American Printing House for the Blind (APH)

About APH

Established in 1858, APH was created by the Kentucky legislature to emboss books and provide education aids and tools for schools for the blind. In 1879, Congress passed the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind which designated APH as the official supplier of educational materials, in all educational settings for students in the U.S. who meet the definition of blindness and are learning at less than college level.

APH receives an annual appropriation to support research, design, manufacturing, and distribution of accessible textbooks, educational aids, and specialized technology to meet the needs of the approximately 55,000 registered U.S. students who are blind and low vision.

Braille is vital for student success but has specific challenges

Surveys from the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute revealed a correlation between the ability to read Braille and a higher educational level, a higher likelihood of employment, and a higher income. Braille textbooks and other education materials are expensive, time-consuming to produce, challenging to ship, and immensely difficult for school districts and students to manage and store due to their size.

Meet Monarch™: a multiline braille display breaking education barriers for students

APH is proud to introduce the Monarch, a revolutionary multiline braille display poised to transform the educational landscape for blind and low vision students. With its innovative design, the Monarch isn't just a device; it's a beacon of inclusivity, empowering students to thrive in classrooms where barriers once stood tall. The cost to emboss and bind braille books for a high school student on an academic track can easily reach $20,000 per year. By comparison, and at a lower cost, the Monarch will store all the educational material needed by the student over multiple school years in a portable, easily accessible form. By dramatically reducing the time it takes to gain access to braille textbooks, it ensures that no student is left behind. With the Monarch, students who are blind or low vision can finally be leaders in their own educational journey. It's more than a device; it's a key to unlocking a world of possibilities and paving the path to a future filled with limitless potential.

Using assistive technology training funds provided by Congress, APH and its partners are providing Monarch units and training to nearly 200 teachers across the country and preparing to provide Monarch units to 100 students for field-testing in the classroom. Learn more at aph.org/meet-monarch.

In FY25, APH requests at least $53.4 million, a $10 million increase over FY24 to accelerate production and distribution of the Monarch braille device so every student can soar.

APH Assistive Technology

APH is committed to meet the expanding needs of people who are blind or low vision living in a fast-paced world through innovative Assistive Technology, creating tools of value that support exploration, independence, and empowerment for early learners, students, and adults. APH also offers wrap-around support programs for Assistive Technology including national outreach services for teachers, comprehensive regional ATT training programs, and digital databases of accessible media.

Assistive Technology from APH is carefully curated and thoroughly vetted for quality to support everyone in living a successful, barrier-free life. A few examples of AT products produced by APH are included below.

Mantis™ Q40

With the Mantis Q40, users no longer need to choose between a keyboard or a braille device – at the same time a student or professional is typing on the Mantis, the refreshable braille below the keyboard is providing a braille complement to the screen reader, making it easier to participate in, and succeed at, school or work.

Juno

Designed to accommodate the needs of students and adults with low vision, Juno is a great magnifying solution for use during work and recreational activities. Juno can capture and process multiple pages of printed text using Optical Character Recognition (OCR). Users can either read the text on Juno's 7-inch LCD screen with 2x-30x magnification and 24 high-contrast color modes, or have it read aloud to them using text-to-speech (TTS).

Code Jumper™

Originally designed by Microsoft® and developed by APH, this fun and engaging product is designed to teach students how to write computer code. Code Jumper technology takes block coding off the screen and puts it on the table in front of you, making it accessible to all students. Brightly colored plastic pods with oversized buttons and knobs are connected by "jumper cables" (thick cords) to physically create computer code that can tell stories, music, and even crack jokes.

American Printing House • 1839 Frankfort Ave. • Louisville, KY 40206
502-895-2405 • 800-223-1839 • info@aph.org • aph.org