

# SOLUTIONS IN SIGHT

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A Summit to Address the Vision Loss Crisis

## Panels and Panelists

### **Transformative Technology: Access, Collaboration, Innovation**

Technology has an enormous impact on the lives of individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Where will the technology of the future take us and how do we ensure that it is accessible and affordable?

**Moderator: Kara Miller — Host and Executive Editor, Innovation Hub**

As the host of WGBH and PRI's "Innovation Hub," Miller speaks with bold, creative thinkers who are solving today's most pressing issues.

**Suman Kanuganti — Co-Founder and CEO, Aira**

Kanuganti is passionate about startups that have a positive social and economic impact. Aira uses the latest technology to give individuals who are blind or low vision a second set of eyes when needed.

**Erich Manser — Accessibility Tester and Consultant, IBM**

As an accessibility expert, Manser stresses inclusion and empathy, working in research at IBM to ensure that technology can be accessed by all users.

**Bilal Zuberi — Partner, Lux Capital**

Zuberi partners with and invests in entrepreneurs working on big, bold, brave ideas in technology, energy and healthcare.

### **Closing Gaps in Our Healthcare System: The Challenge of Health Care Reform**

By 2030, it is estimated that nearly 1 in 5 Americans will be over 65, and with this will come a sharp increase in the rates of age-related vision loss. Vision loss already costs our economy more than \$51 billion a year – how can the healthcare

system adjust to meet this need, and what can we do to increase awareness of the efficacy of vision rehabilitation?

**Moderator: Audrey Shelto — President, Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of Massachusetts**

Shelto is widely recognized for her expertise in all aspects of health care and her commitment to improving the delivery of services, broadening health coverage, and reducing barriers to care.

**Cathy Holden, COMS—Director of Clinical Operations/Rehabilitation, NewView Oklahoma**

One of only a handful of Orientation and Mobility Specialists in Oklahoma, Holden has personally helped thousands of residents gain more independence after vision loss. She is also a leader in expanding high quality vision rehabilitation services across the state.

**Paul Saner — Commissioner, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind**

Saner’s personal experiences and long history of advocacy make him a strong leader and ambassador for the 30,000 individuals who are legally blind in the Commonwealth.

**Scott Taberner — Chief of Behavioral Health and Supportive Care, MassHealth**

Taberner is leading reforms at MassHealth to better coordinate and integrate care for behavioral health, physical health and long-term services and supports for elders and persons with disabilities.

## **Access to a Full Life: Addressing Mental Health Barriers and Reimagining Services for Active Living**

As the “Baby Boomer” population ages, more and more people will be faced with a vision loss diagnosis, which can lead to depression and social isolation – but it doesn’t have to. How can we ensure that people who are blind or visually impaired have the opportunity to live a full life, staying happy, healthy, and engaged?

**Moderator: Michael Festa, Esq. — State Director of AARP**

Throughout his 25-year public service career, Festa has worked to improve the lives of older adults and people with disabilities.

**Rebecca Alexander — Psychotherapist, Author**

Now a psychotherapist and author, Alexander's memoir *Not Fade Away* details her refusal to let Usher syndrome or a devastating fall keep her from living life to the fullest.

**Alice Bonner, PhD, RN — Secretary, Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs**

Alice Bonner's 30-year career as a clinician, researcher, educator and policy-maker has focused on models of care that promote optimal health, autonomy and quality of life for older adults.

**Ryan Knighton — Author, Screenwriter, Speaker**

An acclaimed author, screenwriter, and speaker, Knighton brings humor and a punk rock aesthetic to the challenges of being a father living with visual impairment.

## **Employment: Strategies to Eliminate Joblessness**

According to the National Federation of the Blind, 62% of individuals who are blind or visually impaired are unemployed, a number that is completely unacceptable. What can be done to make the workplace accessible and to make employers understand the capabilities of workers who are visually impaired?

**Joe Abely — President, The Carroll Center for the Blind**

Abely has a long history with The Carroll Center, having served on the Board since 2004. He brings an astute business mind and management experience from his many years at companies such as LoJack Corporation and Deloitte Haskins & Sells, and in his role as a Director on many corporate and nonprofit boards.

**Bruce Howell — Accessibility Services Coordinator, The Carroll Center for the Blind**

The Accessibility Services team at The Carroll Center specializes in creating accessible user interfaces and web experiences. Howell, who also has a

background in retail banking and business development, works with clients of many kinds to ensure accessibility for their customers.

**Kate Katulak — Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments, Perkins School for the Blind**

Kate teaches several subjects to high school students at Perkins including technology, executive functioning and math. She serves as co-facilitator of Perkins' Pre-Employment Program and helps design curricula across content areas.

**Dave Power — President and CEO, Perkins School for the Blind**

Dave Power has guided growing organizations as an operating executive, board member and advisor for more than 25 years. He is an author, a distinguished teacher, and the parent of a Perkins alumnus.

**Carl Richardson — State House ADA Coordinator**

Richardson collaborates with the Executive branch, legislature, and state agencies which serve the disability community to make the Massachusetts State House fully accessible to all.

**Marla Runyan — Digital Accessibility Consultant/Testing Team Lead, Perkins School for the Blind**

A former world-class American track and field athlete and marathoner, Runyan is also an accessibility expert, teacher, and author.

**Martha Steele — National Trustee and Boston Chapter President, Foundation Fighting Blindness**

Steele recently retired from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health as Deputy Director of the Bureau of Environmental Health. She is an active advocate, volunteer, and birdwatcher.