



# AERODYNAMICS

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of the Blind and Visually Impaired

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## NOW BOARDING

### New Beginnings

By Sara Bennett, Editor

Welcome to AERODYNAMICS! As Editor of the now relaunched AER newsletter for Canadians, I hope that you will find it informative, educational, edifying and, yes, even entertaining at times, not to mention a must-read. But that's not all. If there is something you like or dislike; if you have news about an event, award winner, newly elected Chapter Executive, or simply want to share a resource; if you have an idea for a new article or column; or if you would like to write or be interviewed, please let me know. All feedback and contributions are welcome and of value.

One of my aims for AERODYNAMICS is that it represents as wide a range of AER professionals across Canada as possible. Regardless of where you live or work, your discipline or client group; and regardless of whether you are a student, relatively new to the field, or have decades of experience under your belt, I would like AERODYNAMICS to engage you personally.

What about the name "AERODYNAMICS?" I wanted something distinct for Canada's newsletter, something unique for us as Canadians. I also wanted something reflective of the journey that AER professionals and clients alike undergo during their interactions with each other and, indeed, during their entire lives. AER professionals acquire new skills, improve strategies and adapt techniques in order to teach and support clients. Similarly, those who are blind and visually impaired achieve a goal, become more independent, and move toward realizing their potential. Both travel from point A to point B. While our respective journeys

aren't always smooth, both strive for efficiency and effectiveness--hence, AERODYNAMICS. At the same time, "dynamics" connotes action, interaction, energy, power and evolution, which are all appropriate for our field. Of course, it doesn't hurt either that AERODYNAMICS contains the acronym "AER"!

As 2015 approaches its end, let's celebrate new beginnings, some of which are described in this newsletter. Climb aboard. Let's enjoy the ride together!

## Oh Canada!

Message from the Canadian Representative to the AER International Board of Directors  
By Deborah Gold, National Director of Research and Program Development, CNIB



**Deborah Gold,**  
**AER Board of**  
**Directors**

Just under one year ago, through my position on the AER Board of Directors, I started several initiatives to facilitate communication among Canadian AER members. I wanted to enhance our ability to grow, for AER to be more relevant to Canadians, and to strengthen the connection between AER and its members to the north.

Together with the AER International office, I created a Canadian listserv so that I could communicate with all Canadian members, and so they could communicate with each other. I also set up and hosted four town hall teleconferences across Canada--one national and three regional--so that our members could tell us what they want and need, what has to change, and how they want to go about making a contribution.

The idea for restarting this Canadian newsletter was relayed at one of the town hall meetings, and the listserv continues to be relevant and useful. While there is no official "AER Canada" per se, there continues to be a sense "out there" that there is, so perhaps we are doing something right.

It has been my pleasure to represent Canadians on the AER Board of Directors for the past two years. As of July 2016, however, I will be stepping down from the Board, as I have a number of other things I would like to pursue. I am very pleased and proud that part of my legacy will be bringing back this newsletter and playing a role in the development of AER's Code of Ethics. Of course, there is also the increased communication I mentioned above. But that's not all. I have also lobbied very hard for the AER international Conference 2020 to come to "the true north strong and free."

Meanwhile, I ask you to consider running for the position of Canadian Representative to the AER International Board of Directors. I have found my time on the Board to be fulfilling, educational and fun. You will make new

### Calendar of Events

July 20-24, 2016 – AER  
International Conference,  
Jacksonville, Florida USA

July 19-22, 2017 – AER  
International Orientation &  
Mobility Conference, Pittsburgh,  
Pennsylvania USA

July 25-29, 2018 – AER  
International Conference, Reno,  
Nevada USA

friends and generate a great deal of professional and leadership opportunities for yourself. You will also truly refresh your knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order!

Nomination forms will be available in the spring of 2016, but I think it is a good idea to begin thinking about this opportunity now. Send your questions my way in case I can help you understand the time required or the role any better as you make your decision.

Historically, the Canadian rep position has alternated between a CNIB staff member and another member of the professional community. Thus, if you work outside CNIB, I strongly urge you to consider this opportunity! Or nominate a colleague.

I look forward to seeing the number of Canadian members increase as it becomes ever-more apparent that AER is truly interested in serving and supporting its Canadian professionals. Please tell your colleagues about the benefits of your AER membership!

Should you have any questions related to this article, my role on the AER Board, or anything else with which AER can help you, email me at [deborah.gold@cnib.ca](mailto:deborah.gold@cnib.ca).

## **BUSINESS CLASS**

### **AER Viewpoint Weekly Newsletter Launched in 2015**

AER's new, weekly, online AER Viewpoint newsletter features a mix of AER news and summaries of blindness-related articles. Although AER provides email addresses to the newsletter producer MultiView for distribution of the publication, high-level firewall protection might prevent some Canadian members from receiving the newsletter. Please whitelist the sending address, [aerbvi@multibriefs.com](mailto:aerbvi@multibriefs.com), to make sure it bypasses your Spam folder. Alternatively, you may subscribe directly at <http://multibriefs.com> where you can also access past issues of Viewpoint.

### **AER Executive Director Visits Canada**

News from the Ontario Chapter

By Susan Howe

On October 29, 2015, the Ontario Chapter of AER was delighted and honoured to host Lou Tutt, AER Executive Director, at the CNIB National Braille + Conference in Toronto.

First, he joined AER Ontario members for breakfast, where an informal discussion about AER occurred. The benefits of being an AER member and ways to increase membership were highlighted, as well as the unique needs of Canadian members.

Lou was the noon hour keynote speaker at the CNIB Braille + Conference. In his speech, interspersed with humour and anecdotes, Lou talked about when he was first hired as AER

Executive Director in 2011. At that time, he promised to commit to the three “Rs”: Recruit, Retain and Regain members. And he has continued to follow through with this commitment till today.

AER’s executive director talked about challenges related to the three “Rs”, including AER’s multi-generational members -- the Matures (born 1932-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation Xers (1965-1981), and Millennials (1981-2000). Some are members-to-be or just starting out in the workforce; some are at the height of their careers; while others are either thinking of retirement or are retired already. In order to remain a vital organization, AER needs to adapt to accommodate its multi-generational membership.



**Lou Tutt, AER Executive Director**

During his talk, Lou also recognized Florence Carter who, at the age of 88, is AER Ontario’s oldest long standing member. Later, he presented Florence with a small token in honour of her many years of service and significant contribution to AER and formerly American Association for Workers with the Blind (AAWB).

That afternoon, in an AER-related workshop at the CNIB Braille + Conference, Lou presented a talk on the History, Mission and Future of AER, which generated much discussion.

*Editor’s Note:* The CNIB National Braille + Conference provided two days of workshops, focusing on advocacy and youth. Vision/blindness-related professionals, parents and consumers from across Canada presented sessions on everything from the Unified English Braille Code to household appliances and gadgets; and from smart devices to travel, music therapy and parent support groups. For more information, visit <http://www.cnib.ca>.

## **THE JOURNEY**

### **Cay Holbrook: Finding Strength in Our Collective Voice**

AER Canada Member Profile, adapted from AER Report, Summer 2015

Cay Holbrook, Ph.D., professor, University of British Columbia, joined her first professional association as an undergraduate at Florida State University, where the Association for the Education of the Visually Handicapped (one of AER’s predecessor organizations) had a student chapter. “About 50 students attended each monthly meeting,” she recalls. “We didn’t have email or the internet, so these gatherings were important in helping us understand our work and what it means to be a professional.”



**Cay Holbrook, UBC**

From the beginning, Holbrook has looked to AER for support and growth. “In order to continue as a professional with integrity that comes from lifelong learning, we need a

community that supports us—and oftentimes, AER is that community,” she says. “For example, AER conferences have allowed me to learn the latest news in research and curriculum that inform my daily work. Not only that, I get to network with people who do the same job as I do, and we help each other meet challenges and share techniques.”

AER has allowed Holbrook to join the international voice for advocacy. “I feel like I’m participating in the bigger conversation about services for people who are blind or visually impaired,” she explains. “When we join forces with others at any level, we become more powerful, more likely to be heard. AER is our collective voice.”

Holbrook also values access to professional literature. “The publications available through my AER membership are a crucial resource,” she says. “As a low incidence field, we need to reach out and find the information that others are publishing, and AER is my go-to resource.”

For vision professionals wanting to get involved with AER, Holbrook suggests small actions that can have lasting effects. “Support AER leadership,” she says. “It can be a small gesture, like writing a note of encouragement, or it can be more involved, like financial support or volunteering to serve on a committee or advisory board.”

As members become more involved, they will find a sense of community in AER. “When you join, it might take a while to get a sense of the group’s culture and how your talents fit,” says Holbrook. “But once you figure it out and you get involved with AER, the benefits are invaluable. You begin to meet people who you will interact with on a regular basis. And you become connected to others who share your passion for a single goal: making the world a better place for people who are blind or visually impaired.”

## **ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES**

- Arrived: The Unified English Braille Code (UEB)
- Connections: For information on UEB and training resources, visit the International Council on English Braille at <http://www.iceb.org/>. To update your braille skills to include UEB, visit CNIB at <http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/braille/Pages/Transcribers-UEB-Course.aspx#contentstart> or enroll in The Hadley School for the Blind’s course, Transitioning to Unified English Braille, <http://www.hadley.edu/ShowCourseDetail.asp?courseid=UEB-121>.
- Arrived: E-Learning at Canadian Deafblind Association of Ontario -- Courses for professionals include: Deafblindness and the Role of the Intervenor; Health, Wellness and Aging; Concept Development and Communication; and Methods and Techniques Related to Congenital Deafblindness.
- Connection: For a full list of courses, go to [http://www.cdbaontario.com/elearning/index\\_e.php](http://www.cdbaontario.com/elearning/index_e.php).

# COAST TO COAST

## Canada's "Real Change"

New Liberal Government to Represent All, Including the Disabled

By Sara Bennett

On October 19, 2015, Justin Trudeau's Liberal Party swept to power in Canada's 42<sup>nd</sup> General Election, and it was a truly nationwide victory. From the Atlantic Provinces to Western Canada, Canadians flocked to their local polls to mark their ballots, giving the 2015 General Election the highest voter turnout since 1993.

The Liberal Party's platform spoke to many Canadians, including the disabled. Polls were equipped with magnifiers, accessible candidate lists, tactile/braille templates and sighted assistance for blind and visually impaired voters to mark their ballots. For details about the Liberal Party's platform—including promises to improve home care, save home delivery of mail, and to pass a National Disabilities Act--visit <https://www.liberal.ca/realchange/>.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's Cabinet Ministers are an equal balance of men and women from all over Canada, with varying ethnic backgrounds and levels of political experience. Two are disabled. For information about Carla Qualtrough, Minister for Sport and Persons with a Disability, who is visually impaired and lives in British Columbia, visit <https://carlaqualtrough.liberal.ca/>. For details about Kent Hehr, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, who is paraplegic and lives in Alberta, go to <http://kenthehr.liberal.ca/>.

In early December, when the Speech from the Throne outlining the new Liberal Government's priorities is delivered, we will see how blind and visually impaired Canadians—and those who work with them--will be affected. Can't wait!

AERODYNAMICS, the AER Canada Newsletter, is published four times per year—in March, June, September and December. Please send all items for publication to the Editor at [saralb@sympatico.ca](mailto:saralb@sympatico.ca) by February 25 for the March issue, May 25 for the June issue, August 25 for the September issue, and November 25 for the December issue.

Views herein represent those of the authors and not necessarily those of AER, its Board of Directors, staff, members or Editor. Likewise, any products or services mentioned do not necessarily represent endorsement.

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