



ABLE Helps Student Succeed in Engineering Class

ABLE was founded by a teacher who wanted to make her classroom materials accessible to her blind students. ABLE continues to meet this need today for students like Carlos, an 8th grader at Roosevelt Middle School.

Carlos, who lost his sight to retinoblastoma at the age of three, says he enjoys school, especially math and engineering. He also enjoys the independence ABLE has given him by producing his classroom materials in braille. "They do my worksheets, and it is very useful because I don't have to wait or depend on someone else to read them to me," he said.

One of the most challenging yet rewarding projects ABLE has been working on is materials for a two-part pre-engineering course Carlos is taking that began second semester of last year and will resume this spring. These materials include both braille text and tactile diagrams. Audrey Hemmer, a brailist for ABLE since 1982, has been working on the braille text for these materials. John Kaczmarowski, another volunteer who has been with ABLE for about 10 years is a tactile artist who draws the diagrams.

Braille text is easy according to Audrey, but other things are more challenging in determining the best way to portray the concept so that it makes sense to the student. For example, in describing the system of dots and dashes for a Morse code machine, it took Audrey some thinking to decide how to represent the dots and dashes in braille. But Audrey finds it to be a rewarding challenge knowing she is helping a student achieve. "I am amazed at the fact that this young man can look at

this stuff and learn something," Audrey said, "My part is easy. His part, to learn from what we do, is amazing to me."

John also finds his role as a tactile artist for this project challenging and rewarding. He especially remembers a diagram with layers of gears that changed the direction of rotation. This diagram was more three-dimensional than most of his diagrams and he had to make the gears larger so Carlos could understand how they relate. He hopes it will come across as straight-forward when Carlos sees them. "I have worked with my hands my whole life and find it fascinating to take a two-dimensional picture and bring it to life," John said.

John says he loves the immediate gratification of doing something that really makes a difference for children like Carlos. "I want him to become an engineer," John said. "I am rooting for him because I feel like I know him and I haven't even met him."



Carlos Garcia reading his braille textbooks

Readers Express Appreciation for Audio Edition of Milwaukee Magazine

In addition to providing classroom materials for children, ABLE also helps adults with print disabilities learn about what is going on in the community by recording every issue of Milwaukee Magazine. The publisher gives ABLE an advance copy of the magazine which ABLE makes every effort to record and distribute before it hits newsstands.

The visually impaired clients ABLE serves are very grateful to ABLE for recording this magazine. Tony Long, who lost his sight as an adult and started receiving Milwaukee Magazine from ABLE in 2001, enjoys being able to keep up with events occurring around Milwaukee. He has an interest in everything from local politics to summer festivals, and said he has gone to restaurants that he would never have heard of if he didn't have access to this magazine. This magazine also helped Tony reconnect with a friend he had lost contact with, after reading a feature article about him.

Dan Lococo, who also lost his sight as an adult, enjoys learning about the cultural aspects of Milwaukee, which is "not only arts and restaurants, but also the personalities, issues and forces defining how we live our lives in Milwaukee." In fact, he enjoys the magazine so much he always reads it twice, just in case he missed something.

Alice Massa was originally from Indiana and became legally blind at the age of 16 from juvenile onset macular degeneration. When she moved to Milwaukee to take a teaching job at MATC in 1991, she didn't know anything about Milwaukee so she subscribed to Milwaukee Magazine pretty much right away. In addition to the events and dining sections of the magazine that helped her familiarize herself with Milwaukee, access to this

magazine also helped her in her teaching job. She would pull passages to use as examples in the writing courses she taught.

But as with all materials ABLE records, this magazine that visually impaired clients look forward to receiving every month would not be available without passionate, dedicated volunteers like Bill Fudge.



Bill Fudge recording Milwaukee Magazine

Bill became a reader for ABLE in 2008 as a way to serve the community in retirement. Since then, he has recorded around 37 issues of Milwaukee Magazine. "The thing that is most interesting is that the material is constantly changing," Bill said. He loves having the opportunity to learn more about Milwaukee while helping others.

Clients who receive the magazine appreciate Bill's service, too. "The person who reads is the person I look forward to," Dan Lococo said. Toni Long also enjoys listening to the voice of the reader and appreciates the importance of what Bill Fudge does. "The quality of a voice really adds to a story," Toni Long said.

Thank you, Bill, and all the loyal Milwaukee Magazine readers!