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Restructuring plan announced for AIDB's adult programs

In an effort to redefine its best strategies in coordinating services for deaf and blind individuals, Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind President Dr. Terry Graham has announced a restructuring plan for adult programs.

The new administrative structure organizes all training and employment programs for adults under a branch to be supervised by a vice president for adult programs. Dr. John Mascia, who currently serves as executive director of the Gentry and Regional Center programs. He will serve as interim vice president.

The new organizational plan for adult services will include the Gentry and Regional Center programs in addition to the Alabama Industries for the Blind. All three units currently provide services for adults including assessment, rehabilitation, job coaching, technology training, community support programs and employment. Collaboration with other state and national organizations is also a common thread in AIDB's adult programs.

"Now, more than ever, it is imperative that we coordinate

our resources and our planning strategies in order to ensure that deaf and blind consumers receive the very best and most efficient services AIDB can offer," Graham said. "AIDB is the world's most comprehensive education, service and employment program of its kind, and at times organizational change is needed to take advantage of new leadership and partnership opportunities.

"We have an excellent leadership team in place at AIDB and I am confident that Dr. Mascia will provide energetic and innovative leadership in his expanded role over adult programs," Graham said. "He, along with other administrative team leaders, is extremely consumer driven and committed to helping clients and consumers achieve the best possible outcomes."

Alabama Industries for the Blind will become part of the Adult Program structure as part of the organizational change. The Industries has provided job training and employment for more than 210 blind and deaf adults since 1932.

"Billy Sparkman is executive director of AIB and he

and his team are committed to expanding employment opportunities for consumers with hearing and vision loss and have won recognition by National Industries for the Blind for four years in a row for growth in blind labor," Graham said.

"Collaboration within AIDB programs and with other state and national agencies who share in our mission such as the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services can make our programs even stronger and more focused on improved outcomes for our consumers," said Dr. John Mascia. "Adult services throughout AIDB share many common bonds and goals and I look forward to working together as we develop new partnerships and perhaps better practices that will have a positive impact on deaf and blind adults."

AIDB is the nation's most comprehensive education and service program for children and adults who are deaf, blind and multidisabled. Established in 1858, AIDB includes five Talladega based campuses and a network of regional centers located throughout the state.