



Virginia Industries for the Blind

# The Connect

Volume 8 Spring 2012



## VIB Richmond plant Grand RE Opening

On April 2, 2012 VIB Richmond plant hosted its Grand RE Opening event. This event was held to showcase the Richmond plant, that had been in service since the 1960's.

VIB Richmond was initially set up as a training facility. The plant produces writing instruments, which are purchased by all state agencies. They also manufacture mop handles, package gloves, and spices, and package screen wipes.

VIB Richmond also houses VIB's services. These services include mail sorting and handling, Contract management services CMS for the Ability One program, closing contracts for the federal government. VIB also staffs blind individuals in the Court Debt Collection for the state of Virginia, in Richmond.

The event had a ribbon cutting ceremony, and offered tours of the facility to showcase the work be-

ing done behind closed doors.

Rick Bohrer started the event by thanking all who came, including state agency representatives, local businesses who helped and were patient with the construction, and the special guests and workers who make it all happen.

Commissioner Ray Hopkins also spoke at the event, in regards to the

relationship between VIB and DBVI, and how it has flourished.

The event's honored guest speaker, was Delegate Jennifer McClellan. VIB falls into her district, and she was more than happy to be our guest speaker. McClellan applauded VIB and its quest to provide employment and independent lifestyles for its employees. The Delegate was very receptive and excited to see what VIB was producing within the plant.



Ribbon cutting VIB Richmond plant (right to left, Commissioner Ray Hopkins, Delegate Jennifer McClellan, Rick Bohrer, and Deputy Commissioner James Meehan)

## Mark Center BSC Grand Opening



In volume 6 of The Connect, there was a story about the new Mark Center Base Supply Store. The store is located in the brand new building in the Mark Center area, on the I-395 corridor. The building at full capacity will house around 6,500 government and military personnel.

The store manager is

Gregg Valenti, who was the 2011 Employee of the Year.

The event included a ribbon cutting ceremony down in the store. Commissioner Ray Hopkins provided his words of praise and talked about the opportunities this store held for VIB and DBVI. The building manager, Bryan Kiser, also spoke. The event went well!

## Pentagon APEX Store Awareness event

The VIB APEX store awareness event got rave reviews from the vendors that attended, we were able to articulate to the public the mission of VIB and tell who we are and what we do for many

(who operate within the Pentagon) that were unaware.

Seven new customer relationships were established via the event, all seven have already made in store purchases after previously shopping

online for office supplies.

By having large suppliers (such as HP), credit card customers within the Pentagon are now aware of the relationship and wish to use VIB as a vehicle to make large

purchase orders of toners that were made elsewhere before (meeting schedule for this week with customer to discuss further)

## Defense Health Headquarters (DHHQ)

The VIB Base Supply Center in the Defense Health Headquarters (DHHQ) is located at 7700 Arlington Boulevard, Room 1SW317, Falls Church, VA 22042. This location came as a result our efforts educating cardholders about the Ability One program and VIB. A cardholder that attended one of our

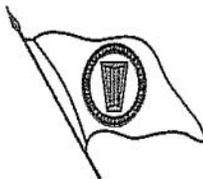
briefings at the Hoffman Government Purchase Card (GPC) training called to ask about this new campus and the possibility of our having a store there. He provided us with a contact name and we followed through and secured the location.

The DHHQ store should open by mid May. It will be operated

by Joe Godwin who was recently promoted to Assistant Manager. Joe has a Bachelors Degree in psychology and is currently working on his Masters in Mental Health Counseling. Joe worked previously at our Pentagon store, Norfolk ServMart and at VIB Oceana. He

will report directly to the Northern Virginia Regional Manager. In addition to Joe, we will have a Floating Store Associate that will work at DHHQ three days a week and at Rosslyn the remaining two days.

The sales floor at DHHQ is 900 square feet and will have between 900 and 1,000 items stocked. As with all of our store locations, the merchandise selection will be tailored to serve the needs of the DHHQ customer.



April 11, 2012

Mr. James Meehan  
Deputy Commissioner  
Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired  
1535 High Street  
Richmond, VA 23220-2302

Dear Mr. Meehan:

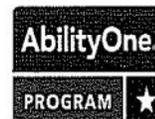
*JIM*

I just want to take this opportunity to personally thank you for hosting my visit last week. It was a pleasure to meet your staff and hear about your Contract Management Services operations. You should take great pride in your dedicated workforce and delighting your customers. I appreciate you realizing our program's goals of increasing employment opportunities and providing a quality work environment for your workforce.

Again, please pass on my thanks to all those who made this such an enjoyable and informative visit for me.

Sincerely,

*Tony*  
J. ANTHONY POLEO  
Chairperson



The U.S. AbilityOne Commission™ is the operating name of the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled, an Independent Agency of the United States Government Established by the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act.

## U.S. Department of State service contract

VIB has been awarded a new Service Contract by NIB. VIB will be responsible for assembling U. S. Department of State High Threat Custom Deployment Kits. Currently the kits are assembled by a commercial com-

pany in Virginia Beach. The new contract, with requirements will be issued to VIB in the next few months. The current kit is made up of 28 different items (ballistic vests, body armor steel plates, Flak jackets, GPS, Military Distress Marker, compass and

a number of other items and issued to U.S. Department of State employees before they deploy overseas. The exact number of new employees and where these employees will perform this work still needs to be determined.



## History of Monticello Rd event

VIB participated in the History of Monticello Road, by hosting an open house at the VIB Charlottesville plant, on April 12. VIB and other business on this historic road, opened their doors to the public, and offered discounts on

food, shed light on what goes on behind closed doors, and provided a peek into operations.

VIB held two sets of tours, and though there weren't many visitors, there was plenty of exposure.

CBS 19 came by

and filmed some of the workers, and took many pictures. That was great, for it was aired on three different news stations, and posted on their website.

VIB was also visited by one of Congressman Robert Hurt's staff members from the district office. We hope to see the Congressman soon!

## MONTICELLO ROAD



Meet Mark and others at Virginia houses for the Blind on April 12.

### EXHIBITION

Photography by Peter Krebs  
April 6-27, 2012

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

Fri 4/6: Opening Reception 6-8 pm  
Sat 4/7: Film Screening: *Still Life with Donuts* (at Soundtrix)  
9 am - noon, Filmmakers' Q&A at 11 am  
Thur 4/12: Virginia Industries for the Blind open house  
1102 Monticello Road, 9-11 am & 1-3 pm  
Tues 4/17: Community Planning Panel 7-9 pm  
In cooperation with AIA Architecture Week

Sun 4/22: Story Sharing and Oral Histories 1-4 pm  
Thur 4/26: Artist Talk with special guests 7-9 pm

Free and open to the public, at the Bridge PVI unless otherwise noted.



209 Monticello Road Charlottesville, Virginia  
Open Tues-Sat, noon-3pm 434-984-5669 www.thebridge.org

## VIB Richmond visited

The Chairman of the Ability One Commission, Tony Poleo visited VIB on Monday afternoon, April 9.

There are now 19 sites covering approximately 52 task orders under the

Ability One Contract Closeout Program with NIB. NIB Services representatives Karen Burns (program administration) and Corionna Canada (contract administration) are due to visit NIB Thursday morning, April 12.



In photo from left to right Jim Meehan, John Qua (NIB), Tony Paleo, Tom Stone, and Doreen Cadigan

# VIRGINIA INDUSTRIES FOR THE BLIND



VIB Charlottesville  
1102 Monticello Rd  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
434-295-5168



VIB Richmond  
1535 High St  
Richmond, VA 23220  
804-786-2056

**Congratulations to all! Thank you for your service and support of the Virginia Industries for the Blind!**

## *Putting in the Time!*

### 50 Years

Arlys Hawks  
Charlottesville

### 25 Years

Annette Lockington  
Charlottesville

### 10 Years

Barbara Herndon/Gregg Valenti  
Richmond / Mark Center

### 35 Years

David Wells  
Charlottesville

### 20 Years

Jim Turner  
Richmond

Veronica Hayes/Donita Daye  
Pentagon / Norfolk

### 30 Years

Larry France  
Diane Hawks  
Charlottesville

### 15 Years

Henry Williams  
Richmond

### 5 Years

Deborah Crandell/Howard Freeman  
Oceana / Richmond



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website  
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