Luca Esposito had been the vice president of manufacturing for the agency from 1975 through his retirement in 2005. He was a visionary in the world of employing the blind and visually impaired. Luca created numerous jobs and developed many product lines that transformed the agency from a rehabilitation service provider, to one that provided good paying jobs, benefits, and upward mobility for the blind and visually impaired. He developed the examination glove line, file folders, and sewing, to name a few. Luca knew everyone's name in Central Industries and walked the floor every morning greeting everyone with a smile and his dance steps.

Our 2018 Annual Report is dedicated to the memory of Luca Esposito.

May 6, 1936 - October 10, 2018
Luca Esposito
In Memoriam

Luca Esposito had been the vice president of manufacturing for the agency from 1975 through his retirement in 2005. He was a visionary in the world of employing the blind and visually impaired. Luca created numerous jobs and developed many product lines that transformed the agency from a rehabilitation service provider, to one that provided good paying jobs, benefits, and upward mobility for the blind and visually impaired. He developed the examination glove line, file folders, and sewing, to name a few. Luca knew everyone’s name in Central Industries and walked the floor every morning greeting everyone with a smile and his dance steps.

Luca Esposito

May 6, 1936 -
October 10, 2018
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A Message from the
CABVI BOARD CHAIR
and our
PRESIDENT & CEO

Many years are significant to the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, but 2018 supersedes them all.

We employed more people who are blind, provided vision rehabilitation services to more people with vision loss, sold more goods and services to our New York State and Federal Government customers, and raised more money to help achieve these milestones, than any other time in our 90 year history.

CABVI commenced construction on a state-of-the-art vision health and wellness center in 2018 – part of a multi-million dollar capital improvement effort serving Utica and Syracuse. These projects will keep our agency at the pinnacle of vision rehabilitation services nationally for decades to come.

Our report on these achievements is bittersweet. In 2018 we announced our retirements from CABVI as Chairman of the Board of Directors and as President & CEO. Moving forward you can be assured of two things: CABVI will continue to tirelessly pursue its mission, and you will always occupy a place in our hearts, for without your passion, many people in need would have gone without our important resources.

Proud of our past, dedicated to the present, and foreseeing opportunity in the future – this is the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired at 90 years.

Sincerely,

Edward Welsh
Board Chair

Rudy D’Amico
President & CEO
1929
Utica office attorney, Francisco Penberthy, presented the Certificate of Incorporation to a new not-for-profit agency in Central New York. Dr. Harold C. Lyman was elected the agency’s first president of the board of directors.

1930
A total of 347 cases of blindness were investigated, and two eye operations were performed. First fundraiser raised $8,200 from three counties (Oneida, Herkimer, and Madison).

1931
CAB Board of Directors announced Helen McBride as first executive director.

1932
The agency was in very serious condition from inadequate funds. Salaries were reduced by 20%. Mrs. Thomas R. Proctor made a gift of $1,500 to cover the $1,240 deficit and pay rent until 1933.
1934
Surgeries restored sight to nine individuals and they were done for free. The Utica Lions Auxiliary donated 21 pairs of glasses to those who were visually impaired.

1939
The Wagner-O’Day bill was signed and National Industries for the Blind (NIB) was formed. At the end of 1939, six blind employees started working in the industries program.

1940
The industries program employed workers who did furniture caning for a total of $95.95 in sales.

1944
Dr. Lyman reported to the board of directors a total of five full-time and three part-time employees, with the addition of 15 home workers with an average wage of $30 per week.

...at our past
The agency found a new home at 301 Court Street in Utica. The total purchase was $7,500 with a down payment of $3,000. Mortgage and expenses were $56/month.

The Utica Lions donated the agency’s sign for the new building.

Hotel Utica held a vision-testing program for children from the ages of 3 to 6. Nearly 200 children were examined and 22 needed further treatment for visual impairments.

1950

Shop sales exceed $19,000 and 13 sales came from the local area and the Hotel Utica event. These sales were a result of chairs being reseated and handles being woven. The NYS Commission for the Blind hosted several of the sales.
1954
Figures from 1953 were presented at the annual meeting. Sixteen communities were served with 1,196 home visits. Eighty seven were done at the Court Street office, and 1,330 children vision screenings were conducted. As a result, 64 new cases of people who were legally blind received services.

1956
Employment is up to 10 legally blind employees who made 57,974 items in the previous year.

1969
After 38 years of service, Helen McBride retires from CAB. Her replacement, Don LoGuidice, is hired as the president and CEO.

1971
The Federal Department of Health, Education, and Welfare awarded a grant of $23,033 to provide the first mobility training and rehabilitation program in the area.
1972
Forty-three years after opening the doors of CAB, National Industries for the Blind officially recognizes the agency for its continued successful government sales volume.

1973
The Mohawk Valley Braille Transcribers formed and Mrs. Harold Canada became the president of the organization.

1978
June 21 is proclaimed as Central Association for the Blind Day by then Mayor of the City of Utica, Stephen J. Pawlinga.

1979
General Electric donates a building on Kent Street in Utica to CAB. City of Utica allocates $42,000 to help with renovations to the building, and it is largely thanks to many board members, including Charles Gaetano, James Turnbull III, Roger Sinnott, and Kenneth Thayer.
1980
At the 51st annual meeting, it was announced that over 1,000 individuals were helped by one or more services from CAB. The areas included from Utica to Old Forge, and from Canastota to Amsterdam.

1981
James B. Turnbull III is named NIB’s board member of the year for his dedication and outstanding leadership for improving the lives of people who are visually impaired.

1985
CAB wins the NYS pencil contract to provide pencils to all approved government agencies. The contract allowed an additional 12 blind and visually impaired to become employed.

1986
Vehicles for Vision is introduced as a fundraising effort for the agency. Six cars were donated on the first day.
1989 After 60 years as the Central Association for the Blind, the agency adds the words, “and Visually Impaired.” Leaders indicated the name change came because they wanted to eradicate the stigma of being called, “the blind association,” and that we also helped the visually impaired.

1995 Voice dialing is first introduced to Central New York. Individuals can add up to 50 names into the phone for easier communications.

1996 Microsoft Windows 95 was released, but since it was heavily used for graphics and pictures, an individual who was blind or visually impaired could not use it.

A Federal contract allows several individuals who are blind or visually impaired to operate the telecommunications center at the S.S. Stratton Veterans Administration Medical Center in Albany. The program is the first of its kind in New York, and was only the second in the nation.
1997  A new, 15,000 square foot building was purchased from the City of Utica for $115,000. The former Hamilton Digital building, now known as CABVI’s Kenneth C. Thayer Production Facility, is located on Bleecker Street.

2000  CABVI’s first Base Supply Center (BSC), Dolphin Express, opens its doors at the Naval Submarine Base in New London, CT.

2003  Three years after Dolphin Express, a second BSC, Galaxy Express, opens at the Westover Air Reserve Base in Chicopee, MA.

Rudy D’Amico named vice president of operations.
The largest contract in the agency’s history, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) glove line, helps increase employment opportunities for people who are blind and visually impaired. CABVI sells 63,800 cases per year to over 450 airports nationwide.

Shipyard Express opens at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, ME, making it the third BSC for CABVI.

Another expansion occurred with the purchase of a 67,000 square foot warehouse on Dwyer Ave. in Utica.
Five short years after CABVI was awarded its trash bag contract, sales exceed $1 million dollars.

Dark Dining makes its debut at Valentino’s Banquet Hall on November 3. It featured four courses and attendees were blindfolded so they could guess each course.

After 39 years as president and CEO of the organization, Don LoGuidice passes the torch to Rudy D’Amico.

The fourth BSC opens at the Naval Station Newport in Newport, RI.
2009
Fifteen employees, most of whom were legally blind and visually impaired, were hired to operate newly acquired contracts relating to 911 exam gloves for the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services, rubber band manufacturing to all government agencies, pajamas to the Department of Veterans Affairs, and double-topped file folders to the Federal Government.

Sales for the BSC stores reached nearly $4 million dollars.

NIB awards the agency with the Employment Retention, Growth, and Upward Mobility Award for demonstrating commitment to increasing employment opportunities for people with vision loss.
The total employment number reaches 200 after securing a federal contract worth $653,000 for a call center.

CABVI completed the prestigious ISO 9001:2008 certification that means the agency has the processes, resources, systems, and skills to deliver high-quality products and services in a timely manner.

The Lavelle Fund for the Blind of New York City helped with renovations to the CABVI headquarters on Kent Street with a $175,000 grant.

CABVI holds its first ever Camp Abilities.
2014

Tobyhanna Office Express, CABVI’s fifth BSC store, opens at the Tobyhanna Army Depot in Tobyhanna, PA.

2015

CABVI makes its debut in Syracuse by opening a facility that employed eight full-time employees, six of whom were legally blind.

2016

The Quest program is created as an opportunity for employees to achieve upward mobility within the agency.

2017

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services awards the agency with the five-year contract for assistive technologies. It enabled expansion of services into five additional counties, bringing CABVI’s total service area to 13 counties.
CABVI broke ground on its new 23,000 square foot Vision Health and Wellness Center, a state-of-the-art facility that will assist individuals with vision loss for decades to come.

USA Blind Hockey and CABVI teamed up to bring the country's first national blind hockey team to the Mohawk Valley for a training camp.
Total Operating Revenue for 2018
$62,811,822
- Central Industries Sales - 83% $52,327,063
- Base Supply Sales - 12% $7,577,965
- Contributions & Bequests - 2.5% $1,616,367
- Rehabilitation Program Income - 2% $931,927
- Gain on Sale of Investments - 0.5% $358,500

Total Operating Revenue for 2017
$60,802,301
- Central Industries Sales - 84% $51,178,934
- Base Supply Sales - 12% $7,508,532
- Contributions & Bequests - 1.5% $828,156
- Rehabilitation Program Income - 2% $942,698
- Gain on Sale of Investments 0.5% $343,981

Total Operating Expenses for 2018
$56,654,555
- Central Industries Program- 77% $43,739,674
- Base Supply Stores - 13% $7,264,824
- Management and Administrative - 3.5% $1,888,878
- Rehabilitation Program - 3% $1,693,421
- Occupancy - 2.5% $1,565,077
- Public Education /Communications - 0.5% $267,487
- Development - 0.5% $235,194

Total Operating Expenses for 2017
$55,164,615
- Central Industries Program- 77.5% $42,767,873
- Base Supply Stores - 13.5% $7,005,803
- Management and Administrative - 3% $1,764,708
- Rehabilitation Program - 3% $1,674,228
- Occupancy - 2% $1,433,752
- Public Education /Communications - 0.5% $281,897
- Development - 0.5% $236,354

Ending Net Assets
$52,545,680
$47,332,475
1,666 patients served in 2018

- 160 patients were 0-18 years old
- 397 patients were 19-60 years old
- 438 patients were 61-80 years old
- 671 patients were 81 years old and up

1,028 patients were female

636 patients were male

Common Causes of Visual Impairments Among Patient Intakes:

- Macular Degeneration #1
- Other #2
- Glaucoma #3
- Diabetic Retinopathy #4
- Congenital or Birth Injury #5
- Retinitis Pigmentosa #6

Volunteer Statistics:

344 people volunteered totaling 11,362 hours

Patients by County:

- Jefferson: 114
- Lewis: 41
- Oneida: 138
- Herkimer: 59
- Montgomery: 67
- Madison: 163
- Otsego: 151
- Other: 23
Thanks to you, our programs and services are able to remain healthy, active, and assist those who need them the most. Your donation means so much to us, and we are thankful to have you as a CABVI family member.

While we appreciate all gifts of any denomination, because of space constraints, we are listing only contributions of $50 and above.

We make every effort to properly recognize our benefactors. Please call us at (315) 797-2233 if we have made an error or omission.
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Dear Rudy,

Everyone deserves to have a leader and mentor like you. Under your leadership, we have prospered, attained better lives, and experienced what it is like to grow within an organization.

Watching you interact with every single one of us truly displayed what kind of an individual you really are. You genuinely cared, and it showed every day.

We wish you nothing but hole-in-ones on and off the course, Rudy.

Best wishes enjoying your retirement and, always remember, you are a part of the CABVI family. We hope to hear your pen clicking in the near future.

Sincerely,

CABVI Employees
Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

507 Kent Street, Utica, NY 13501

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2018 Annual Report