



AERODYNAMICS

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NOW BOARDING

"Let's Work Together"

A Message from Canada's New Rep to the AER Board
By Carole Williams, Orientation & Mobility Specialist

I am honoured to have worked in the blindness field for 22 years now and have enjoyed working with a range of clients, from seniors to school-aged children. I am also honoured to be your 2016-2018 Rep to the AER Board of Directors. Let me introduce myself.

My career began at CNIB in 1994 as an Orientation & Mobility Specialist. Later, I also became Coordinator of Client Services, responsible for the supervision of five direct-service staff. After nine years at CNIB, I began my own private contracting business, providing O&M services to places like Mohawk College and several school boards across southern Ontario. Today, I work full-time with the Peel District School Board as Orientation & Mobility Specialist/Accessibility Consultant.

Since 1995, I have attended five AER International Conferences and presented at numerous local conferences across Canada. One of my most important and rewarding experiences is having been an active AER Ontario member for over 21 years, serving as President, Membership Chair and Member-at-Large. Most recently, I was honoured to receive the very prestigious Spungin Fellowship Award at the 2016 American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conference. I am passionate about professional development, staying abreast of current trends in the blindness field, and networking with colleagues from around the world. AER provides these opportunities. If you



Carole Williams

take full advantage of your membership in this outstanding organization, you too will grow and become better educators.

Thank you for exercising your right to vote in this year's AER elections and for choosing me to represent you. As Canadian Rep, I promise to take your ideas, concerns and accomplishments—

no matter how trivial or unimportant you think they might be—to the AER International Board. My goal is to ensure that our voices are heard.

Please feel free to contact me at any time. I'd love to hear from you and get your feedback on how we can work together to make this organization thrive, for many years to come. Call me at 416-523-8807 or send an email to carolewilliams@bell.net.

BUSINESS CLASS

Opportunities Abound at AER International Conference 2016

From July 20-24, 2016, professionals serving those who are blind and visually impaired came together in Jacksonville, Florida, for AER's biennial international conference. The theme this year was "Connect, Collaborate, Achieve", with motivational speaker Vera Jones delivering the Opening Session, "Exceeding the Vision." The conference offered more than 150 educational sessions. Presenters shared resources, reported on research, described innovative programs, and much more. Attendees learned new skills and proven strategies, discussed trends and hot-button issues in the profession, and networked with peers. Just about every specialization, not to mention AER Division, was represented. Canada, too, made a showing.

Over the course of the five-day conference, Canadians presented several sessions. Heidi Panchaud and Melinda Szilva, of the



University of Waterloo's School of Optometry and Sight Enhancement Centre, presented "Helping Clients Navigate Roadblocks on the Road to Embracing

Assistive Devices," where they shared ways to recognize common roadblocks in clients and real-life strategies that rehabilitation professionals can use to overcome them. Ph.D. candidate Caitlin Murphy, together with Research Associate Rand

[Olga Overbury](#) Allabade and professor Dr. Olga Overbury of the University of Montreal's School of Optometry, shared their research in the presentation, "The Influence of Fixation Stability on Posture and Balance." These are but two examples of Canadians' involvement in the conference.

As for other topics, "Developing a Love of Literacy in Children Birth to Three," "Describing Math Images to Students Who Are Blind" and "Tactile Graphics: High Quality Doesn't Mean High Cost" addressed access to education. All things braille were found in workshops like "Getting Ready for Braille: Finger/Hand Strengthening & Tactile Discrimination Activities," "New Nemeth Code Resource on the Way!" and "UEB and Braille Displays: Steps, Tips and Tricks." Attendees learned about orientation & mobility issues in "Everything but a Candy Cane! Pros, Cons of Various Canes and Tips," "GPS & O&M ... Are You Travel Savvy or Lost in Space?" and "Technology's Role in Diagnosing Guide Dog Mobility Issues and Providing Remote Support." Session content ran the gamut from babies to seniors, from low vision to multiple disabilities, from mental health to

Calendar of Events

Oct. 21, 2016 – [AER Ontario AGM/CNIB Braille Conference](#), Toronto, Ontario Canada

Nov. 16-18, 2016 – [Northeast AER Conference](#), South Portland, Maine USA

March 2-4, 2017 – AFB Leadership Conference, Arlington, Virginia USA

July 19-22, 2017 – [AER International Orientation & Mobility Conference](#), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania USA

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

suicide risk, and from transitions as experienced by the blind and visually impaired to challenges and opportunities in the field of blindness and visual impairment.

What challenges and opportunities might those be? Sessions like “Georgia's Innovative Solution to Meet the Dire Need for More Teachers of the Visually Impaired” and “Getting in Sync with Your Workload” might shed some light on some of the challenges. Opportunities, on the other hand, were reflected in “CATIS [Certified Assistive Technology Instructional Specialist]: What is It? Could I Become One?”, “Share Your Expertise! Learn How to Become a *JVIB* Peer Reviewer,” and “What the [AER] Education Curriculum Division Can Do for You.”



AER International Conference 2016 CE Access Pass Available

Recordings of many of the educational sessions from the AER International Conference 2016 are now available online! And better yet, until December 31, 2016, AER members receive an exclusive discount for the CE Access Pass. AER Members can purchase the CE Access Pass for \$200 and gain unlimited access. This provides an excellent opportunity to grow your knowledge, skills and abilities and earn CE Hours at times most convenient for you! Access sessions through the AER Knowledge Center: <http://aerbvi.sclivelearningcenter.com/index.aspx?PID=7763>.

Exclusive Education Offer for AER Canada Members

AER is proud to offer a voucher (a \$55 U.S. value) for one FREE session on the AER Knowledge Center to Canadians who join AER or renew their membership between January 1 and December 31, 2016. This is a limited time offer. Once you join or renew at <https://aerbvi.org/membership>, the AER office will send you a voucher code. If you have questions, email aer@aerbvi.org.

To redeem your voucher:

1. Go to the AER Knowledge Center at <http://aerbvi.sclivelearningcenter.com>.
2. Log in or create an account.
3. Hover over “My Account” and click “Redeem Voucher” (if the user has not logged in, they will be prompted to do so at this time).
4. Enter the code and click “Redeem Voucher” – once it is accepted, click “View Content”.
5. Select the black icon for “AERBVI – Complimentary Session”. – Important: your browser must allow pop-ups to move forward to the next step.
6. Select exactly one session to redeem – this session will be added to the user’s “My Content” library.

AER Ontario Chapter Joining in the CNIB Braille Conference

The AER Ontario Chapter will hold its Annual General Meeting from 8:30-9:30 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 21, at the 2016 CNIB Braille Conference. The event will be held at CNIB Toronto, 1929 Bayview Ave. The conference will feature a keynote address from AER member Dr. Cay Holbrook, Visual Impairment Program Coordinator, University of British Columbia; braille advancements in technology, including a hands-on look at the new low cost Orbit Braille reader;

education and teaching tools for braille literacy; and a comparison of braille devices currently available, hosted by a panel of Braille users. AER Workshops will focus on O&M and use of technology.

Save the Date! Northeast AER Chapter Conference, Fall 2016

The Northeast Chapter of AER, comprised of the northeastern United States and the Canadian provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland & Labrador, invites you to its fall regional conference, November 16 - 18, 2016, in South Portland, Maine, at the Portland Marriott at Sable Oaks. For more information, visit:

<http://www.neaer.umb.edu>

Coming in 2017! The First-Ever Canadian Interdisciplinary Vision Rehab Conference

Are you passionate about vision rehabilitation? Are you a professional who is, or would like to be, involved in low vision rehabilitation? In response to frequent requests for workshops and education on vision rehabilitation in Canada, an interdisciplinary planning committee, in conjunction with the Centre for Sight Enhancement at the University of Waterloo, is organising a first multidisciplinary vision rehabilitation conference for the weekend of March 25-26, 2017, to be held at the School of Optometry and Vision Science at the University of Waterloo, Ontario.

Designed to be of interest to optometrists, ophthalmologists, orientation & mobility specialists, low vision therapists, vision resource teachers, opticians, occupational therapists, counsellors, and others, the conference will feature continuing education lectures and workshops. Three prestigious keynote lecturers will be: Walter Wittich (Ecole d'optometrie, University of Montreal); Joan Stelmack (Director, Low Vision Service, Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary, University of Illinois); and AER member Ann Riddering (Director of Rehabilitation Services, Henry Ford Health System's Vision Rehabilitation and Research Center--Michigan). The conference will also include a trade show and art show.

Don't miss this inaugural weekend! For a preliminary schedule, registration and more, see: <https://uwaterloo.ca/sight-enhancement/canadian-interdisciplinary-vision-rehabilitation-conference>

ECONOMY CLASS

Expanding Access to Eye Care

Canadians are seeing a promising trend in eye care across the country—a push by Provincial Governments and optometrists for the provision of regular, readily accessible eye care. Over the past couple of years, three provinces have authorized their optometrists to provide a wider range of service. In June 2015, Alberta announced that its optometrists could now manage and treat glaucoma independently, while Saskatchewan did so in January 2016. This brought Saskatchewan in line with British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick and the Northwest Territories. Meantime, in August 2015, Prince Edward Island expanded primary eye

care access through its optometrists to include fully funded diagnosis and treatment of dry-eye and red-eye conditions. Perhaps more importantly, it also includes screening for eye diseases in patients with diabetes.

In May of this year, the country's optometrists marked Vision Health Month by calling on Canadians to make regular eye exams part of their preventative healthcare routines. Studies show that more than half of the Canadians who don't have regular eye exams skipped a visit with their optometrist because they believed they had good vision. But even with good sight, comprehensive eye exams can help detect eye diseases, not to mention underlying medical conditions that might show signs in the eyes. Such conditions include diabetes, high blood pressure, certain cancers, tumours, aneurysms, autoimmune disorders, thyroid disease, sickle cell disease, liver disease, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, and other neurological or brain disorders. The Canadian Association of Optometrists recommends that adults have an eye exam every two years and annually after age 65. Children should have their first eye exam between six and nine months, their second between ages two and five, and annually after starting school.

For further details, visit the Canadian Association of Optometrists website: <https://opto.ca/cao-news>

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

What Does an Accessible Canada Mean to You?

Adapted from Canada.ca/accessible-Canada

On June 22, 2016, the Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, announced that the Government of Canada was launching national public consultations related to planned accessibility legislation. Canadians, including those with disabilities, may attend scheduled in-person public consultations in their local area, complete an online questionnaire, or both.

In-person consultations will take place from September 2016 through February 2017 in every Province and Territory--from Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia, to St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The Yukon's Whitehorse, Northwest Territories' Yellowknife, and Nunavut's Iqaluit will also host in-person consultations. On November 1, 2016, the Honourable Carla Qualtrough will also host a one-day National Youth Forum in Ottawa seeking input from youth with disabilities aged 15-30.

Canadians with disabilities continue to face barriers in their daily lives including physical barriers, not only in buildings but also public transit and technology; attitudes, beliefs and misconceptions; and outdated policies and practices. What ideas do you have? The Canadian Government is seeking input on: the goals of the planned accessibility legislation, who it should cover and what barriers it should address; how it should be monitored, enforced and reviewed; how to report to Canadians on its implementation; and how to raise accessibility awareness in general.

This is a great opportunity for Canadians with disabilities, their families and the professionals who work with them to contribute to Canada's disability discussion and influence planned accessibility legislation. For a schedule and updates regarding in-person consultation venues, cities and dates; information about the online questionnaire and discussion guide and the formats available; or to complete the questionnaire, visit:

<http://www.canada.ca/accessible-canada>.

AER Info & Tech Division Members Ready to Answer Tech Questions

It's back-to-school time again, and that means you have lots of technology questions that need answers. Turn to the AER Information and Technology Division as a resource. Email a question to AERback2school@gmail.com and division members will share their expertise with you. You will receive an answer back as quickly as members can find what you need. Be sure to make your question as concise and complete as possible, with versions, models, platforms, etc. Take advantage of this back-to-school offer by Friday, September 30. Don't miss out on a chance to get help with technology questions from your colleagues at AER.

Have You Created Your Online AER Account?

AER's website, www.aerbvi.org, allows members access to their member record for address updates, to renew, make purchases, and to get to members-only sections of the website. First, members must register for an account. To activate the account:

- ▶ Select the login tab at the top of the page to be directed to a series of pages.
- ▶ Select Register Now at the bottom of the page.
- ▶ Select Quick Activation by Contact ID.
- ▶ Enter your member number, first name and last name.
- ▶ Choose your own username and password.

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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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