

# **Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB)**

## **2016 ANNUAL REPORT**

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services**



Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

**600 Washington Street | Boston, MA 02111 | (617) 727-5550  
[www.mass.gov/mcb](http://www.mass.gov/mcb)**

## Table of Contents

Letter from the Commissioner	1
Program and Service Updates	2-5
2016 Key Accomplishments	6-7
Active Collaborations	8-9
Consumer Highlights	10-14

### MCB Mission Statement

*The Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) provides the highest quality rehabilitation and social services to approximately 26,000 individuals in the Commonwealth who are blind, leading to independence and full community participation. MCB accomplishes this critical mission by working in partnership with consumers who are legally blind, families, community agencies, health care providers and employers.*

### History

MCB, the second oldest public agency for the blind in the country, was established in 1906 with two mandates: to “ameliorate” the conditions that are the result of legal blindness; and to keep a register of all legally blind persons in the Commonwealth. The founders, comprised of three men and two women including Ms. Helen Keller, functioned as a board of directors, which was charged with establishing a state agency to provide services to blind persons. The original agency was organized primarily around two residential workshops for the blind, one for men, and the other for women. In 1919, it was incorporated into the State Department of Education and later renamed the Division of the Blind. In 1966, the agency was reestablished as a separate commission. MCB is currently an agency in the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS).

While the word “ameliorate” is still part of MCB’s statute, it is not often used. To ameliorate means to make a problem better or at least less painful. Blindness has come a long way since MCB was founded. Individuals began using long white canes beginning in 1931. From there, the first life-changing, but still primitive, assistive technology converting text to speech came about in 1975. In 2009, MCB’s last sheltered workshops were closed. These and many other advances along with the agency’s incredibly capable staff allow most of MCB’s consumers to regain productive independence, surmounting blindness as a problem.



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Commission for the Blind  
600 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111*

CHARLIE BAKER  
Governor

KARYN POLITO  
Lieutenant Governor

MARYLOU SUDDERS  
Secretary

PAUL SANER  
Commissioner

Tel.: 617-727-5550  
800-392-6450  
TDD: 800-392-6556  
Fax: 617-626-7685  
[www.mass.gov/mcb](http://www.mass.gov/mcb)

January 2017

Dear Friends,

The year 2016 featured a lot of listening, celebrations, and agency initiatives and accomplishments, with many collaborative and consumer successes. We are sharing this annual report with our consumers and families, non-profit providers, medical and special education vision professionals, and stakeholders.

There was much to celebrate during the year, starting with MCB's 110<sup>th</sup> birthday which gave us an opportunity to reflect on the many positive advancements throughout our long and successful history, building on the considerable legacy of those who have preceded us.

This report highlights feedback from more than 20 listening sessions across the Commonwealth, attended by hundreds of consumers who are legally blind, and other stakeholders. These listening sessions allowed us to solicit consumer, family, provider, and community perspectives on a range of services provided by MCB. We have responded to many of the suggestions that were raised from the listening sessions. You will also read about consumers of all ages who have mastered blindness and continue to excel in their chosen activities and endeavors. These accomplishments and successes are ours and yours to celebrate and share.

A key ongoing MCB strategic goal is furthering collaboration amongst all our collective partners. You will read about some of these collaborative efforts including those with other agencies across state government as well as with Massachusetts' renowned blindness non-profits with deep histories and missions strategic to MCB.

I hope you enjoy reading this report and I look forward to your continued involvement and support of MCB.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "PAS", enclosed in a thin black rectangular box.

Paul Saner,  
Commissioner

## Program and Service Updates

### Listening Sessions

From October 2015 through March 2016, MCB conducted more than 20 listening sessions across the Commonwealth. From Pittsfield to Cape Cod, MCB heard from seniors attending support groups, parents of young children who are blind, Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs), parents of students in transition, and adults seeking employment or community independent living services. Several consumers who are Deaf-Blind were part of a vibrant session held at the Perkins School for the Blind (Perkins).

Some of the feedback from the sessions included a request for improved communication, such as more information on MCB's website regarding services offered for individuals who are newly diagnosed. Additional areas of interest were around available community resources, clarification of roles within MCB, periodic newsletters, resources available to consumers, and available services for individuals who are visually impaired but not legally blind. There was particular interest in transition services, especially as impacted by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and interest in technology and community-based service models.

There were concerns raised around the lack of awareness and enforcement of the White Cane Law, questions about the Real ID requirements, and communication access for individuals who are Deaf-Blind. Transportation challenges were perhaps the most commonly voiced difficulties, as was the sentiment that agency activities were mostly concentrated in the eastern part of the state and especially around Boston. Audience members also cited access issues that they experienced with community organizations and businesses.

In response to the consumer feedback around the need for improved communication, enhancements were made to the MCB website to include website links to resources and information on blindness, as well as the debut of the consumer-focused newsletter, *MCB News*. The agency, in collaboration with the Perkins Library, is in the process of producing a CD containing a list of available MCB services and how to access them. This information will be provided to newly registered consumers and available on MCB's website.

In an effort to increase targeted outreach and provide caregivers and the public with information on individuals who are legally blind, MCB staff members have presented at statewide conferences such as the Massachusetts Council on Aging, and the

Massachusetts Homemakers Association. In addition, MCB's regional staff continue outreach to local stakeholders. As an example, the MCB Northeast region held a health fair at the Peabody Senior Center that brought together local organizations and businesses. At the event, seniors received free flu shots as well as comprehensive eye exams on the New England College of Optometry's (NECO) Mobile Eye Clinic.

### **White Cane Safety & REAL ID**

MCB welcomed the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) Registrar Erin Deveney and Assistant Registrar Sarah Zaphiris to the Boston office in May. The agenda encompassed a discussion of two issues MCB heard about extensively during the listening sessions: the REAL ID; and how to better educate the driving public about the Massachusetts White Cane Safety Law. Response around the lack of awareness and enforcement of the Massachusetts White Cane Law were addressed at the annual State House White Cane Day which included Registrar Deveney and Speaker of the House Robert DeLeo. Deveney spoke about the constructive and creative collaboration that has been formed with MCB and referenced several marketing efforts that are being implemented to increase white cane awareness. The RMV also ran a series of public service announcements regarding white cane awareness on electronic highway billboards and video loops at RMV offices during the month of October. Additionally, the RMV agreed to display the White Cane Safety Law more prominently on their website, and included flyers about white cane safety in registration renewal mailings released in August and October.

According to the RMV website, the REAL ID is likely to be made available starting in April 2018. At such time, the RMV plans to issue these cards for \$25.00 to registered MCB consumers. This is half the cost of a driver's license. The REAL ID will also be renewable at five-year intervals. For more information about the REAL ID, please visit <http://www.massrmv.com/LicenseandID/REALIDinMassachusetts.aspx>



MA Speaker of the House Robert DeLeo presents the O & M Community Advocacy Award and a Legislative Citation to MCB consumer Gerald DiFranza.

## **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**

WIOA is the federal vocational rehabilitation (VR) landmark legislation of the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, which was signed into law in 2014. It is designed to strengthen and improve the nation's public workforce system and help get Americans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, into high-quality jobs and careers. The legislation is also intended to help employers hire and retain skilled workers. The year 2016 saw the promulgation of WIOA regulations that necessitated a comprehensive Combined State Plan including several state and local partners to provide an effective and efficient workforce system for the Commonwealth. State agencies joining MCB in signing the plan included:

- Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development
  - o Department of Career Services
  - o Department of Unemployment Assistance
- Executive Office of Education
  - o Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
  - o Department of Higher Education
- Executive Office of Health and Human Services
  - o Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)
  - o Department of Transitional Assistance
  - o Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA)

The Combined State Plan was signed by Governor Charlie Baker in March 2016. The Governor also presided over the Statewide WIOA Implementation Conference in December. The Combined State Plan can be viewed by visiting:

[Http://www.mass.gov/massworkforce/state-plan/wioa-2020/ma-wioa-state-plan-final-4-7-16.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/massworkforce/state-plan/wioa-2020/ma-wioa-state-plan-final-4-7-16.pdf)

WIOA also included a provision on Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for students with a disability between the ages of 14 and 21 (up to their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday) with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan. The provision included language stating that the Pre-ETS services could be provided to students eligible or “potentially eligible” for VR services. Students who are “potentially eligible” include individuals who are registered with MCB but have not applied for MCB VR services (and who may not be ready to do so at the time) as well as students with visual impairments who are not registered, but are assigned to work with a TVI or a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS).

MCB has responded to the Pre-ETS requirement by hiring three Qualified VR counselors to work exclusively with this transition-age population statewide. Some of these workers' job activities include working with TVIs and COMS in collaboration with

school districts' special education departments, to ensure that MCB services are part of students' IEPs. During the year, students participated in special Pre-ETS activities provided by the Carroll Center for the Blind (Carroll Center), Perkins, Our Space Our Place, and several other providers around the state. MCB's regional offices continue to sponsor workshops for TVIs, COMS, as well as other special education educators. Currently, MCB is planning a statewide conference for these educators in 2017. More information on MCB's Pre-ETS initiatives can be found at:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/mcb/pre-employment-transition/>

### **Project SEARCH**

In 2015, MCB partnered with Massachusetts Eye and Ear and Cambridge Health Alliance to become the first agency for the blind to launch Project SEARCH, a successful national 9-month program for individuals with disabilities that provides internship experiences. Since then, there have been 17 participants with 15 of them achieving employment, resulting in an 88% employment outcome rate. Building on a data share signed with the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS) in 2015, MCB and DDS are looking systematically for more Project SEARCH or supportive employment joint programming for shared consumers.

### **Community-Based Assistive Technology Training**

Last year's report highlighted the work of the Brooks Free Library in Harwich, which has a community-based technology training program for consumers who are visually impaired. This year the geographical reach for this vital service was expanded due to the Massachusetts Council on Aging awarding grants to three senior centers to provide technology training to consumers of all ages. MCB's key non-profit partner, the Massachusetts Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired (MABVI), is organizing training centers in Brookline and Worcester, with an additional location in Franklin also soon opening.

### **Seniors and Falls Prevention**

MCB is a member of the Statewide Falls Prevention Coalition along with over 70 different organizations. MCB staff participated in the first-ever low vision adaptation of Matter of Balance training, a program that raises awareness about falls and prevention strategies. The training acknowledges the risk of falling but emphasizes practical coping strategies to reduce any associated fear. The program's goal is to reduce risk of falling while increasing activity levels and confidence among older adults. MCB staff are providing seniors with specialized group training at locations such as the Lowell Association for the Blind and senior and assisted living centers.

## 2016 Key Accomplishments

- MCB was awarded the 2016 American Optometric Association (AOA) Vision Rehabilitation Distinguished Service Award at the AOA's National Conference held in Boston. The award is presented to entities that have demonstrated exceptional dedication to serving individuals with visual impairments to improve visual efficiency. At the award ceremony, Commissioner Saner was joined by the U.S. Department of Education Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Commissioner, Janet LaBreck, a former MCB commissioner who along with Dr. Richard Jamara and Dr. Gary Chu of NECO were the leaders behind the innovative Mobile Eye Clinic initiative.



(L to R): Dr. Clifford Scott, President of NECO, Commissioner Saner and Janet LaBreck.

- MCB became the first VR agency to be inducted into the 2016 Susan M. Daniels National Disability Mentoring Coalition Hall of Fame for Project L.E.N.S., a MCB employment mentorship program in partnership with Partners for Youth with Disabilities. The Susan M. Daniels Disability Mentoring Hall of Fame was established to honor those who are making a significant difference in the lives of youth and adults with disabilities through mentoring, and to raise awareness about the importance of mentoring for individuals with disabilities.
- Effective October 3, 2016, MCB expanded services to include qualified individuals who have low vision. Under this new guideline, individuals with low vision who are ages 14 and older are eligible to receive VR services to help them

obtain and maintain employment. These new cases fall within a newly established low vision category for individuals with a progressive visual impairment (including dual sensory loss) with a diagnosis leading to legal blindness. This initiative aligns Massachusetts with the practice of 45 other states.

- MCB's summer internship program is a long-established job preparation model that supports traditional college-age students, as well as mature consumers, all of whom are legally blind, to acquire work experience. In 2016, the program reached its 13<sup>th</sup> year, and involved 85 participants. MCB consumers Marla Runyan, Director of Digital Accessibility at Perkins Solutions, and the first Olympic athlete (2000 and 2004) who is legally blind, and Paul Parravano, the Co-Director of MIT's Office of Government and Community Relations, were the featured speakers at the opening and closing ceremonies, respectively. During the program's 13-year span, there have been more than 700 internship opportunities with approximately 330 private and public business partners. More than half of the participants who have graduated from school have achieved employment with an 88% job retention rate.



MCB Consumer Jennifer Tylock, one of the MCB Internship Reach for the Stars contest winners, and Commissioner Saner.

## Active Collaborations

- MCB was selected to join an intensive technical assistance project through the Institute of Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston, referred to as the “Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center on Employer Relations and Supports.” MCB has been collaborating on this project with non-profit partners, the Carroll Center and Perkins. The three partners have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to develop an employer engagement activities database. The collaboration, referred to as “Vision Works Consortium,” will also collaborate on employment-related outreach activities.
- The annual job fair, sponsored by MCB, the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, the Carroll Center, Perkins, and the National Braille Press (NBP), is a model example of collaboration around employment. In October 2016, the job fair involved more than 50 public and private companies and organizations. Additionally, more than 50 consumers seeking employment pre-applied for advertised positions and were interviewed.

Photo credit: David Gordon Photography



Consumers interact with employers at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Job Fair for Individuals with Visual Impairments.

- MCB continues to collaborate with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Currently, the two agencies have proposed a joint communication to Special Education Directors as a way to conduct outreach and educate the directors about services provided by MCB. In addition, the two

agencies will create links to each other's websites for easy and better access to information. Other collaborations include with RMV, DDS, MRC, EOEA MassHealth, Department of Mental Health, Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the Department of Cable and Telecommunications, amongst others.

- MCB continues to collaborate with MABVI by referring MCB consumers in need of enhanced low vision services provided by specially-trained Occupational Therapists. MABVI has also expanded their services to include clinical social workers trained to serve individuals who are blind or have low vision. Other strategic collaborations include group vision rehabilitation therapy services at the Peabody Senior Center. This is a continuation of a pilot program that was started at the Lowell Association for the Blind. In the group rehabilitation sessions, MCB consumers gather monthly to learn or enhance vision rehabilitation therapy skills taught by MCB staff. A curriculum is under development that will enable this offering to be scaled to other regions across the Commonwealth.
- MCB, along with Perkins, the New England office of the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC), and the New England Consortium for Deafblind Technical Assistance and Training (NEC), collaborated on a Pre-ETS Program for public school students between the ages of 14 and 21 who are Deaf-Blind or blind with additional disabilities. The initial phase of the program was held in May and involved a Transition to Work Plan in conjunction with the education team, parents, and the student. This was followed in July by a week-long training on the Perkins campus which allowed students to participate in job exploration and workplace experiences. This program offers consumers a chance to develop quantifiable skills leading to a placement into an internship or employment in an integrated job setting.



MCB Consumer Olumide Oke, on the job at the Home Depot.

## Consumer Highlights

### ***Madeleine Babcock (Children's Services)***



If you meet Madeleine Babcock, it won't take long to figure out that she loves to swim. It also won't take very long to see that this young teenager's will and determination will allow her to accomplish anything she puts her mind to doing. Her story is an inspiration for anyone with a disability.

Madeleine was born with glaucoma, a disease that damages the optic nerve, and aniridia, a disorder that affects the iris. As a result, she is legally blind in her left eye and only has light perception in her right eye. But this has not stopped Madeleine from her love of being in water. She started swimming lessons at 18-months-old and hasn't looked back. When she turned six, she decided that she wanted to compete as a swimmer and joined the Belmont Aquatic Team.

No stranger to hard work [maintaining an "A" average in school while keeping up with orientation and mobility (O&M) and braille lessons, etc.], Madeleine swims about two hours a day. She practices with her Belmont team five times a week and once a week with the swim team at Adaptive Sports New England, an organization that increases participation in athletics by young people and adults with visual or mobility impairments. She has had to employ some unconventional techniques to pursue her love of swimming. She breathes on every fourth stroke instead of every three. In races, one of her parents will use a golf ball retriever with a tennis ball attached to the end to tap her on the head as she approaches the end of a lane. This signals that two strokes remain before the wall.

Last June, Madeleine competed in the U.S. Paralympic Trials in Charlotte, North Carolina. Although she fell short of making the U.S. Paralympic team that competed in the 2016 Paralympic games in Rio, Brazil, Madeleine has already set her sights on the 2020 Paralympics in Tokyo. According to her parents Chris and Jill, Madeleine believes she can do anything she puts her mind to. She claims, "You don't have any limits...and you're your only limit."

In addition to her school work and athletic prowess, Madeleine works with a MCB Rehabilitation Teacher (RT) to advance her cooking and organization skills.

### ***Daniel Dintzner (Deaf-Blind Extended Supports Unit)***

If you stroll across the campus of the Springfield Technical Community College (STCC), you may or may not notice any of the nearly 500 students on campus who have identified themselves as having a disability. There are several students with low vision, but only one who is legally blind, and that student is Daniel Dintzner. Born with a rare genetic disorder called Alstrom Syndrome, Daniel has faced multiple health issues for most of his life. He started losing his ability to hear at age six and one year later, started losing his sight. Today, he uses a hearing aid, carries a



machine to translate text to speech and uses a cane to guide him. Alstrom Syndrome is also characterized by liver and heart conditions, diabetes, short stature, and a form of heart disease that enlarges and weakens heart muscles. However, Daniel has not allowed any of this to interfere with his aspirations. He refuses to let his physical challenges stop him from pursuing his goals. Working with MCB's Deaf-Blind Extended Supports unit, and with support from his family and friends, he is working to obtain his Associate's degree. In fact, Daniel made the Dean's list at STCC last spring.

Due to Daniel's condition, he is required to sleep 16 hours every day. He cannot take back-to-back classes and can only manage two to three courses per semester. He uses his BrailleNote Apex, Dragon, JAWS, ZoomText, and Kurzweil 3000 to level the playing field in his classes. Everyone in MCB's Assistive Technology unit knows Daniel on a first name basis. His drive and determination is inspiring. Without even realizing it, Daniel is also helping STCC learn how to provide access and accommodations to students who need them. STCC's Office of Disability Services considers Daniel to be a pioneer of sorts.

Daniel has participated in MCB's summer internship program the last three summers. Most recently, he interned at Advent Financial Planners, where he conducted demographic research. Looking ahead, he plans to graduate with an Associate's degree in two years and transfer to Western New England University to earn his Bachelor's degree. His employment objective is a career in finance or accounting. When he isn't hitting the books, Daniel enjoys keeping up with Boston sports teams. Sad to see the 2016 Red Sox season end so abruptly, he is enjoying the Patriots' success and is looking forward to the Celtics season.

### **Danit Farwell (BRIDGE Program)**



Prior to losing her vision, Danit Farwell was independently active. The owner of a successful home-based travel service, she spends most of the year living in Brookline and spends winters in Las Vegas. Things started to change for her when she was diagnosed with Age-Related Macular Degeneration (ARMD) after her vision started to deteriorate rapidly in 2015.

After registering with MCB, Danit became aware of the variety of services MCB had to offer. Her MCB case manager referred her to MCB's Blind Reintegration for Independence, Development, and Growth for Elders (BRIDGE) Program. Danit, age 76, received several low vision devices that included a magnifying mirror, MaxTV glasses, a talking timepiece, liquid indicator, and 20/20 pens. On initial contact, she was very depressed, fearful, and reluctant to services. She verbalized feelings of hopelessness and helplessness, and openly wept. She was resistant to any kind of RT or O&M training, but open to low vision devices that would enable her to read with minimal physical change. Clearly, she was in the angry stage of her vision loss. With consistent contact and her BRIDGE caseworker listening and addressing each difficulty, and slowly introducing more BRIDGE services, it took one year for Danit to begin to accept her vision loss.

Danit also received a Senior Vision Assessment (SVA) from Bob McGillivray at the Carroll Center. She hesitantly agreed to O&M services. She received an Aladdin desktop Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), Pebble portable video magnifier, and 6X Optelec PowerMagnifier, which have all helped her continue to run her business. She is also a regular attendee at the MCB/MABVI Brookline Low Vision Support Group.

It is apparent that BRIDGE services had a meaningful effect on enabling Danit to gain some control over her daily living as an elder who is legally blind. The provision of low vision devices reinforced Danit's capacity to complete daily reading tasks, to navigate safely in and out of her home, and develop confidence in socializing with others. Danit credits the patience and persistence of her BRIDGE caseworker with allowing her to regain her independence.

### **David Kleiler (Senior Assistive Technology User)**



David Kleiler has had a life-long passion for film. He was the Professor of Film Studies at Babson College during the 1970s. In the late 80s, he was the central figure in the movement that saved the Coolidge Corner Theater in Brookline. When he was told by his eye doctor that his macular degeneration had progressed to the point that he was declared legally blind, he wondered how he would continue to pursue his love of movies.

Most of MCB's retired consumers don't have easy access to assistive technology training. David, being a veteran, was eligible for Veterans Administration (V.A.) services which covers this training. When he discovered that his access to V.A. services was going to be delayed for months after a flood at the V.A. clinic, he turned to MCB for help. His MCB caseworker stepped in and arranged for him to see a RT and an O&M instructor to help with his adjustment to his vision loss. David worked with his O&M instructor to learn how to use a white cane and to travel safely in his neighborhood. He says he goes out six to eight times a day, to walk his pet dog, go to the library, and of course, to see movies.

David's case shows how MCB can bridge a gap, so as not to leave a consumer without services. In this case, MCB loaned David a Smartlux video magnifier. One of MCB's RTs worked with him to learn how to use the device for spot reading. David also visited the MCB office to try out a CCTV and various types of screen magnification and screen reading computer software. He says this was one of the most valuable services he received. David recalls, "When I went to my low vision evaluation at the V.A., it was like I had already been through a dress rehearsal. I already had a very good idea of what assistive technology worked best for me. I'm incredibly grateful for that."

David was also provided with a Talking Label Wand so he could better identify items at home. An avid visitor to his local library, he borrowed a portable lamp to use for task lighting. Once David received equipment from the V.A., he returned everything he had borrowed from MCB. He is now working with his RT to learn to use his iPhone.

"When I was diagnosed with legal blindness, I knew I wasn't going to let that stop me from doing the things I love," recalls David. He continued, "And I haven't. I still see four or five films a week and hold regular film screenings in my home every month. I am very much a part of the film scene in Boston and still get calls from film reporters. I am incredibly grateful for the services I have received from MCB."

### **Mark Markarian (Randolph-Sheppard Program)**



If you are ever visiting the Worcester area, you may want to stop at the Verdict Café. When you arrive, you will receive a warm smile from the owner Mark Markarian, and find plenty of fresh breakfast and lunch offerings.

Mark, originally from Worcester, attended Johnson & Wales and went on to train chefs at Houlihan's Restaurant in California. He later returned to Worcester and opened the Catered Affair, a Worcester catering business. He also worked as Director of Food Service at Southgate, a retirement community in Shrewsbury, and was employed in the health care industry until his retirement. After being diagnosed with Usher Syndrome, Mark had to surrender his driver's license. He later learned about MCB and the Randolph-Sheppard program, which provides qualified U.S. citizens who are legally blind with the opportunity for training and ownership of a vending facility on federal, state and other properties in the Commonwealth. Verdict Café is one of 29 food service facilities being governed by MCB.

Mark manages all aspects of his business. He works on menu selection, food preparation, inventory control, ordering, accounting and employee supervision. He says he is very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to work with MCB and operate the Verdict Café. As Mark once said, "I think it serves as an example that everyone can accomplish their goals no matter the barriers."

**If you have any questions regarding MCB services, this report, or if you would like to receive the report electronically, please call 617-626-7583 or email us at [Officeofthecommissioner@massmail.state.ma.us](mailto:Officeofthecommissioner@massmail.state.ma.us). Please include your name, telephone number and town of residence.**