

A Publication of the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

# FOCUS

Volume 34 | Fall 2020



## BRINGING MANUFACTURING AND JOBS BACK TO AMERICA

CABVI MAKES GROUNDBREAKING PLEDGE TO AMERICAN MADE NITRILE GLOVES

  
Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired  
live your vision

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Albert Einstein once said, "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving." 2020 has been year of keeping balance. Once the pandemic started and the government designated CABVI an essential business, we kept moving to maintain our balance.

We worked together to be safe, keep our production of PPE in the hands of our customers, while focusing on the agency's future. In this edition of FOCUS, we look at a few small samples of our staff's accomplishments. Here are a couple of illustrations of our ongoing work:

When the pandemic caused us to cancel Camp Abilities, our rehabilitation team launched Camp in a Box, creating a virtual camping experience.

Our sales team created a partnership with SHOWA to increase domestic nitrile medical glove production and distribution.

CABVI's dedicated employees stayed on mission, keeping balance, riding straight and true. We did not need training wheels because we knew how to keep moving.



**Ed Welsh**  
President and CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward P. Welsh".

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## EARL HOLMES

Director of Information Technology

Years at CABVI: 22

### When did you start working at CABVI?

I started as an intern in 1998 in the Adaptive Technology Center and then became a full-time employee in the IT department in 2000.

### What do you do at CABVI?

I direct and manage the technology used by the organization. I also create and maintain software developed specifically for CABVI operations.

### What do you like best about working at CABVI?

I really enjoy working with the diverse group of people in my department. We have different skills and personalities that make each day interesting. Being in the IT department, often times we work weekends or late nights, and having a team that you really click with makes it much easier. I also get to interact with different employees throughout the agency on a daily basis, so every day is different.

CABVI is a larger nonprofit with bigger business needs, which creates challenges that you constantly have to adapt and work with. It's a constant learning experience.

### What is your most memorable experience at CABVI?

My most memorable experience is bringing the agency from seven computer systems to more than 200, with over 100 servers. The agency has grown



tremendously, in a short amount of time, and with that grew the need for technology. It's been really amusing seeing the IT growth over the years.

### What is something that surprises you about CABVI?

When CABVI wants to do something, somehow we find a way to make it happen.

### What is one fun fact about yourself?

I have been interested in IT for as long as I can remember. When I was 7 I built a long-range computer network using a Commodore 64 over a CB radio transmitter.



## CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SUMMER CAMP IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

Since 2013, Camp Abilities CABVI has partnered socialization, recreation, and sports acquisition with vision rehabilitation through planned camp activities. This combination of objectives made Camp Abilities CABVI different from other camps in the Camp Abilities family. But this year, Camp Abilities looked a little different.

With the health and safety of campers in mind, CABVI launched Camp in a Box, an eight-week virtual camp that combined meaningful, effective remote classroom instruction, with the distribution of fitness and adaptive equipment. Instruction topics included fitness, nutrition,

recreation, independent living skills, technology, orientation and mobility, and development of internal coping skills.

Each week, campers received a box of fun and engaging rehabilitation tools in the mail. The contents of the box supported the lesson for the camp session but also included materials to support the lesson theme. "Our team did a really great job coming up with fun themes for each session," CABVI Vice President of Rehabilitation, Kathy Beaver said. Themes ranged from The Flamingo Challenge, Dino Attack! Can You Escape?, Let's Boogie, and VRT is a Piece of Cake, among others.



The campers checked-in via video chat with the CABVI rehabilitation team and the other campers, where they would open the boxes together and participate in activities from their homes.

“One of our main goals when we are at summer camp is establishing a team atmosphere with all of the campers,” CABVI Adaptive Sports and Recreation Manager, Dylan Drexler said. “While the campers were not able to physically be together, the Zoom sessions allowed them to still work together, and build essential team-building skills that can be applied all throughout their lives.”

Each package also included a supplemental lesson and ideas that families could do one their own, reinforcing prior lessons and skills acquired.

“Performing these lessons at home allows parents, siblings, and friends to participate,” Kathy said. “This inclusion of others not only serves to strengthen home communities, but also provides natural supports for the camper during the lesson.”

Moving forward, CABVI hopes to one day be back at Camp Huntington or Camp Nazareth. Until then, they continue to connect virtually and will carry on a new Camp tradition.





## WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY

### A DAY TO CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE

You may see an individual who is blind or visually impaired walking around the agency or community with a long white cane that they swiftly swing back and forth as they walk. The white cane was introduced in the early 1930s as a way of assisting individuals who are blind or visually impaired travel independently, and has since become a symbol of that independence.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson proclaimed October 15th as Annual White Cane Safety Day to honor and celebrate the achievements of individuals who are blind or visually

impaired. It also serves as a reminder to educate the public about the importance of the white cane, and what you can do to help.

Each state has its own set of traffic laws to protect the rights of pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired. In New York, according to Section 1153, "a special right-of-way law allows blind pedestrians to cross the road with a guide dog or a white or metallic cane. You must always give them the right-of-way when they are trying to cross at a marked or unmarked crosswalk even if the traffic signals or other right-of-way rules are not in their favor."

Additionally, drivers should always stop at least five feet from a crosswalk. Pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired may use the sound of your engine to locate the crosswalk boundaries. If your car is too close, too far, or any part is in the crosswalk, they may misjudge the safe area. Drivers should always avoid honking at individuals using

a white cane. An individual who is blind or visually impaired cannot see why you're honking and could misinterpret that as a signal for danger. If you see an individual who may look like they need assistance, it is okay to ask permission. If they ask you to guide them, offer your arm, but never grab them. The individual will grab your elbow and allow you to guide them to safety.

### WHITE CANE FACTS

- The technical name for the white cane is *probing cane* for the way it is used to probe and locate obstacles
- The white cane was invented by George A. Bonham, President of the Peoria Lions Club in Illinois, who suggested painting it white with a red stripe to make it easily visible
- The "Hoover Method," is the standard technique of swiftly swinging the cane back and forth, was pioneered in 1944 by Richard E. Hoover, who was a World War II Veteran and Rehabilitation Specialist



# AMERICA CELEBRATES 30 YEARS OF ADA

## CREATING AN INCLUSIVE WORLD FOR ALL

President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act into law in 1990. This landmark civil rights law prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. Since its enactment, our country has taken great strides toward the ADA's promise of true inclusion, and Americans with and without disabilities increasingly live, learn, work, play and contribute side-by-side.

In an editorial, The New York Times wrote: "The act does more than enlarging the independence of disabled Americans. It enlarges civil rights and humanity, for all Americans."

The ADA gave visibility to various disabilities, and allows individuals with disabilities to be a part of mainstream America, where they would have previously



**ADA30**   
**Americans with Disabilities Act**  
Celebrate the ADA! July 26, 2020

been institutionalized or confined to their homes. The accommodations not only benefit those for which they are intended for, but everyone. Ramps and elevators that were designed for individuals in wheelchairs made it much easier for parents to push strollers or carts. The ding an elevator makes when it reaches the destined floor alerts a distracted pedestrian. Wider doorways that were designed to accommodate wheelchairs ease the strain of moving furniture in and out. The act also covers individuals experiencing temporary disability such as a complicated pregnancy, illness, or injury.

The ADA has allowed agencies like CABVI to provide meaningful employment to all individuals, including those who are visually impaired or experience disabilities. The inclusion of tactile crosswalks, audible crossing signals, and the availability of braille enabled individuals who are blind or visually impaired the freedom to travel on their own. It has helped fuel the growth of accessible technologies, enabling individuals who are blind or visually impaired to access greater employment opportunities.

Since its passage, the ADA has helped bridge the accessibility gap by showing businesses how to better accommodate individuals with disabilities, creating a more inclusive community for all.



## **BRINGING MANUFACTURING AND JOBS BACK TO AMERICA**

**CABVI MAKES GROUNDBREAKING PLEDGE TO AMERICAN MADE NITRILE GLOVES**

Made in America is the order of the day as the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI), and SHOWA, announced an innovative partnership to manufacture and distribute domestically produced nitrile gloves to address the national shortage of personal protective equipment.

SHOWA is currently the only U.S. manufacturer of the nitrile, single-use PPE gloves that front-line industrial, service, transportation, healthcare, and government workers rely on. In late 2019, SHOWA invested significantly in its Fayette, Alabama glove manufacturing facility, and now has the production capacity to meet a five-year nitrile glove supply need - today.



“Meeting current and future demand for PPE gloves that are made in America is a matter of National Security, and our strategic partnership with CABVI reaffirms our mission to support organizations whose front-line workers are the first and last line of defense against the coronavirus pandemic,” SHOWA COO Americas, Oceania & EMEA, Richard Heppell said. “At the same time, our strategic facility expansion last year means that we have available capacity for federal, state, and local government agencies seeking a domestic source for high-quality, proven nitrile gloves.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a challenge for all consumers, from healthcare facilities to first responders, to source quality gloves. Nearly all nitrile glove manufacturing occurs in the Asia Pacific (APAC) rim, a region of the globe particularly hit hard during the early stages of the pandemic.

As a result, factories in Malaysia, China, Indonesia, and Thailand, saw delivery times jump from about 90 days to more than 180 days. As the entire APAC regions quarantined, nitrile glove production capacity cratered while demand skyrocketed.

CABVI will package and distribute the gloves from SHOWA, in their facilities in Utica, and Syracuse N.Y.

“While many are chasing glove supplies around the globe, wondering how to meet today’s explosive needs, SHOWA and CABVI are focused on the future,” CABVI Vice President of Products & Distribution, Katie Eddy, said.

Through this partnership with SHOWA, and CABVI’s government contracts via the AbilityOne® Program, CABVI can serve the dual purpose of supporting their customers’ efforts to protect the health of front-line workers and citizens, while ensuring they can retain and produce jobs for the communities they serve, by packaging and distributing the SHOWA gloves.

“This partnership demonstrates CABVI’s confidence in SHOWA, and rest assured, we will do everything in our power to help them continue expanding their services as well,” Katie said. “Together we can do great things for the citizens of the United States.”

# CENTRAL INDUSTRIES HONORED BY LOCAL AGENCIES

Nitrile gloves, the most requested product on the planet during the pandemic, continue to be in critically short supply. Nearly all of the gloves come from the Asian Pacific (APAC) rim. It's not hyperbole to say the globe descended on Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and China, last spring buying everything in sight resulting in short supply, long supply lines, and even longer delivery times.

America faced a crisis within a crisis, with the potential for the crisis to compound without quality personal protective equipment (PPE). According to CABVI President & CEO, Ed Welsh, that's the point at which, "our employees demonstrated heroic spirit."

State and local officials took note. Commissioner Sheila J. Poole of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services issued a citation recognizing CABVI's team for producing and distributing PPE, "such as gloves, to OCFS facilities and, as a result of their exemplary work, has provided potentially lifesaving protection to staff and youth in our care."

Mohawk Valley EDGE (Economic Development Growth Enterprises Corporation), provides coordinated economic development programs assisting businesses to locate, grow, and prosper in Oneida and Herkimer Counties, NY. MV EDGE named CABVI one of five recipients of its annual Leading EDGE Awards for its innovative partnership with SHOWA Group, to distribute domestically produced nitrile gloves addressing the national shortage of personal protective equipment.



"We've committed to purchasing a substantial quantity of SHOWA's gloves, which we will package in, and distribute from, our facilities in Utica, and Syracuse," Ed said.

"The supply will expand. The supply line is the 1100 miles between Fayette, Ala., and Utica. We cut the delivery time from months to a few

days. Our All-American workforce of blind employees and their sighted peers will ensure the product reaches customers quickly.

"That is how we will defeat the spread of COVID-19. CABVI stands at the tip of the spear."





## SENATOR GILLIBRAND MAKES A STOP AT CABVI OFFICIALS COMMEND CABVI FOR THEIR EFFORTS DURING PANDEMIC

CABVI hosted United States Senator Kirsten Gillibrand over the summer as part of her manufacturing tour of upstate New York.

The visit coincided with the announcement of CABVI's recent partnership with SHOWA, to provide domestically produced, medical-grade nitrile gloves. SHOWA is currently the only U.S. manufacturer of the nitrile, single-use personal protective equipment (PPE) gloves that front-line industrial, service, transportation, healthcare, and government workers rely on.

Senator Gillibrand commended CABVI and its employees for

their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide PPE such as gloves, disinfectants, face masks, and incontinence products to crucial state, federal, and local front line workers.

"The work CABVI is doing right now is one of our greatest defenses against COVID-19," Senator Gillibrand remarked. "Their willingness to stay the course in a time of this crisis is admirable."

Senator Gillibrand supports a federal package of incentives to companies that bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States.

"It's no surprise that the work CABVI does has been recognized as critical and their dedication to their employees, commitment to their community, and ability to deliver results shows why New York is one of the best places in the country for manufacturing."

The Senator joined Utica Mayor Robert Palmieri, CABVI President & CEO Ed Welsh, and board chair James Turnbull, IV, on a tour through Central Industries where she met and talked to employees and witnessed PPE packaging firsthand.

# CABVI IN THE COMMUNITY



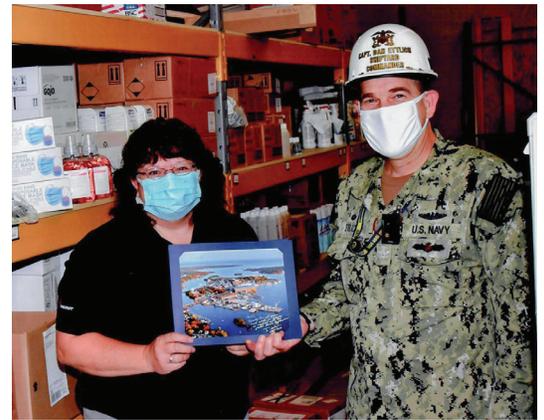
## CABVI Assists Rotary Club of Utica Donate Firefighter Gear

Rotary Club of Utica worked with several rotary clubs across the United States to gather and deliver firefighter gear to Kosovo. CABVI's Shipping and Distribution department assisted with packing the equipment and preparing it for shipment. In total, over 2,000 lbs of equipment went to firefighters in need.

## BSC Manager Honored by US Navy Commander

Terri Fabrizio, Shipyard Express Manager, one of the six BSCs operated by CABVI, was honored by Captain Daniel Ettlich, Base Commander at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, for the support her team provided during the pandemic and was presented a Challenge Coin. This coin is given to service members as a mark of camaraderie and special thanks.

"Whatever PSNY asked you for, you worked tirelessly and supported us by going above and beyond any challenges you were faced with," Captain Ettlich said. "We realize this was no easy task, and we cherish you for your support, determination, and dedication."



## Employee Receives Rotary Pride of Workmanship Award

The Rotary Pride of Workmanship honors those who demonstrate outstanding competence, a commitment to excellence, professionalism, and a willingness to go above and beyond the job description. CABVI Manager of Children's Services, Kimberly Scerbo was one of five recipients to receive the prestigious award in October.

"I nominated Kim for her tireless efforts to open doors of opportunity for children with visual impairments," Vice President of Rehabilitation, Kathy Beaver said. "She provides ongoing support to the children who she works with and her coworkers, each and every day."

The award was presented to Kim by Rotary POW Chair, Roxanne Mutchler and Kathy Beaver.



**Dear Friend,**

Season's Greetings!

I hope you are well because this has been a year unique to nearly all of us. This is my most sincere wish – that our best days lie ahead.

I believe that is the case at the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The past months brought unprecedented challenges to CABVI on two fronts:

1. Keeping the river of personal protective equipment flowing to first responders across the country
2. Providing services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired in Central New York

Our committed, All-American workforce, produced masks, packed gloves, and bottled disinfectants and sanitizers while we committed to keeping them safe in the workplace. Public health officials suggested many times that our procedures created a model to be followed.

Our vision rehabilitation team forged creative ways to reach individuals who are blind or visually impaired with the levels of service to which they've become accustomed, whether by telephone or video conference.

CABVI's is a great team, beginning always with those who are blind or visually impaired, staff, volunteers, customers, and donors. Over the three decades I have been associated with CABVI, everyone shows pride in their work and a desire to accomplish the mission.

If you are able, please renew your support of CABVI during this Season of Giving. For each of us, the mission continues.

Sincerely,

Rudy D'Amico, Honorary Chair  
2020 CABVI Holiday Appeal



Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

**HOLIDAY**  
*campaign*

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May 1, 2020 - October 31, 2020

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Laura O'Donnell

**Lois Wiley**  
Francis Wiley

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Maida Appleton

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Judy Winslow

**Dr. Lorna Grant and Staff at CNY  
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Susan Goldberg

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**Maurice Young**  
Rev. Richard Moran, Jr.

**CABVI makes every effort to properly recognize our benefactors in the Annual Report, published in May. Unfortunately errors happen and we would like to use this space to acknowledge these special contributors.**

## Gifts in Honor

**Families of Susan Sivers-Corrigan**  
William and Eleanor Corrigan

**Dan Phillips**  
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William and Cynthia Tessian

**Mrs. Ruth Turnbull**  
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**Edward Welsh**  
Alan R. and Connie Leist Jr.

## Benefactor: \$999 - \$500

Donald and Pat LoGuidice

## Make a Charitable Contribution Directly From Your IRA

Are you 70 ½ or older and, not in need of your minimum IRA distribution this year?

If the answer is no, there's a tool you can use called the qualified charitable contribution (QCD).

With a QCD, you can make a donation to CABVI directly from your IRA.

Under a QCD, a charitable contribution made from an IRA is not included in your gross income. You do not take a deduction for the contribution. The QCD counts toward your required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year.

Suppose your RMD for the year is \$17,000. If you make at least \$17,000 of QCDs, you've satisfied both your RMD and \$17,000 of your charitable giving for the year. There's no additional gross income on your tax return. You don't deduct the QCDs as charitable contributions.

Confusing? Speak with your tax advisor, attorney or IRA administrator.

You must make the charitable contribution directly from your IRA custodian, or trustee to CABVI, 507 Kent Street, Utica, NY 13501, Federal ID No. 15-0543587.

You must be at least age 70½ by the date of the charitable contribution.

Please contact Steve Gannon, Vice President of Development and Communications at 315-797-2233 ext.1265 for more information.

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## This holiday season you can support us when you shop!

Now, when you shop, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchase to CABVI.

Simply register your Amazon account to our charity link:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/15-0543587>

Or search Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired to make your purchases support CABVI.

# FOCUS

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Current newsletters and annual reports are available by mail, in Braille, e-mail, on disk, audio cassette, or on our website. If you prefer to receive future editions of our publications in one of these alternate formats, call CABVI at (315) 797-2233 x1303.

If you are receiving this publication in error, please contact CABVI's public relations department at (315) 797-2233 x1303.

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507 Kent Street, Utica, NY 13501

**Production & Warehouse**  
2145 Bleecker Street, Utica, NY 13501  
2270 Dwyer Avenue, Utica, NY 13501  
6050 Court Street, Syracuse, NY 13206

**Vision Health & Wellness Center**  
408 Elizabeth Street, Utica, NY 13501

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