



# About Us and With Us: A Conversation on Being an Employee with a Disability in MA

Wednesday, October 4, 2023

11 AM- 12:00 PM EST

Hybrid-State House | Room 350 | 24 Beacon Street, Boston and on Zoom

On Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88296608989#success>

As part of the Commission's Inaugural National Disability Employment Awareness Month Celebration, we will hold a panel session with individuals across job sectors who will share their employment journey. We will also engage the audience in a Q&A session.

ASL and CART services will be provided.

## Facilitators:

### CARL RICHARDSON

*Treasurer MA Permanent Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities;  
MA State House ADA Coordinator/504 Diversity Officer*

### IMENE BOUZIANE SAIDI

*Program Director, MA Permanent Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities*

## Panelists:

### PATTI MENZEL

*Autistic presenter, consultant, and self-advocate*

### BRAD STEELE

*Senior Director of Unified Communications at the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security*

### KERRY THOMPSON

*Senior Advisor, Inclusion & Accessibility for the Disability Rights Fund and Executive Director for Silent Rhythms, Inc*

### THELMA WILLIAMS

*Chief of Staff, Diversity Equity & Inclusion Co-Chair at the MA Commission for the Blind*



Patti Menzel is an Autistic presenter, consultant, and self-advocate. She provides dynamic professional development presentations on topics around autism for educators, medical clinicians, law enforcement, and families. Patti encourages a holistic bio-psycho-social approach to viewing and supporting Autistic people across the lifespan. She aims to help make some of the more enigmatic aspects of autism more understandable. Patti is passionate about supporting professionals and families, building community, envisioning improved systems, and believes that the best way forward is together. She is on the board of directors for Community Autism Resources, provides training through Mass. Dept. of Developmental Services as well as Schriver medical and PACES collaborative, while maintaining close connections within the Autistic self-advocate community. In her leisure time, Patti enjoys hiking, t'ai chi, reading, swimming, and spending time in nature.



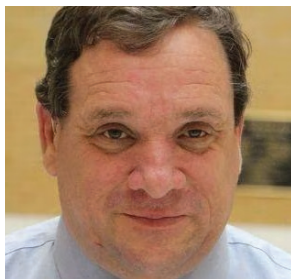
Brad Steele is the Senior Director of Unified Communications at the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security. He is responsible for the Enterprise Telecommunications, Contact Centers and Cellular Services under the MassVoice umbrella. Consolidating and standardizing the way we communicate in the Commonwealth. Brad has been with the state since 2009 and has been active in many procurement efforts. Representing Massachusetts in the National Association of State Technology Directors for 14 years, Brad is a Past President of the organization and an Honorary Life Member.



Kerry Thompson is the Senior Advisor, Inclusion & Accessibility for the Disability Rights Fund and Executive Director for Silent Rhythms, Inc. She was a 2014 German Marshall Fund fellow and a 2020 Harvard Dance Center visiting artist. She is a published author and has written numerous blogs on inclusion in human rights, nonprofits, philanthropy, and the arts sector. She is also the creator and coach of the Inclusion 101 series.



Thelma Williams, recipient of the 2020 Governor Paul Cellucci Award for Leadership and Mentoring in State Government, has been Chief of Staff at the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) since November 2022. Thelma began her career at MCB over 15 years ago as Northeast Regional Director. She has a passion for empowering both her colleagues and consumers in realizing their fullest potential. In her spare time, Thelma enjoys both singing and writing. She has co-authored an article in the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal and is a published poet.



Carl Richardson identifies as DeafBlind and serves as the ADA Coordinator/504/Diversity Officer for the Massachusetts State House. In this role, Carl works with the Governor and Executive branch, as well as with members of the legislature and leadership from state agencies to serve individuals with disabilities across the Commonwealth, ensuring that the State House is an accessible, inclusive, and welcoming environment.