



## Town Hall Meeting 3-11-14 Public Input Wanted

The purpose of the meeting is to give the public an opportunity to provide feedback to the Director, staff and advisory councils of the Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) on the operation of DVI programs and services. Representatives from the following programs will be on hand to take comments or questions: Independent Living; Education; Vocational Rehabilitation; Delaware Industries for the Blind; Business Enterprise Program; Orientation and Mobility; Technology.

The meeting will be held Tuesday March 11, 2014 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Location:

Delaware Health and Social  
Services - Public Health Office  
Edgehill Shopping Center  
43 S. DuPont Hwy  
Dover, DE 19901



No registration is required. Not able to attend? Send questions or comments to: [DVIIntake@state.de.us](mailto:DVIIntake@state.de.us)

## Frequently Asked Questions about the Division for the Visually Impaired

Q. What is DVI- What does it do?

A. DVI provides services statewide to citizens who are blind or visually impaired from birth through old age. DVI is one of Delaware's oldest state agencies having celebrated its 100th year of providing services in 2009. DVI has a state funded staff of approximately 60, (with an additional 45 positions in the Delaware Industries for the Blind and 14 in the Business Enterprise Program) and an annual budget of state and federal funds of approximately \$ 8.5 million dollars.

DVI provides holistic, integrated services to over 1,000 individuals annually. These services are provided to three key groups of consumers:

- Educational age (0 - 21)
- Primary employment age (21-65)
- Older Delawareans (55 +)



Q. What is the agency motto?

A. *"Improving Perception"*

Q. What is the agency mission?

A. *"Working in partnership with Delawareans who are blind or visually impaired empowering them to be self-sufficient."*

Q. What is the blind registry?

A. The Delaware Code mandates that physicians report persons who are legally blind to DVI for inclusion on a Registry. The agency utilizes the Registry to provide important information and

services to the blind and visually impaired community. The information is confidential and being included on the Registry does not mean services will be provided without the consumers consent. However, being listed on the registry ensures more timely service when requested. Currently there are nearly 3,000 people on our Registry. National data indicates that a state with Delaware's population might expect 6,000 persons to meet our eligibility criteria.

Q. What services does DVI provide?

A. DVI Provides the following Services:

### Employment Services

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Help for consumers to keep their jobs or learn new jobs when they experience vision loss
- Entrepreneurial support for the visually impaired
- Business Enterprise Program
- Delaware Industries for the Blind



### Independent Living Services (ILS)

- Provision of adaptive techniques and devices that help consumers to maintain independence
- Time and financial management
- Training in self-care
- Meal preparation/kitchen skills/appliance use
- Braille Instruction

## Education

The DVI Education Team provides statewide educational services to children, from birth through high school graduation, who have a visual impairment. Certified teachers of the visually impaired provide assessment, direct instruction and/or consultation services. These services are provided to families and to the school districts in Delaware, which have students who are visually impaired enrolled. Infants and toddlers receive services in the home or at other early intervention settings. Child/Youth Counselors provide assistance and support to families who have just learned their child has a visual impairment or who have just moved to the area.

## Support Services

- Evaluation and training with non-optical aids (magnifiers) and optical aids to achieve goals such as reading mail to maximize remaining vision
- Assistive Technology training including computer screen magnification and computer screen access
- Instruction by specialists to help consumers travel independently and safely via Orientation and Mobility techniques

Q. Who is eligible for services?

A. Eligibility for services from DVI is prioritized as follows:

- Totally Blind- No Light Perception
- Legally Blind- 20 / 200 visual acuity in the better eye with correction; OR, has a field restriction limited to 20 degrees or



less

- Severely Visually Impaired- 20/70 to 20/200 visual acuity in the better eye with correction

Q. How do people get services?

A. People may call us directly at 302-255-9800 and talk to an intake worker. Some people are referred by their eye care professional, or in the case of children through their local school.



## DVI and Social Media

During the spring of 2013, a staff group led by Deputy Director Elisha Jenkins developed an outline for a DVI facebook page. Launched in April, this page has been used to announce workshops, new staff, retirements, program changes and other activities involving DVI, DIB, BEP and stakeholders such as Delaware Association for the Blind, Delaware Association for Blind Athletes, the Veterans Administration and others. Since September, a member of Public Allies Delaware, Melissa Benbow, has been working in the agency helping to expand our Social Media presence and specifically helping to broaden our facebook reach.



We strongly urge consumers, advocates and the general public to “Like” DVI on facebook and encourage friends and family to do the same so that we may reach the broadest audience possible.

Like DVI on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/DviDelaware](http://www.facebook.com/DviDelaware)



# Video Documentary



Filming in the Biggs Building



Teacher Amy Rotzinger with a student



Jack A. Markell, Governor

During the past year, a broadcast quality 7 minute documentary has been produced featuring the Division and our programs and services. During the winter of 2013 we hosted a video crew from the Florida based ***In Focus*** program. ***In Focus*** interviewed several staff members including then Director Robert Doyle, Teacher of the Visually Impaired Amy Rotzinger, and several consumers. The crew then fanned out in the Biggs Building to show other aspects of the wide range of DVI services and programs including Delaware Industries for the Blind, the Business Enterprise Program, Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, Technology and Orientation & Mobility.

The video crew also traveled to Governor Jack Markell's office to interview him about our agency, visited a consumer worksite, and traveled to Silver Lake Elementary school in Middletown to show Amy interacting with one of her students. Video highlights were distributed to cable providers nationwide and to PBS stations.

To view the documentary go to the following YouTube link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoeEiVUyf3k>

# Focus on a Condition: Albinism

**(Editor's Note: this information is from the National Eye Institute of the National Institute of Health)**

Albinism is caused by one of several genetic mutations that make the body unable to produce or distribute melanin, a natural substance that gives color to your hair, skin, and eyes. The symptoms of albinism vary. These symptoms include: absence of color in the hair, skin, or iris of the eye, lighter than normal skin and hair, and/or patchy, missing skin color. The two major forms of albinism are oculocutaneous albinism and ocular albinism.

Oculocutaneous albinism affects the color of skin, hair and eyes, and it also causes vision problems. Specifically, Oculocutaneous albinism reduces pigmentation of the iris (the colored part of the eye) and the retina (the back of the eye). Ocular albinism only affects the eyes; skin and hair might be normally colored, while the retina will not have coloring. The vision problems resulting from this lack of melanin in the eyes include:

- Reduced sharpness
- Rapid, involuntary eye movements (nystagmus)
- Increased sensitivity to light (photophobia)
- Cross eyes (strabismus)
- General vision problems, or blindness

Oculocutaneous albinism affects about 1 in 20,000 people worldwide. Ocular albinism impacts 1 in 60,000 males, and is much less common in females.

In terms of eye care, treatment generally includes: UV protected sunglasses to relieve light sensitivity and prescription glasses to correct vision problems and eye position. Eye muscle



surgery is also recommended to correct abnormal eye movements (nystagmus).

People with albinism can have full and well rounded lives. However, special attention and care is needed to protect skin and eyes from the potentially damaging effects of sunlight. Below is a list of several organizations that exist as a source of support and information for people who have albinism:

- National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation – [www.albinism.org](http://www.albinism.org)
- International Albinism Center – <http://albiunismdb.med.umn.edu>
- International Albinism Center at the University of Minnesota <http://www.ophtalmology.umn.edu/patientcare/albinism/home.html>
- National Organization for Rare Disorders <http://rarediseases.org/rare-disease-information/rare-diseases/byID/457/viewAbstract>

Resource list from the University of Kansas Medical Center <http://www.kumc.edu/gec/support/albinism.html>

## Blind Etiquette

*Interacting with a person who is blind and visually impaired in a respectful and conscious manner*

**Remember** that the **only difference** between me and you is that I am unable to see through my eyes what you see through yours. Other than that **we possess the same faculties and capabilities. I can perform and complete tasks much like everyone else, except than I do them differently because I do not rely on sight.**

**Don't be ill at ease. Introduce yourself to me. I am a *person* who happens to be blind. We can have a simple, open dialogue. We**



can discuss blindness if you have questions, but there are also a lot of other things we can talk about. There is no need to be concerned about using language like “see” or “look.”

**Empathy is good, pity is not.** I don’t need to be pitied; neither do I need to hear about the compensations of blindness. My sense of smell, taste, touch and hearing are not heightened or unique, rather, I tend to rely on my other senses more than a person with all five senses.

**Ask if I would like assistance.** I might need assistance at times, and other times, I do not. I would prefer that you **offer your arm or shoulder**, or ask me what I would be comfortable with, instead of making an assumption and thereby creating an uncomfortable situation.

**Remember, I am blind, not deaf.** I don’t need you to raise your voice when speaking to me.



**Use specific words for communicating direction.** I can better orient myself to my space when I am given clear instruction concerning my surroundings. “Over there” is not helpful to me, but “4 feet to your left” is.

**When you enter or leave the room, let me know.** I might not sense that you left. Orient me to where you are. I want to be facing the right direction in relation to you and whoever else I’m with.

**Please don’t distract my guide dog.** The dog has a responsibility; if my guide dog is distracted I might be misdirected.

**Be conscious of the surroundings.** Don’t leave doors and

cabinets open or things on the floor that I might not be aware of when moving around.

**Offer to read the menu.** At restaurants I do find it helpful to be made aware of my surroundings and what the restaurants have to offer. When dining together, I would appreciate if you used the clock format to describe where my food is located on my plate.

**Contact DVI at (302)-255-9800** if you have any questions about services and resources for people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired.

## Advocates Corner

My name is Lloyd Schmitz and I would like to offer you a challenge to get involved and make a difference. I am a Delawarean in my mid 50's that went through high school with functional vision in one eye and lost my vision shortly after.

At the age of 21 I received my first dog guide.

After getting married with two children I stayed home and helped to raise them until a work opportunity became available. I worked for Delaware Industries for the Blind (DIB) for a couple of years and then went into the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) where I operated vending and cafeterias throughout Delaware for over 20 years.



Lloyd Schmitz

While operating my business under the BEP, I joined the Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens where I served a three year term. I served for 6 years on the Vocational

Rehabilitation Advisory Council for DVI where I exhausted my term limit. After getting frustrated with the paratransit service I joined the Elderly & Disabled Transit Advisory Committee (EDTAC) where I became the co-chair and then the chairperson for several years where I still serve as chair.

While running the cafeteria in the Carvel state office building I wrote a letter to Governor Minner and requested an appointment to the Governor's Advisory Council On the Blind where I currently serve as the chairperson. Just last year I was appointed to the Employment First Oversight Commission under the State Council for Persons with Disabilities where I am serving as the chairperson for 3 years. I am twice past president of local LIONS clubs in Delaware where I have been a member for over 30 years and still serve on the board of directors of the Lewes club.

I am currently the vice president of the central chapter of the NFB of Delaware.

## **DVI Transition Youth Program Revitalized: Staff's Impressions**

DVI's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) team has been working devotedly to give new life to the Transition Youth Services Program. This program, which caters to young adults aged 14-24, works in conjunction with DVI's Education, Orientation and Mobility, and Independent Living Services teams. The program also involves parents, guardians and other connected family members to provide students with knowledge, resources and opportunities to transition from secondary school and/or college to employment or further

education. Our staff feels very passionate about the transition program and the potential created by its revitalization. Some of our staff has shared their impressions of the transition program, and in doing so, give us a sense of what we can expect the program to do to assist DVI's younger consumers.

Loretta Harper-Brown, one of our VR Business Consultants, describes transition as a “supportive program;” a program that helps students to, “develop their employment and education goals, as well as social/personal interactions and development.” Genelle Fletcher, one of our VR Senior Counselors, succinctly describes transition as, “A place for high, middle, and college students to prepare to engage in the real world. To Genelle, transition aids students in the “shift from minors to adults who are productive citizens.” Essentially, transition serves as an important stepping stone into adulthood.

Everyone who has given their impressions of the program love working with transition students. Loretta Harper-Brown describes these youth as “open,” “fluid,” and full of potential. Genelle Fletcher finds it greatly rewarding to witness students have the “aha” moment; that moment they realize that they can do what they want to do, regardless of any impediment. Jenelle Green, completing an Ameri-Corps program apprenticeship at DVI as Youth Transition Assistant, says that she values the process of gaining trust and building relationships with the students.

*Infinite  
Possibilities  
For Your Future*



**Assisting  
Students in the  
Transition  
from School to  
Work**



Delaware Division for the  
Visually Impaired



Our staff has high hopes and expectations for what students can gain from participating in the transition program. Jenelle Green wants students who come through the transition program to be assured that the DVI team is a “resource for growth that they can utilize to propel

them forward.” Jenelle says that she wants students to be able to say, “DVI helped me land this job.” Shirley Bryson, DVI’s new VR District Administrator, says that she would like “all of the technical, emotional and educational supports and tools to be streamlined” for students, so that they can fully operate in the general population.

While DVI staff has certainly done a great job in revitalizing this youth program, they look forward to even greater improvements. Genelle Fletcher hopes to see students become self-advocates and establish a “presence in their community.” Loretta Harper-Brown looks forward to transition developing into a “structured program” for students to enter, accruing important competencies and skills at each level of growth. Shirley Bryson hopes to see DVI utilize every resource available to provide for the needs of every student in transition. All in all, the impressions of the staff working to improve the transition program reflect a generally positive outlook for the future. DVI’s vested interest in the transition program forecasts great potential and possibility for our students.



YOUR CAREER



## Daniel Madrid Named Director

Daniel Madrid was appointed DVI Director in July of 2013 replacing Robert Doyle who assumed the role as Director of the Florida Division of Blind Services.

Born in Virginia, Dan moved to Delaware at an early age and is a graduate of Milford High School. Dan is a U of D graduate and received his Master's in Psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University. Dan worked as a VR counselor and later became an administrator with the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Dan's vision for the agency focuses on high standards and customer service. He plans to use data and information to guide his decision making. Dan is excited about interacting with DVI staff, and is impressed so far with the openness he has seen from employees. He is looking forward to raising the visibility of the agency and general awareness of people with visual impairments by fostering strong relationships in the community, with councils, customers and the private and public sectors to help us achieve our goals.



*Daniel Madrid*

Dan lives in Wilmington with his wife and young son.

# Welcome New Staff!

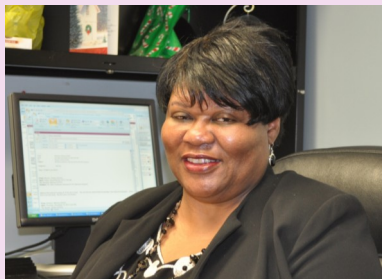
***Editor's Note: The following are new staff members who started since the last edition of DVI Views. All work at the Biggs Building in New Castle unless otherwise noted.***



**Bilal Ahmed**, Administrative Specialist,  
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Team



**Melissa Benbow**, Public Allies  
Delaware Intern, Communications



**Shirley Bryson**, Vocational  
Rehabilitation District Administrator



**James "Ty" Case**, Administrative  
Officer, Business Enterprise Program



**Yang Chen**, Senior Accountant,  
Fiscal Office



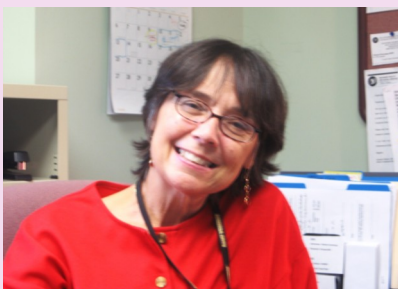
**Raymond Eskaros**, Quality Control Supervisor, DIB

**Jenelle Green**, Public Allies Delaware Intern, VR Transition Program



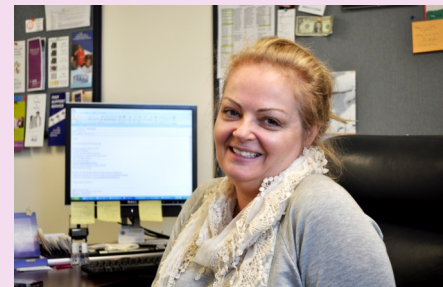
**Stephanie Green**, Administrative Specialist, Support Services

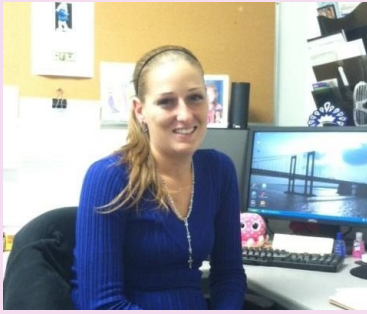
**Michelle Hamilton**, Administrative Specialist, VR Team Milford



**Frances Horzempa**, VR Senior Counselor

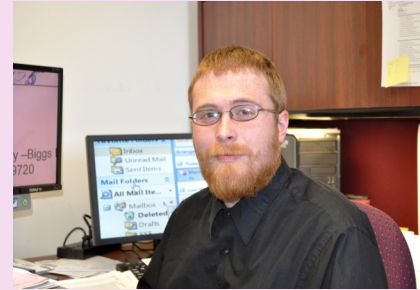
**Jocelyn Langrehr**, Vocational Rehabilitation Program Specialist





**Amber Mangini**, International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Coordinator, DIB

**Frank Marsh**, Accounting Specialist, Fiscal Office



**Erika Oberholtzer**, Quality Control Inspector, DIB

**Susan Papiri**, Customer Service Representative, DIB



**Mary June Peterson**, Senior Fiscal Administrative Officer, Fiscal Office

**Thea Sucholdolski**, Teacher of the Visually Impaired





## Promotions!



**Elisha Jenkins, Deputy Director**

**Melodye May, Independent Living Services Administrator**



**Heather Dougherty, Full Time Orientation and Mobility Specialist**

### **GO GREEN! Get the Newsletter Electronically**

Help us with printing costs by getting future issues of the newsletter via e-mail. We will send it in a full color pdf file and a txt version which is easily read by screen readers.

E-mail Jack Holloway at [Jack.Holloway@state.de.us](mailto:Jack.Holloway@state.de.us) and we will add you to our e-mail list, or call at 302-255-9821.

Thank you for helping us keep our costs down.



## Fair Housing Is Your Right!

It is illegal for a housing provider to prohibit service animals, charge a fee for service animals, or ask for a deposit for service animals. Landlords must make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, such as allowing for service animals without charging a fee.

Report housing discrimination to Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. (CLASI):

New Castle County: 302-575-0660

Kent County: 302-674-8500

Sussex County: 302-856-0038

Website: [www.declasi.org](http://www.declasi.org)

## NFB-NEWSLINE®

DVI, in collaboration with Delaware Library Access Services, is sponsoring this **free service** in Delaware. **Call Toll Free 1-866-504-7300** for information on how to sign up, or go online to: **nfb.org**

NEWSLINE allows subscribers to listen to scores of newspapers, magazines and other information over their phone. The toll-free centralized call-in center provides service on demand to any subscriber, enabling those who cannot read conventional print to have access to all content offered on NFB-NEWSLINE® twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.



**Division for the Visually Impaired  
Biggs Building  
1901 N DuPont Highway  
New Castle, DE 19720-1199**

**FREE  
MATTER  
for the  
BLIND**

**Low-Vision Technology Day  
Wednesday March 19, 3:00-7:00 P.M.**

Low-Vision Technology Day at the Resource and Technology Demonstration Center, Easter Seals Delaware & Maryland's Eastern Shore. 61 Corporate Circle, New Castle, DE 19720.

Descriptions and demonstrations of the latest assistive technology. Sponsored by Easter Seals in association with the Division for the Visually Impaired. For more information call: 302-221-2087.



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Division for the Visually Impaired

***DVI Views***

Division for the Visually Impaired,  
Delaware Health and Social Services

**Daniel Madrid**, Director; **Elisha Jenkins**, Deputy Director  
**Melissa Benbow & Jack Holloway**, Editorial Staff

<http://www.state.de.us/dhss/dvi>