

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
**COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED**



**2019 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

**New Jersey Department of Human Services**  
**Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

## **2019 Annual Report - State Rehabilitation Council**

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) promotes and provides services in the areas of education, employment, independence, and eye health for people who are blind, vision-impaired, or deaf-blind, their families, and the community.

The Commission adopts four major strategies in carrying out its mission, which are:

- (1) Providing specialized services to people with limited or no vision;
- (2) Educating and working in the community to reduce the incidence of vision loss;
- (3) Improving social attitudes about blindness and visual impairment; and
- (4) Increasing employment outcomes for individuals who are blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind.

Detailed information about services can be found at: <http://www.cbvi.nj.gov> .

Any questions regarding this report, or to request it in alternate formats, should be directed to Amanda Gerson at 973-648-3660 or via e-mail at [amanda.gerson@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:amanda.gerson@dhs.state.nj.us) .

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## State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) - Chairperson

Dear Governor Murphy:

In January 2019, Dr. Bernice Davis was appointed Executive Director of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, having served as Acting Executive Director for most of 2018. With the help of the SRC, Dr. Davis made outreach to Commission stakeholders one of her ongoing priorities.

- In February the managers of the Commission's three service centers in Newark, Freehold and Cherry Hill attended an SRC meeting, where they presented their short-term objectives, and SRC members asked questions and provided constructive feedback.
- SRC members participated in a statewide stakeholders meeting with Dr. Davis and Commission senior management in July 2019.
- In the Fall of 2019, the SRC and CBVI conducted focus groups for the Commission's VR consumers as well as those receiving specialized services from the agency's deaf-blind unit as part of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.

Under the leadership of Director Davis, and with the help and support of the State Rehabilitation Council, CBVI staff and management have continued with the important job of serving blind and visually-impaired citizens of New Jersey. As this report will show, blind and visually impaired people are finding employment, people with multiple disabilities are receiving increased attention, and high school and college students are learning the hard and soft skills needed to enjoy a productive and meaningful life, all with the help and encouragement of the SRC.

Richard Fox

State Rehabilitation Council Chairperson

## Executive Director's Report

Sincerely,

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) are proud to submit the Annual Report for Federal Fiscal Year 2018. The report is required under Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and chronicles a productive and innovative year of providing quality and consumer driven services, made possible by the partnership of the NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, community stakeholders and the members of the State Rehabilitation Council.

The Commission and the SRC place great value on sharing information, ideas and expectations, all of which are cornerstones for setting our yearly goals and meeting the challenges of the future. Throughout the year, SRC members have actively offered their comments, suggestions and feedback by attending meetings, community events and many other activities that serve to improve access, equality and employment outcomes for people who are blind, visually impaired and deafblind.

In closing, the Commission is extremely fortunate to work with a SRC that shares its priorities, and supports the Commission's longstanding mission to increase the number of capable blind, visually impaired and deafblind persons successfully contributing to the workforce of NJ.

This Annual report highlights the programs, achievements and accomplishments of the CBVI and SRC in FFY 2019 and we welcome your comments.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bernice M. Davis  
Executive Director

## SRC Working Principles and Responsibilities

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was established by Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. It gives advice to, and works in partnership with, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency. The members of the State Rehabilitation Council are appointed by the Governor and convene at least five meetings a year. All meetings and public forums are announced, and are open and accessible to the general public. The meetings are held in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act, NJSA 10:4-6.

The functions of the SRC are to:

- Review, analyze, and advise CBVI regarding performance of its responsibilities of the Agency under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act amendments of 2014;
- Assist CBVI with the development of State goals and priorities, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation program;
- Advise and assist CBVI with the preparation of the State Plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required under the Rehabilitation Act amendments of 2014;
- Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with, Vocational Rehabilitation services;
- Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) on the status of Vocational Rehabilitation programs operated within the State, and to make the report available to the public;
- Coordinate with other councils within the State, including the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC);
- Establish successful working relationships between CBVI, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and Centers for Independent Living within the State; and
- Perform other functions consistent with the purpose of this title, as the SRC determines to be appropriate.

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## **SRC Accomplishments in FFY 2019**

The SRC met five times in FFY 2019. With the support of the Commission and Governor's office, the SRC appointed new members to replace those whose terms had expired and provided vital feedback to the Commission on a number of topics pertaining to consumer outreach and increased consumer engagement. The SRC facilitated the development of a plan for the agency's Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment activities, which include a new and varied strategy for reaching consumers and stakeholders. These activities, which will continue into FFY 2020, will contribute to the agency's development of a new State Plan for 2020.

## **SRC Goals for FFY 2020**

The SRC will continue to meet five times in Federal Fiscal Year 2020, as well as continue ongoing support to foster the goals of CBVI and its excellent services to the consumer population.

The SRC Chair and membership will work closely with Commission administration to identify and address areas of improvement in service areas, and successful resolution of findings from federal monitoring in FFY 2018.

The SRC will work with CBVI leadership to identify ways to strengthen and improve employment services, particularly those provided by community rehabilitation providers.

The SRC Chair and membership will undertake strategic activities to identify and guide the Council's areas of focus and subcommittee responsibilities for the upcoming 3 years.

The members of the SRC will continue to participate, as appropriate, in public forums and agency programs for the benefit of consumers.

## Overview of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

In April of 1909, the New Jersey State Legislature directed that a state agency be established "to provide any and all means which shall be deemed feasible for ameliorating the condition of the blind." Over 108 years later, the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI), more than ever finds itself fulfilling that original mandate.

The Commission was established as a state agency in 1910 under the direction of Lydia Young Hayes, a blind teacher of the blind. One of the initial tasks of the Commission was to compile a registry of the state's blind residents. During that first year, 750 people were registered.

The formation of a single agency to administer to the needs of New Jersey's blind population emerged from a wave of social consciousness that swept the country in the late 1800s and early 1900s. As a result of increased awareness, significant strides were made toward equalizing opportunities for people who were blind.

During that first year, Miss Hayes and another teacher, Janet Paterson, established the state's first integrated classes for blind and sighted students within the Newark school system. These classes were based on the belief that integrated classes provided blind students with the educational tools and exposure necessary for a smooth assimilation into society.

The integrative educational philosophy and policy was recognized throughout the country, as an innovative model in the field of education of the blind. From the early 1940's to the late 1960's, and under the supervision of Josephine Taylor, the Commission's evolving educational programs, known as the New Jersey Plan, gained world-wide recognition. The educational initiative of supporting blind and vision-impaired students in public schools, and sending teachers to assist them through lessons in Braille, low-vision aids, and special classes, has grown over the years into an even more comprehensive educational service program that supported over 2000 students last year.

A Home Teaching Service Program was also installed during the first years of the Commission. Teachers went into consumers' homes to help them discover ways to efficiently use new techniques and their own talents to achieve self-sufficient lifestyles. This program offered instruction in communication skills such as Braille and typing, and included guidance in the production of marketable crafts and handiworks, which led to the creation of a Home Industries Program, that functioned as an agent for the sale of products made by blind persons.

In 1915, the Commission began a program to place blind workers in the work industry at large, capitalizing on employment opportunities resulting from World War I Armed Services recruitments. Federal and state legislation offered additional support to the Commission's early employment and social service programs, which were designed to provide legal and economic leverage to agencies that served people with disabilities.

Basic legislative mandates and their various amendments allowed the Commission to vastly enhance its services during the middle period of its growth, under the direction of George Meyer (1936-1964). Major legislative amendments, such as the Barden LaFollete Act in 1943, and earlier federal rehabilitation legislation like the Smith-Fess Act of 1920, provided funds and authorized state agencies to help blind and vision-impaired people obtain meaningful employment through vocational training, counseling, physical restoration, and placement services.

The Randolph-Sheppard Act of 1936 authorized the Commission to license qualified blind people to operate vending stands in federal and federally-sponsored buildings, which was later broadened to include state, municipal and private buildings. There are presently 53 Commission-sponsored newsstands, snack bars, coffee shops, and full-service cafeterias in facilities throughout the state, with several more planned.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services were formally organized in 1941 under the supervision of Carl Pirrups-Hvarre. Vocational Rehabilitation Services provided a wider range of training, placement, counseling and guidance to prepare blind people for employment, and to further immerse them into the business arena.

From 1911 to 1918, the Commission, concerned citizens, and private organizations, such as the New Jersey Association for the Blind, pooled their resources to secure legislation to promote research into blindness prevention. Eye Health Services were formally established in 1943 under the supervision of the late Emma Howe, which included the nation's first traveling eye unit and a glaucoma registry. These Commission services have continued to grow over the years with the Better Eye-Health Services and Treatment (Project BEST) program, which provides services in the areas of eye health and eye safety by offering free vision screenings for adults and children, with a concerted effort to provide these services to historically underserved sectors of the population (low income, elderly, minorities, people with Diabetes, and individuals with special needs).

Under the direction of Joseph Kohn, (1964-1976), the size and scope of the Commission's staff and service programs more than doubled. Significant expansions occurred in many departments: social services, rehabilitation teaching, eye health nursing, the home industries program, vocational rehabilitation, an expanded contract workshop program, the opening of the George Meyer Textbook and Materials Center, preschool eye screening programs, and many more.

With the establishment of the first Consumer Forum in 1964, under the auspices of Governor Richard Hughes, consumers and other interested individuals began to take active participation in the Commission's decision and policy-making procedures. Now the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) established in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, advises and works in partnership with CBVI administration and staff.

CBVI, known as the Commission for the Blind until 1982, was at the forefront of that movement and still works diligently toward the realization of new levels of achievement in the quest for equal opportunity in education, employment, and community integration.

Although the Commission's scope of services has significantly expanded since 1910, the established direction is still an integral part of today's programs and policies as well as tomorrow's goals and aspirations.

## Statewide Impact of CBVI Services

Numbers indicate total served by Commission services and/or programs (Please note that individuals may be served in multiple programs at CBVI):

	COUNTY	ED	IL	IL-OB	VR	PB*
1	Atlantic	91	92	126	93	10
2	Bergen	181	61	166	264	1
3	Burlington	155	86	135	169	4
4	Camden	204	118	189	201	10
5	Cape May	15	13	59	28	0
6	Cumberland	55	47	72	57	0
7	Essex	195	107	210	321	20
8	Gloucester	102	54	93	92	1
9	Hudson	102	90	93	204	8
10	Hunterdon	27	6	16	21	0
11	Mercer	108	36	101	139	3
12	Middlesex	230	108	208	302	10
13	Monmouth	178	109	237	208	5
14	Morris	112	41	106	150	8
15	Ocean	190	73	383	190	5
16	Passaic	145	57	107	173	7
17	Salem	18	16	19	23	0
18	Somerset	80	46	65	109	2
19	Sussex	35	15	28	34	1
20	Union	145	72	135	202	5
21	Warren	16	7	30	29	1
22	Out of State	4	2	0	14	0
23	Not identified	13	19	45	15	54
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2401</b>	<b>1275</b>	<b>2623</b>	<b>3038</b>	<b>155</b>

### \* Explanation of Abbreviations

ED – Education (Ages: 0-21 years),

IL – Independent Living (Ages: 54 years and younger)

IL-OB – Independent Living for Older Individuals who are Blind (Ages: 55 years +)

VR – Vocational Rehabilitation (Ages: 14 years and older)

PB – Project BEST (Serving all age groups)

## Employment Outcomes in FFY 2019:

\*154 total employment outcomes

11.7%	Office and Administrative Support Occupations
9.1%	Management Occupations
8.4%	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations
7.8%	Healthcare Support Occupations
7.1%	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations
5.2%	Computer and Mathematical Occupations
5.2%	Education, Training, and Library Occupations
5.2%	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations
4.5%	Community and Social Service Occupations
4.5%	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations
3.9%	Sales and Related Occupations
3.9%	Production Occupations
3.2%	Architecture and Engineering Occupations
3.2%	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations
3.2%	BEP Operator
2.6%	Business and Financial Operations Occupations
2.6%	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations
2.6%	Construction and Extraction Occupations
2.6%	Homemaker
1.9%	Personal Care and Service Occupations
1.3%	Protective Service Occupations

## **Blindness Education Services**

Certified Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) work closely with the child, family members, and local school personnel to provide Blindness Education Services that make it possible for students who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind to participate equally with other students in general education classroom activities. These services are provided for eligible children (from birth through high school years) and their families.

## **Student Hands-On Alternative Reinforcement Program (SHARP)**

In addition to CBVI's traditional education services, the SHARP Program is a summer program that provides an innovative approach to summer learning. This program enables participating students in grades 1 through 8 opportunities to use literacy skills (Braille or large print), assistive technology, and independent living skills in practical, real-life settings through community engagement, service projects, and in peer groups. A total of 92 students attended the program during the summer of 2019. The students also had an opportunity to interact with high school students from our Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) Program, who worked within SHARP as High School Mentors.

## **Pre-Employment Transition Services**

In FFY 2019, the Commission continued to develop and expand its Pre-Employment Transition Services, in order to be in alignment with the recent changes in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (the most recent reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973). The Commission has a long history of providing Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services to students and youth with disabilities with dedicated programs going back nearly 50 years. CBVI currently has six Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors dedicated to working with high school students, four Counselors dedicated to our consumers enrolled in College full-time, and a number of programs and services that have been developed and continue to evolve to meet the needs of our consumers and the federal regulations that govern the VR program. These transition programs include EDGE (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement) 1.0 and 2.0, Work Skills Preparation, and College Prep Experience.

Pre-Employment Transition Services are available to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities, ages 14 to 21, and include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, workplace readiness training, instruction in self-advocacy, and counseling on post-secondary enrollment opportunities.

### **EDGE (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement) 1.0**

Now in its fifth year, the EDGE program helps prepare blind and visually impaired high school students receiving transition services from the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired to become successful professionals. Students attend monthly workshops at the Joseph Kohn Training Center in New Brunswick. Between sessions, they participate in monthly conference calls where they hone their professional, advocacy, and independent living skills. Additionally, students also attend regularly scheduled field trips where they enjoy opportunities to socialize with other blind peers, build life skills, and learn about opportunities to find employment or become more involved in extracurricular activities. The program is run and staffed by successful blind and visually impaired individuals, who understand the importance of instilling blind youth with the independence and confidence necessary to become successful adults, professionals, and members of their communities.

## **College Prep Experience at The College of New Jersey**

The College Prep Experience (CPE) is a pre-employment transition program designed to provide high school students who are blind and visually impaired with college experience in preparation for entry into college or university. The program staff of the Center for Sensory and Complex Disabilities at The College of New Jersey strive to familiarize our students with the campus and prepare for their adjustment to college life. The students participate in college-related academic workshops, facilitated activities and opportunities to assess self-advocacy, independent living, networking and peer mentoring, community integration, and career and college exploration. Staff collectively evaluate the students' skills necessary for a successful college life, and provide a description and recommendations for the development in the aforementioned areas.

## **Work Skills Preparation Program (WSP)**

The Work Skills Preparation Program (WSP) is a pre-employment transition program facilitated by the Center for Sensory and Complex Disabilities at The College of New Jersey. This program is for high school students (ages 16-21) who are blind and visually impaired with additional disabilities, who would benefit from an employment outcome upon completion of high school. Consumers who attend WSP have a desire to work and are able to do so with or without supports. WSP prepares consumers for life after high school by providing opportunities to practice work-related academic and soft skills, employment skills, and independent living skills in both classroom-based and community-based settings. Students also receive instruction in orientation and mobility, assistive technology and learn self-advocacy skills.

## **EDGE (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement) 2.0**

EDGE 2.0 serves over twenty college undergraduates across New Jersey and Pennsylvania who are blind and visually impaired. Students learn how to maximize their college experience through an individualized assimilation plan that addresses barriers on campus, sets academic and social goals, as well as establishes plans for campus and community engagement. An intensive curriculum from Learning Ally accompanies the program and targets research-based skill sets necessary for college success. As upperclassmen in the program, students have career development plans that provide a map to graduation and a guide to careers in their fields of interest. In addition, students participate in campus visits with a career advisor, monthly mentor conversations, and peer meetings with career-centered activities. Using each of these resources and a career-focused approach, students enhance their ability to become employed competitively in their field of choice.



## Vocational Rehabilitation Services

VR services provided by the Commission under this program are designed to assist individuals who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind to prepare for, secure, retain, or advance in employment that is consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, interests, and informed choice. The scope of Vocational Rehabilitation Services includes:

- Assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs by qualified personnel;
- VR counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice, including referral and services from other agencies;
- Physical and mental restoration services;
- Vocational and other training services;
- Maintenance and transportation related to the rendering of any VR services;
- Vocational Rehabilitation services to family members, to assist in achieving the employment goal for an individual with a disability, e.g., family counseling;
- Interpreter services, including sign language and oral interpreter services, for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, and tactile interpreting services for individuals who are deaf-blind;
- Independent Living skills instruction, including personal and home management;
- Orientation and Mobility services to instruct in methods of independent community travel;
- Services to assist students to transition from school to work;
- Job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
- Supported employment services, including customized employment;
- Personal assistance services, including reader services;
- Occupational licenses, tools, equipment, initial stocks, and supplies;
- Technical assistance to individuals who are pursuing self-employment;
- Rehabilitation technology services and devices; and
- Post-employment services, i.e., short term services required to keep a job.

## **Youth Employment Solutions (YES) Program**

The Youth Employment Solutions (YES) Program is conducted in partnership with TCNJ to serve post-high school youth with disabilities, ages 18-25 years old. TCNJ's role is to match a job seeker with a Support Specialist, whose goal is to engage the job seeker in the discovery process, using strategies that prove effective for individuals with developmental disabilities. The Support Specialist will lay the foundation of job development, and create deliverables (i.e., Person-Centered Planning Tool, Brochure, Visual Resume) which are put in place to help support the job coach with job development, and to raise awareness of greater potential. It's a win-win-win with YES Support Specialists working with CBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to support their caseload and teaming up with the Supported Employment agency to support job development and coaching, to lead to greater outcomes.

## **Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC)**

The Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC) is a state of the art facility that offers vocational rehabilitation, employment services, and independent living skills training for consumers of the Commission. The JKTC is a three-floor residential center and houses meeting and conference rooms, classrooms, a cafeteria, a gym, a recreation room, a student lounge, an accessible kitchen, a technology demonstration and evaluation center, and student dorms. Consumers participate in a range of classes, and may meet with the staff social worker, psychologist, and guest presenters. In the evenings, students engage in recreational and learning activities in and outside JKTC. Finally, near the end of the program, students participate in a community-based work experience program, where they are able to sample different job sites and practice their skills.

The mission of the JKTC is to assist blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired individuals to lead full and productive lives as they live and work in their communities. The program is customized for each consumer and can range in duration from approximately 2 weeks (assessment only) to 20 weeks or more.

## **Business Relations Unit (BRU)**

The Business Relations Unit (BRU) of CBVI provides services to both public and private sector businesses in order to assist them with meeting their diversity initiatives in hiring individuals with disabilities. The BRU partners with businesses to address their needs, such as education and technical assistance on recruiting, hiring, and retaining employees who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired. The BRU endeavors to present an alternative pool of candidates to businesses, while attempting to break down any barriers of employment for people with disabilities, including assistive technology and accessibility consultation.

## **Deaf-Blind Services**

### **iCanConnect NJ**

The iCanConnect NJ Program has provided various types of assistive technology and telecommunication devices to over 125 New Jersey residents. Devices such as iPads, iPhones, Braille notetakers, laptops, screen readers, and adaptive software have been purchased for individuals meeting the program's eligibility requirements. This program was established in order to make sure that laws enacted in the 1980s and 1990s to increase the access of persons with disabilities to modern communications were brought up-to-date with 21<sup>st</sup> century technologies, including new digital, broadband, and mobile communications. Any New Jersey resident with combined hearing and vision loss can reach out to see if they qualify for the iCanConnect program to receive free technology to support distance communication. Program guidelines can be found at <http://www.icanconnect.org/see-if-you-qualify>.

### **Support Services Providers of New Jersey (SSP-NJ)**

The Support Services Providers of New Jersey Program, or SSP-NJ, is a consumer-driven program providing qualified trained professionals to support our deaf-blind residents to promote independence. SSPs provide visual and environmental information, as well as human guiding, to acclimate the consumers to their environment so that they can make informed decisions. The program supports consumers in a variety of activities such as post-secondary education, household management, employment, health/well-being, and community integration. The relationship between the deaf-blind person and the SSP is a partnership based on trust and open, honest, and comfortable communication.

## **Technological Support Services**

Assistive technology support is available to consumers to train, gain, retain, or advance one's employment. Assistive technology is defined as any item, piece of equipment, or system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. The Agency's Technological Support Services department assists consumers in gaining direct access to computer equipment and other technology through a comprehensive assessment of skill and accessibility needs. The purpose of the unit is to minimize barriers, while also taking into account the consumers' unique situation, making recommendations for equipment and training that would enable the individual to efficiently address his/her professional or academic responsibilities. Technological Services Specialists (TSSs) are responsible for maintaining and staffing six comprehensive and up-to-date Regional Technology Assistance Centers (RTACs) located throughout New Jersey in Newark, Freehold, Cherry Hill, Atlantic City, Trenton, and New Brunswick.

### **QWERTY Program**

Technological Support Services has introduced a program for VR consumers to help fill a needed gap in typing instruction called QWERTY (Quality Work Experience Related To You). This program supplements training for those who need to increase or develop their typing skills before they can successfully begin additional training, as it is not easy to learn computer software, if you are not already comfortable with using a keyboard. Participants are provided instruction on how to use 1 of 2 typing programs and receive support and guidance

from a QWERTY mentor throughout their participation. The program is self-directed to meet expectations while being supported by the QWERTY mentor. Individual expectations for practice and improvement are reviewed and participants commit to meeting those expectations so they can progress to other technology training upon completion.

## **Business Enterprises New Jersey (BENJ)**

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is the State Licensing Agency (SLA) for the Federal Randolph-Sheppard program. Business Enterprises New Jersey (BENJ), a unit within CBVI, directly oversees New Jersey's Randolph Sheppard program. As such, BENJ is responsible for coordinating the operation of fifty-two (52) Randolph Sheppard food locations across the state. The types of operations include: 7 cafeterias, 5 single-person sites (dry stands), 1 military cafeteria, 21 snack bars, and 18 vending sites.

Individuals who wish to enter BENJ are required to be at least 18 years of age, be legally blind, have a high school diploma (or GED), pass a background check, and be a United States citizen. The BENJ unit is comprised of one Supervising Community Program Specialist, 6 Field Representatives, and one Administrative Assistant.

### BENJ 2019 Highlights

- Total gross sales: \$11,300,000.00\*
- Operator average net income: \$49,000.00\*
- Total number of Managers served: 41
- Total number of consumers evaluated for Small Business Program: 4
- Total number of consumers received assistance for their Small Business Program: 0
- Total number of consumers evaluated for BENJ: 8
- Total number of consumers training: 2
- Total number of consumers receiving placements: 2

\*Estimated

### New Locations Setup:

- Opened a new vending location at the Department of Children & Family (DCF) in Egg Harbor
- Opened a new vending location at DCF in Plainfield
- Opened a new vending location at Department of Labor in Vineland
- Opened a new vending location at DCF in Mays Landing
- Opened a new vending location at DCF Morris Plains
- Opened a new vending location in Wayne
- Opened a new vending location at the Department of Transportation in Mt Arlington

### BENJ 2019 Initiatives:

- BENJ is looking to incorporate additional in house training programs for the program participants
- BENJ will continue pursuits for various vending opportunities with both NJ State and national Park Services
- BENJ continues to work with the General Services Administration (GSA) and pursue potential locations with the Federal Government, with new locations projected for 2020.

- BENJ is looking to increase promotion of the program to more women, to work with the national Women's Initiative Supporting Entrepreneurship (W.I.S.E.), and ultimately facilitate more women to enter the Randolph-Sheppard program.
- BENJ will continue to work with CBVI's high school aged transition students to expose them to the opportunities offered by the Randolph-Sheppard program, and to facilitate work-based learning experiences at Randolph-Sheppard locations.

## **Independent Living Services**

Independent Living services are designed to assist individuals of all ages (Independent Living -54 years of age and under, and Independent Living Older Blind – 55 years of age and better) who are blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind gain and adapt the skills needed to lead full and productive lives. CBVI provides assistance/instruction in the areas of daily living, communication, orientation and mobility, assistive technology, Braille instruction, eye health education and low vision services. The Independent Living Services Department works with community partners, providing information and education so that they can best serve blind and visually impaired members of their community.

## **Assistive Support Programs for Independence Renewal and Education (ASPIRE)**

Established in 2015, ASPIRE is a state-wide network of peer support groups designed to provide individuals who are living with vision loss the opportunity to gain the necessary coping skills, information, and education needed to thrive. The ASPIRE Program has increased the number of Peer Support Groups in its network from 23 groups to a total of 59 groups, four of which are established groups specifically for Veterans. ASPIRE connects with groups in all 21 of New Jersey's counties. Training for group facilitators is held annually.

ASPIRE is administered by the Independent Living Unit of CBVI, and its 59 groups are geared towards those with vision loss 55 years or older, and is also available to all adults interested in attending. ASPIRE continues to expand, with three new groups about to begin that will serve individuals ages 21-54. ASPIRE offers individuals with vision loss the opportunity to connect with others who share similar challenges and the same life experiences. Through attendance in monthly group meetings, program participants talk with one another and receive emotional support, exchange useful information, and find practical solutions for challenges that accompany low vision and blindness. ASPIRE helps people with vision loss to realize they are not alone and that they can achieve much more than they ever thought possible.

For more information about support Groups in the ASPIRE Network, please contact the Support Program Coordinator at 973-648-2821.

## **Library Equal Access Program (LEAP)**

The LEAP initiative targets adults 55 years and older and provides basic computer skills training on how to use assistive software, such as magnification and audio reading tools, to help visually impaired users with reading websites, emails and other documents. Training also includes an introduction to using assistive technology features now available on iPads. LEAP represents a unique partnership between CBVI, the State Library's Talking Book & Braille Center (TBBC), and Advancing Opportunities. Classes are provided in nine libraries across the state, with a tenth location at the Talking Book and Braille Center beginning classes in Spring of 2020. The other nine libraries are located in Atlantic City, Cherry Hill, East Brunswick, Hackensack, Mays Landing, Morris Township, Newark, South Orange, and Toms River. With assistive technology available now in local libraries across the state, blind and visually impaired seniors may visit their hometown library and take advantage of the classes offered and the library's resources. When classes are not in session, the equipment provided - computers (with speech and magnification software), iPads, and a Closed Circuit Television System (CCTVS) - may be used by library members.

## **Senior Hands-On Retreat Experience (SHORE)**

Bi-Annually, the Independent Living Older Blind program provides specialized comprehensive training to a group of 12 blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind seniors that are age 55 and better. These participants and their companions are invited to attend a week-long overnight program sponsored and staffed by the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Our Senior Hands-On Retreat Experience (SHORE) provides rigorous independent living skills training and fun, from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM throughout the week. A Support Service Provider (SSP) is available every evening from 5:00 to 11:00 PM to assist the participants as needed.

Throughout the week seniors participate in an all-inclusive program that demonstrates real life experiential learning. While at the retreat, participants receive intensive independent living instruction in, safe travel, health and wellness, assistive technology, communication and self-advocacy skills. Consumers also obtain information about and/or participate in coping with vision loss, community integration, and leisure activity options. Some of the specific activities/lessons include, but are not limited to: overall eye health and nutrition- diabetic education, community travel, food preparation /kitchen safety skills, dining at restaurants and music and relaxation therapies. The week ends with a graduation ceremony, that is preceded by a dinner dance for past and present participants.

## **Project BEST (Better Eye-Health Services and Treatment)**

Project BEST comprises all eye health services offered by CBVI, a component of which is our screening unit. The primary roles of the Project BEST screening unit are to identify eye disease in target populations of New Jersey residents that do not have access to eye health care, facilitate treatment through community providers, and to serve as a robust source of CBVI referrals for those who meet the various eligibility criteria for blindness training and the other services. Providing a growing array of services since 1979, the screening unit continues to meet its statutory obligation to increase access to the community.

Along with identifying those in need of eye health care and follow up, Project BEST provides outreach and education to those who host as well as participate in the eye screenings. Project BEST provides, in conjunction with the Department of Health and Center for Disease Control, a Diabetic Eye Disease Detection Screening, targeting populations with diagnosed Type II Diabetes. This program hopes to continue to grow, facilitating increased outreach for those with the disease. The Early Childhood Screening program (Pre-School Vision Screenings) identifies impediments to education, as well as eye disease specific to that age group. The number of Pre-School Vision screenings allows for earlier detection of vision problems leading to earlier intervention. Migrant Worker Screenings and the Adult Vision Screenings target primarily adult populations, but are available to children as well. All venues offer an eye health education component and may be able to assist those that self-identify as having diabetes. CBVI staff also advocates for Affordable Care Act enrollment for all eligible residents.

Schools, faith-based groups, Federally Qualified Health Centers, municipalities, and other organizations throughout New Jersey can access vision screenings by contacting the Supervisor of Project BEST at (973) 648-7400.

**2019 Highlights (Number of consumers served)**

Adult Vision Screening	7,310
Pre-School Vision Screening	19,680
On-Site Screening	5,995
Migrant Screening	365
Diabetic Eye Disease Detection (DEDD) Program	1033
Total Individuals Screened	34,653
Total Number of Screening Events	897
Referred for Further Evaluation	3,759
Referred for additional CBVI services	147



## Success Throughout the Lifespan - Spotlight Stories

These stories feature individuals who have made great strides this past year toward greater independence, academic achievement, and employment success. At CBVI, success is not only defined by the acquisition of employment, but multiple times throughout life, as it occurs each time one overcomes barriers, makes significant progress, and achieves one's goals. The following pages highlight both the amazing people of all ages that CBVI has the privilege of serving, as well as descriptions of the unit, programs, and services that have contributed to their accomplishments.

### Ethan and Gavin Morrobel

The following story is told in the words of Ethan and Gavin's mother, Pamela Aasen.

It has been 10 years since my children were diagnosed with Usher Syndrome Type 1b, a disorder that affects hearing, vision and balance. Ethan, 17 is a senior in High School and Gavin, 15, is in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. We learned about their hearing loss when they were infants and made the decision for both of them to get cochlear implants; so their language was developing nicely by this time. Now, began a new journey with new professionals in the world of the blind and visually impaired. We began at home by talking with them honestly about what RP meant and how their vision would fade. We watched blind athletes participate in the Paralympics and rather than focus on their loss, we had them pick the Paralympic sports they would like to compete in. We were in Canada at the time, so it was skiing, but eventually, after moving to New Jersey in 2014, it became swimming. And now, not only do they swim for their high school and Y club teams, they are competing in para swimming events across the country. These days they are not focused on how much vision they have lost or if they will go completely blind, they are focused on training, getting better, and competing as blind athletes.

As Ethan and Gavin prepare to compete in the Paralympic National Para Swim Championships, I think of everyone from CBVI who helped them get to this point. Their TVIs who encouraged them, provided braille instruction and helped them advocate for the accommodations they needed to continue to succeed academically. Their O&M Specialists who taught them how to navigate with a cane (including a trip to NYC) and ensured school buildings were equipped with proper safety measures. Their Deaf-Blind Specialists who encouraged their participation in programs like SHARP and EDGE and connected them to the Explore your Future program at RIT and the NFB Blind Engineers Program. And last, but certainly not least, the Technology Specialists provided equipment that helped reduce their fatigue; understanding that they work hard every day just at listening and seeing in their mainstream classrooms.

I wish I could have seen all of this when Ethan and Gavin were babies, it would have given me hope when I thought about their future. The professionals that have worked with them have been instrumental in preparing them to be the independent, confident young men they are now who achieve high honors in school, participate in their IEP meetings, advocate for themselves with their teachers and present at schools, universities and charitable events to share their experiences and raise awareness about Usher syndrome. They are Student Ambassadors for Ava's Voice, an organization dedicated to empowering youth with Usher syndrome and to educate families and school communities. As my husband and I begin to take the backseat and watch them in action, we are reassured that they are confident young men who understand themselves and can communicate their needs. And along the way, I have certainly learned not to doubt their strength or to limit their possibilities.

### Eser "Murat" Akin - Blindness Education - Elementary

Eser "Murat" Akin came to America from Turkey in 2017 at the age of 7. At the time, he knew how to speak only a little English. Although he was nervous and a bit frightened when he first arrived at John Hill School in Boonton, those feelings quickly disappeared. With the help of his Teacher of the Visually Impaired, and everyone at school working with him, he soon evolved into the happy, gregarious child that he is today. Murat is simultaneously learning both English and the literary Braille code, and continues to make steady ongoing

progress in his ability to efficiently read Braille. Murat also receives Orientation and Mobility and is quickly learning to become an independent cane traveler. His smile and his infectious laugh, in addition to his eagerness to please and to do well, is the reason why he is and continues to be a true success!

### **Trinity Dort – Blindness Education – High School**

Trinity Dort is a Senior in high school, attending the Union County Vocational Technical Schools in Scotch Plains, NJ. Trinity has received services from the NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired since elementary school. Though initially resistant to introducing large print material into her program, Trinity's CBVI Teacher of the Visually Impaired and Technological Services Specialist, in conjunction with her educational team and family, facilitated integration of large print books, screen-magnification technology, and social networking opportunities to help her understand how the use of accommodations can make life more efficient. Trinity has enjoyed a successful, enriching educational career, capping it off with a rigorous high school STEM program, which provides a solid engineering background. Using low-tech and high-tech magnification solutions, she has participated in academic and social networking opportunities with peers at the Union County Technical Schools, the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired's EDGE program, and extra-curricular activities. Finally, in consultation with the CBVI's Transition services, she has developed the self-advocacy skills to conduct a variety of college and university campus tours and interviews targeting her future bio-medical engineering pursuits, and highlighting specific visual and other accommodative strategies she would implement for post-secondary and vocational success. These early experiences also served to make her an excellent mentor in the SHARP program this past summer. She easily identified with the younger students who were reluctant to use their skills of independence, and understood that reluctance. Trinity's wealth of childhood experiences, and amicable personality render her a true example of the success that the agency's comprehensive services, with the commitment of individuals and their families, afford in developing competently-equipped citizens: ready to work and positively impact their world.

### **Michael Spiro – High School Transition Services**

Michael Spiro is a young man who graduated last June 2019 from Lacey Township High School. Michael is visually impaired with additional disabilities of Cerebral Palsy and Dyslexia, as well as additional medical considerations which have increased his barriers to employment. However, Michael has made great strides in his independent living and vocational progress through work that brought Michael to living in his own apartment and receiving supported employment services. Michael went from being on the brink of homeschooling because of health issues to living independently while being employed at Dunkin' Donuts doing food prep with assistance through supported employment job coaching. Family and support persons were unsure about the degree to which Michael would be able to live and work independently, but Michael quickly progressed in his self-care and life skills as he established vocational skills. With the help of his CBVI Teacher of the Visually Impaired, VR Transition Counselor, technology services, independent living instruction, his family, and DDD funding and services, Michael is able to implement customized and cohesive program within his home, encompassing continued academic education, various therapies, life skills, and job skills.

### **Brian Villaplana – Newark Service Center**

In August of 2014, Brian Villaplana began receiving CBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Services. At that time, Mr. Villaplana expressed interest in becoming a Physical Education Instructor and indicated the desire to obtain a college degree to achieve this goal. Through the full array of VR services, including support and counseling from his VR counselor, low vision services, assistive technology, and college services, Brian began

fulltime college studies in Spring of 2019. While attending college, he worked part time as a Stock Clerk, and in June of 2018, Brian achieved a BA degree in Physical Education. With the assistance of Job Development services, Brian was placed in a part-time position as a Physical Therapy Assistant in August of 2018, and was later promoted to full-time employment in a job that he loves. He continues his part-time Stock Clerk position.

### **Brian Eardley – Freehold Service Center**

Brian Eardley is a young man with whom CBVI has been able to see grow and blossom throughout the years. Although Brian has an autism spectrum disorder, severe anxiety, and a visual impairment, he has demonstrated his commitment to pursuing employment. When he first attended the Work Skills Preparation program while in high school, he was shy and lacked self-confidence. By attending the program, he gained valuable skills, experience, and confidence that motivated him to continue to grow and pursue his vocational goal: to work in an office setting. Brian returned to the Work Skills Preparation Program for a couple of summers, growing more each year.

Upon graduation, he began working with a multidisciplinary team consisting of his VR Counselor, the Y.E.S. program, supported employment agency, and Division of Developmental Disabilities, to pursue a customized employment placement. In the Spring of 2019, Brian obtained a job working at the Westfield Board of Education; his parents reported that when he shared with them that he got the position, you had never heard anyone be so excited about working. CBVI was able to arrange On-the-Job Training and Brian continues to work at the Westfield Board of Education with the support of a job coach.

### **Sena Pottackal – Newark Service Center**

In 2004, Sena Pottackal was a freshman in high school when she applied for CBVI services after experiencing vision loss due to retinitis pigmentosa. CBVI sponsored Sena's college studies at Rowan University where she graduated with highest honors, receiving a BA majoring in Public Relations (PR) and double minoring in Advertising and Communication Studies. Sena is currently in her last semester at NYU where she is pursuing a Masters in PR and Corporate Communications with a concentration in Corporate and Organizational Communications. Her thesis studies the representation of people with disabilities in advertisements to create best practices to build mutually beneficial relationships between the organizations and the disabled community. Sena is completing her internship at NBC Universal within the diversity and inclusion department.

In November of 2017, Sena was hospitalized due to vertigo inducing migraines which severely impacted her ability to walk and stand, causing her to take a break from her studies. Her medical condition improved, and she will graduate in December of 2019, maintaining a GPA of 3.8

Sena has had an accomplished and celebrated educational career, recognized through scholarships, competitive internships, and numerous news and media acknowledgements, such as PR Week, The Homes Report, O'Dwyer's, News India Times, Cherry Hill Sun, and Khaleej Times. She was awarded a scholarship through the New York Women in Communications Interpublic Group. For her internship project, she collaboratively designed a fully disability-inclusive experiential marketing campaign for product launch. While at NYU, Sena engaged in the NYU Social Sector Leadership Diversity Fellowship. In September 2019, Sena spoke at the Public Relations Council, Critical Issues of the Modern Workforce Forum at Carnegie Hall.

Sena's professional pursuits are driven by her determination to improve disability inclusion. As a result, she is seeking employment which will enable her to hone her leadership and communications skills while increasing opportunities for the disabled community.

### **Cory Brown – Cherry Hill Service Center**

In 2016 Cory came to the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, questioning his role as a Kennel Tech at House Paws, a Mobile Veterinary Service. With previous experience as a pet-sitter and dog trainer, he loved his job as a kennel tech, but thought he could handle more responsibility. With the assistance of his VR Counselor, Cory looked into various veterinarian technician certification programs in his area. However, due to his 40-50 hour weekly work schedule, a classroom setting would be tough to fit in. Cory further researched a good online program that would allow him to study and pursue his goal while keeping his arduous schedule. He has since completed 3 semesters with San Juan College, maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Cory maintains an attitude of “no excuses,” never using his disability to get out of his responsibilities. Owning his own condominium and traveling independently to work and in his community, Cory daily rides his bike 7 miles round-trip to work in the rain and cold.

In both his work and school, Cory needs to read slides on a microscope. Due to his vision loss he was not able to evaluate these specimens. CBVI sent Cory to a low vision doctor where he was able to get a digital magnifying screen that enables him to accurately read slides and perform the duties of his job. In December of 2019, Cory will have earned his Veterinarian Assistant Certification, plans to continue another 2 years to obtain his Veterinary Technician degree.

### **Valerie Frink – Joseph Kohn Training Center**

Valerie was already active in the visually impaired community before becoming a JKTC student, even founding her own low vision support group in Jersey City. In addition, she was actively involved in other local organizations, such as the National Federation of the Blind. However, a skillset that Valerie needed help with was in the Orientation and Mobility (O&M) discipline. When Valerie started the JKTC program, she admitted that she was apprehensive about traveling outdoors without sighted assistance, especially when it came to street crossings. Despite this anxiety, Valerie always remained open-minded and stepped out of her comfort zone during instruction, learning how to cross a busy intersection or take a public bus. As her weeks at JKTC progressed, so too did Valerie's confidence in all classes. Instructors unanimously reported on the positive progress Valerie made. For her part, Valerie confirmed that her confidence grew and shared that she no longer felt the same anxiety about traveling local routes in her home area. Prior to the program, she would walk to her local church near her home, she would usually ask a companion to meet her at the corner and walk her across the street; by the end of her JKTC program, Valerie was proud to state that she walked to church by herself regularly, without any assistancel.

### **Kenneth Miller – Joseph Kohn Training Center**

During the initial meetings with Kenny, he shared that he had been feeling unproductive, inactive, and financially restricted in his life and was open and ready to learn. In order to gain the necessary skills he needed for success, he decided to enroll in JKTC. Throughout the training program, Kenny always showed up with ideas, questions, and honest thoughtfulness and took his skill building seriously by engaging in extra practice in the evenings and on weekends. Furthermore, Kenny supported the social environment of the JKTC by choosing

to become a resident student and by encouraging his fellow students. His initiative was further demonstrated when, for the first time at JKTC, Kenny seized the opportunity to independently develop his own Work Experience job site; a direct result of his networking with his personal and professional connections. Near the end of his JKTC training program, Kenny shared that he had learned a multitude of useful skillsets in JKTC, as well as in the Work Experience program, and felt the program significantly empowered him to move towards his vocational plans.

### **Lewis Edwards – Business Relations**

In 2013, Lewis Edwards attended school for culinary arts in 2013, and subsequently worked at a few restaurants prior to losing his vision. When he was ready to return to work, after taking some time to attend to his medical needs, it was suggested by his counselor that he attend one of the mentoring days at the local Shop-Rite.

Over the past three years, CBVI's Business Relations Unit has developed a partnership with Shop Rite of Cherry Hill; through this partnership, the store hosts quarterly mentoring days where interested candidates spend a few hours at the store participating in a hands-on work experience in the various departments. This provides the candidates an opportunity to discover if they would like to pursue employment at ShopRite, and facilitates a working interview for the store personnel to get to know the person and their abilities. Interested candidates are able to apply and interview for available positions that same day.

Lewis attended a ShopRite mentoring day and subsequently obtained employment in the Deli department. Lewis thought the mentoring day was a very “innovative practice” that was well-handled to provide employment opportunities, and while the transition was difficult at points, through the partnership, education, and support by CBVI, the store has worked well to accommodate him. Lewis continues to enjoy his employment at ShopRite and looks forward to advancement in his future.

### **Gary Atchison – Business Enterprise New Jersey**

Gary Atchison was an average, middle-aged man with a job, a wife and children, when he noticed he was starting to lose his vision. Visits to many doctors failed to produce even a diagnosis – nobody knew why Gary was going blind. Eventually his vision decreased below 20/200, making him “legally blind”. The physical disability, along with the mental and emotional adjustment, caused Gary to lose his job and a lot of personal struggles. After several years of getting by, Gary found out about BENJ, went through the training and became a licensed BENJ manager. Starting with smaller assignments, Gary worked his way up and is now running a cafeteria with four employees. Through it all, Gary was able to keep his home, his marriage has survived, and he now has the self-esteem and the monetary rewards that come from running a successful business.

### **Kim Adams – Independent Living**

Kim Adams lost her vision suddenly due to an optic nerve disorder. Though it was initially difficult for her, Kim welcomed a range of independent living services from CBVI to help her maintain her independence. She was able to utilize the Commission's low vision services, through which she was able to receive a pair of magnifying glasses, and also obtained a CCTV through CBVI's CCTV Distribution Program. These tools allowed her to read mail and pay bills without assistance.

During one of the initial home visits, Kim's Rehabilitation Teacher explained *A SHORE Thing* program. By the summer, Kim was ready to participate, and she was selected for the Fall SHORE Thing program; she was enthusiastic throughout the program, made lifelong friends, and learned additional skills. To this day, Kim

continues to talk about the program and the services she has received from CBVI. She thanks CBVI for helping her and for never giving up on her for services, even when she wanted to give up on herself.

### **Robert Frisco – Independent Living**

When Robert Frisco first opened his case with CBVI, he had been dealing with vision loss for quite some time, finding ways to self-accommodate, but was not aware of his Macular Degeneration or visual impairment. Soon after meeting his Rehabilitation Teacher, Robert was encouraged to apply and attended the Spring 2019, *A SHORE Thing* in Long Branch, NJ, with his wife as his companion.

Attending *A SHORE Thing* was much like a launch pad for Robert. Within a short week's time, he was walking independently with a mobility cane, using Voice Over on his iPad and iPhone, and gained a plethora of useful information to help adapt to life with vision loss.

Walking into Robert's home these days is a testimony to the value Robert holds for all services he received from the Commission. In their home, there is now a mobility cane by the front door, locator dots are now on household appliances, there is bright LED lighting in his kitchen and family room, and audio labels for the Pen Friend to administer medications independently.

In the months following *A SHORE Thing*, Robert and his wife have attended the ASPIRE program's low-vision support groups and weekly trainings with the LEAP program to further his assistive technology skills, and reports feeling a greater sense of independence and far greater success.

## Did you know?

The NJ State Library Talking Book and Braille Center offers an array of leisure reading and magazines in digital audio, Braille, and large print. Call 1-800-792-8322 or visit: [www.njsltbbc.org](http://www.njsltbbc.org)

Bookshare.org offers thousands of leisure reading and academic materials in text to speech and embossed Braille formats. [www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)

Learning Ally is a major provider of academic books on all levels in DAISY-format CD or download. [www.learningally.org](http://www.learningally.org)

Newspaper reader services from NFB – NEWSLINE, sponsored by CBVI at 1-888-882-1629

NFB-NEWSLINE is a free service available to anyone who is blind, deaf-blind, vision impaired or print-disabled. Funded by state sponsors, NFB-NEWSLINE offers over 400 publications to choose from, including ten national newspapers like the Wall Street Journal and USA Today, sixteen breaking news sources such as CNN, BBC, and ESPN Online, fourteen international newspapers including Financial Times and Vancouver Sun, and countless state newspapers, as well as fifty magazines like Family Circle, time, Consumer Reports, Jet, Guideposts, Smithsonian and more.

### **The Commission may be able to assist with\*:**

\*Based on eligibility

- Vocational Rehabilitation to help you obtain employment.
- Rehabilitation teaching to help you perform daily living tasks.
- Orientation and Mobility instruction to assist you in traveling independently.
- Referral to community resources for housing, financial assistance, and other supported services.

The Commission will respond to your concerns, if you are dissatisfied with the services you receive. Call the Office of the Executive Director at 973-648-2325.

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) can assist you in resolving any disputes regarding provision of Vocational Rehabilitation services by calling: 1-800-922-7233. The CAP program is administered by Disability Rights New Jersey.

Para-transit can provide transportation to work, medical appointments, etc.. Call the NJ Transit Office of Special Services at 1-800-772-2287 to get the phone number for your County.

## SRC Meeting Dates – 2020

SRC meetings are held in compliance with Section 105 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and also are in compliance with the NJ Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6.

The public is invited to all meetings, which will start at 9:30 a.m. on the following dates in 2020:

February 7

April 3

June 5

October 2

December 4

## Service Centers and Facilities

For a complete description of CBVI services, please visit the web site at <http://www.cbvi.nj.gov>

### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

153 Halsey Street, 6th Floor P.O. Box 47017  
Newark, NJ 07102  
Phone: (973) 648-3333 Fax: (973) 648-7364

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Eva Scott, Director of Blindness Education  
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Elizabeth DeShields, Statewide Independent Living  
Coordinator  
[elizabeth.deshields@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:elizabeth.deshields@dhs.state.nj.us)

### JOSEPH KOHN TRAINING CENTER

130 Livingston Ave, New Brunswick, NJ 08903  
Phone: (732) 937-6363 Fax: (732) 247-6628  
Manager: Del Basha  
[delavar.basha@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:delavar.basha@dhs.state.nj.us)

### BUSINESS ENTERPRISES NEW JERSEY

Joseph Kohn Training Center  
130 Livingston Ave, New Brunswick, NJ 08903  
Phone: (732) 937-6363 Fax: (732)247-6628  
Manager: Deacon Truesdale  
[napoleon.truesdale@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:napoleon.truesdale@dhs.state.nj.us)

### GEORGE F. MEYER INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

375 McCarter Highway, Newark, NJ 07114  
Phone: (973) 648-2547

### NEWARK SERVICE CENTER (NSC)

153 Halsey Street, 5th Fl. Newark, NJ 07101  
Phone: (973) 648-2111 Fax: (973) 648-7674  
Manager: Aaliyah Dent  
[aaliyah.dent@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:aaliyah.dent@dhs.state.nj.us)

### FREEHOLD SERVICE CENTER (FSC)

100 Daniels Way, Freehold Township, NJ 07728  
Phone: (732) 308-4001 Fax: (732) 308-404  
Manager: John Reiff  
[john.reiff@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:john.reiff@dhs.state.nj.us)

### CHERRY HILL SERVICE CENTER (CHSC)

2201 Rt.38 East, Suite 600, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002  
Phone (856) 482-3700 Fax: (856) 482-3770  
Manager: Diana Cortez  
[diana.cortez@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:diana.cortez@dhs.state.nj.us)

### ATLANTIC CITY SERVICE CENTER (ACSC)

1300 Atlantic Ave, 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl. Atlantic City, NJ 08401  
Phone: (609) 441-3074 Fax: (609) 441-3079  
Manager: Diana Cortez  
[diana.cortez@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:diana.cortez@dhs.state.nj.us)

### DEAF-BLIND SERVICES

153 Halsey St, 5<sup>th</sup> Fl, Newark, NJ 07102  
Phone: (973) 648-7504 Fax: (973) 648-7674  
Supervisor: Joy Atin-Shark



joy.atin-shark@dhs.state.nj.us