



provides vital
resources

to the blind
community

Perkins Library

Fund: 7000-9406

Statewide, over 25,000 individuals with print disabilities - and institutions and organizations providing services to this population - depend on the Perkins and Worcester Talking Book Libraries as the primary source of accessible reading materials for study, work, personal enrichment, intellectual development, and leisure.

Why the Perkins Library is Important

The need for accessible library services is likely to rise steeply due to the so-called “silver tsunami”; vision loss due to macular degeneration, glaucoma, and cataracts correlates strongly with age. By 2020, the population of Americans age 40 and older who are blind is projected to be 70% larger than it was in 2004. Today, the Libraries reach only one-quarter of the estimated 100,000 potential eligible Massachusetts residents. To serve this growing need, more robust public outreach is needed.

What the Perkins Library Would Do with Increased Funding

Timely Material Delivery: Current staff will continue to be able to answer incoming telephone calls, process returned outgoing and incoming materials, duplicate replacement copies of audio books and magazines, and process equipment loans. New braille and audio books will continue to be produced in the Perkins Library Recording Studio and Braille Production Programs.

Newsline Program: This program will continue to be available to the Perkins Library to provide borrowers with access to over 400 national and local newspapers and magazines on a same-day basis, through the use of computerized speech, allowing users to listen to content via a touch-tone telephone, online, or with an iOS app.

Public Information Outreach: There are still an estimated 100,000 potentially eligible users in Massachusetts who don't know the Libraries exist. Continued funding for outreach will allow for an estimated 2,000 individuals to learn about and sign up for the programs and services of the Perkins and Worcester Libraries this year.

Bookshare Access for Massachusetts: Electronic text-to-speech or electronic braille files for over 600,000 books for students, professionals, and anyone utilizing assistive technology to download accessible electronic books and periodicals will continue for registered borrowers. Just one more way to make printed materials accessible for people with print disabilities.

Library Without Walls Outreach Program: Delivery of specialized programs featuring speakers and authors for borrowers statewide via telephone conference calling service. Allows patrons to enjoy and participate in book discussions and interesting presentations on a wide variety of subjects. This program engages borrowers and eliminates the barrier of transportation to participate; all anyone needs is a touch-tone telephone.