

## MEDIA ADVISORY

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# Foundation for Blind Children Receives Grant from the Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation

Phoenix—Foundation for Blind Children is excited to announce that it has received a generous grant from the Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation to support expansion of its Early Intervention and S.O.A.R. transition programs for the blind.

The early intervention program supports children with vision loss, from birth to three years of age, and their families. The first few years of a child's development are incredibly important, and FBC's teachers, counselors, and therapists work to teach the foundational skills for a child to be successful. This grant will allow FBC staff to assess 250 children and host 40 events for blind/low vision children and their families.

"Foundation for Blind Children taught my wife and I how to teach our blind son," said Marc Ashton, FBC's CEO. "They showed us how we were still our son's first teachers. They taught us how to teach him so he could grow up, go to school, and go to work."

S.O.A.R. (Success, Opportunity, Advocacy, and Responsibility) is a nine-month career readiness program for blind and low-vision youth. Students learn professional skills such as how to craft a resume and present themselves in interviews. The goal of S.O.A.R. is to get each student their first job by the end of the program.

"70% of blind adults around the country are unemployed," said Melanie Audet, FBC's Manager of Transition Services, "but programs like S.O.A.R. help our students dip their toes into the workforce, one of the many reasons why less than 10% of FBC graduates are unemployed."

The Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation serves as a statewide leader in providing philanthropic resources for organizations working in human services, health and medical, education, arts and culture, and spirituality. The Halle Foundation identifies and funds outstanding nonprofits to ensure that all people can build healthy, productive, and inspiring lives.

### About Foundation for Blind Children

the [Foundation for Blind Children](#) provides Education, tools, and services to create opportunity for anyone with vision loss to achieve greater independence. FBC serves the blind and visually impaired of all ages, from birth to currently 104 years old. With three Valley locations (East, West and Central Phoenix), we strive to be "the" community resource for blind, visually impaired, and multiply-disabled children, adults, and their families. We believe that vision loss is a diagnosis, not a disability.

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