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Georgia academy for the blind macon ga

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Now situated at its current location on Vineville Avenue since 1902, GAB is one of three state schools operated by the Georgia Department of Education. As a sister school to the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf and the Georgia School for the Deaf, GAB serves students with visual impairments, some with additional disabilities, averaging an annual enrollment of around 110 students. With about half being residential students and the other half transported daily, the Academy has been providing vital services to its students since 1852. As Dr. Kenney Moore, state schools director, notes, "It's amazing to think that the Georgia Academy for the Blind has provided services to students with vision impairments in Georgia since 1852." The school is committed to serving the whole child, offering wrap-around services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology. Its curriculum follows the Georgia Standards of Excellence content, mandated for all Georgia Public Schools. GAB is renowned for its outstanding visual arts, choral and theatrical performances, teaching, and learning. Students excel in team sports like wrestling, track and field, cheerleading, and goalball, a sport designed specifically for athletes with vision impairments. The Academy also offers personalized transition services such as Project SEARCH, which stands for "Self-directed Exploration of Attainable, Realistic Careers and Happiness." In this program, students participate in a one-year, school-to-work program at Navicent Health, the business partner providing work-readiness training for eligible students. The Georgia Academy for the Blind's (GAB) Project SEARCH transition program helps students gain valuable work experience by rotating through three job assignments at Navicent. By year's end, students have a resume full of accomplishments and solid references to boot. GAB also boasts an impressive school nutrition program, which receives state and federal funding. The focus is on serving up fresh fruits and veggies daily, with the dining hall staff even catering to students' special dietary needs. The school's commitment to growth and improvement is evident in its recent renovations, including the Watkins Natatorium and Reynolds Auditorium. These upgrades demonstrate GAB's dedication to supporting students with vision loss across the state. As Moore proudly puts it, "We've come a long way since 1958 when our old pool was installed." The new natatorium is named after Ivan Glynn Watkins, a renowned leader and coach who dedicated his career to helping special needs children. But the pool's benefits extend far beyond mere exercise. For some students, aquatic therapy provides an invaluable opportunity to reach new milestones and achieve goals through sensory feedback in the water. As GAB support specialist Allison Hawkins explains, "It's amazing to see them have so much fun while improving their body awareness." The auditorium, meanwhile, is named after Frank Reynolds, a long-serving state employee who has been instrumental in the school's history. GAB continues to strengthen its ties with local and regional agencies through partnerships that provide vital services for students. With its focus on community outreach and support, GAB remains an invaluable asset to both the students it serves and the wider Georgia community. Founded by Central Georgia's Macon Rotary Club, the Georgia Academy for the Blind (GAB) has made a lasting impact not only on its students but also on the community. Many GAB alumni have returned to volunteer or work at the school, with four former students currently employed or volunteering there, including two holding graduate degrees from higher educational institutions. Two notable examples are Gloria Gardiner and Eddie English. Gardiner, who was sent to GAB from South Korea by her parents, has taught special needs and Braille at GAB for about 17 years after receiving her first degree from Georgia College and State University and a doctorate from Nova Southeastern University. English, who attended GAB from first grade through high school, returned as a special needs high school teacher after teaching and coaching in Lamar County for 16 years. Kimberly Patat is another example of an alumna returning to GAB, where she works as a paraprofessional and feels like "coming home". The academy's address is 2895 Vineville Avenue, Macon, GA 31204, with contact information available at www.gabmacon.org(). No fees are charged to students at this time. Please temporarily halt any new referrals as they will not be processed until August 4th, 2025.