



## Ramesh's Story

Many small business owners have taken a hit in this downturn economy. Ramesh Tamby, licensed massage therapist, certainly felt the impact when his clientele fell below half of what it was the previous year, but this was not the only obstacle he faced. Ramesh's Deaf-Blind.

Deaf-Blind Specialist, Barbara Rathmell works with the Ohio Deaf-Blind Outreach Program (ODBOP) at the Columbus Speech & Hearing Center. She first met Ramesh about a year ago. "He was in danger of losing his job and ODBOP was contacted by the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) to resolve the issues putting his job at risk," shared Barbara.

Barbara was able to intervene as part of the job retention service. She helped resolve issues by improving the communication between Ramesh and the chiropractor from whom he rented space. Also, previously he could not hear a knock on the door, which made proper customer service a challenge. By providing a doorbell outside Ramesh's massage room that transmits a message to a vibrating pager, he was able to know when a client was waiting at the door.

"The one consistent challenge among our consumers is that the general public is not knowledgeable about Deaf-Blindness," said Barbara. The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissions (NARUC) estimates that 70,000-100,000 people living in the United States are Deaf-Blind.

A new Website was developed to promote Ramesh's business and educate the public on his training and background in massage therapy. He was working very hard with ODBOP to improve his business, and his devotion and efforts resulted in an increase in business and clients.

Sadly, Ramesh passed away recently, but his entrepreneurial spirit serves as an excellent example and inspiration to others. The challenges of Deaf-Blindness can be overcome and dreams can be not only achieved, but exceeded!

Ramesh's family was extremely proud of all of his accomplishments. They are especially thankful for the role ODBOP played in his success. They requested all donations in remembrance of Ramesh be made to Columbus Speech & Hearing Center.

The Ohio Deaf-Blind Outreach Program offers many services to our clients, including communication assessments, recommendations for assistive equipment, job development, seeking, placement, coaching & follow-up, job save recommendations and case management services. ODBOP also offer assessment of needs and necessary training or equipment, professional workshops and in-service trainings.