

# AnchorLine

*the newsletter for supporters*

**Fall 2015**

**Issue #2**

published and  
distributed twice yearly

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**Anchor Center for  
Blind Children teaches  
visually impaired  
infants, young  
children and their  
families, providing  
hope and a nurturing  
environment where  
children reach their  
highest potential.**

## Louise's Story

Maybe Louise looks familiar to you, or you've heard of albinism. Louise was diagnosed with Oculocutaneous Albinism Type 1 (OCA). More socially known as albinism, OCA Type 1 is a genetic condition characterized by a lack of pigment in an individual's eyes, skin and hair. Albinism also affects vision. The degree of vision impairment varies with the different types of albinism and many people with albinism are considered "legally blind."

**The moment  
we walked in,  
we knew it was  
the place for us**

Upon first learning of her diagnosis, Louise's parents, Scot and Megan McMorris, were heartbroken. Questions of, "Will she be able to see?", "Will kids make fun of her?" and "Will she be able to drive?" started overwhelming the family as they envisioned a future for their newborn. When she began attending Anchor Center for Blind Children, her family was filled with "a new sense of normal" in the hope and support system they found. "The moment we walked in the doors at Anchor Center, we knew it was the right place for us," shares Megan. "This was a whole new world for our family. One we were scared of, but open to embracing."

Earlier this year, Megan and Scot posted a video online of Louise trying on her glasses and recognizing her mother for the first time. The next morning, Louise's video had gone viral with over one million views. "We were shocked and immediately bombarded by phone calls from news sources such as *Inside Edition*, *ABC World News* and *Entertainment Tonight*," remembers Megan. The outpouring of support also came from Denver's local news stations as well. "The response to our video was overwhelmingly wonderful." With the spotlight still on Louise after 12 million video views, the McMorris' feel grateful they are able to share their journey with other families who are struggling with the reality of caring for a young child with albinism or vision impairment.

Louise's impact is made even

*continued page 2*



# Anchor Center Welcomes New Executive Director!

For the past 25 years, Heather Cameron has served in leadership positions for an array of nonprofit and governmental organizations, including Laradon, the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Metro Volunteers, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Colorado, Mental Health America of Colorado, and Foothills Animal Shelter. On October 12, Heather joined Anchor Center for Blind Children, serving as its new Executive Director.



Helping organizations “move to the next level” has been central to Heather’s career. From 1999 to 2001, she facilitated the statewide expansion of NAMI, Colorado’s Family-to-Family Program. From 2001 to 2006, she helped spearhead the implementation of the Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) police training program across Colorado. From 2006 to 2010 she was instrumental in the creation of Colorado’s 24/7 crisis line, Metro Crisis Services, now known as Rocky Mountain Crisis Partners. In 2010, Heather joined Foothills Animal Shelter, serving as its executive director during a time of dramatic organizational change. Under her leadership, the Shelter increased earned income by 50 percent, formed a 501c3 supporting organization (the Friends of Foothills Animal Shelter), secured the Division Winner title for the national ASPCA Rachel Ray Challenge, doubled the Shelter’s volunteer force, and grew adoption rates by over 15 percent.

Heather is excited to be a part of the Anchor Center team. “Anchor Center has a wonderful mission built and grown by the remarkable passion and dedication of its founders, board members, staff, volunteers, families and donors. For me, leadership is about service to others. I am honored to have this opportunity to serve Anchor Center, to join the Anchor family and community, and to build upon the Center’s legacy of inspiration and hope.”

Anchor Center’s staff and Board of Directors are excited to begin this new chapter in our organizational history with Heather Cameron at the helm of our ship!

## Louise’s Story, continued

more meaningful as she continues to make great improvements after only a year in Anchor Center’s Infant Program. Staff and therapists work one-on-one with Louise on practicing depth perception, eye-hand coordination and orientation and mobility. “Anchor Center has not only helped our daughter, but has also been a great support system for us as her parents,” said Megan.

The McMorris’ reflect on the past year and all the awareness their little daughter Louise has generated. “Keeping it in perspective is key. No matter what, it could always be worse. However, I don’t know where we would be without Anchor Center. ‘We’ includes all of the children and parents who benefit from their services. It is because of this place that we have a sense of hope and no longer feel alone in this journey. The staff makes us feel like family and together we are united in the ups and the downs. We are so blessed and know that Louise is going to thrive beyond our wildest dreams.”

## Our Miracle Workers

Anchor Center for Blind Children has helped thousands of children and their families learn how to live with a vision impairment, meet critical early developmental goals and lead full, productive lives. Our children graduate from Anchor Center programs to attend the public school system and amaze us all with what they can accomplish.

Anchor Center’s experienced teachers are the core of our programming services, ensuring a safe, nurturing environment that positions our unique organization as a well-respected leader in the field of early childhood education and intervention services for the visually impaired. Our cross disciplinary staff includes **Teachers of the Visually Impaired and specialists in the fields of physical, occupational, speech and language, music therapy, horticultural therapy, social work, mental health, and family support.**

If you haven’t already, we invite you to schedule a tour of our state-of-the-art learning facility to see our amazing staff and programs in action. Please contact Savannah at [swippel@anchorcenter.org](mailto:swippel@anchorcenter.org) to arrange a visit today!





# Get Your Angel Wings Today and Leave a Legacy to Shape our Future



Every supporter of Anchor Center deserves special praise. But there is among us a small, select group of donors who have taken their commitment far beyond the ordinary. They are the members of the **Anchor Angel Circle of Giving**.

Anchor Angels are our leading donors, committing to give a minimum \$1,000 gift for two consecutive years (just \$83.34 per month). Most of all, by committing to a two-year pledge, Angels change the lives of blind infants, toddlers and preschoolers and make it possible for them to have a childhood full of wonder, joy and hope. We invite you to be part of a family of donors who go the extra mile to keep Anchor's vision of quality programming and community service alive.

To get your wings, call Kristine at 303-377-9732 or download the Angel Pledge Form from our website, *How You Can Help* and *Anchor Angel Circle of Giving Club*.

**Navigators** are those supporters that have included Anchor Center in their will, estate plan or other gift of future provision. Our deepest gratitude goes to these friends that are supporting our present and charting our future. If you would like to extend your support of Anchor Center to make a lasting impact, there are several gift arrangements to choose from.

Whether you would like to put your donation to work today or benefit us after your lifetime, you can find a charitable plan that lets you provide for your family and support Anchor Center.

Our new, interactive website helps you determine the best option. Please visit [anchorcenter.org](http://anchorcenter.org) under *How You Can Help* and *Gift Planning*. Information is updated monthly so check back often!



PG 3

## 2014 / 2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Participated in **69 IFSP/IEP goal setting meetings** to meet legal requirements for all children with disabilities.

Completed **8 outreach trips** to rural areas.

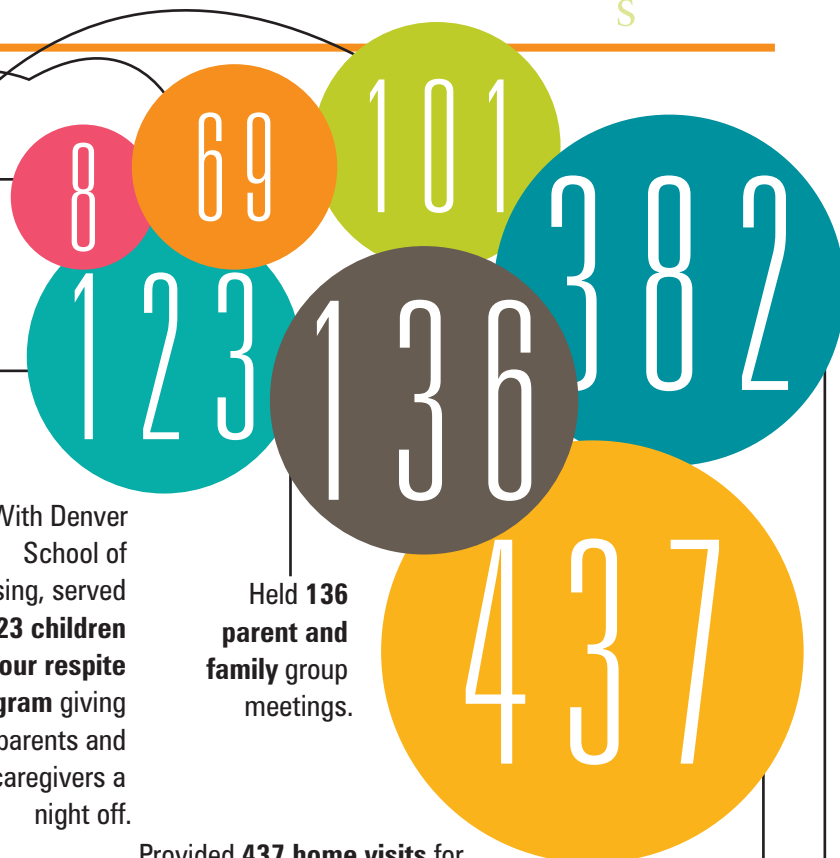
Provided **101 eye exams**.

Served **382 children and families** through center-based services, home visits and rural outreach.

With Denver School of Nursing, served **123 children** in our **respite program** giving parents and caregivers a night off.

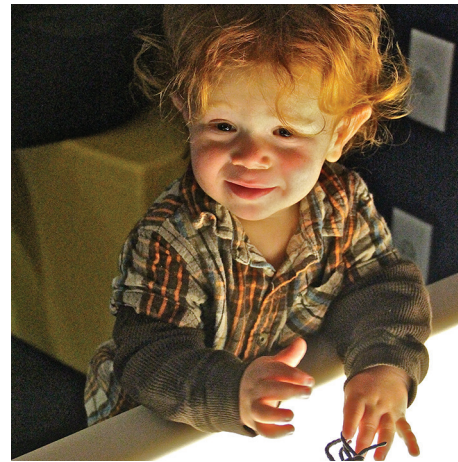
Held **136 parent and family group meetings**.

Provided **437 home visits** for children too medically fragile to come into Anchor Center.





# through



*left and top: Fun field trips include swimming and visiting a pumpkin patch!*

*above: LightAide is a teaching tool which displays colorful, engaging LED light sequences.*





# our eyes



PG 5



*From water play to horticultural therapy, we maximize outdoor learning!*

# Colorado Gives Day

## Help us get our share of the \$1 Million Incentive Fund

### WHAT IS COLORADO GIVES DAY?

- It's more than just a day. It's a movement that inspires and unites thousands of donors to support their favorite causes (like ours!) online through [ColoradoGives.org](http://ColoradoGives.org).
- Donate online at any time during the 24-hour period of December 8. Anyone can contribute, not just supporters in Colorado!
- Visit Anchor Center's page at [coloradogives.org/anchorcenter](http://coloradogives.org/anchorcenter) to donate on December 8 and learn about our goals, accomplishments, and much more!

### WHAT ELSE SHOULD ANCHOR CENTER DONORS KNOW?

- Worried you will forget to give on December 8? Visit our page to *schedule your donation* ahead of time and check it off your year-end "to do" list!
- 100% of your donation is tax-deductible and qualifies for the Colorado Child Care Contribution Tax Credit.
- Your donation will help us receive a percentage of the \$1 million FirstBank Incentive Fund!



PG 6

## Support the Vision of Anchor Center

**Anchor Center for Blind Children is privately funded and depends on corporations, foundations, groups and individual donors like you to sustain our important programs.**



**Gifts to Anchor Center** qualify for the Colorado Child Care Contribution tax credit. In 2015, 100% of the total of the tax credits earned through contributions made in 2015 plus all remaining accrued carry forward credits may be claimed. Please see FY135 from the Colorado Department of Revenue and consult your tax advisor for more information. Anchor Center will send you a consolidated receipt and the Child Care Contribution Tax Credit Certification (DR 1317) in 2016 for all 2015 qualifying gifts.

### Other Ways You Can Help

- matching gifts
- workplace giving
- car donation
- monthly gift through Kaleidoscope Color Circle
- wish list: in-kind donations
- third party events

### Examples of What Happens When You Give...

\$25

provides three Braille books for the preschool class

\$60

provides a home visit to an infant and family

\$100

provides three hours of music therapy

\$250

provides a functional vision assessment for a child with suspected vision problems

\$500

provides six weeks of the toddler program for one child

**Visit [anchorcenter.org](http://anchorcenter.org) to learn more about how you can contribute to Anchor Center's mission!**



## Dancing with the Anchors

The results are in...and Dancing with the Anchors 2015 (presented by VEBO) was another great success for Anchor Center for Blind Children! Held on October 24, this fundraising dance competition returned for a second year to the beautiful Highlands Ranch Mansion. Styled after TV's "Dancing with the Stars," guests enjoyed a wonderful evening of food, drink and entertainment. Paired with local dancing professionals, Denver television news anchors learned a specific form of dance ranging from salsa to swing to the cha-cha. Teams fundraised for donations in support of Anchor Center and debuted their dance performances in a spirited dance competition.

Our sincere gratitude goes out to all of our amazing anchors — **Danielle Grant** (9NEWS), **Jonathan Gonzalez** (9NEWS), **Steve Staeger** (9NEWS), **Dayle Cedars** (7NEWS), **Eric Kahnert** (7NEWS), **Britt Moreno** (CBS4), **Dave Aguilera** (CBS4), and former news personality **Amelia Rose Earhart** along with their partners from **Arthur Murray Studios** — for their great work in helping us raise over \$36,000!



*Congrats to our "Most Entertaining Award" winners, Dayle Cedars (7NEWS) & Morris*



*Mirror Ball Trophy Winners, Danielle Grant (9NEWS) & Michael*

## Upcoming Events

**Updated information about all Anchor Center events can be found at [anchorcenterevents.com](http://anchorcenterevents.com)**

### December 8, 2015

#### Colorado Gives Day

Donate at [coloradogives.org/anchorcenter](http://coloradogives.org/anchorcenter) and your donation will be increased by the \$1 Million FirstBank Incentive Fund.

### February 11, 2016

#### Visions of Love

An evening event at Anchor Center, pairing fine wine and chocolate. Sponsorship opportunities available. Contact Dawn at [dschipper@anchorcenter.org](mailto:dschipper@anchorcenter.org).

### June 29, 2016

#### 20th Annual ECA ForeSight Golf Classic, presented by RE/MAX, LLC

Held at the world-class Sanctuary. Sponsorships now available! Contact Savannah at [swippel@anchorcenter.org](mailto:swippel@anchorcenter.org) for more information.

## 2015 Cherrity Pie Festival

September 26 was a day filled with families, fun, and of course all things *pie* at Anchor Center. Thanks to the amazing dedication and efforts by the teams at Pie Consulting & Engineering, the 5th Annual Cherrity Pie Festival was a resounding success.

Because of the support provided by our generous sponsors, in-kind supporters and event guests, total funds netted more than \$36,000 for Anchor Center for Blind Children in support of essential programs and services.



*Pie Consulting & Engineering staff have made this event possible for five years!*





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**Please sign up at [anchorcenter.org](http://anchorcenter.org)**



**Find us and follow us!**

Become a fan to get updates on what's happening at Anchor Center.