themselves to where the center ice, blue lines, and goals are. To date, over 20 Veterans have learned to ice skate and play blind hockey in Washington DC, Virginia, Maryland, Connecticut, Texas, California, New York, Illinois, and Pennsylvania. Last February, BVA hosted

their 1st Annual Blind Hockey Weekend, free for the entire visually impaired community, with 10 Veterans and 70+ visually impaired athletes on the ice, making this event the largest Blind Hockey event ever held in the United States. BVA also took five visually impaired athletes to the USA Hockey Disabled Festival in San Jose this past April, arriving with the largest contingent of athletes from any group at the event. This will hopefully lead to approval by the Olympic Committee to add “blind” hockey to the Paralympic Winter Games in Pyeongchang in 2018.

Through its partnership with US Figure Skating and an anonymous equipment supplier, BVA hopes to increase participation in the Learn-to-Skate program and to create more blind hockey teams throughout the United States.

If you are interested in creating a local team, sponsoring a team, learning how to apply for grants from VA to create programs for Veterans, or to get the kids you serve “on the ice,” contact BVA Executive Director, Al Avina at aavina@bva.org.

Q & A Member Spotlight: Courtney Plotner



What do you do in your down time?

Spend time with my husband and son (soon to be children), relax on the beach or go for a long run.

The best advice I ever got ...

Do the things you love now.

My best childhood memory is ...

Spending summer days with my cousins swimming and fishing at our grandparents' house.

Tell us about one item on your bucket list.

I want to travel to each continent. 3 down, 4 to go.

What are you reading, watching and/or listening to?

I listen to many different music genres...there is always music playing at our house. I am currently reading One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel García Márquez, and I am about to start Tim Ferriss' most recent book, Tools of Titans.

What is your best guilty pleasure?

Vegan chocolate chip cookies from Earth Fare. I'm not a sugar person normally, but they are amazing!

What do you want to be when you grow up?

I love what I'm doing now, but growing up I always wanted to be a sports reporter.





Fall Conference and Annual Meeting

New Orleans, LA | November 5-8, 2017



VisionServe Alliance 3rd Annual CEO Summit

Portland, OR | Last Week in April 2018

**SAVE THE
DATE**



- MISSION:** To engage leaders in building a better world through services for people with vision loss.
- VISION:** To be a leader and a unified voice in the field of services for people with vision loss for advocacy, education, ethical management, professional growth, and enhanced services.
- PURPOSE:** To build and nurture a diverse core of future and current leaders within a healthy and vibrant network of private nonprofit organizations throughout the United States and Canada whose commitment is to enrich the lives of those living with vision loss and to remove the barriers to the pursuit of opportunities.



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