



# MetroWest Center for Independent Living, Inc.



## The Carroll Awards *Blind Employee of the Year: Jini Fairley*

At MetroWest Center for Independent Living, we are *extremely* proud of our Director of Services, Jini Fairley. The Carroll Center for the Blind and the MA Commission for the Blind awarded Jini with the "Blind Employee of the Year" award.

This award publicly acknowledges the achievements and contributions to the workforce by a person who is blind or visually impaired. Jini was selected as a person who demonstrates the highest degree of excellence. Jini was also recognized in 2009 when she became a member of the Carroll Society.

MetroWest Center for Independent Living was also recognized as "Employer of the Year for employing and supporting persons who are blind and visually impaired".

In addition to the award, Jini was recognized for her accomplishments by Congressman Joseph Kennedy II, State Representative Ruth Balzar, and State Senator Cynthia Creem.



Jini, Rose and Paul

Jini is a role model for independent living, and the

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importance of employment. As Director of Services, she is a working manager who works directly with consumers and manages staff. Both roles require staying on top of the constantly evolving state and federal regulations and processes, as well as the ever-changing availability of services and housing in the MetroWest area. As a user of assistive technology, she is knowledgeable in the latest devices available.

Jini's advocacy work is equally impressive. She recently served on the Governor's Paratransit Commission which involved many state-wide meetings and significant extra work. She will continue to be involved with this project as it begins the implementation phase. Jini's daily commute is via public transportation and takes her from the MBTA to the MWRTA. She actively participates in her local government as a member of the Disability Commission in Newton.

Jini has a history of exceptional accomplishments. She began her career as a computer programmer and system analyst for IBM and EDS. When her husband's work took the family to Paris for three years, she established the first Chapter of La Leche League in France. They moved back to Newton, and her family grew to 5 children. She was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa and was declared legally blind in 1994. Shortly afterwards, her husband passed away, and Jini was without a husband, without a job, unable to drive, and with five young children. She tried to start a home computer business, but needed to learn how to use computers as a blind person. With support from the MA Commission for the Blind, she attended the Carroll Center's Independent Living and Office Skills Training program and acquired the skills needed for competitive employment. It still took a year before she was hired by the Disability Policy Consortium. (We don't know who did not hire her, but we're glad they made that mistake!) After her employment at DPC, she was hired full time by MWCIL. In addition to her career, she now has five successful adult children, and can enjoy being a grandmother. Awesome!

from,  
Paul Spooner  
Executive Director at MWCIL



All of the awardees

Visit the [Carroll Center website](#) for more information about the award, and to view a video of the event.

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