



Happy Holidays from MCB!



Thank you to everyone who joined us for MCB's 2nd Annual Virtual Open House on Friday, December 3, 2021 to recognize International Day of Persons with Disabilities and celebrate the 31st Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. We enjoyed stories and entertainment from our community, along with accessibility insights from a panel of experts. [Get the recap and recording.](#)



Leadership Update

Dear MCB Community,

It has been a pleasure connecting with you both virtually and in person this year.

At MCB, our mission is to provide individuals who are blind, visually impaired, and Deafblind with access to employment opportunities and social rehabilitation with the goal of increasing independence and self-determination.

We believe in the values of perseverance, adaptability, respect, resilience, and inclusion. Our team works toward a vision of a world where all people with disabilities have the opportunity to work and thrive.

COVID is still with us, but thanks to vaccine availability and our hybrid work model, we have been able to resume delivering in-person services this year while we also continue to provide virtual services across the Commonwealth.

We are grateful for the resilience of our community and team and have accomplished many things together as a community.

This year, we enjoyed connecting virtually for two Town Hall events, a virtual event for the DeafBlind community, our first Caregiver Support Week, our annual MCB Internship Program Ceremonies, annual Job Fair, White Cane Awareness Day, and more.

We delivered and deployed hundreds of Assistive Technology (AT) devices. We provided Orientation & Mobility services both indoors and out to help individuals learn new skills to navigate at home, school, and work. And our Vision Rehabilitation Teaching team taught new methods and techniques to assist with the challenges of vision loss.

During the 2021 school year, many students went back to school, and the Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Library provided books and resources in Braille and large print, along with digital materials and AT devices.

Our stakeholders like Carroll Center for the Blind, Perkins School for the Blind, POLUS Center, and MABVI continued to pivot and developed new paths and programs for the people we serve.

We wrapped up our first-of-its-kind ad campaign called *What's Your Vision?* that emphasized the importance of employment for the individuals we serve.

We are so proud of what we have been able to accomplish together in 2021, and we look forward to everything to come in 2022.

Stay connected with us to find out what is happening next. Visit www.mass.gov/mcb. Follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), YouTube, and [Facebook](#). Email us at MCBinfo@mass.gov. Call us at 1-800-392-6450.

Thank you for being a part of our MCB community. We are grateful for you. Have a wonderful holiday season from all of us at MCB.

**Sincerely,
David D'Arcangelo**

NEED A CERTIFICATE OF BLINDNESS OR BLINDNESS ID?

Call 617-626-7415 or email BlindnessRegistry@mass.gov.

Connect live via the [Virtual Blindness Registry](#) Mon. thru Fri. from 10 am to 1 pm ET.

COMMUNITY INSPIRATION

Meet Ali Mahady, a mother of a son with complex needs and Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI). Ali is an advocate for her child and the blindness community. Recently, she developed a Facebook group called "Massachusetts Parents of Children in DPH Care Coordination and MCB" as a way to connect parents and caregivers across the state who participate in DPH and MCB programs to connect and share information.



COVID-19 UPDATES AND INFORMATION

Find vaccinations and boosters in your area, get the latest announcements from the Governor, and read about reopening Massachusetts. Search VaxFinder.mass.gov for appointments near you, or [find out more about in-home vaccinations](#).

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Meet Bill Hersh, an Adaptive Technology Specialist & Certified Low Vision Therapist at the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind. In these roles, Bill works closely with individuals in order to assess their functional vision, and helps them select tools that redress barriers to educational, career, and independent living objectives.

2022 EVENTS: SAVE THE DATE

Virtual Town Hall: What's New in Orientation & Mobility?

Wednesday, April 27, 2022 from 12 to 1:30 p.m. ET

Virtual Town Hall: The Importance of Rehabilitation Teaching

Tuesday, September 13, 2022 from 12 to 1:30 p.m. ET

White Cane Awareness Week

Monday thru Friday, October 10-14, 2022

WHITE CANE AWARENESS DAY

Thank you to all who joined our Virtual White Cane Awareness Day Celebration on October 15, 2021 to recognize the importance of the white cane for individuals who are blind, visually impaired, and DeafBlind in Massachusetts. MCB was proud to host the annual event to share information about the history of the white cane, the "White Cane Law", white cane benefits, different types of canes, traveling recommendations, and more. Individuals shared their inspiring stories of using white canes to travel to work and school. Low vision support groups participated, and MCB's Orientation & Mobility (O&M) team was introduced. The recipients of the first annual Meg Robertson Mobility Awards were announced. [Enjoy the recording](#) if you missed it!

STAKEHOLDER UPDATES

MCB Stakeholders work collaboratively to ensure that we are serving our shared community with programming and services throughout the state. We are a large group of providers and organizations who are committed to individuals who are blind, visually impaired, and DeafBlind along with their families, caregivers, and support networks. Visit [Mass.gov/MCB](https://www.mass.gov/MCB) for a stakeholder resource guide, or ask your MCB counselor about stakeholder organizations in your area.

- Tonight, Thursday, December 23rd, at 7 p.m. [The Talking Information Center \(TIC\)](#) Radio and Podcast Players will be presenting The Shop Around The Corner.
- [The NFB of Massachusetts](#) is pleased to announce the availability of scholarships for the 2022-2023 academic year. Up to 3 scholarships may be awarded, including 1 for \$3,000.00 and 2 for \$1,500.00 each. Instructions and deadlines are available by contacting Shara Winton, NFBMA President at 617-600-8130 or send an email to SharaWinton@gmail.com with the word "scholarship" in the subject line.
- [The POLUS Center](#) is offering extra support and training for individuals who recently moved into a home or apartment with a program called "Getting Settled." Interested? Please contact your MCB Counselor or contact Kathy Bull by at kaxianna@yahoo.com or 781-799-2983.

- [The Carroll Center for the Blind](#) is offering a "Screen Reader User Tester Training Program" in March 2022 to prepare participants to obtain employment in the field of digital accessibility to help companies with their accessibility compliance. Whether they work as an independent contractor, are hired by one of the many accessibility consulting companies or are hired by entities with their own internal accessibility expertise, this program should position them for a solid career path in digital accessibility. The seven-week, in-person program held on the CCB's Newton, MA campus will teach and expand each attendee's ability to professionally explore, test, and report findings regarding the accessibility and usability of websites, mobile applications, and digital document files. Anyone interested in this program should contact Kathy Felt, Director of Admissions at kathy.felt@carroll.org or by calling her at 617-969-6200, ext. 216.

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind |
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