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For Immediate Release

APH's Monarch Named a Finalist in Fast Company's 2024 Innovation by Design Awards

Celebrating 13 years of Innovation by Design, the 2024 honorees include nearly 500 projects, products, and services from Pentagram, the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, Canva, and others.

Louisville, KY (July 24, 2024) – American Printing House for the Blind (APH) 's one of a kind dynamic tactile device, the Monarch, was honored in Fast Company's 2024 Innovation by Design Awards in the Accessible Design category.

The Innovation by Design Awards, which can be found in the Summer 2024 issue of *Fast Company*, honor the designers and businesses solving the most crucial problems of today and anticipating the pressing issues of tomorrow. The competition, now in its 13th year, features a range of blue-chip companies, emerging startups, and promising young talent. It is one of the most sought-after design awards in the industry.

The Monarch is a refreshable, multiline braille and tactile graphics device, that, for the first time, delivers braille and tactile graphics in real time on one device. About the size of a gaming laptop, the Monarch has the capability to connect to a visual display for collaboration with sighted teachers and peers. The Monarch revolutionizes learning, leveling the educational playing for students who are blind or low vision. Students can now graph math equations on their device instead of creating something from craft supplies. They also have at their fingertips access to more the 2,000 tactile graphics.

To power the braille used on the Monarch, a new braille format was created. The [eBRF](#) file format will support braille literacy and education by making it faster than ever before to put braille into the hands of students. By building on existing technical specifications, a more robust braille format will allow students to interact with braille and integrated digital graphics on multiline braille displays for the first time. The new file format will also make sharing braille between countries much easier than in the past, expanding the amount of content available in braille.

“It is a great honor to be featured on Fast Company’s annual list of the World’s Most Innovative Companies for Accessible Design. We know the Monarch will play a vital role in ensuring students receive access to textbooks and graphics with the touch of their fingertips,” said Craig Meador, Ed. D., APH President. “Having those two important items at the ready will ensure no student falls behind or struggles due to textbook delays. Products like the Monarch are in line with our mission to create accessible learning experiences through educational, workplace, and independent living products and services for people who are blind and low vision.”

“This year’s honorees show how essential creativity is to the process of innovation,” said Brendan Vaughan, editor-in-chief of *Fast Company*. “It’s inspiring to see how some of the best minds across industries are using design to shape our world for the better.”

The judges include renowned designers from a variety of disciplines, business leaders from some of the most innovative companies in the world, and *Fast Company*’s own writers and editors. Entries are judged on the key ingredients of innovation: functionality, originality, beauty, sustainability, user insight, cultural impact, and business impact. Winners, finalists, and honorable mentions are featured online, and winners and finalists are featured in the Summer issue of *Fast Company* magazine, on newsstands July 30, 2024.

[See the complete list.](#)

About American Printing House for the Blind

American Printing House for the Blind is a worldwide leader in designing innovative lifelong learning solutions for children and adults who are blind or low vision. In this fast-changing world, we believe in the power and necessity of learning to open the doors to educational success, satisfying employment, social inclusion, active citizenship, and personal well-being. We level the learning playing field by providing specialized technology, materials, products, and services that are essential for education and life. American Printing House for the Blind is headquartered at 1839 Frankfort Avenue in Louisville, Kentucky. For more information, please visit www.aph.org.

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