# 2013 Annual Report- National Industries for the Blind

# New Directions: Leading the Way

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Photo: Pictured left to right: Gary Krump, chairman, NIB Board of Directors, and Kevin Lynch, president and CEO, NIB.

# Message from the Chairman and President

In 2013, we recognized the 75th anniversary of NIB and the AbilityOne® Program. When the year started, we knew it would be a difficult one. Troop drawdowns in Iraq and Afghanistan dramatically reduced supply orders from the military, a customer that has been the bedrock of employment for people who are blind through their support of our program. Sequestration went into effect midyear, which created more uncertainty with our customers and resulted in delayed or significantly reduced orders. And at the end of the year, the government shut down for the first time in 17 years.

The impact was felt hard by our associated agencies. Hundreds of their employees experienced reductions in hours or were furloughed. While we have been affected by reduced government spending many times in our 75-year history, the current environment is unprecedented.

Nevertheless, in spite of these challenges, we created 328 new work years for people who are blind and increased sales in the services sector by 15 percent. We reached an impressive milestone in our Contract Management Support Program, which has processed more than 140,000 contracts for closure and allowed the government to recoup more than $534 million in funding. We opened more AbilityOne Base Supply Centers, thereby increasing distribution outlets for our products. We also assumed the day-today management of the New York State Preferred Source Program for People Who Are Blind, a state government purchasing initiative that employs more than 400 New Yorkers who are blind or visually impaired. In addition to all of that, NIB was named one of the top 50 nonprofits to work for in the nation.

At NIB, we believe that success comes from a relentless focus on innovation and execution. Moving forward, we are going to continue to maximize AbilityOne sales by working with the U.S. AbilityOne Commission® and our customers to improve compliance. At the same time, we are aggressively pursuing opportunities outside of the AbilityOne Program and stepping up education and awareness among our key stakeholders.

After 75 years, NIB continues to lead the way. While we have changed throughout our history, our primary mission has not. In the years to come, we will stay committed to creating employment opportunities for people who are blind.

Kevin A. Lynch, President and Chief Executive Officer

The Honorable Gary J. Krump, Chairman of the Board

# NIB 75TH ANNIVERSARY

## 75 Years of Creating Employment for People Who Are Blind

In the late 1930s, leaders in the blindness community conceived an idea that would forever change the vocational lives of Americans who are blind. After encouraging Congress to open government markets to products made by people who are blind, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Wagner-O’Day Act into law on June 25, 1938.

National Industries for the Blind was established on August 10, 1938, to allocate and manage government orders among agencies that employed people who are blind.

In the 75 years since, NIB and its nationwide network of associated nonprofit agencies have grown to help thousands of people who are blind lead more independent lives through employment. Today, NIB and its associated agencies produce thousands of products and deliver a wide range of services for government and commercial customers.

Photos: 1. Pictured left to right: New York State Senator Martin Golden, 22nd Senate District; Kevin Lynch, president and CEO, NIB; Victor Calise, commissioner, New York City Mayor’s Office for Peoplewith Disabilities; and Gary Krump, chairman, NIB Board of Directors.

2. Pictured left to right: Kevin Lynch, president and CEO, NIB; Barbara Taylor, senior manager, Corporate Supplier Diversity Strategy and Integration, The Boeing Company; Frank Mayer, regional director, Office

of Customer Accounts and Research, General Services Administration; and Robert Woodside, program manager, Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative Program, General Services Administration.

## “National Industries for the Blind Day” in New York City

On June 27, 2013, NIB returned to its “birthplace” in New York City to recognize the enactment of the Wagner-O’Day Act and the subsequent formation of NIB. Representatives from its associated nonprofit agencies, corporate and government partners, and elected officials joined NIB at Lighthouse International in Manhattan to honor the historic milestone.

New York State Senator Martin Golden, from Brooklyn’s 22nd Senate District, expressed his support and appreciation for NIB’s mission and contributions to the blindness community. NIB received a personal letter of commendation from New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg released a proclamation declaring June 27, 2013 “National Industries for the Blind Day” in New York City.

## Annual Conference Wraps Up Anniversary Year

NIB’s special year of recognizing its 75th anniversary culminated with the 2013 NIB/NAEPB (National Association for the Employment of People Who Are Blind) National Conference and Expo, held October 9-11 in National Harbor, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C. The event provided many opportunities for networking and learning for NIB and associated agency staff, vendors and business partners.

Each year, conference attendees honor associated agency employees of the year nominated for NIB’s two national awards. Agencies nominated 81 employees — a record number— and several of the nominees addressed the general session, inspiring attendees by speaking briefly about their experiences, their passion for their jobs and their positive and self-reliant attitudes.

## New Websites Tell the Story

**www.nib.org:** In FY 2013, NIB refreshed its corporate website with a contemporary design that reflects its progressive and innovative culture. New features include interactive locator maps, a “Contact Us” form and a media page with streaming videos. The new website was reorganized to make information easier to find and content was condensed into a more web-friendly format.

**www.NIB75Years.org:** NIB also launched its anniversary microsite to highlight key milestones and profile the visionaries who have contributed to NIB’s “history of a limitless future.”

Photo: NIB website and NIB Microsite

## Communications Tools Help Raise Awareness

Throughout 2013, NIB worked closely with its associated nonprofit agencies to share information with customers, business partners and communities nationwide, raising awareness about NIB’s mission and the capabilities of people who are blind. NIB’s communications activities included:

* Issuing a 75th anniversary press release, picked up by hundreds of news outlets across the country
* Launching a targeted social media campaign with anniversary messaging on NIB’s Facebook and Twitter (NatIndBlind) pages using the hashtag #NIB75Years
* Developing an advertising campaign to thank federal government customers for their support in purchasing products and services
* Creating a video, “Celebrating 75 Years of Creating Jobs,” to highlight the history of NIB and the wide array of career opportunities available for people who are blind
* Developing templates, messaging and other tools for its associated agencies to spread the word in their local markets, and sharing information through a collaborative website for the agency public relations network.

Photo: NIB’s “Thank You” Ad

## National Survey Assesses Views of Hiring Managers

NIB commissioned a study in November 2012 to assess the attitudes and opinions among corporate decision makers regarding the employment of individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The results supported NIB’s 75th anniversary education campaign to address the myths and misconceptions regarding the capabilities of people who are blind.

More than 400 telephone interviews and online surveys were conducted to collect attitudinal data among human resources directors and other hiring managers at U.S. companies in a wide range of industries. The survey revealed that misconceptions still exist in the business community about the capabilities of people who are blind, the nominal cost of assistive technology and the positive impact of encouraging a diverse workforce.

The hiring manager survey ignited significant media interest, and was the basis of:

* A press release that generated 711 online and search engine views and 357 third-party website postings
* A Wall Street Journal article with 700+ social media shares
* An article in The Associated Press (AP) picked up by The Huffington Post with 150+ comments and 400+ social media shares.

## Hot Off the Press: “Empowering People”

To remember the people and events that led to the creation of NIB and its history over the past 75 years, NIB published “Empowering People: The Story of National Industries for the Blind and its Associated Agencies: 75 Years — 1938-2013.” The author, Mary Jane Surrago, Opportunity magazine editor and assistant secretary to the NIB Board of Directors, dedicated the book to “the men and women in NIB associated agencies who have inspired the NIB team, generation after generation, to champion opportunities for people who are blind to achieve their full career potential.”

Photo: “Empowering People” Book

Quote: “[NIB] continues to empower people who are blind to attain personal and economic independence, and we are delighted to join them in celebrating their 75th anniversary . . .”

— Hon. Michael R. Bloomberg

Mayor, City of New York

## 2013 R.B. Irwin Award Honors Dr. James A. Kutsch, Jr.

Dr. James A. Kutsch, Jr., former chairman of the NIB Board of Directors, was honored with the 2013 R. B. Irwin Award for his exceptional service and commitment to NIB’s mission. After a career as a computer science professor and telecommunications executive, today Kutsch serves as president and CEO of The Seeing Eye, which provides specially-bred and trained dogs to guide people who are blind. Blinded as a teenager through a home chemistry accident, Kutsch’s doctoral research led to the development of the first computer terminal with computer-generated speech.

The R. B. Irwin Award is the highest honor given by NIB to a professional or volunteer who has championed employment of people who are blind. Dr. Irwin worked with other leaders toward the formation of NIB.

Photo: Pictured left to right: Gary Krump, NIB board chairman; 2013 R.B. Irwin Award winner Jim Kutsch, president and CEO, The Seeing Eye, and former NIB board chairman; and Kevin Lynch, president and CEO, NIB.

## NIB Named to Best Nonprofits List

NIB was named one of the nation’s best nonprofits for which to work by The NonProfit Times. The “Best Nonprofits To Work For” list identifies, recognizes and honors the 50 best places of employment in the nonprofit industry. NIB was ranked #15 on the overall list, and #7 among medium-sized organizations with 50 to 249 employees. The 2013 “Best Nonprofits To Work For” study is a comprehensive assessment of how employees perceive their jobs, covering topics that range from leadership and compensation, to teamwork and work-life balance.

Photo: NPT’s Best Nonprofits to Work for-2013 Logo

## Recognizing 50 Years of Service

A special award in recognition of 50 years of volunteer service was presented to Abram Claude, Jr., who served as secretary-treasurer, vice chairman and chairman during his tenure on the Board from 1963 to 1994.

When Claude retired from the Board, he was elected as an honorary lifetime director, an honor held by only two other individuals in NIB’s history. He is a past recipient of the R. B. Irwin Award, and was appointed by President George W. Bush to the U.S. AbilityOne Commission® as a private-citizen representative.

Photo: Abram Claude, honorary lifetime director, NIB Board of Directors, was honored with the Crystal Flag award in recognition of his 50 years of volunteer service to support the mission of NIB.

# INNOVATE

While NIB maintained a steady focus in 2013 on providing outstanding customer support and delivering quality products and services, the organization faced the challenge of adapting to a very different and dynamic business environment. The successful achievement of its primary mission – to create jobs and build careers for people who are blind – called for innovative tactics.

Maximizing AbilityOne Sales: NIB worked closelywith the U.S. AbilityOne Commission® and federal government customers to strengthen compliance and minimize purchasing of “essentially the same” items.

Developing New Products: NIB developed 138 new projects in FY 2013, including products in the office; janitorial/sanitation; and maintenance, repair and operations product lines, as well as services projects. Building Services Business: NIB increased sales in the services sector by 15%, supporting customers through Contract Management Support, Section 508 Assurance, contact center operations and other business services.

## New Products in FY 2013

Examples of new products include:

* Optical sensor mouse with a high-definition tracker, produced by LC Industries in Durham, North Carolina
* Lanyard with breakaway connection, safe for use in areas with machinery, produced by West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind in San Angelo
* Privacy filters, ideal for use in high-security areas, developed through a partnership between Beyond Vision in Milwaukee and 3M
* Vehicle cleaners and protectants, a new line launched through a co-branding project of VisionCorps (Susquehanna Association for the Blind and Vision Impaired) in Pennsylvania and Zep
* Safety helmets, complying with national safety standards for head protection, produced by Keystone Blind Association in Pennsylvania for the General Services Administration
* LED safety flares, sponsored by the Defense Logistics Agency and produced by the Lighthouse for the Blind of Fort Worth.

## CMS Program Returns Dollars to Government

Since the Contract Management Support (CMS) program launched in 2009, the program has identified more than $534 million, which federal government customers were able to recoup; provided more than 140,000 ready-to-close contracts; achieved an accuracy rate of higher than 99 percent; and created

135 new positions for people who are blind or have severe disabilities, 27 of whom are wounded warriors or disabled veterans. In FY 2013, NIB created 25 new contract closeout positions for people who are blind, providing services for customers such as:

* Defense Logistics Agency, with several commands supported by Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Virginia Industries for the Blind and The Lighthouse for the Blind Inc. in Seattle
* Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland, supported by Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind in Washington, D.C.

Photo: Andrew Thomas, CMS specialist, San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind in Texas.

Quote: “I salute NIB for its successes in creating and diversifying career opportunities, which have empowered thousands of people with vision loss to achieve their full vocational potential.”

— Hon. Edolphus (Ed) Towns

Former member of the U.S. House of Representatives and AbilityOne Congressional Champion

## Section 508 Assurance Ensures Accessibility

NIB offers Section 508 Assurance services to address software, systems and website accessibility and usability conformance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the web content accessibility guidelines. Under new Section 508 contracts in FY 2013, Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, in Washington, D.C., provides testing as a subcontractor for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Transportation Security Administration.

Photo: Filomon Rosa works in Business Services at Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind, one of NIB’s associated agencies providing Section 508 Assurance services.

## 2013 Peter J. Salmon Employee of the Year Award

Gerald Jones

2013 Peter J. Salmon Employee of the Year Award

Lions Volunteer Blind Industries, Morristown, Tennessee

Progressive macular degeneration made it difficult for Gerald Jones to continue his career as an electrician. Since joining Lions Volunteer Blind Industries (VBI) four years ago as a packer, Jones soon became the leader of the mattress department. Today Jones is the lead employee in the paper towels department. He maintains all production records, from order to shipment, and oversees daily timesheet records. His goal is to become a department supervisor at VBI. The Peter J. Salmon Employee of the Year Award honors employees who excel in their positions at NIB associated agencies. Dr. Salmon was instrumental in the passage of the Wagner-O’Day Act in 1938 and the formation of NIB.

Photo: 2013 Peter J. Salmon Employee of the Year Award winner Gerald Jones, Lions Volunteer Blind Industries, Morristown, Tennessee.

Quote: "I lost my eyesight when I was 14, and lived a life of hard work with no insurance, nothing. But when I came to Volunteer Blind they changed everything."

— Gerald Jones Lead production employee, Lions Volunteer Blind Industries

## Outreach to Wounded Warriors

The NIB Wounded Warrior Program provides one-on-one support to wounded veterans at military hospitals and at military job fairs, sharing information about training, internships and job opportunities at NIB and its network of associated agencies. At the 68th National Convention of the Blinded Veterans Association, NIB staff participated in Operation Peer Support, visiting with blinded veterans of every conflict from World War II to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. The Inland Northwest Lighthouse in Spokane (satellite of The Lighthouse for the Blind Inc. in Seattle) exhibited at the conference and hosted an agency tour for visitors to observe the manufacture of wall boards and hanging file folders.

Photo: Pictured left to right at the Blinded Veterans Association conference: Mark Wilson, U.S. Army veteran; Ned Rupp, veterans affairs specialist, NIB; Chris Rader, U.S. Marine Corps veteran; Laura Russell, executive assistant, NIB.

## Reengineering Work Environments

During visits at 24 associated agencies, NIB’s rehabilitation engineering team developed ways to increase the number of jobs employees who are blind can perform. For example, at West Texas

Lighthouse for the Blind, modifications to the lanyard press enabled individuals who are blind to operate equipment previously only accessible to sighted employees.

# DIVERSIFY

Challenged by the need to diversify its business, NIB aggressively pursued opportunities outside of the AbilityOne® Program in FY 2013, forging new partnerships in commercial and state-use markets.

## Leveraging Experience for the Commercial Textile Market

NIB is capitalizing on the opportunity to take the skills and expertise gained in the federal government market and apply them to the commercial market, particularly in niche areas such as textile manufacturing. NIB and its associated agencies have gained valuable experience producing high-quality, durable apparel and other outdoor gear to meet the exacting specifications of the U.S. military, including uniforms, protective equipment and other accessories.

* Sole Source Subcontract: NIB is a subcontractor to PolyHD LLC to produce Performance Wear T-Shirts, made with fabric that is knitted, dyed and finished in the United States. PolyHD holds the private Magellan label contract with Academy Sports and Outdoors stores in the Midwest and South and is seeking other opportunities with major retailers. Employees at Industries of the Blind in Greensboro, North Carolina, and Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind are cutting and sewing the shirts, fulfilling orders for approximately 175,000 shirts annually. As sales increase, more NIB associated agencies will produce the shirts. PolyHD wants NIB to be its sole source producer for this product.
* New Co-Brand Agreement: NIB identified and approached eight internationally-recognized brands with a proposal to develop an exclusive line of high-end bags, such as backpacks and duffel and messenger bags. Upon selection of a co-branding partner, NIB plans to release a line in 2014.

## Building Relationships with Commercial Primes

The U.S. AbilityOne Commission® and Northrop Grumman Corporation jointly hosted a regional networking event in Redondo Beach, California, in March 2013. The event provided an opportunity for nonprofit agencies associated with NIB and SourceAmerica™ to meet directly with corporate partners. Staff from The Lighthouse for the Blind Inc. in Seattle participated in the nonprofit agency panel, highlighting the success of their longterm partnership with Boeing. Other NIB agencies participating were RLCB Inc., Raleigh, North Carolina; Junior Blind of America, Los Angeles; Industries for the Blind, Milwaukee; and Alphapointe, Kansas City, Missouri. The networking event provided quality one-onone time with several major commercial prime contractors in the United States, including Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon and General Dynamics Gulfstream.

Photo: Attendees at the AbilityOne and Northrop Grumman networking event.

Quote: “National Industries for the Blind is a tireless leader committed to removing barriers of participation for the blind and visually impaired, thus making this country better for them and for all Americans.”

— Hon. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA12)

Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives

## NIB Lands Commercial Contact Center Services Contract

NIB signed a five-year contract with consulting and training company, Fresh Revenues, to enhance the company’s telephone “mystery shopping” services, a critical component for measuring training and coaching effectiveness. Fresh Revenues is supported by 10 part-time employees who are blind or visually impaired.

## State-Use Programs Open New Markets

Many of NIB’s associated agencies provide products and services to state government agencies and NIB is exploring state-use programs for new business opportunities.

* NIB Manages Program in New York: In December 2012, NIB assumed the day-to-day management of the New York State Preferred Source Program (NYSPSP) for People Who Are Blind, a state-mandated initiative to create and sustain employment opportunities for New Yorkers who are blind or visually impaired employed at nine affiliated nonprofit agencies. State and local agencies are required to purchase certain products and services produced by the New York nonprofits, employing more than 400 people who are blind or visually impaired. NIB enhanced the online catalog of more than 1,500 products and services to streamline the ordering process for customers: www.NYSPSP.org.
* Products Added to Florida’s Program: NIB’s strategic associated nonprofit agency in Port Richey, Florida − Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind (LVIB) − received its first product order for Meter Mist fragrance canisters from the Florida Department of Transportation. The products were added to the RESPECT Program, Florida’s state-use program, and are available for purchase by all agencies or colleges in the state. LVIB employees assemble and package the Meter Mist products. NIB is working with LVIB and other associated agencies in Florida to add additional products to the program.

Photo: Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind (LVIB), Port Richey, Florida, was recognized for its graduation from NIB’s strategic market development initiative. Sylvia Perez, CEO of LVIB, accepts award presented by Kevin Lynch, NIB president and CEO.

## Open for Business: New Base Supply Centers

The first AbilityOne® Base Supply Center (BSC) opened in 1995, offering government customers thousands of high-quality, competitively priced SKILCRAFT® and other name brand products in a convenient, retail environment, as well as Hazmat, Individual Equipment Element and other services. In FY 2013, the BSC network grew to 150 stores on military bases and in government offices nationwide with the addition of four new retail locations:

* Barnes Federal Building, Boston; operated by Industries for the Blind - Milwaukee
* Keesler Air Force Base, Biloxi, Mississippi; operated by LC Industries Inc.
* Office of Naval Intelligence, Suitland, Maryland; operated by Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind
* Securities and Exchange Commission, Washington, D.C.; operated by Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind

These openings are encouraging news for the BSC program in a difficult economic environment and are a testament to the value they bring to federal government and military customers around the country.

Photo: Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind in North Carolina opened its 18th AbilityOne Base Supply Center at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington, D.C., in January 2013.

## 2013 Milton J. Samuelson Career Achievement Award

Christian Gorshing

2013 Milton J. Samuelson Career Achievement Award

NewView Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Christian Gorshing wanted to be an accountant ever since she was in high school. She graduated from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in 2001 with a bachelor’s degree in accounting, and struggled to find work due to her visual disability until she heard of NewView Oklahoma. She landed a job at the agency as a warehouse clerk at Tinker Air Force Base in 2005, then moved up to accounts payable as payroll clerk, then purchasing specialist. When NewView reorganized its accounting department last year, Gorshing was promoted to accounting supervisor. Her goal is to become the chief financial officer of NewView.

The Milton J. Samuelson Career Achievement Award is given to individuals who demonstrate career advancement at an NIB associated agency or in the private sector. Samuelson championed upward mobility and placement programs for people who are blind.

Photo: Pictured left to right: Gary Krump, NIB board chairman; Ramona Samuelson, wife of the late Milton J. Samuelson; Chad Gorshing; 2013 Milton J. Samuelson Career Achievement Award winner Christian Gorshing, NewView Oklahoma, Oklahoma City; and Kevin Lynch, president and CEO, NIB.

## Business Leaders Program Builds Careers

NIB’s Business Leaders Program, launched in 2003, recognizes how leadership development in today’s business workforce is key to enhancing the personal and economic independence of people who are blind. The program offers five tracks for professional development and two-thirds of NIB’s associated agencies have participated in at least one track.

* Fellowship for Leadership Development – 15 fellows completed since 2003
* Business Management Training – 79 students graduated since 2004 and 75% have earned at least one promotion
* Leaders At All Levels – 6,850 employees trained since 2005 in up to eight different modules
* Business Basics – 354 individuals enrolled since 2007
* Effective Supervision: The Essentials – 55 supervisors and 49 coaches participated since 2010

In FY 2013, 16 employees who are blind were promoted as a result of their participation in the program. Many employees are taking the skills gained through the Business Leaders Program and other experiences to advance their careers, and in some cases, land government or private-sector jobs.

Quote: “This [75th anniversary] milestone is a testament to the hard work and dedicated service of the organizations involved with NIB in providing for those who are blind and visually impaired.”

— Hon. John A. Boehner (R-OH8)

Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives

# EDUCATE

In 2013, NIB stepped up initiatives for outreach and education among key stakeholders. This included communicating directly with federal agency leaders and elected officials to ensure they understand the AbilityOne® Program and to encourage purchasing through the program to meet business needs.

## Advocates for Leadership and Employment Engage Policymakers

NIB’s Advocates for Leadership and Employment program empowers associated agency employees who are blind with the skills and tools necessary for effective advocacy in their communities nationwide. The inaugural class of 13 Advocates completed its two-year term in December 2013, and the second class of Advocates was announced in the fall.

The Advocates engaged elected office officials in their communities on a wide range of issues that impact opportunities for people who are blind. They arranged agency visits by congressional and local leaders in their districts, were interviewed by local and national media, wrote editorials for local newspapers, and participated in community meetings.

Photo: Advocates for Leadership and Employment with Tony Stephens (pictured at center), NIB public policy and advocacy manager: Misty Stenberg, MidWest Enterprises for the Blind; Blake Lindsay, Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind; Rachel Carver, Outlook Nebraska; Stephens; Nan Magness, Louisiana Association for the Blind; Stephen Comency, Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment; Toni Fraser, Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind; and Courtney Williams, Lions Volunteer Blind Industries.

Quote: “The Advocates program is a win-win for the employees, the agencies and their communities.

National Industries for the Blind plays an integral role in the economic and personal development of persons who are blind in our nation . . . I applaud the work that you are doing for our nation and for our great state.”

— Hon. Harry Reid (D-NV)

Majority Leader, U.S. Senate

## Public Policy Forum: Strength in Numbers on Capitol Hill

Leaders from NIB’s associated nonprofit agencies came to Washington, D.C., to meet with elected officials during the 2013 NIB/NAEPB Public Policy Forum, held May 14- 16. The forum’s theme, “Opening Doors to Opportunity Through Employment,” was demonstrated by employees who are blind, sharing stories in their own words with members of Congress and Capitol Hill staffers, educating legislators on the AbilityOne® Program and the impact of sequestration on employment in their home districts.

The forum focused on the challenges NIB associated agencies face because of federal budget issues. During more than 125 Capitol Hill meetings, NIB associated agency representatives called on Congress to “lead by example” by purchasing SKILCRAFT® and other products sold through the AbilityOne Program for their offices.

Photo: The Ohio delegation at the U.S. Capitol, pictured left to right: Betsy Baugh, shared services director, fund development and community relations, Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI); Robin Usalis, CEO, Clovernook Center; Carmelita Harvill, utility employee, Clovernook Center; Richard Huffman, inflight assembler, CABVI; Scott DeHart, human resources specialist, CABVI; and John Mitchell, executive director, CABVI, and president, NAEPB.

## Second Annual Grassroots Forum Takes Root

NIB associated agencies across the country further strengthened their grassroots advocacy efforts by holding events throughout the month of August, when congressional members were on recess in their home districts. Built around the theme, “Building Partnerships, Expanding

Opportunities,” events during the second annual NIB/NAEPB Grassroots Forum enabled associated agencies to highlight products and services they provide for customers and how they create a wide range of jobs for people who are blind.

During the forum, 25 events were held with elected officials and their staff members at 13 NIB associated agencies, from Seattle to Pittsburgh, and Dallas to Kalamazoo. Agencies also engaged in the Grassroots Forum social media campaign on Facebook and Twitter. All agencies were equipped with an NIB Grassroots Advocacy Toolkit that offered advice and guidelines to build momentum and interest in Grassroots Forum activities and messaging about employment opportunities for people who are blind.

Photos:

1. Congressman Pete Gallego (D-TX23) tried out a sewing machine in the textiles department at the San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind in Texas.
2. Misty Steinberg, public policy liaison at MidWest Enterprises for the Blind, Kalamazoo, Michigan, with Rep. Fred Upton (R-MI6) during his visit to the agency.
3. Rep. Patrick McHenry (R-NC10); Randy Buckner, director of operations at Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind’s Asheville facility in North Carolina; and Tony West, sewing machine operator in the textiles department.
4. Dennis Steiner, president and CEO of VisionCorps (Susquehanna Association for the Blind and Vision Impaired), Lancaster, Pennsylvania, shows Rep. Pat Meehan (R-PA7) a chin strap that VisionCorps employees assemble for the U.S. military.

# U.S. ABILITYONE COMMISSION

## NIB Agencies and Quality Work Environment Processes Continually Improve

The Quality Work Environment (QWE) initiative, launched by the U.S. AbilityOne Commission® in January 2010, helped many NIB associated agencies realize tremendous improvements in their organizations in 2013. Highlights include:

* QWE Outstanding Achievement Award recipient, Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment of Binghamton, New York, utilized Employment Practices Implementation Committee (EPIC) team members for the process of hiring new staff in senior-level roles.
* Virginia Industries for the Blind’s first QWE action plan implementation yielded mentorship and tuition reimbursement programs.
* The South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind team implemented their first QWE action plan – creating a strong culture through celebrations, contests and a daily radio show.
* Texture strips in NewView Oklahoma’s floors help employees easily navigate to different departments throughout the agency.

The most significant improvement was simplification of the self-assessment tool, which enabled agencies such as Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Cincinnati to create an action plan in one day.

## Commission’s Microsite Recognizes Wagner-O’Day Act Anniversary

The U.S. AbilityOne Commission launched a microsite to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Wagner-O’Day Act. The “75 Years, 75 Reasons AbilityOne Works” site features past and present successes, including profiles of several NIB associated agency employees and customer contracts: www.abilityone.gov/75.

## Publications Focus on AbilityOne Program

The final edition of MarkeTips magazine, published by the General Services Administration in September 2013, focused on “AbilityOne - It Works!” The magazine’s primary audience is federal acquisition specialists and procurement professionals. Also published in the fall was AbilityOne magazine, the Commission's annual publication that coincides with National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) in October. The publication is distributed to federal government customers.

## NIB Honors Former Commission Member

Kevin Lynch, NIB president and CEO, honored former U.S. AbilityOne Commission member Dr. Carol Lowman, deputy to the commanding general, Army Contracting Command, Department of the Army, at the Commission meeting on July 11, 2013.

Dr. Lowman served as the Department of the Army representative on the Commission from October 2011 through August 2012.

NIB recognized Dr. Lowman’s efforts to further NIB’s mission to enhance opportunities for economic and personal independence of persons who are blind. As a result of her leadership, Contract Management Support (CMS) is a well-established line of business for the AbilityOne® Program. Since 2009, 135 employees who are blind or have severe disabilities have been employed through CMS.

Photos: 1. NIB President and CEO Kevin Lynch presents a plaque to Dr. Carol Lowman, deputy to the commanding general, Army Contracting Command, Department of the Army.

2. Pictured left to right for presentation of 2013 Quality Work Environment Outstanding Achievement

Award to Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment (A.V.R.E.), Binghamton, New York: Kelly Storm, board chair, A.V.R.E.; Brian Hurley, workforce relations program director, NIB; Katie Humphreys, Employment Practices Implementation Committee (EPIC) team chair, A.V.R.E.; Kevin Lynch, president and CEO, NIB.

# 2013 HIGHLIGHTS

NIB worked closely with its 93 associated nonprofit agencies to overcome obstacles in a challenging business environment throughout FY 2013. As a result, people who are blind across the nation have found employment and opportunities for career growth.

* 328 New employment opportunities for people who are blind
* 5,571 People who are blind employed at NIB and its associated agencies
* 5.4M Hours worked by people who are blind at NIB associated agencies
* 158,600 People who are blind who received rehabilitation services provided by NIB associated agencies
* 519 People who are blind promoted or who obtained competitive positions with NIB associated agencies or other organizations

# 2013 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## Statement of Financial Position

*As of September 30, 2013 (Dollars in Thousands)*

### Assets

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Cash and cash equivalents | $ 2,911 |
| Investments | 27,445 |
| Receivables, net | 27,166 |
| Deposits and prepaid expenses | 669 |
| Property and equipment, at cost less accumulated depreciation | 4,013 |
| **TOTAL ASSETS** | **$ 62,204** |

### Liabilities and Net Assets

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Liabilities | $31,129 |
| Net assets ($136 temporarily restricted) | 31,075 |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS** | **$ 62,204** |

### Statement of Activities

For the 12 months ended September 30, 2013 (Dollars in Thousands)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Fees from associated agencies | $ 27,571 |
| Gross profit on e-commerce sales | 2,201 |
| Other income | 3,990 |
| Total revenue | 33,762 |
| Total expenses | 33,686 |
| Change in net assets | 76 |
| Net assets at beginning of year | 30,999 |
| **NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR** | **$ 31,075** |

*\*Summarized from audited financial statements*

# NATIONAL INDUSTRIES FOR THE BLIND ASSOCIATED NONPROFIT AGENCIES

ALABAMA

* Alabama Industries for the Blind

Talladega and Birmingham, AL

ARIZONA

Arizona Industries for the Blind

* Phoenix, AZ

Southern Arizona Association for the

* Visually Impaired

Tucson, AZ

ARKANSAS

* The Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind

Little Rock, AR

CALIFORNIA

* Earle Baum Center of the Blind Inc.

Santa Rosa, CA

* Junior Blind of America

Los Angeles, CA

* Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Oakland and San Francisco, CA

* Lions Center for the Blind

Oakland, CA

* Valley Center for the Blind

Fresno, CA

DELAWARE

* Delaware Industries for the Blind

New Castle, DE

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

* Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind

Washington, DC and Riverdale and Silver Spring, MD

FLORIDA

* Center for the Visually Impaired Inc.

Daytona Beach, FL

* Florida Center for the Blind Inc.

Ocala, FL

* Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches Inc.

West Palm Beach, FL

* Lighthouse Works!

Orlando, FL

* Lighthouse for Visually Impaired and Blind

Port Richey, FL

* Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind

Tampa, FL

GEORGIA

* Center for the Visually Impaired

Atlanta, GA

* Georgia Industries for the Blind

Bainbridge, Albany and Griffin, GA

* Vision Rehabilitation Services of Georgia Inc.

Smyrna, GA

HAWAII

* Ho'opono Workshop for the Blind

Honolulu, HI

ILLINOIS

* The Chicago Lighthouse for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

Chicago, IL

INDIANA

* Bosma Enterprises

Indianapolis, IN

KANSAS

* Envision Inc.

Kansas City and Wichita, KS

LOUISIANA

* Blind Labor Training Center Inc.

Bastrop, LA

* Louisiana Association for the Blind

Shreveport, LA

* The Lighthouse for the Blind in New Orleans Inc.

Baton Rouge, Crystal Springs, Gulfport and New Orleans, LA

MAINE

* Lighthouse Industries of Maine Inc.

Portland, ME

MARYLAND

* Blind Industries and Services of Maryland

Baltimore, Cumberland and Salisbury, MD

MASSACHUSETTS

* The Carroll Center for the Blind Inc.

Newton, MA

MICHIGAN

* MidWest Enterprises for the Blind Inc.

Kalamazoo, MI

* Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Grand Rapids, MI

MISSISSIPPI

* Mississippi Industries for the Blind

Jackson and Meridian, MS

MISSOURI

* Alphapointe

Kansas City, MO

* The Lighthouse for the Blind

Berkeley and St. Louis, MO

NEBRASKA

* Outlook Nebraska Inc.

Omaha, NE

NEVADA

* Blind Center of Nevada Inc.

Las Vegas, NV

NEW JERSEY

* Bestwork Industries for the Blind Inc.

Runnemede, NJ and Philadelphia, PA

* Cambridge Industries for the Visually Impaired

Somerset, NJ

* New Jersey Association of the Deaf-Blind Inc.

Somerset, NJ

NEW MEXICO

* New Mexico Commission for the Blind

Albuquerque, NM

NEW YORK

* Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired –Goodwill Industries of Greater Rochester Inc.

Rochester, NY

* Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment Inc.

Binghamton, NY

* Aurora of Central New York

Syracuse, NY

* Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Utica, NY

* Elizabeth Pierce Olmsted, M.D. Center for the Visually Impaired

Buffalo, NY

* Lighthouse International

New York, NY

* New York City Industries for the Blind Inc.

Brooklyn, NY

* Northeastern Association of the Blind at Albany

Albany, NY

* Southern Tier Association for the Visually Impaired

Elmira, NY

* Visionary Media

New York, NY

* VISIONS/Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

New York, NY

NORTH CAROLINA

* Industries of the Blind Inc.

Greensboro, NC

* LC Industries Inc.

Durham, NC; Louisville, KY; Daytona, FL; and Ellisville, Hazlehurst, Jackson, Natchez, Sanitorium, Tupelo and Whitfield, MS

* Lions Industries for the Blind Inc.

Kinston, NC

* Lions Services Inc.

Charlotte, NC

* RLCB Inc.

Raleigh, NC

* Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind Inc.
* Winston-Salem and Asheville, NC and Mayaguez, PR

OHIO

* Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Cincinnati, OH

* Cleveland Sight Center

Cleveland, OH

* Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired
* Cincinnati, OH and Memphis, TN

OKLAHOMA

* NewView Oklahoma Inc.
* Oklahoma City, OK

OREGON

* Blind Enterprises of Oregon
* Portland, OR

PENNSYLVANIA

* Blind and Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh
* Homestead, PA
* Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Chester, PA

* Chester County Branch Inc. Pennsylvania Association for the Blind

Coatesville, PA

* ForSight Vision

York, PA

* Keystone Vocational Services Inc.

Sharon, PA

* North Central Sight Services Inc.

Williamsport, PA

* VisionCorps (Susquehanna Association for the Blind and Vision Impaired)

Lancaster, Philadelphia and Somerset, PA

* Washington-Greene County Branch Pennsylvania Association for the Blind

Washington, PA

* Westmoreland County Blind Association

Greensburg and Uniontown, PA

RHODE ISLAND

* IN-SIGHT

Warwick, RI

TENNESSEE

* Ed Lindsey Industries for the Blind Inc.

Nashville, TN

* Lions Volunteer Blind Industries Inc.

Johnson City and Morristown, TN

TEXAS

* Beacon Lighthouse Inc.

Wichita Falls, TX

* Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind Inc.

Dallas, TX

* El Paso Lighthouse for the Blind

El Paso, TX

* East Texas Lighthouse for the Blind

Tyler, TX

* Houston Industries for the Blind

Houston, TX

* Tarrant County Association for the Blind

Fort Worth, TX

* San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind

San Antonio, TX

* South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind

Corpus Christi and Victoria, TX

* The Lighthouse of Houston

Houston, TX

* Travis Association for the Blind
* Austin, TX
* West Texas Lighthouse for the Blind

San Angelo, TX

UTAH

* Utah Industries for the Blind

Salt Lake City, UT

VIRGINIA

* Virginia Industries for the Blind

Charlottesville and Richmond, VA

WASHINGTON

* The Lighthouse for the Blind Inc.

Seattle and Spokane, WA

WEST VIRGINIA

* The Seeing Hand Association Inc.

Wheeling, WV

WISCONSIN

* Associated Industries for the Blind Inc.

Milwaukee, WI

* Industries for the Blind Inc.

West Allis and Janesville, WI

* Wiscraft Inc.

Milwaukee, WI

# NIB Board of Directors

* Chairman of the Board

The Honorable Gary J. Krump, Esq.\*

Senior Consultant

Cassidy & Associates

Washington, DC

* Vice Chairman of the Board

Ronald Tascarella\*

Senior Vice President and

Chief Credit Officer

PathFinder Bank

Oswego, NY

* Secretary

Kristin Graham Koehler, Esq.

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Jorge Asef-Sargent, CPA\*

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Brooklyn, NY

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Director, Corporate Development

Lockheed Martin Corporation

Bethesda, MD

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3M

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Durham, NC

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Basking Ridge, NJ

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Founder and Chief Executive Officer

Strategic Community Intervention

Rochester, NY

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Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Cincinnati, OH

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Consultant

Akerman Senterfitt

Washington, DC

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Dallas, TX

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USA (Ret)

President

Proctor & Boone, LLC

Clifton, VA

* Frederick J. Puente

President

Blind Industries and Services of Maryland

Baltimore, MD

* Dennis L. Steiner\*

President and Chief Executive Officer

VisionCorps (Susquehanna Association for the Blind and Vision Impaired)

Lancaster, PA

* Janet P. Szlyk, Ph.D.

President and Executive Director

The Chicago Lighthouse for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

Chicago, IL

*\*Executive Committee member*

* Assistant Secretary

Mary Jane Surrago

Councilwoman

Glen Rock, NJ

* Honorary Lifetime Director

Abram Claude, Jr.

North Salem, NY

Photo: Seated, left to right: Szlyk, Perkins, Costlow, Tascarella, Krump, Koehler, Asef- Sargent, Morin, Branch. Standing, left to right: Mitchell, Puente, Steiner, Jablonski, Proctor, Hudson, Council, Johnson, Bland, Chew, Hanye.

Quote: “As we take care of our customers, deliver quality products and services, and adapt to a very dynamic business environment, we remain focused on our primary mission – to facilitate the creation of quality employment for people who are blind.”

— Kevin A. Lynch

President and Chief Executive Officer

National Industries for the Blind

# NIB Executive Team

* Kevin A. Lynch

President and Chief Executive Officer

* Angela Hartley

Executive Vice President and Chief Program Officer

* Steven T. Brice

Vice President andChief Financial Officer

* Thomas A. Panek

Vice President, Relationship Management

* John Qua

Vice President, Services

* Marie-France Vareilles

Vice President, Products

* Carrie Laney

Executive Director, New York

State Preferred Source Program for People Who Are Blind

# 1938-2013 RECOGNIZING 75 YEARS

## SETTING THE STAGE 1917 – 1938

1917

Peter J. Salmon joins The Industrial Home for the Blind in Brooklyn, New York, later becoming executive director. He envisions a market for products made by people who are blind.

1921

M.C. Migel helps to launch American Foundation for the Blind and serves as its first president. Years later, he asks his friend, U.S. Senator Robert F. Wagner from New York, to introduce a bill that would establish the federal government as a steady market for industries employing people who are blind.

1929

Prominent educator Robert B. Irwin is appointed executive director of American Foundation for the Blind. He works with Salmon and Migel to lobby for passage of legislation to create stable employment for people who are blind.

## THE BIRTH OF NIB (1938-1939)

1938

Rep. Caroline Love Goodwin O’Day and Sen. Robert F. Wagner, both from New York, co-sponsor the Wagner-O’Day Act.

JUNE 25, 1938

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the Wagner-O’Day Act into law.

AUGUST 10, 1938

NIB is incorporated.

1938

Chester C. Kleber becomes NIB’s first general manager.

1939

In NIB’s first full year, people who were blind produced 348,768 wet mops, 52,306 corn brooms, 589 deck swabs, 126 sanitary swabs, and 2,997 cocoa mats. This generated $220,000 in government sales and created steady jobs for hundreds of people who are blind.

## WARTIME PRODUCTION SPIKE (1940-1946)

1940

During WWII, NIB associated agencies produced 17 million mailbags, 21 million mops, 41 million pillowcases, creating 1,000 jobs for people who are blind.

## EXPANDING REACH (1947-1967)

1952

NIB launches SKILCRAFT®, the unifying brand name for quality products made by people who are blind.

## NEW ENDEAVORS (1968-1979)

1969

NIB begins a project to produce 70 million pens per year for GSA, marking NIB’s entry into production of a wide variety of writing instruments and other office products, and creating 125 new jobs for people who are blind.

1971

Senator Jacob K. Javits of New York sponsors legislation to include people who are severely disabled and the provision of services. The law is renamed the Javits- Wagner-O’Day Act.

## INCREASING SOPHISTICATION (1980-1997)

1980s

Assistive technologies and new manufacturing processes enable people who are blind to produce a wide range of new products and provide services.

1991

NIB associated nonprofit agencies join forces to meet the needs of the nation’s military in the Persian Gulf War.

OCTOBER 11, 1995

First Base Supply Center opens at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, further diversifying careers for people who are blind in the retail environment.

## NIB’s IMPACT (1998-2013)

2000

NIB creates the first online source for purchasing products.

2008

Kevin Lynch becomes NIB’s president and CEO. Joining NIB in 1994, his career at NIB and at some of its associated agencies spans more than 30 years.

2013

NIB and its associated agencies recognize the 75th Anniversary of the Wagner-O’Day Act and formation of NIB.

## Mission:

To enhance the opportunities for economic and personal independence of persons who are blind, primarily through creating, sustaining and improving employment.

## Vision:

Visual impairment is not a barrier to employment.

## Values:

We are committed to maintaining the highest level of trust and integrity while conducting business with individuals, organizations, private industry and government.

We are committed to conducting business lawfully and ethically with all people who are blind, employees, associated industries, customers and suppliers.

A primary goal of NIB and our associated agencies is to enhance the opportunities for personal and economic independence of people who are blind. We seek to achieve excellence in delivery of service and provision of access, both physical and programmatic.

We are accountable for all our decisions and actions.

We are committed to providing excellent quality, value, competitive prices and superior service to all our customers who use products and services made and/or provided by people who are blind.

We are committed to recognizing the changing needs and preferences of our customers.