CABVI Receives NIB Award

The Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, a regional agency that employs people who are blind or visually impaired by providing high quality products to the federal government, recently received an Employment Retention, Growth and Upward Mobility Award from National Industries for the Blind (NIB). NIB recognized CABVI’s demonstrated commitment to increasing employment and economic growth opportunities for people who are blind.

“The part of our mission is to provide employment opportunities for people who are blind,” said Rudy D’Amico, President and CEO of CABVI. “Our team members who are blind represent a dedicated and loyal workforce. We hope to serve as an example in the community of the capabilities of people who are blind while providing quality products and services to the federal government.”

In the United States, seven out of ten working age Americans who are blind are not employed. Federal purchasing of SKILCRAFT® and other products and services under the AbilityOne Program, from NIB associated agencies like CABVI, employs more than 5,000 Americans who are blind across the nation. NIB and its associated agencies, under the AbilityOne Program, represent the single largest employment program for people who are blind in the country.

“At NIB, we are happy to reward our agencies for their efforts to retain and grow employment and create upward mobility options for people who are blind,” said Kevin Lynch, CEO and President of NIB. “Their hard work and achievements are enabling more people who are blind to achieve socioeconomic independence and equality.”
Exemplary employees are worth their weight in gold as the saying goes. While the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired believes all of our employees who are blind or visually impaired are excellent at their jobs, in 2009-2010 two employees distinguished themselves. CABVI nominated Mark Knapp for the National Industries for the Blind Peter J. Salmon 2010 Direct Labor Employee of the Year award and Dr. Kathleen Cima, for NIB’s Milton J. Samuels 2010 Career Achievement Award.

A nationally certified ASE mechanic, Mark’s visual impairment cut short his career in automotive and truck repair. However, CABVI recognized, in Mark, an eagerness to take on numerous tasks when hired in 1997, according to his supervisor Steve Niermeyer. “Mark soon became ‘Mr. Everything.’ He learned to operate a variety of machines, handled materials to keep lines running and worked in shipping to move products to customers. “Mark demonstrates all of the characteristics of an exemplary employee: he is dependable, trustworthy, manageable and works very well with others. To a person Mark’s peers like him.”

Dennis Webster, Vice President of Manufacturing at CABVI added that Mr. Knapp is everything you want in an employee – blind or otherwise. “He is punctual, conscientious, detail oriented, efficient with resources and considerate to his peers. His attitude demonstrates to me that Mark’s future is very bright indeed.”

Dr. Cima

There are many emotional stages commonly experienced by people who have lost their vision. Vision Rehabilitation Services at the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired teach consumers how to safely navigate their surroundings and perform activities of daily living. Helping consumers navigate the emotional waters associated with vision loss is the focus of Dr. Kathleen Cima, PhD.

Kathy gives consumers a person to talk to about their feelings in either a group setting or on a one-on-one basis. “People have a hard time giving up things like driving. Accepting that they will have to depend on others for transportation can be a tough transition,” she explained.

“Adjusting to the fact that almost every aspect of their life will be affected is difficult not only for the person who has suffered the loss, but for their family as well.

“So we have classes for the individual and also for their family. We talk about reactions to this life-altering event, and we look at the stages of adjustment that eventually lead to acceptance,” she added.

Born with glaucoma, Kathy had three surgeries on her eyes leaving her very nearsighted as a young child. As a preteen, she injured her right eye and doctors discovered the glaucoma had returned. In spite of three more operations, she was legally blind at 14. She was totally blind by the time she was 24.

Kathy recalls that at 14, she did not accept her vision loss well. Her self-esteem plummeted and she struggled to fit in. As always, her family was very supportive and they encouraged her to attend Aurora, a program in Syracuse. A woman at Aurora, Charlotte Malove, had a great impact on Kathy. “Charlotte was a gift from God. I decided then and there that I wanted to do for others what she had done for me,” recalls Kathy. “She changed my attitude about being visually impaired, showed me how to accept what had happened to me, and gave me the strength to move forward.”

And move forward she did. She earned a variety of degrees from several acclaimed colleges and universities culminating with a Doctorate in Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania. “It was very difficult. There was an enormous amount of reading and my research dissertation was a real challenge,” said Kathy. But again she persevered.

CABVI President and CEO Rudy D’Amico describes Mark and Kathy as two of the most inspirational people he knows. “They’ve overcome remarkable personal obstacles to succeed in their private and professional lives. Mark and Kathy have achieved great things for themselves and in service to people who are blind or visually impaired in central New York.”
Children’s Summer Camp: Trash to Treasure
June 29 - July 1

By Linda McMurray

Fourteen legally blind and visually impaired children, ages 4 - 20, attended CABVI’s annual summer mini-camp to explore aspects of Going Green and protecting the environment. CABVI, the New York State Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped and the Utica Lions Auxiliary sponsored this year’s activities.

On the first day camp participants met at CABVI for games and pictures. They toured the Oneida County Solid Waste Authority Recycling Center, learned about the recycling process and bought some compost for a project. Later in the day the children visited Clinton Pottery and everyone had a chance to try the pottery wheel making clay objects.

Day 2 saw our campers paint clay butterfly pots at CABVI before travelling to Cornell Cooperative Extension Visitor’s Center for a tour of the Master Gardens and Butterfly House. Old Path Farm in Sauquoit, NY hosted a tour of their organically grown vegetable fields. Back at CABVI, campers planted mint herbs in the pots they had painted, with the compost from the recycling center, to take home to their parents.

On the final day our campers made bird feeders from recycled soda bottles followed by a song bird presentation by Matt Perry from Spring Farm CARES. Camp’s last bus trip took campers to the Utica Zoo for a hands on animal demonstration and a California Sea Lion feeding and show. Camp and the show ended appropriately, with a sea lion reminding everyone to always recycle, as he tossed his soda bottle into a bucket!
The Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired Board of Directors elected Edward P. Welsh Chairman of the Board at its recent annual meeting. Mr. Welsh is general manager for the Central Region AAA and an Oneida County legislator.

“The Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired is a historic agency with a unique mission. Following in the footsteps of remarkable community leaders like Francisco Penberthy, Roger Sinnott, Jim Turnbull and, more recently, Gary Gildersleeve, Paul Dreja and many others, is a distinct honor,” Mr. Welsh said.

The slate of officers elected at the annual meeting included Peter Emery, Kenneth C. Thayer, and James B. Turnbull, IV as Vice Chairs, Gen. Richard Evans, USA Retired, Treasurer, and Marie Bord as Secretary.

The board also elected Margaret G. Brown, CPA, Richard Dewar and the Honorable Mr. Ralph J. Eannace to serve three year terms as incoming directors.

The Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired is a full service vision rehabilitation agency serving blind and visually impaired people of all ages in upstate New York. The Association has 184 employees, 79 of whom are blind or visually impaired, and annually serves more than 1300 visually impaired people in its eight county service area.

In addition to the agency’s headquarters and manufacturing facility at 507 Kent Street, Utica, CABVI operates distribution plants on Beechgrove Place and Dwyer Avenue in Utica.

Operations outside of central New York are the call center at the S.S. Stratton VA Medical Center, Albany, NY, Dolphin Express Store, New London, CT, Galaxy Express Store, Westover, MA, Shipyard Express Store, Kittery, ME and The Island Express, Newport, RI. CABVI manufactures or packages 33 different product lines for over 3000 customers across the country.
Braillists’ Contribution

The Mohawk Valley Braille Transcribers made a recent contribution of $5,000 to the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Twenty-three volunteers, many of whom are retired school teachers, work year-round to transcribe school text books into Braille and convert written materials into large print and onto audiotape. Founded in 1972, the Braillists produced 69,426 Braille pages for textbooks and other reading material sent to 2 states last year.


Mark Your Calendar!

11th Annual Norman E. Bramley Memorial Golf Tournament

Saturday, September 18
Hidden Valley Golf Club
Whitesboro, NY
8 a.m. Registration. 9 a.m. Shotgun start.
$80 per player
18 Holes/Cart
Lunch at the turn.
Chicken BBQ
Lots of Prizes
Call Dan Kinney
315-736-0534
Proceeds benefit CABVI

DARK DINING

An evening with George Aney

A Central New York tradition returns!

Saturday, October 16
New Location!
Yahnundasis Golf Club
Seneca Turnpike
New Hartford, NY
6 - 7 p.m.
Social Hour, Open Bar, Silent Auction
7 - 7:15 p.m. Seating
7:15 p.m. - Dinner: THE ULTIMATE! CULINARY! SENSORY! EXPERIENCE! (Wait until you see what you’re in for!)
$100 per person. Seating is limited.
For information call 315-797-2233 or email steveg@cabvi.org
Our Generous Community

Gifts in Memory
January 1 - July 31, 2010

Betty Jane Arcuri
James Carlo
Rudy and Anne D'Amico

Albert Arlotto
Shirley Arlotto
Gregory and Julie Benincasa

Thomas D. Babilon
Norma Boccardo
James and Elizabeth Di Camillo
Celia Fedor
John Florczyk
Mary Gardner
Margaret Jackson
Alice W. Shaw
George E Thompson
Stephen and Lynn Walthall

Edna Bailey
Marjorie Boxall

John Balio
Laura E O'Donnell

James Barnes
Mary Clements

Geraldine Becker
David and Sharon Albanese
Christopher and Cheryl Collins
Mr. and Mrs. David Seelman

Gladys Camadine
James and Anne Feathers
Clyde and Lucille Lane
Billy and Joyce Lowry
Richard and Rose Myers
Bill Paine

Ernest Caruso
Rudy and Anne D'Amico

Lucille Cima
Mary Clements

Walter C. Coe
Cindy and P Daniel Freudenberger

Edwin Coffin
Nancy Coffin

Stephen Conway
Bill and Cindy Wirene

Cathleen R. Darling
Laura E O'Donnell

Ronald M. Finer
Rudy and Anne D'Amico

Janis M. Ford
Rudy and Anne D'Amico

Diane George
Rudy and Anne D'Amico

Mildred Griffith
Rudy and Anne D'Amico

Lois Hanley
Vincent and Ann Salatino

Robert Harmon
Rudy and Anne D'Amico
Vincent and Ann Salatino

Frank C. Henkle
Joseph A Ayoub Jr
Joseph Bumbalo
Toby and Kathleen Levy
Vincent and Judith Pesce

Francis Hodges
Mary Clements

Harrison Hummel
Rudy and Anne D'Amico

Helen H. Huss
Michael and Mary Ellen Arcuri
James and Rosemary Benson
Michael Burton
Cafe Del Buono
Julia Casamento
James and Margaret Clifford
Daniel and Theresa Cohen
Barbara Colpoys
Mary Pat Connors
Kevin and Ameena Copeland
Peter and Catherine Cagnolin
Lisa Davis
Mr. and Mrs. Carl DelBuono
Margaret Durr
Charles and Jane Grant
Marie Greco

Mr. Hamilton E. Greene
Francesca Grimmer
Jennifer Harvill
Linda J. Hoffman
Andrew S. Kowalczyk Jr
Patricia Lennon
Ms. Josephine Loughlin
Paul and Debra Macchi
Cheryl Martin
Nancy McNair
Lee and Sharon Merkel
Peter and Joanne Montana
William S. Montesano
David and Diane Nobles
NYS Office of Mental Retardation and
Developmental Disabilities
Marian Pitsas
Tammy L. Puchalski
Christine Rhoda
Denise Romanow
Sano-Rubin Construction Co., Inc.
Jeff and Mary Smith
Bernard M. Solan
Dennis and Rose Solan
John and Cynthia Solan
Marianne Solan
Timothy D Solan
Jennifer Spring
Robert and Jeanette Steinhorst
Louis and Eileen Sunderhaft
Patricia Wentka

Karen Kelberman Plunkett
Rudy and Anne D'Amico

Betty J. Lamb
John and Barbara Carpenter
Columbia Center Church
Domiano and Lois Contino
James and Joan Ford
William and Betty Galik
Kristen Gillmore
Herkimer County Community College
Beatrice Little
M Burton Marshall
Betty Ogden Knapp
Rosalyn Roberson
Dan and Sue Roberts
Rev and Mrs Gerald S. Saliba
St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Church/
Worn Again Clothing
Legacy Society

Generous contributors help the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired provide our vision rehabilitation services without charge. Tens of thousands of people who are blind or visually impaired have benefitted from your generosity through the years.

CABVI created the 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 an 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.

We are deeply grateful to each and every donor for 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 Mary Monahan, Public Relations and Development Specialist at (315)797-2233.
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 offers 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.

Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired
507 Kent Street
Utica, NY 13501

Address Service Requested

(315) 797-2233 • (877) 719-9996

Rudy D'Amico
President and CEO

DIRECTORS
Edward P. Welsh, Chair
Peter Emery, Vice Chair
Kenneth C. Thayer, Vice Chair
James B. Turnbull, IV, Vice Chair
Gen. Richard Evans, USA Ret., Treasurer
Marie Bord, Secretary
Margaret G. Brown, CPA
Richard Dewar
Hon. Ralph J. Eannace
Joseph Gale, M.D.
Shawn Kelly
Michael J. Misiaszek, Esq.
Col. Paul A. Steves, USA Ret.
Thomas P. Webb, O.D.

EMERITI
Mark H. Elias, M.D.
Mrs. Robert H. Fearon, Jr.
Charles A. Gaetano
Mrs. Emlyn I. Griffith
Mrs. James P. O'Donnell
Robert A. Payne, Sr.
Julius Perlillo

C.A.B. FOUNDATION
Michael J. Misiaszek, Esq., Chair
Fred Sadallah, Vice Chair
William L. Corrigan,
Secretary/Treasurer
Pondra Bowen-Kitchen
Steve Cater
Ray O'Brien
Bart Rasmus
Edward P. Welsh
Michael Wicks

EMERITI
Remi Charlebois
Jim Robinson

CNY VISION FOUNDATION
Mindy S. Barstein, Chairperson
Gary D. Scalzo, Vice-Chairman
Tammy Puchalski, Treasurer
Debbie Kessler, Secretary
Paul Drejza
Ralph Imundo
Stephen J. Powers
Matthew Sisti
Edward P. Welsh

Focus Newsletter:
Layout, Writing - Steve Gannon, Director of Development
Writing - Linda McMurray, Teacher of the Visually Impaired

Focus, the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired’s newsletter is published three times a year by the Development Department at the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 507 Kent Street, Utica, NY 13501. VOLUME 16, ISSUE 2. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Focus, Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 507 Kent Street, Utica, NY 13501.

Current newsletters and annual reports are available in Braille, on disk, audiocassette or at our website: cabvi.org. If you prefer to receive future editions of our publications in one of these alternative formats, call CABVI at (315)797-2233.

Products for Living with Vision Loss

Show your CABVI pride with our new Scotchlite Walk Safe umbrella. This neat umbrella opens and closes with the touch of one button. The Scotchlite reflective tips are a great way to stay safe too! $24

Say “Hi” to Moshi! This colorful, compact, voice activated clock tells the time, date and temperature... just ask it. $24.95

WARNING: Not a suitable substitute for husband or wife. Yet.

Hot Shot
Hot water dispenser, heats one cup of water and dispenses it right into your cup. Eliminates the need to pour. $33

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. Ask for our new catalog. You can also find us on the Internet at www.cabvi.org.