

CABVI FOCUS

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CABVI and Deirdre Imus Form Partnership

The Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI) is announcing a partnership with The Deirdre Imus Environmental Center for Pediatric Oncology at the Hackensack University Medical Center in Hackensack, NJ.



Deirdre Imus

CABVI is a “preferred source” of Greening the Cleaning® products for all New York State and New York City government services and agencies, as well as all state-funded public school systems and universities. CABVI will process orders and distribute the award-winning Greening the Cleaning® products to institutional customers. CABVI personnel will also handle customer service.

Greening the Cleaning® means eliminating, to the greatest extent possible, all cleaning agents containing hazardous ingredients and replacing them with naturally-derived ingredients possessing the least level of toxicity. One hundred percent of all surpluses from sales of the institutional products go to two entities: the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, to provide employment opportunities and vision rehabilitation services to people who are blind or visually impaired in central New York, and The Deirdre Imus Environmental Center for Pediatric Oncology®, supporting education and research to identify, control and ultimately prevent exposures to environmental factors that may cause adult, and especially, pediatric cancer, as well as other child health problems.



Packaging green cleaning products in CABVI's Central Industries.

Purchases of Greening the Cleaning® products help to employ more than 70 people who are blind or visually impaired in filling, packaging, distribution and customer service operations according to Rudy D'Amico, President and CEO of CABVI.

“We wanted to team with an organization whose primary mission is to help people,” Mr. D'Amico said. “This partnership makes a real difference, especially as we reach for new opportunities to grow and help other non profits. We have added four new jobs for workers who are blind and anticipate more as sales increase.”

continued



Central Association
for the Blind
and Visually Impaired

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New York State mandates that schools purchase green cleaning products under Public Law 409-I, and that agencies purchase from preferred vendors under State Finance Law 162.

“This is a win-win-win for our institutional customers, CABVI and for children,” said Deirdre Imus, founder and President of The Environmental Center, (www.dienviro.com), part of Hackensack University Medical Center in New Jersey.

“Customers get a dedicated order fulfillment and customer service operation. CABVI gets a steady volume of meaningful work that benefits people who are blind or visually impaired, while we get greater focus on our mission.”

Ms. Imus is a national best-selling author. Her latest book is *The Essential Green You!, Easy Ways to Detox Your Diet, Your Body and Your Life*. Ms. Imus is also co-founder and co-director of the Imus Cattle Ranch for Kids with Cancer (imusranchfoods.com), an authentic 4,000 acre working cattle ranch in northern New Mexico, which provides the experience of the American cowboy to children suffering from cancer and various blood diseases, as well as to children who have lost a brother or sister to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

Recognized in 2006 by Governor George Pataki, Deirdre Imus and the Environmental Center helped usher in “Green Cleaning” Executive Orders in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut that require state agencies to reduce or eliminate the use of toxic cleaning agents. Her testimony before City Hall in New York City also led to new “green cleaning” maintenance procedures at schools.

Among the growing list of government offices, universities and school districts in New York adopting the award-winning Greening the Cleaning® program with the help of the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI) is the Westchester County, NY Department of Correction.

Elizabeth Hendrick, Health and Safety Administrator for the department of correction, recognized the positive impact of the Greening the Cleaning program and praised CABVI for their help and responsiveness in “greening” the jail’s housekeeping and maintenance. “The use of ‘green’ products in the facility has reduced safety and health risks to our employees and reduced the amount of hazardous wastes to be disposed. The American Correctional Association recommended national accreditation for us citing the cleanliness of the facility,” she said.

CABVI Recycling Champion

The Oneida-Herkimer Solid Waste Authority recently recognized the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired as a 2009 Recycling Champion. CABVI received the award November 16, 2009 at a meeting of the solid waste authority’s board of directors.

“CABVI truly exemplifies the term ‘Recycling Champion’ for having developed a comprehensive recycling and solid waste and energy reduction program at it’s Kent Street facility in Utica,” said William A. Rabbia, Executive Director.

In 2008, CABVI recycled over 200 tons of corrugated cardboard, office paper, stretch film and file folder trimmings. The agency also reduced energy consumption costs by 50 percent by changing from 460 watt light bulbs to 230 watt energy efficient bulbs.

CABVI’s Facilities Manager, Kevin Swayze said when he joined the team at CABVI about two years ago, one of the first things that jumped out at him was the amount of recyclable trash generated. “It was not just office paper but the corrugated boxes and heavy cardboard rolls from the paper we use to make file folders that found their way into the solid waste stream.

“Knowing that CABVI was about to begin selling green cleaning products to agencies of New York State government, I felt we needed a better plan to address our green problem.”

With the support of CABVI’s Board of Directors and Rudy D’Amico, President and CEO, and financial assistance from Em-

pire State Development and technical guidance by Mohawk Valley Applied Technology, CABVI purchased two compactors and commenced baling operations for all recyclable materials.

Vincent Salatino, Vice President of Operation, said trash which was a liability became an important asset. “I’m pleased to say that the hundreds of tons of waste material that cost CABVI thousands of dollars annually to dispose of is now a revenue generator supporting programs that help people who are blind or visually impaired achieve their highest levels of independence.”



Dennis Webster, Vice President of Manufacturing, Katie Rockwell, Business Development and Marketing Manager, Kevin Swayze, Facilities manager, Vincent Salatino, Vice President of Operations and Donald Gross, Chairman of the Board of the Oneida Herkimer Solid Waste Authority.



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Writing - Steve Gannon, Director of Development

Low Vision Expos

CABVI recently held two Low Vision and Wellness Expos, one in Watertown in August with 150 attendees and another in Johnstown in November attended by 100 participants. Representatives of CABVI and 15 human service organizations from Jefferson and Lewis Counties participated. Dr. John Janovsky spoke on the topic of Macular Degeneration while Dr. Allen Zuck led a discussion about living with low vision.

CABVI Outreach Coordinator Jennie Barlow said, “The expos provided a great opportunity for people with questions about their vision health to talk to the experts and learn about services that are available in the Watertown and Johnstown areas.”



Kathy Beaver, CABVI Director of Rehabilitation, Assemblywoman DeDe Scozzafava and Rudy D'Amico, CABVI President and CEO at the Watertown Low Vision Expo.



Betsy Harvey-Minutti, Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (left), displays products sold at the Sight Shoppe located at CABVI's main offices at 507 Kent Street in Utica.



Wayne Campbell, Vision Rehabilitation Therapy Assistant and Orientation and Mobility Assistant, demonstrates the magnifying capabilities of a CCTV. CABVI carries a line of CCTVs in their Sight Shoppe (see back cover for catalog information).

Children's Holiday Party

The Utica Lions Auxiliary and the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped sponsored the annual Christmas Party at CABVI December 5.

The Zimblar Family thanked CABVI and the Lady Lions for making their holiday so special. “What a wonderful party! It made us feel warm and welcome. We had time to relax and enjoy. Thirawit (their son, who is visually impaired) feels like he belongs at CABVI. It is part of his home and for that we are grateful,” said Mary Zimblar.

“It was great to finally meet the Lady Lions who have given so much to our children over the years.”



Surrounded by friends is CABVI consumer, Mi So Kwak (right).



Thirawit, Angkana and Samanya Zimblar with Rudolph and Frosty.

NBT Bank Sponsors Third Annual Dark Dining

NBT Bank presented the third annual Dark Dining event, a unique dining experience, Saturday, November 14, 2009 at Valentino's Banquet Hall. A fundraiser to benefit the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Dark Dining is a sensory feast served to blindfolded guests.

"The event offered guests a chance to focus on the richness of the non-visual world and a forum where sighted people could better understand the challenges faced by people who are blind, while at the same time, helping CABVI achieve its mission," said Debbie Kessler, chairman of the 2009 Dark Dining event.

The evening began with a social hour and silent auction followed by diners donning their blindfolds for a gourmet four-course meal, served with fine wines. Savoring the sensuous flavors, smells and textures, guests were challenged to tease out the mysteries of the menu. Between courses, attendees were entertained by fun - and often thought-provoking -activities orchestrated by emcee and CABVI Orientation and Mobility Specialist, Jim Marscher.

By the end of the meeting, more than \$36,200 had been raised for vision rehabilitation services at CABVI. A special thank you to NBT Bank and all the other Dark Dining sponsors which included:

Adirondack Financial Services
Basic Medical Industries
Clifford FuelCo., Inc.
Doucette Medical
Eye Associates of Utica, PC
First Source Federal Credit Union
Charles A. Gaetano Construction Corp.
High Five Medical Products
Leatherstocking Abstract & Title Corp.
M.A. Polce Consulting, Inc.
Meadwestvaco Corp
Mohawk Valley Retina, PLLC
MSI Molding Solutions
Mutual of America
Phoenix Textile Corp.
Scalzo, Zogby & Wittig, Inc
Sempermed
S.P. Richards Co.
ST Med
The Hartford
Trenton Technology
Wal-Mart Foundation
WKTV-TV 2
92.7 The Drive WXUR



More than 125 guests attended the third annual Dark Dining. With blindfolds in place while enjoying a gourmet meal, attendees had the opportunity to better understand the challenges faced by people who are blind.



Educational as well as entertaining, Dark Dining featured a blindfolded "pour-off" between local radio personality Frank McBride and Valentino's bartender Salvatore Mazzara. Providing play-by-play was Bill Keeler of Utica's Keeler in the Morning radio show while CABVI Orientation and Mobility Instructor, and the evening's emcee, Jim Marscher, judged the outcome.

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Hamilton and Utica College Students Volunteer at Dark Dining

by Paula Flisnik, Director of Volunteer Services

On hand at Dark Dining this year was a crew of bright and cheerful volunteers who helped to make the event a success.

Nine Hamilton College and two Utica College students volunteered while learning about the challenges people who are blind face everyday. The nine Hamilton College field hockey players were Erin Bessette-Kirton, Kay Bossler, Colleen Callaghan, Meaghan Carter, Sarah Flisnik, Mary Lancaster, Caitlyn Livsey,



Hamilton and Utica College students who volunteered at Dark Dining.

Erin McNally, and Marisa Spangolo. The two Utica College students who are planning to further their education in the field of Optometry were Amanda Scalise and Matthew Wadas.

This volunteer assignment offered the opportunity to examine the aspects of the vision rehabilitation field. These students were taught essential skills of a sighted guide and assisted with the needs of attendees at their assigned tables. As part of the evening's entertainment, Sarah Flisnick and Matthew Wadas experienced the challenges of dancing blindfolded and the impact it made on their orientation and mobility.

Caitlyn Livsey was deeply moved as a guest at her table shared that her son was blind. "She became emotional when she told me that now she knows how difficult her son's life has become since losing his sight."

CABVI thanks these young volunteers for their enthusiastic assistance at Dark Dining. They added to the wonderful energy of the evening.

Album Features Top Blind Artists

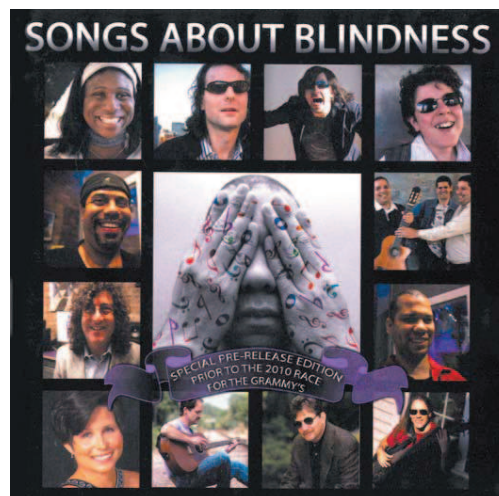
The music played during CABVI's Dark Dining event came from the new CD, *Songs About Blindness*.

An eclectic mix of music styles, *Songs About Blindness* features 15 original songs composed, performed and produced by blind artists throughout America including Johnny Young, Los Ciegos del Barrio, Bryan Lee and many more.

The Visionary Media Company, a not-for-profit company affiliated with National Industries for the Blind, produced *Songs About Blindness*. Visionary Media connects blind musicians, composers, vocalists and audio professionals with employment opportunities.

You can support The Visionary Media Company by purchasing a copy of *Songs About Blindness* for \$10. Send your check made out to CABVI in the envelope provided in this issue of Focus. We'll mail your copy of *Songs About Blindness* right away - a meaningful gift for any occasion!

Songs About Blindness includes a Braille cover and a full-color booklet with song lyrics and artist bios. CDs and cases are manufactured by blind employees of ABVI-Goodwill in Rochester.



A Message from Herb and Hazel Black

As the 2009 Holiday Season rapidly approaches, our family, like yours, is looking forward to celebrating time together. A large part of our lives includes our second family at the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired where, as volunteers, we've assisted many people in need over the last several years.

CABVI serves over 1100 in eight counties of upstate New York: Fulton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Montgomery, Oneida and Otsego. That's a lot of real estate to cover and



Herb and Hazel Black of Remsen

sometimes consumers have a very hard time traveling to Utica or one of the clinics in Watertown, Hamilton or Fort Plain.

That's where we've been able to help. Herb will drive people who are blind or visually impaired to-and-from the agency or a clinic for vision rehabilitation services or from their homes to doctor appointments, sometimes as far away as Syracuse. Hazel keeps the Slocum-Dickson Library at CABVI in order. It is the area's largest repository of books and reference materials about visual impairment.

We love the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of so many people. and we want to extend the same opportunity to you – to assist people who are blind or visually impaired to achieve their highest level of independence with a gift to keep the services they receive from CABVI active and free.

What's the reward?

"I can do it myself!" Those are sweet words to a parent's ears when a child who is blind conquers a new task. Whether it's tying a shoe, playing with a new toy, walking for the first time or preparing to attend school with sighted kids...we work with them step by step to build independence and a brighter future.

"I have a job!" That's one of the greatest goals, and toughest obstacles, to people of working age who are blind...because they face a 70 percent unemployment rate. We help them with good-paying, productive jobs in our Industries program or with other area employers...and even help them keep their existing jobs after losing their sight.

"I can use a talking computer!" With the latest advances in technology, computers are now as accessible for someone who is blind as they are for the sighted. We show people how to master these new "tools of independence" so they can participate fully in today's high-tech world of information...at home, in school, on the job.

"I can still live in my own home!" Many elderly people fear they will have to move into a nursing home when they suffer age-related vision loss. What a relief to learn independent living skills so they can continue to manage safely and self-reliantly.

Please continue to help your neighbors celebrate dignity and independence in all these ways. Because of your wonderful generosity, CABVI will be ready to help provide services to the next person, young or old, who has been affected by vision loss.

God Bless and Happy Holidays.

Herb Black Hazel Black

Herb and Hazel Black, Honorary Chairpersons
CABVI Holiday Appeal

Bramley Golf Tournament

The Tenth Annual Norman E. Bramley Memorial Golf Tournament raised \$10,500 to support vision rehabilitation therapy programs of the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. In the tournament's ten years, the family and friends of Norman Bramley, a Clark Mills resident who lost his sight in the Pacific Theater during World War II, have donated more than \$165,000 to CABVI.

At this year's tournament, held at Hidden Valley Golf Club in Whitesboro, a field of 124 golfers from across central New York participated with more than 20 volunteers making the event a success. A special thanks to the tournament's sponsors:

S.P. Richards, Co.
NBT Bank
Phoenix Textile
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Leatherstocking Abstract
Molding Solutions, Inc.
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Clark Mills American Legion Post 26
Hidden Valley Golf Club
92.7 The Drive WXUR
1420 AM ESPN Radio WNRS



Bramley Golf Tournament Committee (l-r): Jim Bramley, Jeff Bramley, Kristina Bramley, Kathy Bramley, Jennifer Bramley, John Bramley, Dan Kinney, Jim Kinney

Legacy Society

Generous contributors help the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired provide our vision rehabilitation services free of charge. Tens of thousands of people who are blind or visually impaired have benefitted from your generosity through the years.

CABVI created a planned giving group, known as the CABVI Legacy Society, to honor individuals whose gifts through wills, life insurance, retirement plans and various charitable trusts or annuities have already been received or will someday accrue to the agency.

You can join the CABVI Legacy Society by naming CABVI in your will for a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your net residual estate. If you have a will already a simple amendment called a codicil should suffice.

Following is sample wording of a bequest codicil:

I give to the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired of Utica, New York, ____ dollars (\$____) or ____% of my net residual estate.

Regardless of the method or the amount of your gift planning arrangement we are deeply grateful to each and every donor and especially appreciative of their thoughtful commitment to the future financial well being of the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. For more information about the Legacy Society, please call Steve Gannon, CABVI Director of Development at (315)797-2233.

Rudy D'Amico
President and CEO

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Established in 1929, CABVI is a not-for-profit agency that serves people who are blind or visually impaired, from newborns to the elderly, usually at no charge. Our staff of professionals offer comprehensive vision rehabilitation, employment, and technology services personally tailored to people with visual impairments. Our mission is to assist people who are blind or visually impaired achieve their highest levels of independence.

New Sight Shoppe Catalog Available



At our Sight Shoppe, we offer products for living with vision loss. Our newest catalog is now available and if you or someone you know is visually impaired, you will find dozens of items to make your life easier - everything from lighting and magnification for better reading to kitchen, medical and timekeeping products.

To find out more, visit the Sight Shoppe, located in our main offices at 507 Kent Street in Utica, NY, or call us at (315)797-2233 or 1-877-719-9996 toll-free. You can also find us on the Internet at www.cabvi.org.

Below: a small sampling of items in the Sight Shoppe catalog.



Liquid Level Indicator



Super Jumbo
Playing Cards

Braille Dice

Low Vision
Bingo Cards



Talking Calculator



Topaz
CCTV