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**iCanConnect Launches Website to Distribute Communications Technology to People With Vision and Hearing Loss**

 *Perkins and Helen Keller National Center Administer iCanConnect.Org*

Watertown, MA - Americans who have combined vision and hearing loss can now access technology that will allow them to connect with people around the corner and across the world by logging on to [www.iCanConnect.org](http://www.iCanConnect.org).

The newly launched website accommodates users with low vision, people who use screen readers and features video that is both audio-described and closed captioned. From screen enlargement software and videophones, to off-the shelf products that are accessible or adaptable, [www.iCanConnect.org](http://www.iCanConnect.org) offers a vast array of new communications technology. Assessment, training and equipment are available free of charge to those who meet federal eligibility guidelines.

“The launch of the iCanConnect website is a major step forward in the effort to enable people with disabilities to interact with the world as involved, contributing members of society,” said Steven Rothstein, President of Perkins in Watertown, MA. “Perkins’ most famous student, Helen Keller, exemplified the potential of a person who is deaf-blind. We are proud to have a role in the creation of this important website.”

The [www.iCanConnect.org](http://www.iCanConnect.org) launch advances the iCanConnect campaign mission to raise awareness about the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP). Mandated by the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) established this new program to ensure every person with combined hearing and vision loss has access to modern communications tools and the training necessary to use them.

Perkins and the Helen Keller National Center in New York City are overseeing the iCanConnect campaign.

“The mission of the Helen Keller National Center is to enable each person who is deaf-blind to live and work in his or her community of choice,” explains Executive Director Joe McNulty, adding, “The launch of the iCanConnect website accelerates those efforts nationwide.”

The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA), championed in Washington, DC by Congressman Edward J. Markey of Massachusetts and Senator Mark Pryor of Arkansas, acknowledges that advances in technology can revolutionize lives. Nearly one million people in the United States have some combination of vision and hearing loss.

Information about equipment, assessment and training is available online at [www.iCanConnect.org](http://www.iCanConnect.org) or by phone at **1-800-825-4595**. Additional information is available through the FCC at <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/national-deaf-blind-equipment-distribution-program>.

About the Partners

**Perkins**, the first school in the U.S. for students with visual impairments, provides education and services to help build productive, meaningful lives for more than 600,000 children and adults in the U.S. and more than 60 countries worldwide. Founded in 1829, Perkins pursues this mission around the world, in the community and on its campus in Watertown, Massachusetts. Learn more online at [www.Perkins.org](http://www.Perkins.org)

**Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults**, authorized by an Act of Congress in 1967, is committed to enabling each person who is deaf-blind to live and work in his or her community of choice. Headquartered in Sands Point, New York, the Center provides support services for youth and adults who are deaf-blind, their families and the professionals who serve them through a network of field offices throughout the United States. Learn more at <http://www.hknc.org/>.

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