



AER Report

Vol. 31 No. 1 Spring 2014



AER International

Orientation & Mobility Conference 2013

Sponsored by the AER Orientation & Mobility Division



AER International O&M Conference Report

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AER International O&M Conference recap

AER International Conference 2014 sneak peek

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From the Listserv

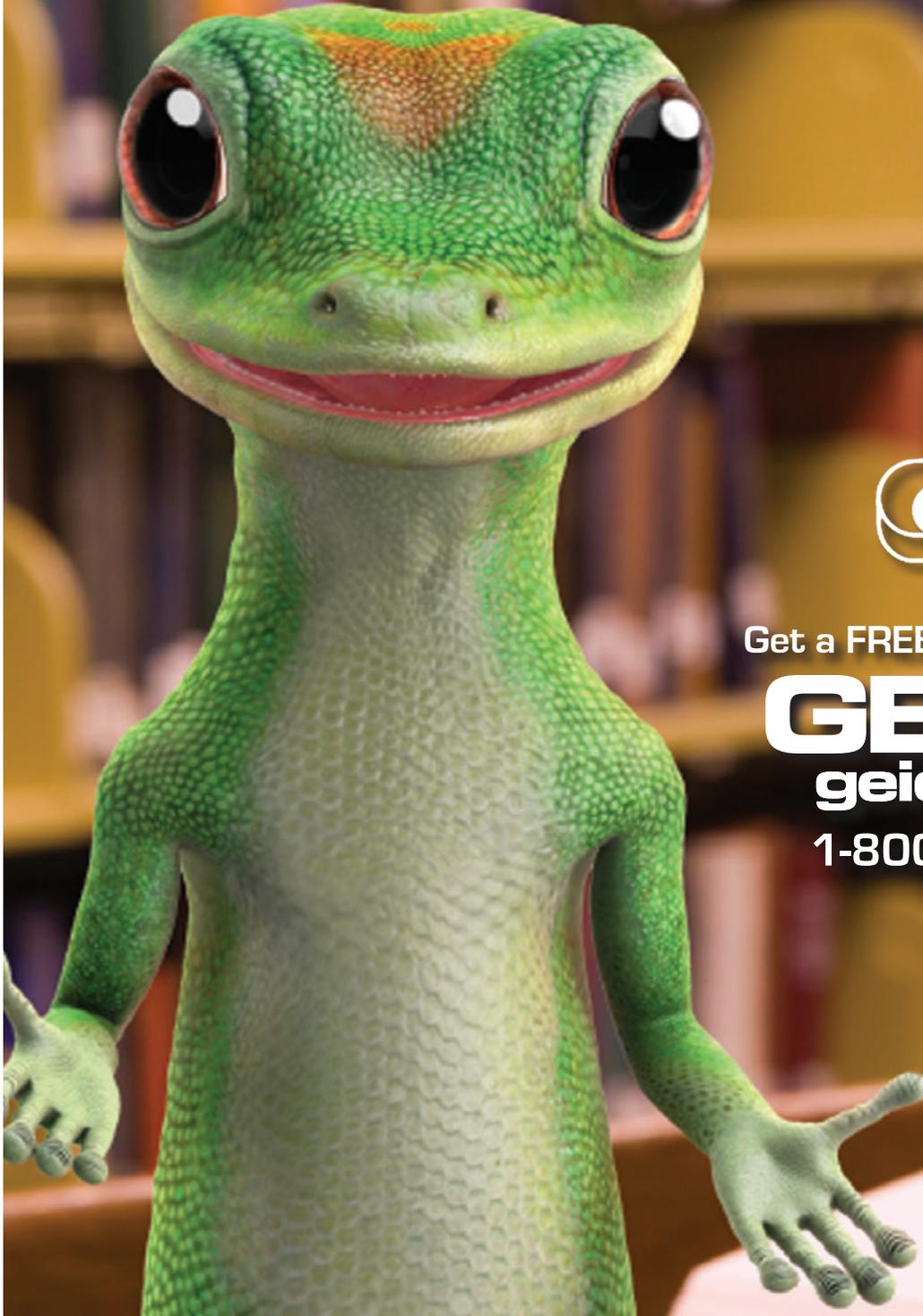
...and much more!

The city of New Orleans grew by more than 750 people when AER's O&M Division hosted the AER International O&M Conference at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside, December 11–14, 2013. For four days, the conference offered an unparalleled array of presentations, networking opportunities and exhibits that catered specifically to the O&M field.

This conference—the first in 10 years for the O&M Division—was a much-needed and wanted event among division members. Said Marjorie Wood, M.Ed., COMS, conference chair and AER O&M Division past chair, “The people who came were ready—they had been wanting an O&M conference for so long. When I took a straw poll of our members at the AER International Conference 2012 [in Bellevue, Wash.], there was overwhelming interest in returning to New Orleans...and in December!” Planning a conference in the city where members wanted it and at the time of year they wanted it certainly helped attract participants from near and far. At last count, the conference welcomed over 750 attendees from America and abroad, including Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan and New Zealand.

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President's Message

by Jim Adams, 2012–2014 AER president



I recently had an experience with my 5-year old grandson that changed the way I view our professional organization, AER. If you will indulge me for a few moments, I'd like to share that experience with you. In your mind's eye, I invite you to take an imaginary trip to the mall with my grandson and me.

My grandson A.J. lives in a neighboring state—about an 11-hour drive from me—so when he visits, I spend as much time with him as possible, rain or shine. During one of his visits, it was in fact raining, so attempting to be a resourceful grandfather, I took him to the local mall to their indoor playground. Although it has only one piece of playground equipment, it quickly became his favorite place to go when visiting our home.

It was during one of these visits to the mall that I began to take notice of the patrons and the various vendors. And it occurred to me that AER is much like the mall that my grandson plays in so vigorously. Like the mall we have “anchor stores” at each end, such as the Texas Chapter and the Northeast Chapter, which have two of the largest memberships. Squarely in the middle of our AER mall sits the O&M Division, our largest division and across the hall from them is another division, let's say the Personnel Preparation Division. Scattered throughout the remainder of the mall are other chapters and divisions, all of which help provide the products and services we need so much as professionals.

Much like the traditional mall, our “AER mall” offers an array of products and services. You might know them as member benefits. Here are just a few:

- Professional support through 13 divisions and 43 chapters.
- Publications, such as *JVIB*, which returned in January 2013 as a member benefit.
- Peer feedback on critical issues through the AER Listservs.
- Professional development via outstanding events such as our biennial international conferences, our recent International O&M Conference 2013 and chapter conferences. We also offer the Mangold Distance Education Webinar Series; the AER Knowledge Center, which contains hundreds of hours of sessions recorded at 2012 and 2013 conferences; and soon

a co-branded webinar series with AFB.

- Let's not forget the AER Job Exchange, which is the field's largest listing of job openings.
- Professional liability protection at economical group rates for U.S. members as well as affordable term life and long-term care insurance. We have car rental and hotel discounts and even online shopping benefits for our members.

Like A.J.'s favorite mall, the association of the various vendors is what helps the mall provide such a wide array of products and services, in our case member benefits. And, I soon discovered that it really wasn't the playground equipment that he so eagerly anticipated on each visit, but the interaction with his peers that made him so happy. As a professional community, our interaction or networking with our peers is also a highly valued member benefit.

Our “professional mall” is highly dependent on our individual contributions and our willingness to share our resources, both financial and intellectual. Your next visit to the “AER mall” may be at your state, provincial, division or international level, and it is all made possible by the efforts of a diverse group of professionals working together to improve and grow our profession.

I look forward to seeing and working with you in *our* “AER mall.”

Jim Adams
2012–2014 AER president

Executive Director's Message



by Lou Tutt

Congratulations to all the folks who helped to organize the successful AER International O&M Conference 2013 in New Orleans, La., this past December ... and kudos to those who braved the severe winter weather to attend! AER members (and non-members) have been talking about the excellent conference and these same people are now looking forward to the upcoming AER International Conference 2014 in

San Antonio, Texas, from July 30–August 3, 2014!!

The conference committee has received all the abstracts and is now evaluating them to put together what promises to be an outstanding program. During this conference, there will be a “changing of the guard” at the international AER board level, and the membership will vote on amendments to the AER Bylaws. It’s going to be a grand ole time in Texas this July/August, so y’all come!! Registration has opened, so make sure to get yours in to take advantage of the Early Bird specials.

At its February 2014 meeting, the AER board approved a motion from the Rehabilitation Counseling, Employment & BEP Services Division (2). The board also approved six O&M Division (9) position papers (revised) as well as motions and amended motions from the following AER committees: Accessibility, Awards, Personnel & Recruitment, and University Review. You can read more about these motions and other board actions on page 9 of this *AER Report*.

At their own expense, members of the AER board will meet face-to-face for two days in May 2014. In addition to a short business meeting, the board will tackle some tough issues that AER faces in the immediate future. These issues include internal and external communication, membership and financial stability. AER turns 30 years old in July 2014, and we must look to the next 30 years. So, a large portion of the board’s May meeting will focus on strategic planning.

In February 2014, I attended and spoke at the AFB Leadership Conference in Brooklyn, N.Y., where we announced that AFB and AER will be producing at least six co-branded webinars starting in spring 2014 and for the next 18 months. AER LIFT Online Webinars got off the ground (no pun intended) in February and will have one online webinar the second Wednesday for the next five months. The series will culminate with a live AER LIFT pre-conference session on Wednesday,

July 30, 2014, just before the AER International Conference 2014 Opening Session that night. I am scheduled to attend at least three AER chapter conferences starting in March: D.C./Maryland, Nebraska and Virginia. And, on April 1, 2014, I will begin my fourth year here at AER!

I would be remiss if I did not recognize the hard work of the AER staff. They deal with many ups and downs on a daily basis, and they always strive to do the best they can for our AER membership. Thanks, Ginger, Joelle, Barb and Mary!!

It has been a pleasure working with President Jim Adams and the AER board of directors these last two years. Jim and the board have had to wrestle some tough issues, and with Jim’s leadership, the board has met these challenges in the best interests of AER.

Finally, as we look forward to spring and summer 2014 and to getting past this winter, if any of you and your families are visiting the metropolitan D.C. areas, please stop by and visit with the staff and me here in the AER office in Alexandria, Va.

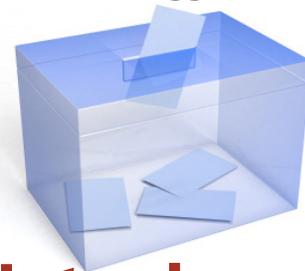
Drop Lou a line

Whether you have a question, an idea, or just want to say hi, he wants to hear from you!

Email lou@aerbvi.org

AER Suggestion Box

Have an idea or suggestion for AER?



Let us know!

Contact us via email at:
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Trouble sleeping at night? Napping to get through the day?

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Difficulty concentrating?

For people who are totally blind, these may be symptoms of Non-24-Hour Disorder (Non-24) – a serious, chronic circadian rhythm disorder.

Non-24 results from a body clock that is out of sync with the 24-hour day which can make it difficult to fall asleep or stay asleep at night and can create an uncontrollable urge to sleep during the day. This may lead to exhaustion, decreased productivity, difficulties with school or work, and problems with concentration.

To learn more about the link between total blindness and a sleep pattern that is out of sync with the 24-hour day, visit www.non-24.com.

**Health educators are available to answer your questions about Non-24.
Call toll free: 1-855-856-2424 Monday-Friday 8 AM-8 PM EST**

NON-24
a circadian rhythm disorder

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AER Orientation & Mobility

Division Statement

Division concern

In July 2013 a small group of orientation and mobility (O&M) specialists and guide dog mobility instructors (GDMI) formed under the title of “O&M PA Working Group” to promote the establishment of a professional association. This group is not an initiative of AER. The current AER strategic plan and division goals do not support it, and no AER resources have been committed to it.

Recently, the working group announced the “O&M/GDMI Profession Strategy Summit,” a series of meetings for the purpose of strategic planning with an articulated goal of establishing “structural recommendations.” In response to the confusion engendered by the working group’s recent announcement and to clarify the limited formal discourse between O&M Division leadership and the group, a comprehensive chronology is provided below detailing the interactions between this group and division leadership.

Since the distribution of the working group’s position paper in July 2013, AER (O&M Division Executive Committee, AER Board of Directors, and AER Bylaws and Structure Committee) has not received formal communication regarding the group’s dissatisfaction nor potential solutions for addressing their needs. Over the last several months the O&M Division Executive Committee has updated division members regarding the working group through topic-specific blast emails, newsletter/updates and at the recent O&M Division Conference in New Orleans—all of which are posted on the O&M Division website (<http://oandm.aerbvi.org/>). Finally, other allied organizations such as ACVREP, AFB, the Carroll Center, COSB, Vision Serve Alliance and multiple AER-approved university programs have rejected the working group’s invitation to participate in the strategic summit and steering committee.

Chronology of O&M Division History with the O&M PA Work Group

July 2013

- The O&M Professional Association Working Group (PA) informs Marjie Wood (division past chair), Kevin Hollinger (division chair), and Susan Langendonk (division chair elect) of a survey because “we are establishing an O&M professional association either within AER or on its own.”
 - O&M Division Executive Committee provides clarifying facts regarding budgets, policies and other history to PA group.

- O&M Division Executive Committee provides link to survey to O&M Division members via email blast.

August 2013

- Hollinger offers “to be part of these discussions if the Professional Association plans to consider establishing it within AER. Otherwise, if the group plans to form outside of the AER, [Hollinger] will not participate.”
- PA group asks Hollinger to clarify Forrest T. Jones professional liability insurance policy coverage and job description.
- AER moderates some listserv postings, because they are “not in line with the Strategic Plan.”

September 2013

- PA group requests information from Hollinger regarding division budget and rationale, and AER’s Operational and Strategic Plan.
- AER Board of Directors lifts moderation of Listservs regarding PA member postings and refers the Listserv policy to the AER Bylaws and Structure Committee for review.

December 2013

- PA group requests meeting space at the AER International O&M Conference 2013 in New Orleans, La., for PA meet-n-greet.
 - Conference Committee offers 3 options: (1) 60-minute concurrent session; (2) Use of the Executive Suite meeting space; or (3) contract with hotel for meeting space/event.
 - The PA group declines the options.

February 2014

- PA group invites Hollinger and/or Langendonk to participate in strategic planning series.
- Hollinger and Langendonk participate in phone conference with Dona Sauerburger about strategic planning and invitation.
- Hollinger, Langendonk and Bonnie Dodson-Burk participate in information gathering phone conference with Jeremy Grandstaff, strategic planner, and Sauerburger.
- O&M Division Executive Committee votes against

Continued on p. 8

O&M Statement Cont. from page 7

supporting the PA group in any capacity.

- O&M Division Executive Committee provides members the *WINTER UPDATE* containing information about the PA group.
- Hollinger provides PA group update to AER Board of Directors.
- Hollinger informs Sauerburger, Grandstaff and O&M membership that the O&M Division Executive Committee and AER Board of Directors have decided not to appoint a representative to the PA group's strategic planning committee.

- O&M Division Executive Committee provides members the *O&M Division Update on P.A. Request*.

March 2014

- Sauerburger requests phone conference with Hollinger/Langendonk to reconsider joining working group; Hollinger and Langendonk decline again.
- Other allied organizations such as ACB, ACVREP, AFB, the Carroll Center, Vision Serve Alliance and multiple AER-approved university programs reject the working group's invitation to participate in the strategic summit and steering committee.

Division-specific news

The O&M Division remains vibrant and strong! The division actively promotes our profession through commitment to professional development. The division has established a foundation for recruiting new professionals into our field. The division participates in leadership training. The division contributed to the improvement of the university review process and updated standards. The division supports AER's secured affiliations with other agencies that serve persons with visual impairment and blindness.

Since the AER International Conference 2012, the O&M Division has accomplished much, including:

- Hosting the AER International O&M Division Conference 2013 with over 750 attendees
- Revising and ratifying the division's Policy and Procedure Manual
- Drafting and submitting proposed revisions for bylaws, policies and procedures to the AER Bylaws & Structure Committee
- Examining and reporting the division's financial history from 1996–present
- Revising and ratifying six division position papers
- Developing and ratifying one new position paper on travel training/travel instruction
- Approving O&M standards for the AER University Review Program

- Updating the O&M Division website
- Distributing the revised O&M Professional Recruitment Flyer
- Assisting in the planning of the AER International Conference 2014 in San Antonio, Texas
- Securing AER board approval for initial planning of an AER International O&M Division Conference in 2017

The O&M Division acknowledges the importance of a unified AER. Our division leadership remains committed to national and international expansion, progression and development of quality services to, for and by individuals with visual impairment or blindness. Through examining our history and envisioning the future, the division has established a strong foundation poised for continued success. The division is actively seeking information from the membership for improving our division and addressing member-specific needs. We urge anyone with questions or concerns regarding the processes and policies of the division or interested in being involved in division initiatives to contact an O&M Executive Officer or their O&M District Director (<http://oandm.aerbvi.org/contact.htm>).



AER Board Approves Several Motions at February 2014 Meeting

The AER Board of Directors approved the following motions at its February 7-8, 2014, board meeting:

- To retain the Awards Committee's request for nominations as sent to members for 2014, but to investigate aligning official policy, awards applications wording and historical practice in the future.
- To establish a policy for special recognition awards and to refer the issue to the Bylaws & Structure Committee.
- To permit the use of divisional numbers when preceded by the division name but never to the exclusion of the divisional name in written or spoken situations in the conduct of AER business or in related publications.
- To recommend that the membership change the status of the University Review Committee from an ad hoc committee to a standing committee of the association.
- To have the Accessibility Committee appoint a liaison to work with AER staff on the development of a new website.
- To charge the Professional Personnel Recruitment Committee with developing an international network of committee liaisons at the chapter level to work on establishing and tracking volunteers within the chapter who are doing presentations/vendor fairs, etc. aimed at recruiting individuals into the vision professions.
- To maintain AER board meetings on a quarterly basis.
- To explore the potential of holding an AER Orientation & Mobility Conference in 2017.
- To enter into negotiations to purchase a new association management database system based on a previous proposal from JL Systems.

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AER and AFB to Provide Co-Branded Webinars

AER entered into an agreement with the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) in early 2014 to produce at least six co-branded webinars over the next 18 months. Webinars will cover hot topics related to the vision field. Under the arrangement, AER members will benefit from a significant discount on the co-branded webinars and on AFB Bookstore items. The two organizations will participate in multitier revenue sharing. The first webinar will be offered in the spring of 2014.

AER Student Council December Meeting

Last year, AER renewed its focus on students who are entering the vision professional field via the board's creation of an AER Student Council. Students attending the AER International Orientation & Mobility Conference 2013 in New Orleans in December were invited to participate in a face-to-face meeting. Committee Chair Stacy Jena led participants in a discussion about creating communications opportunities for students, the need for mentors, internship information, and attracting more young people to the field. AER has established a Student Council Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/601243119929212/>.

O&M Conference Cont. from page 1

The O&M Division grapples with issues that overlap just about every other blindness and vision field. Their clients range from babies to the elderly and from low vision to completely blind; they work in all settings from the school to the workplace to the community; and they work with guide dogs, white canes and GPS devices. It's no wonder that when AER made the call for presentations, over 100 proposals came in within a few short weeks. As a result, the conference offered nearly 120 sessions, including 95 hours that were recorded for AER's CE Pass (see page 12 in this issue for more information).

"When we began planning this conference," recalled Wood, "we wanted to provide the members with a valuable benefit. This conference was affordable and gave our members so many phenomenal opportunities to network with others in the field. It was fantastic being able to focus on any aspect of our job and to talk to people. We all learned real, practical, hands-on techniques that we could go home and implement." The conference program featured a broad range of topics, from licensure to self-defense, with many of the field's leaders among the presenters. "People kept coming up to me, saying there were so many good sessions," said Wood. "They were thrilled to be able to meet and talk with some of the biggest names in our profession."

Keeping members at the forefront of their planning, the conference committee went to great lengths to accommodate everyone's needs as much as possible. For example, the conference committee found meeting spaces and times for special interest groups and made room reassignments to accommodate popular presentations.

Also, the committee asked speakers with participant limits on their workshops to repeat their sessions so more O&Mers could experience their presentations. "Almost every speaker we asked was able to accommodate us," said Wood.

The attendees were not the only people who enjoyed the conference. "Many of the exhibitors I spoke to said they had never been to a conference that treated them so well," said Wood. "I had many exhibitors tell me that they appreciated everyone who came by their booths and spent time with them. It wasn't just signing up for a raffle and moving on. They really felt like they had the opportunity to present their products and services to an interested audience."

Besides organizing the myriad sessions for the conference program, the committee also arranged a cruise aboard the famous Creole Queen on the mighty Mississippi River, which provided a scenic and relaxed atmosphere for socializing. Another highlight was the 50-year anniversary celebration of the O&M programs at Western Michigan University, the University of Pittsburgh and Florida State University.

Wood noted with great appreciation that AER President Jim Adams and Executive Director Lou Tutt attended. "They were approachable, which made an impression on the members they met," she said. "Having the board meeting—and several board members—at the conference on Saturday was special. When you're used to working in your state or province, you don't realize what AER International does. It was nice to give members that connection between their experiences at home and the broader scope of what the organization does."

Looking back on the conference, Wood saw the importance of bringing O&Mers together for the future of the profession. "We're going to be dealing with tough issues like licensure and having occupational and physical therapists trying to teach O&M skills to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. These are important issues, and we need an organization that's large and can represent us when such challenges arise. There is strength in numbers, and the O&M Conference was a good indication of that. Let's keep the momentum going!"



AER's Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Division successfully hosted the AER International O&M Conference in New Orleans, La., from December 11–14, 2013, and wishes to thank the following:

- Conference committee members, **Kevin Hollinger** and his program committee for putting together an outstanding array of speakers and for securing programs in braille for attendees; **Laura Bozeman** for working with the wonderful volunteers who helped with registration and for facilitating breakout sessions; and **Kathy Yale** for working with AER's office staff to secure vendors for our exhibit hall.
- **Lynn Gautreaux** for his initial planning on this conference and for training the Hilton New Orleans Riverside staff on proper techniques and special accommodations for attendees, and to **Dona Sauerburger** for her initial work on programming.
- The **AER Louisiana** chapter and the **Louisiana Lighthouse for the Blind** for welcoming us to their beautiful state and helping us find our way around New Orleans.
- The **AER Texas** chapter for making the O&M conference t-shirts a reality.
- **Lou Tutt and the AER office staff** for all their hard work in keeping the conference up and running.
- **Jim Adams and the AER board** for supporting our desire to have this conference as a member benefit.
- The **exhibitors** for their products and demonstrations.
- And the **attendees, speakers**, those who provided feedback, and those who helped whenever help was needed for making this conference a resounding success!

We appreciate all who were a part of this historic event and wish more could have attended. We are looking forward to our next AER International O&M Conference and will take all the lessons learned to ensure that O&Mers will once again get new and improved educational opportunities.

Marjie Wood, M.Ed., COMS
AER International O&M Conference 2013
Committee Chair

Committee Members:

Laura Bozeman
Kevin Hollinger
Kathy Yale

Thank you

to AER International O&M Conference 2013 Sponsors and Exhibitors

AER wishes to thank the sponsors of the AER International Orientation & Mobility Conference 2013.



AER sincerely appreciates the following exhibitors who participated in the AER International Orientation & Mobility Conference 2013:

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www.ambutech.com

LS & S, LLC
www.lssproducts.com

American Foundation for the Blind
www.afb.org

National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation
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Guide Dogs for the Blind
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South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind
www.scsdb.org

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HumanWare
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International Mobility Conference 2015
www.imc15.com

Zimmerman Low Vision Simulation Kit
www.lowvisionsimulationkit.com

Leader Dogs for the Blind
www.leaderdog.org

CE Access Pass for

AER International Orientation & Mobility Conference 2013

More than 95 hours of sessions recorded at the AER International Orientation & Mobility Conference 2013 are available through the AER Knowledge Center.

Those who purchased the CE Pass for access to all recorded sessions are welcome to view those sessions at any time. MultiView, the company that recorded the sessions, sent purchasers an email with a username and password for the site, which is different from your AER username and password.

ACVREP has approved credits for the online sessions. To qualify for credit, you must complete the session in its entirety. For example, if a session is one hour, you must watch the full hour to obtain credit. After viewing the sessions for which you want credit, contact the AER office at 703-671-4500 or aer@aerbvi.org and request a transcript.

For those who did not purchase the CE Access Pass, you may still do so online at the AER Knowledge Center,

<http://aerbvi.sclivelearningcenter.com>, through March 31, 2013. AER members receive a 50% discount off the list price for the full package of recorded sessions from the conference. Make sure you login to the Knowledge Center using your email address and last name to qualify for the discount. Beginning April 1, 2013, each session will be priced separately.



Congratulations

to the following recipients of the O&M Division (9) scholarships for the AER International O&M Conference 2013:

Kim Zebehazy, international division member (\$200)

Cynthia Guise and **Suzie Thomas**, U.S. division members (\$200 each)

Ruth Weinrib and **Yvonne West**, student division members (\$200 each)

Bebe Chudeusz and **Grace Bullen**, division members who purchased a CE pass (\$100 each)

AER-Approved Program Spotlight:

University of Arkansas at Little Rock O&M Program

In the AER Report Summer 2013 issue, we introduced a new series to highlight university programs that have received approval through the revised AER University Review. For this issue, we look at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Orientation and Mobility Program, led by president of the AER Arkansas Chapter and past chair of AER's O&M Division, William Jacobson, Ed.D., COMS.

The University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) is no stranger to AER approval. Its O&M Program first received approval in 1975 under AER's old University Review process, which involved an on-site team visit and meeting over 300 standards. Upon learning about the revised University Review process, William Jacobson, chair, Department of Counseling, Adult and Rehabilitation Education, and coordinator of the O&M program, jumped at the opportunity to have the O&M program evaluated.

"I'm a strong proponent of accreditation," said Jacobson, who also served on AER's early University Review teams. "I leaped at the chance to be reviewed and recognized by our field's leading professional organization.

It's so important to critically look at ourselves and to have outside people look at our program to ensure we're meeting the needs of the profession."

UALR's O&M program follows a hybrid format, offering online classes during the academic year and on-site O&M core courses over two summer sessions. With its open enrollment policy and online format, the program has no limits on the number of students it can accept; as long as students meet the admissions standards and have an interest in O&M, they can enroll at anytime.

Currently, the program enrolls 65 students, 40 of whom are actively taking courses. "The students go through the program at their own pace," said Jacobson. "They are all part-time students who live in their home communities." Despite juggling graduate-level work and full-time jobs, most students graduate and enter the mobility profession. Each year, the program boasts six to ten graduates, with students receiving either a master's degree in rehabilitation of the blind or a graduate certificate in O&M. Observed Jacobson, "Our graduates are people who the profession would have lost had they not had the option of our program. We're capturing people who really want to be mobility instructors, but they either don't have a program in their state or they don't have resources to leave their jobs and go full-time to a traditional program." Students come from all across America and even from as far as Guam, Puerto

Rico and Canada to take advantage of UALR's hybrid format.

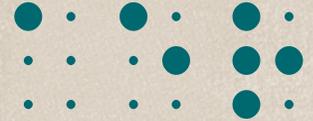
Of particular note are the summer sessions, which demonstrate how university programs can successfully partner with local schools and agencies. The Arkansas School for the Blind and World Services for the Blind both provide free housing and weekday meals to summer students. "We enjoy a win-win relationship with the school and World Services," explained Jacobson. "We help provide O&M training to kids at the school or adults at World Services. In exchange, our students get excellent, real-world training; some also get some student teaching experiences."

Arkansas law requires all programs at UALR to undergo some sort of accreditation process. Because O&M does not have a formal accrediting body, Jacobson naturally turned to AER and the University Review. "I was leery of having to go through the process, because the old system had standards that were sometimes too restrictive," he shared. "Just one standard could keep me from being approved." The newly revised process, he quickly discovered, is much more user-friendly and features reasonably defined standards. An organized person by nature, Jacobson recalled that going through the University Review process itself was not difficult. "It was a matter of going through our course syllabi to make sure we met each of the standards."

In closing, Jacobson noted, "People need to understand that the University Review has changed. University programs should go ahead and do it. Having AER approval absolutely makes a difference to my program. I'm a one-person program—I can live in isolation if I'm not careful. To have AER's stamp of approval is important to me, personally and professionally, and to the program within the university. AER approval lets me know that our students are getting the right training, not only to provide excellent services to the people who need it, but also to move our profession forward as they become the next generation of leaders."



Celebrating
30
Years
1984-2014



AER INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2014

Moving into the Future

July 30 – August 3 ★ **San Antonio, Texas**
Grand Hyatt San Antonio



<http://aerbvi.org/international2014>



Association for Education and Rehabilitation
of the Blind and Visually Impaired

AER International Conference 2014

Invitation from Conference Chair Patricia Leader



From Patricia Leader

Members, colleagues and friends,

As chair of the AER International Conference 2014, I welcome you to San Antonio, Texas, July 30–August 3, 2014, for an exciting and stimulating conference. The conference will be held in the Grand Hyatt on the River Walk, a stunning venue for developing your expertise, networking with colleagues and enjoying the sights and sounds of the area. We encourage you to make your plans early to attend this stellar event as AER celebrates its 30th anniversary.

The International Conference Program Committee is hard at work planning a comprehensive program that focuses on learning, experiencing, sharing, and cutting edge technology. More than 800 professionals and practitioners will be in attendance, ranging from educators, vision rehabilitation therapists, orientation and mobility specialists, low vision specialists, university preparation professionals, to vendors and parents.

This year's conference will include:

- Opening presentation from country singer Ronnie Milsap
- An exciting celebration of AER's 30-year anniversary
- Keynote speakers on Fit for Life, current technology and Non-24 Hour Sleep Disorder
- New "Learning Labs" to provide in-depth, hands-on training on key topics
- Dozens of division tracks focusing on field-specific areas
- A vibrant AER Exhibit Hall, featuring vendors and products critical to your work
- Countless opportunities to connect and network with hundreds of colleagues
- Opportunities for the CEUs you need for certification and credentialing
- In-person training for chapter and division leaders (AER LIFT)
- A wonderful evening hosted by the AER Texas Chapter

The AER International Conference 2014 is the one conference that you must attend. Make your plans early and get ready to ride into Texas on July 30, 2014, and ride out with the best, most cutting edge ideas, strategies and training you have ever experienced! See you in San Antonio and remember the Alamo and AER!

Patricia Leader
AER past president
2014 conference chair



Preliminary Conference Schedule

Wednesday, July 30, 2014

- 8-9 a.m. Registration for pre-conference events
 9 a.m.-4 p.m. MacFarland Seminar
Prosthetic Vision: Where We Are Now and Where We Are Going
 Pre-conference workshops:
 • [Physical Activity Programming for Children and Youth with Visual Impairments](#) - Lauren Lieberman & Justin Haegele
 • [An Introduction to Unified English Braille: A Hands-on Workshop](#) - Frances Mary D'Andrea, Mary Nelle McLennan & Diane Wormsley
 • [Overview and Field Practice Using the Trekker Breeze to Create Routes and Establish a Position in Space](#) - Craig Phillips
- 9 a.m.-4 p.m. [AER LIFT Training](#)
 1-5 p.m. Exhibit hall set up
 1-9 p.m. Registration
 4:30-5:30 p.m. New Member Reception
 6-8 p.m. Opening General Session with Ronnie Milsap

Thursday, July 31, 2014

- 8:00-9:30 p.m. President's Reception
- 6:15-7:00 a.m. "Get Fit" group walk/run
 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Registration
 7-8 a.m. Breakfast with exhibitors
 Student Council breakfast (student members invited)
Low Vision Rehabilitation Division (7) business meeting, awards ceremony & breakfast
- 8:00-9:30 a.m. General Session 2: *Fit for Life*
 9:30-10:00 a.m. Networking break
 10-11 a.m. Specialty tracks
 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. Specialty tracks
 12:15-1:30 p.m. Lunch on own
AER Vision Rehabilitation Therapy Division (11) business meeting, awards ceremony & lunch
- 1:30-3:00 p.m. Specialty tracks
 3:00-3:30 p.m. Networking break
 3:30-5:00 p.m. Learning Labs:
 • Education - **Unified English Braille**
 • O&M - [Improving Cane Technique Through Proprioceptive Facilitation](#)
 • Rehabilitation - [Vision Rehabilitation Techniques for Traumatic Brain Injury](#)
- Specialty tracks
 6-7 p.m. AER O&M Division (9) Awards Reception

Friday, August 1, 2014

- 6:15-7:00 a.m. "Get Fit" group walk/run
 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Registration
 7-8 a.m. Breakfast with exhibitors
 Canadian Council breakfast
 8:00-9:30 a.m. General Session 3 - *Non-24-Hour Disorder*
 9:30-10:00 a.m. Networking break
 10-11 a.m. Specialty tracks
 12:15-1:45 p.m. AER Awards Lunch (ticketed event)
 2:00-3:30 p.m. Specialty tracks
O&M Division (9) business meeting
 3:30-4:00 p.m. Networking break
 4-5 p.m. Specialty tracks
 5:15-6:30 p.m. **Rehabilitation Counseling, BEP & Employment Services Division (2) reception & business meeting**

Saturday, August 2, 2014

- 6:15-7:00 a.m. "Get Fit" group walk/run
 7 a.m.-5 p.m. Registration
 7:00-8:30 a.m. Poster sessions with breakfast
 8:30-10:00 a.m. Learning Labs:
 • Multiple Disabilities & Deafblind
 • Low Vision/Aging
 • Information & Technology - **Using a Laptop or iPad to Access Classroom Handouts, Powerpoints, and Textbooks**
- Specialty tracks
 10:00-10:15 a.m. Networking break
 10:15-11:15 a.m. Specialty tracks
 11:15-11:30 a.m. Networking break
 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Specialty tracks
 12:30-1:30 p.m. Lunch on own
 1:30-3:00 p.m. General Session 4 - *Innovation Applications of Technology*
 3:00-3:15 p.m. Networking break
 3:15-4:15 p.m. Specialty tracks
 4:15-4:30 p.m. Networking break
 4:30-5:30 p.m. Specialty tracks
 Saturday evening Texas Host Night

Sunday, August 3, 2014

- 7:00-11:30 a.m. Registration
 7-8 a.m. Breakfast
 8:00-9:30 a.m. AER business meeting
 9:30-9:45 a.m. Networking break
 9:45-11:15 a.m. Specialty tracks
 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Specialty tracks



Program

Make sure the AER International Conference 2014 is marked prominently on your calendar for the summer of 2014 in historic San Antonio, Texas!

We're expecting more than 800 professionals from the field of blindness and visual impairment to attend. That makes the AER International Conference 2014 North America's largest meeting of vision education and rehabilitation professionals.

The biennial conference will feature hands-on presentations in the field of blindness and visual impairment covering:

- ✦ Education
- ✦ Assistive technology
- ✦ Orientation & mobility
- ✦ Aging & blindness
- ✦ Low vision
- ✦ Vision rehabilitation therapy
- ✦ Multiple disabilities
- ✦ Unified English Braille
- ✦ Recreation & physical fitness
- ✦ ...and much more!

Who should attend

- ✦ Orientation & mobility specialists
- ✦ Teachers
- ✦ Low vision therapists
- ✦ Counselors
- ✦ Vision rehabilitation therapists
- ✦ Assistive technology specialists
- ✦ Social workers
- ✦ Braille transcribers
- ✦ Administrators
- ✦ Optometrists
- ✦ Ophthalmologists
- ✦ Professionals from related fields

MacFarland Seminar, July 30, 2014

Prosthetic Vision: Where We Are Now and Where We Are Going

The one-day event prior to the AER International Conference 2014 takes an in-depth look at medical issues. With a focus on prosthetic vision, this year's seminar will provide practical and detailed information on the topic. Visit <http://aerbvi.org/international2014>, for more information.

Registration for the MacFarland Seminar is separate from AER International Conference registration. You must register for the International Conference to attend the MacFarland Seminar.

AER LIFT Training

Chapter and division leaders and others who are interested in AER leadership roles are invited to attend this workshop on July 30 to hone leadership skills and learn the basics of managing chapters and divisions. AER LIFT is an acronym for AER Leadership Initiatives Facilitate Teamwork. Visit <http://aerbvi.org/international2014>, for more information. There is no additional charge for this event.

Continuing education

With approximately 150 hours of programming available, the AER International Conference 2014 guarantees to deliver unsurpassed educational opportunities with plenty of programming for continuing education units (CEUs). This conference is well-known for the excellent content and quality of its general and breakout sessions, and this year will be no exception. New this year is the addition of Learning Labs for more in-depth work on particular topics.

Sessions will be noted as fundamental, intermediate or advanced. This is a great opportunity to learn key basics about an unfamiliar topic, gain knowledge of more advanced strategies or concepts about vision professional issues, or take an in-depth look at fairly complex subject matter.

All attendees will receive a Certificate of Attendance. AER is applying for continuing education credit to ACVREP and CRCC.

AER Awards Lunch

Celebrate the achievements of AER members who have contributed to the vision profession at the AER Awards Lunch on Friday, July 31, 2014. We will recognize winners of the C. Warren Bledsoe Award, Alfred Allen Award, Mary K. Bauman Award, John H. McAulay Award, Ambrose M. Shotwell Award, Douglas C. MacFarland Award, and the AER Outstanding Chapter Award. An additional fee of \$40 per person applies.

Accommodations/Transportation

Grand Hyatt San Antonio

Discover an exciting blend of modernism and Latino culture at one of downtown San Antonio's premier hotels. Adjacent to the River Walk and HemisFair Park, the dramatic design of Grand Hyatt San Antonio exemplifies this unique city, offering breathtaking spaces, unforgettable experiences, exceptional touches and personalized services.

Hotel room reservations must be made by **July 7, 2014**, to receive the group rate.

Grand Hyatt San Antonio

600 E. Market Street
San Antonio, TX 78205
<http://grandsanantonio.hyatt.com>

Make hotel reservations only through AER sources. Visit http://aerbvi.org/international2014/travel_lodging.htm for a link to online reservations. Or call 888-421-1442 (U.S. & Canada) or 210-224-1234 to make reservations by phone and mention the "AER International Conference 2014" to get the group rate.

Airport transportation

City Tours Inc., operator of GO Airport Shuttle, is offering AER International Conference 2014 attendees a rate of \$32.50 per person round trip/\$16.25 one-way for transportation to and from the San Antonio International Airport and the Grand Hyatt San Antonio. To reserve this rate, visit http://aerbvi.org/international2014/travel_lodging.htm.

American Airlines is offering all attendees a 5% discount off the lowest applicable published airfare. The discount is available from July 27–August 4, 2014, for travel to San Antonio, Texas. Book your reservations online at <http://www.aa.com/group> and enter promotion code **5174DQ**.

Howdy

from the AER Texas Chapter

The AER Texas Chapter extends a warm invitation and a big HOWDY as you join us in San Antonio for the AER International Conference 2014. Be prepared for a BIG Texas welcome when you attend! We are thrilled you will be in the Lone Star State for this essential conference during AER's 30th anniversary. Our hope is to make sure you are comfortable and enjoy your time in our state.

We encourage you to make sure that you divide your time between education, networking and fun while you're here. Singer, songwriter Ronnie Milsap will get things started during the opening session, and we know that other great presenters will help you expand your knowledge throughout the conference.

San Antonio is a vibrant, multicultural city with exceptional attractions. The conference hotel is located on the popular River Walk where you can shop, dine, lounge in a cafe, take a riverboat tour or simply stroll alongside the calming river. Of course, y'all must "Remember the Alamo," now a museum located in the heart of downtown. You'll also remember our zesty cuisine, shopping and so much more!

You will be in Texas during the summer so dress appropriately and bring sun block!!

So, come and make awesome Texas memories!

Sincerely,

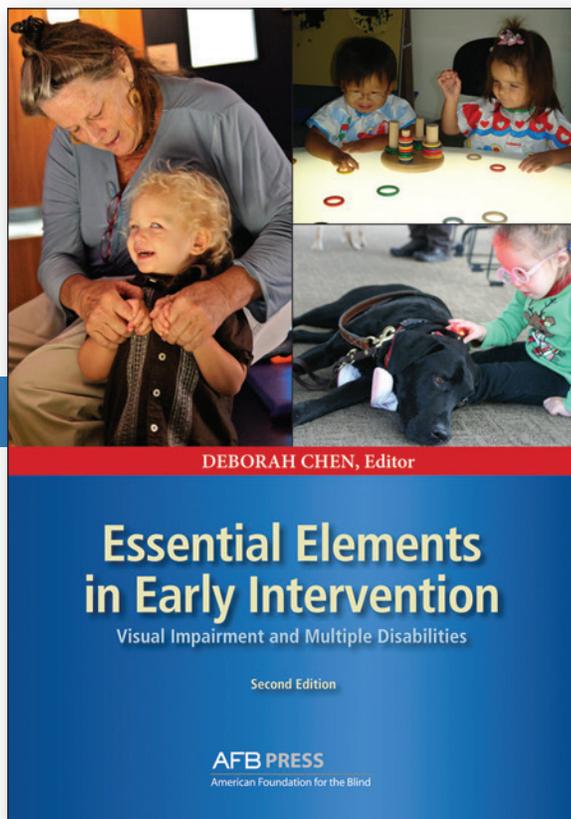
The AER Texas Chapter

Essential Elements in Early Intervention

Visual Impairment and Multiple Disabilities,
Second Edition

Deborah Chen, Editor

Essential Elements in Early Intervention is a complete sourcebook and guide for professionals working with young children with dual sensory impairments and who may have multiple disabilities. Written for early interventionists who specialize in this area, as well as those working with a child with a visual impairment for the first time, this book translates research into practical strategies that can be used with children and their families.



The second edition reflects the research and best practices developed over the 15 years since *Essential Elements in Early Intervention* was first published in 1999. New material includes expanded, updated information on:

- » Parent-child bonding and attachment and their role in the development of communication and learning
- » Federal special education legislation
- » Best practices in early intervention
- » Evidence-based outcomes
- » Targeted strategies for effectively working with families and educational teams

"I did not think it was possible to improve on the first edition of *Essential Elements in Early Intervention*, but this edition surpasses the first. The book not only updates the research foundation in early intervention, but... it takes the art of early intervention services for children with visual and multiple disabilities to the next level, beyond trial and error to evidence-based practice."

From the Foreword by Dr. Kay Alicyn Ferrell
Professor of Special Education
University of Northern Colorado, Greeley

Available in paperback, e-book, ASCII and online subscription.

ORDER NOW!

www.afb.org/store 1-800-232-3044

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American Foundation for the Blind



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www.facebook.com/connectwithpress

AER International Conference 2014

Pre-Conference Workshops

AER is pleased to announce four pre-conference workshop opportunities, all of which occur on **Wednesday, July 30, 2014, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** (Registration begins at 8 a.m.)

Physical Activity Programming for Children and Youth with Visual Impairments

Presented by Lauren Lieberman, The College at Brockport; Justin Haegele, Ohio State University

Space limitation: 70. You must register for the AER International Conference to attend.

Additional fee required.

The workshop will focus on school-aged children with visual impairments and other disabilities and will review:

- What is adapted physical education?
- Assessments for children with visual impairments
- Appropriate programming for physical education and physical activity, including training support staff
- Instructional strategies for motor skills, fitness, sports and recreation
- Resources such as videos, products, equipment, websites and summer camps
- Advocacy strategies

An Introduction to Unified English Braille: A Hands-on Workshop

Presented by Frances Mary D'Andrea, University of Pittsburgh; Mary Nelle McLennan, American Printing House for the Blind; and Diane P. Wormsley, North Carolina Central University

Space limitation: 40. You must register for the AER International Conference to attend.

Additional fee required.

This full-day, interactive and hands-on workshop will provide a more in-depth look at Unified English Braille (UEB). General principles of UEB will be discussed as well as specific information about changes from current code, along with some new symbols and rules. Participants will have the opportunity to read sample materials and to write UEB on braille devices. Some Perkins braille devices will be available to use; however,

participants are encouraged to bring their own Perkins, portable braille device or a laptop with braille software that allows 6-key entry.

Overview and Field Practice Using the Trekker Breeze to Create Routes and Establish a Position in Space

Presented by Craig Phillips, Kansas State School for the Blind

Space limitation: 10. You must register for the AER International Conference to attend.

Additional fee required.

Participants in this six-hour pre-conference workshop will learn details of the Trekker Breeze GPS and how to create routes from the address entry feature. Workshop includes morning session on the parameters of GPS and device orientation, a working lunch (provided) to practice the settings menu and an afternoon session of route creations on the street and in open areas. Be prepared to walk up to 3 or 4 miles. HumanWare will supply units for use during the session or bring your own Trekker Breeze. Upgrades to the 2.0 system will be provided at the workshop if you bring your own. HumanWare will hold a drawing at the end of the session for a Trekker Breeze GPS.

AER LIFT Training

No charge.

Chapter and division leaders and others who are interested in AER leadership roles are invited to attend this workshop to hone leadership skills and learn the basics of managing chapters and divisions. AER LIFT is an acronym for **AER Leadership Initiatives Facilitate Teamwork**. Visit <http://aerbvi.org/international2014> for more information.

Celebrating
30
Years
1984–2014

Happy Anniversary, AER!

As AER embarks on its 30th year of service to professionals who serve individuals who are blind and visually impaired, it's a good time to look back on our history.

From its beginning in 1984, when the American Association of Workers for the Blind (AAWB) and the Association of Education of the Visually Handicapped (AEVH), formerly known as the American Association for Instructors for the Blind (AAIB), decided to consolidate to create the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, or AER as it is known today, one value has remained constant—AER is the one organization that provides support to the professionals who work with the visually impaired.

In 2012, Rick Welsh, who served as president of the first AER Board of Directors in 1984, presented a well-researched program on the origins of AER for the online AER LIFT leadership training series. The fascinating presentation goes back to the roots of AER when one director and one teacher from 14 of the 16 existing schools for the blind first met in 1853 to discuss common needs and concerns. A recording of the presentation is available at http://leadership.aerbvi.org/AERLIFT2012_2013Archives.htm.

We need your help!

The AER History and Memorial Committee is preparing a 30th anniversary celebration for the AER International Conference 2014 in San Antonio, Texas, this summer and beyond. They are seeking photos of AER members and events taken during the last 30 years. Please look through your photo albums and drawers for pictures, then scan and email them with captions to authors@aerbvi.org.

We look forward to celebrating our organization's history with you in San Antonio!

San Antonio – Deep in the Heart



From the Missions to the Hill Country, San Antonio offers so many things for visitors to see and do, ranging from major theme parks to the famous River Walk, lined with restaurants, patios, galleries and shops. The city is filled with culturally significant arts, history, museums and architecture. Go to <http://visitsanantonio.com> for more information.





It Pays to Be a **MEMBER!**

Take advantage of outstanding discounts available to AER members for these fine products and services:

SHOP.com/aerbvi

Earn cash back on online purchases and support AER at the same time with the new member benefit, www.shop.com/aerbvi. Use the portal to access thousands of partner stores and earn up to 35% cash back on qualified purchases.

Car Rental & Hotel Stay

AER members are entitled to discounts from 10% to 25% on car rentals from Alamo, Avis, Budget, Destination Europe, Hertz, and National.

Choice Hotels International provides AER members with discounts of up to 20% at nine brands including Cambria Suites, Clarion, Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, EconoLodge, MainStay Suites, Quality, Rodeway Inn, Sleep Inn, and Suburban Extended Stay.

Go to www.alumnibenefits.org/aer for details.

Legislative News

AER Legislative Committee Urges Support of TEACH Act

The AER Legislative Committee is supporting legislation, introduced November 2013 in the U.S. House of Representatives by Tom Petri (R-Wisc.), that would provide equal access to educational materials to students with disabilities. The Technology, Education and Accessibility in College and Higher Education (TEACH) Act (HR 3505) would require that any instructional technology—such as digital content, tablets, online platforms, interactive computer software, etc.—used by a postsecondary school either be accessible to students with disabilities or that the school provide accommodations or modifications so that the ease-of-use and benefits of the technology for students with disabilities is on par with other students. The act also directs the U.S. Access Board to develop guidelines for manufacturers to encourage the development of accessible instructional materials in the marketplace.

The TEACH Act is based on the recommendation of a Congressionally authorized study; it creates no new legal mandate for schools and has the official support of the publishing industry. These guidelines are sorely needed to protect equality in the classroom for blind and print disabled students.

The AER Legislative Committee urges members to sign a petition in support of the act at <https://www.change.org/petitions/pass-teach-act-equal-access-to-educational-materials-for-students-with-disabilities>.

Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act Introduced

On February 12, 2014, comprehensive legislation to enhance and reform the United States' special education system for students with vision loss and students with hearing loss was introduced in Congress per a report from the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB). Once enacted, HR 4040, the Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act will ensure that: every child who is deaf and every child who is blind, regardless of whether they have additional disabilities, will be properly counted and served; each of a child's unique learning needs will be properly evaluated; states will engage in strategic planning to ensure they can, in fact, meet each child's specialized needs; the U.S. Department of Education will do its part to hold states and schools accountable; students who are deaf will be served by qualified personnel; and students who are blind will receive state-of-the-art services and skills supported through a new major national collaborative initiative addressing their unique learning needs.

Introduced by Reps. Matt Cartwright (D-Pa.), Mark Takano (D-Calif.), and Steve Stockman (R-Texas), HR 4040 combines

into one bill two pieces of formerly draft-only legislation: the Alice Cogswell Act, named for the first deaf girl to be educated in a school for the deaf in the United States and advocated by America's leading deafness and hard of hearing organizations, and the Anne Sullivan Macy Act, named for Helen Keller's beloved teacher and advocated by a broad coalition of national, regional and community-based organizations representing vision loss

For more information and to learn how to support this historic legislation, visit the AFB website at www.afb.org/macyact.

Medicare Demonstration Project for Low Vision Devices a Possibility

The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) reports two members of the U.S. House of Representatives introduced legislation recently to establish a nationwide Medicare demonstration project to evaluate the fiscal impact of a permanent change in Medicare coverage to pay for low vision devices. Currently, Medicare will not pay for any device using a lens, regardless of whether such device incorporates any other features.

The legislation, HR 3749, introduced by Reps. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) and Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.), would initiate a five-year demonstration project that would put low vision devices in the hands of Medicare beneficiaries who, after a clinical evaluation by an ophthalmologist or optometrist, can benefit from a low vision device and for whom such devices are medically necessary. The legislation is careful to require that the demonstration project be genuinely national in scope and is explicitly designed to yield reliable data and meaningful results.

Once the legislation is enacted and the demonstration project is successfully completed, Congress will have significantly richer data upon which to consider changes to the Medicare program's coverage of low vision devices, especially the most costly devices, a permanent feature of the program. Precisely how many individuals will receive low vision devices and how many physicians across the country will participate in the project will need to be determined by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), working in consultation with stakeholder groups, as it develops and implements the project. The legislation makes \$12.5 million available for the project over five years.

For more information, go to the AFB website, <http://www.afb.org/info/programs-and-services/public-policy-center/directconnect-newsletter/low-vision-devices-getting-much-needed-attention-from-congress/1235>.

Continued on p. 24

Legislative News Cont. from page 23

AER Joins NCPSSERS

AER has joined the National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services (NCPSSERS), a U.S. group that addresses the need for and value of special education, related services and early intervention. The group identifies, disseminates and supports implementation of national, state and local strategies to remedy personnel shortages and persistent vacancies for the benefit of all children and youth. For more information about the coalition, visit <http://specialdshortages.org>.

ITEM Coalition 2014 Priorities Established



AER is a member of the ITEM Coalition (Independence Through Enhancement of Medicare and Medicaid), which is devoted to

raising awareness and building support for policies that will enhance access to assistive devices, technologies and related

services for people with disabilities and chronic conditions. Coalition priorities for 2014 include:

- Complex rehab technology
- Defense of access to assistive devices and technologies in long-term budget debate
- Implementation of healthcare reform
- Sight, speech and hearing device issues
- Durable medical equipment issues
- Orthotics and prosthetics

For more information, visit <http://itemcoalition.org>.



U.S. Federal Drug Administration approves Hetlioz: first treatment for non-24 hour sleep-wake disorder in blind individuals

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on January 31, 2014, approved Hetlioz (tasimelteon), a melatonin receptor agonist, to treat non-24-hour sleep-wake disorder (“non-24”) in totally blind individuals. Non-24 is a chronic circadian rhythm (body clock) disorder in the blind that causes problems with the timing of sleep. This is the first FDA approval of a treatment for the disorder.

Non-24 occurs in persons who are completely blind. Light does not enter their eyes, so they cannot synchronize their body clock to the 24-hour light-dark cycle.

Hetlioz is manufactured by Vanda Pharmaceuticals, Inc. of Washington, D.C., a major AER partner. It will be available in spring 2014.

Those with the disorder may have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep, and may wake up groggy or feeling as if they need more rest. People with non-24 may find their sleep patterns reversed—needing to sleep during the day and staying awake at night.

“Non-24-hour sleep-wake disorder can prevent blind individuals from following the normal daily schedule that we all take for granted,” said Eric Bastings, M.D., deputy director of the Division of Neurology Products in the FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. “Hetlioz can improve the ability to sleep at night and to be active during the day.”

Although most people who are totally blind still can perceive light well enough to prevent non-24, there may be as many as 100,000 individuals in the United States with this condition

who can’t perceive enough light to establish a normal night sleep schedule. Non-24 can occur at any age.

The effectiveness of Hetlioz was evaluated in 104 participants in two clinical trials of totally blind individuals with non-24 disorder. In the trials, treatment with Hetlioz resulted in significant improvement compared to placebo (inactive pill), both in increasing nighttime sleep and decreasing daytime sleep duration.

In clinical trials, the most common side effects reported by patients treated with Hetlioz were headache, elevated liver enzymes (alanine aminotransferase) in the blood, nightmares or unusual dreams, disturbed night’s sleep, upper respiratory or urinary tract infection and drowsiness.

Hetlioz can impair activities that require complete mental alertness. Hetlioz should be taken at the same time every night before bedtime, and activities should be limited after taking the drug.

Hetlioz was reviewed under priority review. Priority review provides for an expedited review of drugs that treat serious conditions and have the potential to provide significant improvement in safety or effectiveness of the treatment, diagnosis or prevention of such serious conditions. Hetlioz also received orphan-product designation by the FDA, because it is intended to treat a rare disease or condition.

Learn more about Hetlioz™ by calling 844-438-5469 or visiting www.hetlioz.com.



New!

Now available in the AFB eLearning Center

iPad in the Classroom Webinar Series

This series of three webinars presented by Dr. Betsy Flener describe the rationale and specific suggestions for using the iPad and tablet devices in the classroom for students with visual and multiple disabilities.

Creating Tactile Overlays for the iPad and Tablet Devices

Credit: ACVREP; Hours: 1

iPad and Communication for Students with Visual and Multiple Disabilities

Credit: ACVREP; Hours: 1.25

Reinforcing Braille Literacy Using the iPad

Credit: ACVREP; Hours: 1

Series \$69; \$29 individually



Working with Job Seekers Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

If you are a professional working in a vocational rehabilitation setting, and new to serving those who are blind or visually impaired, this five lesson course will help prepare you to successfully work with and assist your clients. You'll be given tools for teaching and interacting with someone who is visually impaired, including information about blindness myths, proper etiquette for social interactions, and the definitions of vision loss terms. The importance of assessment, evaluations, and determining needs are explained. Considerations for making a variety of job accommodations are discussed, including use of access technology, overcoming physical challenges, and dealing with environmental factors. An extensive list of resources for your work is also provided.

**Credit: 4 hours ACVREP, 4 hours CRCC
Course \$49; Credit Certificates \$10**

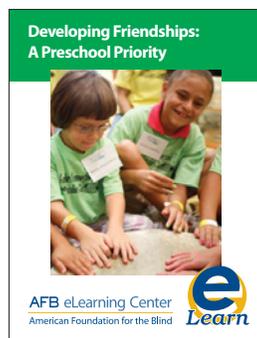
For more information about these and other webinars and courses, visit the AFB eLearning Center <http://eLearn.afb.org>



Developing Friendships: A Preschool Priority

Mastering social skills is important to the future success of a child who is blind or visually impaired, and there is no better time to start learning those skills than when children are very young. In this webinar, Mindy Ely presents a three pronged approach for teaching preschoolers how to make friends. This process includes helping children 1) WANT to interact with others, 2) enter a play situation successfully and 3) maintain social interactions. Includes a handy checklist to identify a child's strengths and weaknesses in peer interaction skills.

**Credit: 1 hour ACVREP, 0.1 CEU AOTA
Webinar \$29; Credit Certificates \$10**



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White Cane Laws for States

The American Council of the Blind has a handy list of White Cane Laws in each U.S. state on their website at www.acb.org/whitecane. The information pertains to pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired and includes state statutes, penalties for violations and excerpts from driver manuals. Here are some examples:

Illinois

State Law and Penalty:

(625 ILCS 60/15)

Sec. 15. Mobility device; service animal; white cane.

- (a) An operator of a vehicle shall stop the vehicle before approaching closer than 10 feet to a pedestrian with a disability who is using a mobility device, accompanied by a visibly identifiable service animal, or carrying or using a white cane, and shall take all precautions that may be necessary to avoid an accident or injury to the pedestrian with a disability. Any vehicle operator who fails to take such precautions shall be liable for damages for any injury caused to the pedestrian with a disability.
- (b) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to deprive any person with a disability who is not using a mobility device, not accompanied by a visibly identifiable service animal, or not carrying or using a white cane of the rights of other pedestrians, nor shall such an occurrence be conclusively held to constitute evidence of contributory negligence.
- (c) Qualified professionals involved in the training of visibly identifiable service animals including training a person with a disability in the use of an animal, orientation and mobility instructors who are providing instruction to persons with disabilities or receiving training to enable them to provide that instruction, or any otherwise qualified person providing instruction to a person with a disability in the proper use of a mobility device or white cane shall be covered by the provisions of this Section.

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=3252&ChapterID=49>

From the Driver's Manual:

Pedestrians with Disabilities

When approaching a pedestrian with a disability who is utilizing a guide dog, a white cane, a wheelchair or other assistive device on a sidewalk or roadway, the pedestrian has the right-of-way and is granted the same rights as any pedestrian.

Pennsylvania

State Law and Penalty:

Section 3549. Blind pedestrians.

- (a) General rule.--The driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way to any totally or partially blind pedestrian carrying a clearly visible white cane or accompanied by

a guide dog and shall take such precautions as may be necessary to avoid injuring or endangering the pedestrian and, if necessary, shall stop the vehicle in order to prevent injury or danger to the pedestrian.

- (b) Effect of absence of cane or dog.--This section shall not be construed to deprive a totally or partially blind pedestrian not carrying a cane or not being guided by a dog of the rights and privileges conferred by law upon pedestrians crossing streets or highways, nor shall the failure of a totally or partially blind pedestrian to carry a cane or to be guided by a guide dog upon the streets, highways or sidewalks of this Commonwealth be held to constitute contributory negligence in and of itself.
- (c) Penalty.--A violation of subsection (a) constitutes a summary offense punishable by a fine of not less than \$50 nor more than \$150.

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/CT/HTM/75/00.035.049.000..HTM>

From the Driver's Manual:

Yield the right-of-way (slow down and prepare to stop) to blind pedestrians, whether they have a white cane or a guide dog, or are being led by others.

Texas

State Law and Penalty:

Section 552.010. Blind Pedestrians.

- (a) No person may carry a white cane on a public street or highway unless the person is totally or partially blind.
 - (b) The driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection or crosswalk where a pedestrian guided by an assistance animal or carrying a white cane is crossing or attempting to cross shall take necessary precautions to avoid injuring or endangering the pedestrian. The driver shall bring the vehicle to a full stop if injury or danger can be avoided only by that action.
 - (c) If it is shown on the trial of an offense under this section that as a result of the commission of the offense a collision occurred causing serious bodily injury or death to a blind person, the offense is a misdemeanor punishable by:
 - (1) a fine of not more than \$500; and
 - (2) 30 hours of community service to an organization or agency that primarily serves visually impaired or disabled persons, to be completed in not less than six months and not more than one year.
- (c-1) A portion of the community service required under Subsection (c)(2) shall include sensitivity training.

- (d) For the purposes of this section:
- (1) "Assistance animal" has the meaning assigned by Section 121.002, Human Resources Code.
 - (2) "White cane" has the meaning assigned by Section 121.002, Human Resources Code.
- (e) If conduct constituting an offense under this section also constitutes an offense under another section of this code or the Penal Code, the actor may be prosecuted under either section or both sections.

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/TN/htm/TN.552.htm#552.010>

From the Driver's Manual:

Blind, partially blind, or disabled individuals may carry a white cane while walking. Others must not display a cane on any public street or highway.

Be alert to a pedestrian guided by an assistance animal or carrying a white cane. A driver shall take the necessary precautions to avoid injuring or endangering a pedestrian crossing or attempting to cross the street. The driver shall bring the vehicle to a full stop if injury or danger can only be avoided by that action. Remember the white cane indicates the person may be blind, partially blind, or disabled.

Watch for individuals who are blind at bus stops, intersections, business areas, and near schools for the blind.

While all wording is similar, some states provide lengthy definitions of when drivers should yield while others are short and sweet. Penalties vary as well. For example, in Kansas the penalty for failure to yield to a blind pedestrian is \$30 while in Maine, the penalty ranges from \$50 to \$1,000.



Welcome New Members! September 26, 2013 – March 6, 2014

CANADA
British Columbia
Susan Flanagan
Donna Gresham

Ontario
Mary Sweeney
Linda Valley

ISRAEL
Orly Lahav
Hagit Shamli

UNITED STATES
Alabama
Donovan Beitel
Margaret Coons
Pam Eckl
Barbara Fletcher
Nichole Holley
Sherry Roberson
Senita Thorne

Arizona
Erica Eswine
Tara Hill
Bernice Medina
Hangameh
Mousavi
Tiffany Neumann
Lynda Nollmeyer
Cynbthia Phelps
Daniel Standage
Marty Tissaw

Arkansas
Connie Crawford
Von Daniels
Omogene Farley
Jacob Grace
Elizabeth Graves
Kimberly Harkey
Ebony Kelly
Sherry Lassiter

Shayla Nelson
Monica Taylor
California
Debra Christenson
Dana Dickson
Jane Neglia
Nancy Neibrugge
Jennifer Swad

Colorado
Alice Applebaum
Mindy Doyle-McCall
Lorraine Estrada
Grace Katolas
John Kilpatrick
Stefanie Kirkwood
Jen Klyczek
Paula Landry
Lisa Roll Moore
Sarah Valesse

Delaware
Daniel Madrid

District of Columbia
Danielle Serfozo

Florida
Mireya Canto
Michelle Fischer
David Rouby
Linda Weiss Rose
Shannon Witt

Georgia
Teresa Cross
Katie Strack

Idaho
Jennifer Hirai
Carol Scholz

Illinois
Celina Arquilla
Stephanie DeCarlo
Sierra Dockery
Jill Frister
Alison Gajos
Alex Jones
Susan Uthup
Aimee Veith

Kansas
Kathy Alstrin
Caitlin Hagerty
Andra Mies

Kentucky
Jessica Belcher
Joann Brandenburg
Pamela Brown
Staci Maynard
Cris Monette
Holly Sadowski
Elizabeth
Schueneman
Kyle Sochia
James Wentz

Louisiana
Linda Stack

Maryland
Kelsey Dickey
Lavoonia Fickling
John Lockard
Stephen McAuliff
Samantha
Montgomery
Russell Tutt

Massachusetts
Pamela Lerch
Teresa Pagliuca
Robert Renna
Jeanne Saunders
Mary Zatta

Michigan
Jennifer Barley
Debra Bonde
David Bowden
Jessica Doner
Jennifer Fritton
Colleen Klesmith
Amy McDonald-Lamiman
Elizabeth Mulligan
Randy Reed
Miguel Reyes
Sarah Rose
Amanda Sterly
Zoel Zattel

Minnesota
Suzanne Bodelson
Mary Korsmo
Judith Normandin

Mississippi
Melanie Shurden

Missouri
Shelley Donahue
Debbie Wolf

Nebraska
Jayme Alexander
Megan Dunlap

Nevada
Shari Marley

New Hampshire
Danielle Mock

New Jersey
Madelyn Samol

New Mexico
Lindsey Alexa

New York
Lynn Branagan
Emilie Britton
Rhonda Butler
Teri Chamberlin
Christine
Guilbeault
Jeannine Hobbes
Marshi Kaufman
Theresa Lehman
Margherita Manz
Eddie Molina
John Panarese
Mirella Samuels
Nancy Smith

North Carolina
Katherine
Bergamasco
Kathy Davis
Katherine Guiney-Olson
Jennifer Hebert
Lucy Plyler
Diane Whitaker

North Dakota
Julie Anderson
Melissa Snyder

Ohio
Nolan Crabb
Tim Jones
Nolan Markle
Ann Pilewskie
Toi Lin Van Horn

Oklahoma
Chris Carden
Renae Dudley
KLimberly Ford
Tera Webb

Pennsylvania
Carol Boudwiin
Natalie Boyd
Amy Burke
Rebekah Craig
Jennifer Ditrlich
Katherine Flick
Laura Graybill
Alicia Hornberger
Connor Kelly
Katherine Landon
Samantha
McGovern
Kristen
Neugebauer
Lisa Noel
Ashley Popojas
Amy Shimonovich
Emily Stemmler

Puerto Rico
Adriana Mattei
Sosa
Glorianne Roman

Rhode Island
Janice Shearer

South Carolina
Michelle Howard
Adrienne Padner

Tennessee
Wendy Morrison

Texas
Heidi Allbright
Valerie Alvarez
Leslie Anderson
Tammy Baca
Gloria Burks
Laura Cornell
Shannon Darst
Teri deJong
Alisa Dowell

Naomi Feller
Janelle Felmet
Maricela Garza
Carolyn Hinytzke
Erin Pate
Lara Pate
Thania Perez
Aburto
Kristie Phillips
Denise Romero
Jessica Rose
Claudia Schleyer
Shelly Sumner

Utah
Tatiana Dixon

Vermont
Patrick Galasso

Virginia
Jennifer Bensaïd
Teresa Bozman
Nancy Cohen

Washington
Corey Grandstaff
Amanda Marrs

West Virginia
Constanza Baker

Wisconsin
Kathryn Brzakala
Leanette Dieck
Susan Eggold
Lisa Konkel

Division Docket

Psychosocial Services Division (4)

The Psychosocial Services Division (4) is proud and honored to announce Mary Morse as the recipient of the Robert M. Lambert, Ph.D. Award. The award presentation and dinner honoring Mary will occur during the AER International Conference 2014 in San Antonio, Texas, on Thursday, August 1, 2014, after our division business meeting.

Mary Morse is an educational consultant who provides consultation, assessments and advocacy for students with visual and multiple disabilities. She offers in-service training on behalf of all students with low incidence disabilities at the district, state and national levels. She has tirelessly championed the cause of educational potential for some of our most difficult-to-teach students and has extended her vision to all those she has trained. She has written innumerable scientific and clinical articles for national and international publications.

Any of our members who know Mary are welcome to attend the award presentation and dinner in her honor. (Alas, anyone joining us must pay their own way!) Further details will be in our upcoming division newsletter, which should be available soon.

The Robert M. Lambert, Ph.D. Award was created by Bob's widow, Irene Lambert, in 1994 after his untimely death. Bob was a leader in research on the impact of sound perception, computer access and other factors for people who are totally blind. It is exciting that Mary and Jack (John Morse, Ph.D., her husband and former Lambert awardee) both knew Bob and Irene and have fond memories of meetings with them. We are delighted that both Morses will attend the award presentation in San Antonio.

Please join us as we celebrate this gifted, dedicated colleague!

Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Division (9)

Submitted by Kevin Hollinger, chair, O&M Division

The O&M Division (9) is still reveling in the afterglow of the AER International O&M Conference 2013 in December at the Hilton Riverside in New Orleans, La. We counted over 750 attendees who engaged in more than 100 sessions and enjoyed 30 exhibits. I can tell you that stories of gumbo, beignets, oysters, and new and old friendships will be dancing in many people's heads until the next division conference in 2017.

During the conference, the O&M Division Executive Committee hosted a business meeting after opening remarks from President Jim Adams and Executive Director Lou Tutt. Our district directors provided updates as did many of our committees. Some notable nuggets from the conference include:

- The conference was so overwhelmingly successful, we encountered some overflow situations and some presenters graciously repeated their sessions. Thankfully, AER is offering a Continuing Education Access Pass with 95 hours of audio recording available, and nearly 250 people have purchased one. (For information on purchasing a pass, please see page 12 in this *AER Report*.)
- The conference focused on three strands: Guide Dogs,

International O&M, and Research in O&M.

- We offered several half-day sessions, such as: using the Trekker Breeze GPS Device; O&M for persons with deaf-blindness; O&M for persons with multiple disabilities; and 1Touch Self-Defense.
- The AER Student Council held its first face-to-face meeting with President Jim Adams and President-Elect Christy Shepard in attendance.
- Sigalu Epenesa (University of Massachusetts Boston) and Faye Miller (Salus University) were recognized as the Blasch Scholarship Winners
- Eileen Siffermann, chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Finances and the Ad Hoc Committee for Revision of the Division Policy & Procedure Manual, provided a summary of their final reports.
- Susan Langendonk, chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Preferred Practices, provided a summary of the completed work to revise seven current division position papers. Six papers were revised and one was rescinded. The AER board approved all the changes in February 2014.
- Bonnie Dodson-Burk, chair of the travel training/travel instruction position paper, stated the division members voted upon and passed the position paper. The AER board then approved it the AER Board in December 2013.
- A roundtable discussion was held to answer questions and obtain additional feedback about the P&P Manual and the division's historical governance. President Jim Adams attended the majority of that session and was a great source of information.

AER Itinerant Personnel Division (16)

The AER Itinerant Personnel Division (16) is happy to report that we sent our newsletters to members at the beginning of February. Please let us know if you did not receive yours. The newsletter is full of great articles, and we hope you enjoy it.

The AER Board of Directors has approved some of our position papers. Both the newsletters (current and previous issues) and the position papers are available online on the Itinerant Personnel Division page of the AER website (<http://aerbvi.org/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=70>).

The Itinerant Division would like to congratulate the O&M Division on a most successful conference last December. Those who attended gathered a lot of helpful information! Those who were unable to attend can get the information by purchasing the CE Access Pass to get the info...and ACVREP credits! (See page 12 of this *AER Report* for more information.)

The Itinerant Division board is looking forward to seeing you in San Antonio at the AER International Conference 2014. Make your plans now to join in the "knowledge bowl" that is being planned!



Basic Spanish

for Orientation and Mobility: A Phrase Book and Dictionary

Brenda Naimy, Editor
Matthew Hogel, Consulting Editor

Professionals providing services to people who are visually impaired work with individuals of all ages from broadly diverse ethnic, religious, and cultural groups. Many speak languages other than English. *Basic Spanish for Orientation and Mobility* is a new user-friendly, valuable tool for communicating O&M instruction to students who primarily speak Spanish.

This handy and comprehensive manual provides:

- » O&M lessons broken down step-by-step and side-by-side in English and Spanish
- » Phrases and O&M terminology needed to convey instruction
- » Easy to read vocabulary lists

Negotiating Stairs with a Cane

- It is helpful to know the names for the different parts of the stairs as you learn how to use your cane to navigate them. These include:
 - riser: the vertical part of the step

Como Navegar por Escaleras con un Bastón

- Le ayuda saber los nombres de las diferentes partes que conforman una escalera cuando usa su bastón para franquearlas:
 - contrahuella: lado vertical de un escalón

BASIC SPANISH

for Orientation and Mobility



A Phrase Book and Dictionary

Brenda Naimy, Editor
Matthew Hogel, Translation and Consulting Editor

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Over the years, AER members have created several position papers on topics specific to the association's divisions. Approved papers are posted on the AER website on division web pages. The following paper, developed by O&M Division members, was adopted September 29, 2013.

AER O&M DIVISION POSITION PAPER

Orientation and Mobility Specialists and the Provision of Travel Instruction to Individuals with Nonvisual Disabilities

Adopted 9/29/2013

The purpose of this position paper is to provide guidance for orientation and mobility (O&M) specialists who are being asked to provide travel instruction (TI) to individuals with disabilities other than visual impairment who have functional mobility limitations. All persons with any disability, whether visual or not, are deserving of exemplary instruction by a highly qualified professional to help them achieve the highest level of independent mobility for which they are capable. The AER O&M Division supports O&M specialists providing travel instruction, if they possess the knowledge and competencies identified in this position paper.

The definition of TI is "one to one instruction provided to people with disabilities other than blindness or visual impairments whose purpose is to enable safe and independent travel in unprotected environments, including on public transit" (Blasch, Wiener, Voorhees, Minick & Furlong, 2010, p. 713). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004 defines Travel Instruction (referred to as "Training") as follows: "Travel training means providing instruction, as appropriate, to children with significant cognitive disabilities, and any other children with disabilities who require this instruction, to enable them to (i) Develop an awareness of the environment in which they live; and (ii) Learn the skills necessary to move effectively and safely from place to place within that environment (e.g., in school, in home, at work, and in the community)" (IDEA, 2004, section 300.39). This same concept applies to adults. As with O&M, TI may be provided to children and adults in various service delivery settings, such as schools, rehabilitation agencies and transit authorities.

The evolution of O&M instruction for persons with a visual impairment has established a standard of highly qualified, certified professionals providing individualized instruction following preferred practice methodologies. Many individuals with disabilities

other than blindness and the parents of children with these disabilities desire this same high level of service. This has resulted in more requests for travel instruction, both in education and rehabilitation settings. It is imperative that individuals receive TI and that the service providers have the necessary level of education and skills needed to provide safe and effective instruction.

O&M specialists teach students of all ages who have multiple disabilities. They adapt instructional strategies for persons with physical challenges, intellectual disabilities, autism, learning disabilities, mental health issues, traumatic brain injury, complex medical conditions and other disabilities, as well as persons who are hard of hearing or deaf. The Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) and The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) include standards for working with consumers who are blind or visually impaired with additional disabilities (AER O&M curricular standards).

Unlike the O&M field, which has university training programs and international certification standards, at present there are no university training programs in TI, nor are there certification standards. Over the years two universities, University of Wisconsin and Western Michigan University, offered programs in TI but both TI programs were discontinued when federal grant funding ended. Today we find high variability in the educational background of travel instructors, ranging from a high school diploma to a master's degree in special education or a related field.

In the Comments and Discussion Section of IDEA 2004, it was written:

Discussion: Section 300.156, consistent with section 612(2)(14) of the Act, requires each

state to establish personnel qualifications to ensure that personnel necessary to carry out the purposes of the Act are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained and have the content knowledge and skills to serve children with disabilities. (IDEA, 2004, section 300.156)

It is, therefore, the state's responsibility to determine the qualifications that are necessary to provide travel training instruction.

Until individual states develop the criteria necessary for travel instructors, this position paper highlights recognized competencies and methodologies. It can serve as a guide for those O&M specialists wishing to evaluate their qualifications for the provision of TI for individuals with disabilities without visual impairment.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE PROFESSIONS OF O&M AND TI

There are many similarities between the fields of O&M and TI. Both fields share the basic principle of individualized instruction provided in natural environments with the goal of independent travel to the highest degree possible. Instructional goals are developed based on students' needs and the results of evaluations of students' travel concepts and skills within their neighborhoods, schools, workplaces and communities. Students are gradually required to take on more responsibilities for their travel-related actions and decisions while instructors increase their monitoring distances and document progression of skill sets. Lastly, both fields endorse collaboration with the students' family members, therapists, educational and rehabilitation staff (Blasch et al., 2010).

O&M specialists and travel instructors assess functional skills and develop instructional strategies that are tailored to each student's strengths and needs, while considering intellectual capacity, physical capability, maturity level, and interpersonal and social skills. Both professionals teach the skills and strategies needed to:

- establish and maintain orientation with an environment, using landmarks and spatial updating to plan and to follow routes
- negotiate obstacles and other hazards in the travel path in order to move efficiently, including use of mobility devices, when appropriate
- solve problems, including reorienting when lost
- make travel decisions
- cross streets at stop signs, traffic signal-controlled and uncontrolled intersections
- use public transportation, including communicating with transit operators and handling unexpected but natural occurrences, such as missed transit connections, missed stops and transit route detours
- interact appropriately with the public

A final similarity is that O&M and TI both incorporate opportunities to apply functional life skills for travel, such as managing time and money, and using a telephone. Some students need to be taught social skills and social expectations as they relate to accessing the community and public transit. Instruction for some students may focus on specific, repeatable routes leading to specific destinations, while for others a more comprehensive view of the environment is fostered.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS FOR TI AND DIFFERENCES IN INSTRUCTION

While there are many similarities between the responsibilities of an O&M specialist and a travel instructor, there are also some differences in curriculum and areas of emphasis. First and foremost the travel instructor helps the student learn about the environment and travel through it by using sight as the primary sensory system. Certainly O&M specialists are accustomed to improving visual efficiency through optical and non-optical training and teaching students to use visual information to make travel decisions, but the O&M specialist teaches the student to supplement vision through training of the other senses. Long cane instruction and non-visual orientation are not included in the provision of TI.

There may also be a difference in the service delivery model when providing TI. While the O&M specialist may spend weeks, months or even years to prepare a student for independent travel within the community, the travel instructor may provide daily intensive instruction that will likely conclude in a shorter period of time. For school age students, TI is typically part of transition programming within the IEP during the last year or two of high school. Students receiving TI may receive 20–25 lessons along a specific route, with instruction on the days and times, including evenings and weekends, the person needs to travel to work, school or other locations.

Strategies for soliciting assistance may be taught differently to TI students. O&M specialists teach many of their students how to solicit assistance and how to ask effective questions to obtain the most accurate information from persons in the community. Conversely, travel instructors typically attempt to minimize assistance-seeking behavior, particularly with students with intellectual disabilities, or they teach persons to request assistance only from community workers. As a result, travel instructors place an increased emphasis on "stranger danger." The travel instructor evaluates the student's ability to generalize these skills through pre-arranged "stranger approaches" by plainclothes police officers or unfamiliar staff members.

An increased emphasis on problem solving and troubleshooting unforeseen events is important for TI. Students must demonstrate the ability to effectively negotiate

Continued on p. 32

travel contingencies that may occur along the specific route(s) they are learning. Fewer lessons may result in reduced opportunities to practice problem-solving strategies. Thus, if unforeseen events do not happen naturally during the course of instruction, the instructor must allow for time to create them. This is particularly important for some persons with autism or those who have difficulty with changes in routine. Some of these persons may easily learn new routes, demonstrating mastery of travel skills, and following “rules” for street crossings and other travel tasks. However, any change in routine may cause significant anxiety, resulting in the inability to perform or generalize skills. Thus, it is crucial to provide documentation of managed anxiety with effective decisions in travel situations.

Challenges with impulse control, reliance upon routine, inappropriate or maladaptive behaviors, anxiety, fear of unusual things, perseveration, distraction and unlearning previously acquired unsafe travel habits are a few of the issues that are typically prevalent with persons who receive TI. It is important to know how students function without their instructor, as some individuals may make errors in judgment, bolt or are unable to complete travel tasks due to extreme anxiety when traveling alone. Thus, TI may include unknown observations by a travel instructor or other knowledgeable professionals who the student has not met. Documented progress monitoring is used during solo trips to provide factual information and reassurance to family members.

THE PROVISION OF TI SERVICES BY O&M SPECIALISTS

Because there are similarities in established competencies and scope of practice for O&M and TI, some O&M specialists already provide TI, and O&M specialists may be considered the obvious choice to provide such services (ACVREP O&M scope of practice; AER O&M curricular standards; Wiener, 2004). The readiness to provide TI services must be based on the O&M specialist having the knowledge to instruct persons with disabilities other than blindness, gained either through coursework in their O&M university program, from a related degree or through direct experience. It is recommended that O&M specialists who choose to provide TI acquire the academic and field practice competencies unique to TI, if they are not already part of the O&M specialist’s repertoire.

Prior to providing TI, the following competencies should be obtained:

- medical and functional aspects of persons with intellectual, physical, perceptual and specific learning disabilities, as well persons with psychological disorders, autism, traumatic brain injury and attention deficit disorder
- use of mobility-related devices, such as wheelchairs, walkers, support canes, scooters, etc. and proper methods for device

- use on lifts/ramps and securements on public transit vehicles
- environmental analysis for students with intellectual, emotional or physical disabilities who are affected by features such as the social environment, visual and auditory stimuli and physical barriers in the travel path
- assessment, instructional methods and strategies for working with persons with intellectual, emotional or physical disabilities, including travel skills that incorporate the use of normal vision into the teaching methodology

It is recommended that persons in O&M university programs who plan to provide TI seek practicum and internship sites that provide increased opportunities to work with individuals with an array of disabilities. O&M specialists who provide TI are strongly encouraged to read related literature, collaborate with other professionals who provide TI and attend professional conferences and workshops in TI.

Questions have been raised about the efficacy of relying on O&M specialists to provide TI since it might draw away needed professional resources from students with vision loss. These same issues of limited resources for O&M instruction were previously explored when universities initiated dual certification programs for O&M and teachers of the visually impaired (TVI). These programs, however, have met the needs of students who have required both types of instruction. The combination of O&M and TI would afford the same opportunities in various settings. In the future it is possible that some universities may choose to develop programs that will combine both O&M and TI, with the focus being on mobility and travel skills for persons of all ages with any type of disability.

Because blindness is a low incidence category of disability, itinerant O&M specialists often travel extensively across large geographic regions. Therefore, providing mobility instruction to students with other disabilities may increase caseloads but allow for service provision in a smaller geographical area, resulting in more instructional time and availability for collaboration. In addition it may be more cost-effective to include TI as part of the workload of an O&M specialist rather than hiring a separate instructor. The Wisconsin Council of Developmental Disabilities funded a project (Blasch, 1982) to employ an O&M specialist with training in TI to provide O&M and TI for individuals with a broad range of mobility limitations. Cost savings reflected the difference between the costs for specialized transportation prior to the implementation of this O&M/TI program and the costs for public transportation required after O&M/TI had been provided. “A cost savings of \$117,540 was realized in its first year of operation based on 36 participants, after the costs of the O&M/TI specialist were deducted” (Blasch et al., 2010).

At present, O&M specialists who maintain professional

liability insurance can be insured to provide TI to sighted individuals with disabilities. O&M specialists must include TI as a job duty and provide a detailed description of the TI and O&M services they provide on their policy applications.

The AER O&M Division supports O&M specialists in providing travel instruction. Each O&M specialist should make an informed decision about whether or not to provide TI, based on his or her knowledge, related degrees, caseloads, experience and interest.

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AER LIFT Webinars Offered for Chapter and Division Leaders

AER LIFT is an acronym for “AER Leadership Initiatives Facilitate Teamwork.” Established as a chapter and division leadership training program for AER elected officers to strengthen the association, the training program stimulates and encourages more involvement of grassroots members, thereby helping the association fulfill its mission to provide support to AER members at the chapter and division levels.

AER LIFT Online offers critically needed leadership training for chapter and division leaders. Current AER leaders, committee members and members who are interested in a future leadership position are encouraged to participate in any of these free webinars.

The April AER LIFT session, **Making AER Meetings and Conferences Accessible for All**, will be held Wednesday, April 9, 2014, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. The presenter is Ike Presley, TVI, CLVT, American Foundation for the Blind.

The 2014 online webinars are presented FREE via Talking Communities (TC). Registration is done via Survey Monkey. Before the call, all registrants will receive login information for TC. Participation using TC requires the use of a headset; there is no phone option.



March-April 2014 Issue Highlights

The March-April 2014 issue of the *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness (JVIB)* is now available and includes an opportunity to [earn CEUs](#) from the [Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals \(ACVREP\)](#).

The lead article focuses on transition-aged youths with visual impairments, using five years of data from a national study to determine what factors affect job prospects for these youths. The Practice Perspectives article highlights the efforts of three professionals who adapted a mainstream reading program with positive results for struggling braille readers. Other articles and reports in this issue offer information on the use of constant time delay for teaching braille word recognition; the importance of early introduction to braille and its relationship to tactile sensitivity; the effect of nonverbal cues; the usage and validity of Michigan Severity Rating Scales; the results of a survey about a new online training curriculum for the Randolph-Sheppard program; and the findings of an action-research project into multiple disabilities and visual impairment.

Articles

- Longitudinal Analysis of Factors Associated with Successful Outcomes for Transition-Age Youths with Visual Impairments by Elyse Connors, Amy Curtis, Robert Wall Emerson and Benedict Dormitorio
- Using Constant Time Delay to Teach Braille Word Recognition by Jonathan Hooper, Sarah Ivy and Deborah Hatton
- Tactile Sensitivity and Braille Reading in People with Early Blindness and Late Blindness by Kensuke Oshima, Tetsuya Arai, Shigeru Ichihara and Yasushi Nakano
- The Effect of Nonverbal Cues on the Interpretation of Utterances by People with Visual Impairments by Jolanta Sak-Wernicka

Practice Perspectives

- Adaptation of a Reading Program to Meet the Needs of Braille Readers by Jane N. Erin
- Adaptation of the Wilson Reading System for Braille Readers by Roz Rowley, Mary McCarthy and Justine Carlone Rines

Research Reports

- Michigan Severity Rating Scales: Usage and Validity by Robert Wall Emerson and Dawn Anderson
- Randolph-Sheppard National Online Training Curriculum for Program Staff: Findings from a National Survey of Randolph-Sheppard Directors by Jacquelyn Bybee and Brenda S. Cavanaugh
- Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairment: An Action Research Project by Vassilios Argyropoulos and Paraskevas Thymakis

To access your *JVIB* member benefit, go to the Member's Only area of AER's website and log in with your AER membership user name and password (email aer@aerbvi.org if you have misplaced your credentials). Then follow the links that say *JVIB* until you reach the table of contents of the current issue.



Tech Links

AER regularly collects Internet links to tech news and resources that may be useful to members and the people they serve. For up-to-date links and other resources, visit AER's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/groups/aerbvi.



Ducere Technologies launches LECHAL interactive haptic based footwear
<http://www.indiaonline.com/Markets/News/Ducere-Technologies-launches-LECHAL-interactive-haptic-based-footwear/5873657020>



Finger-worn gadget reads aloud when you point at words
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2563759/The-ring-READS-Finger-worn-gadget-reads-aloud-point-words-translate-books.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490



Experimental contact lens aims to offer tactile sight for the blind
<http://www.gizmag.com/experimental-contact-lens-tactile-sight-blind/30621/>



Google unveils 'smart contact lens' to measure glucose levels
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-25771907>



App turns smartphone into virtual cane for the blind
<http://www.technologyreview.com/view/523401/app-turns-smartphone-into-virtual-cane-for-the-blind>



Scientists 'print' new eye cells
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-25405542>



Canadian high-tech goggles restore sight to legally blind
<http://www.canadianmanufacturing.com/design-engineering/case-studies/canadian-high-tech-goggles-restore-sight-to-legally-blind-design-engineering-127978>



3-D street map for the blind
<http://www.insidescience.org/content/3-d-street-map-blind/1503>



University of Nevada, Reno professor developing Google Glass-based tool to help the blind get around
<http://www.rgj.com/article/20131120/LIV11/311200036/Finding-pathway-UNR-professor-developing-Google-Glass-based-tool-help-blind-get-around-video->



Yoga accessible for the blind with new Microsoft Kinect-based program
<http://www.washington.edu/news/2013/10/17/yoga-accessible-for-the-blind-with-new-microsoft-kinect-based-program/>

In Memoriam

Robert (Bob) LaDuke died Jan. 21, 2014, in Kalamazoo, Mich., at the age of 75. A well-known professor of orientation & mobility at Western Michigan University, Bob is fondly remembered by his many students who remarked on his wit and vitality. His obituary stated, "Bob had a great personality and was an absolute joy to know. His sense of humor and well-timed jokes could always lift spirits and make people laugh. Wherever Bob was, smiles could be found." He is survived by his wife, Judith LaDuke, and numerous children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Memorials may be made to the Battle Creek Relay for Life Team "Hey Jude" (checks payable to American Cancer Society), or Hospice Care of S.W. Michigan.



Raymond (Ray) Brooks, 94, of Melrose Park, Ill., died Jan. 17, 2014, while on vacation in Lido Key, Fla., while enjoying dinner with his family. He was the beloved husband and best friend of AER member Gala Brooks. Ray was an O&M specialist at the Central Blind Rehabilitation Center at Hines VA Hospital in Hines, Ill., for 38 years. He was one of the pioneers in the development of this field, which started at the end of WWII, to teach blinded veterans to travel independently with the use of a long cane. He was one of 15 orientors hired during the second wave of those added to the original staff at the Blind Center in 1951. Memorials may be made to the Sacred Heart Church Food Pantry, 819 N. 16th Ave. Melrose Park, IL 60160.



Chapter News

Arizona

Our Fall Conference in Phoenix in November 2013 was successful. The chapter board would like to thank our keynote speaker, **Lou Tutt**, and special content area speaker, **Craig Phillips**, as well as all the speakers and vendors who gave their valuable time to support AER Arizona (AER AZ). A special thanks to the staff of the **Crowne Plaza Phoenix** for accommodating our needs. Also, a very special thank you to **Tracy Mosbarger** and the Program Committee who worked tirelessly on the program, and to **Lenetta Lefko** for creating an awesome program that attendees received in their conference bags.

Congratulations to **Rajiv Panikkar**, recipient of the **2013 Margaret Bluhm Worker of the Year Award**. We are honored to work with Rajiv as our colleague here in Arizona, and especially appreciate his leadership on the AER AZ board these past several years.

We held elections for the board positions of president, vice president, and three members-at-large. Sandra Stirnweis was elected president and Tamara Bishop-Amavilah, vice president, with terms continuing until November 2015. Lenetta Lefko, Ruth Parsons and DeEtte Snyder were elected as members-at-large, to serve on the board until November 2014.

The chapter introduced and approved the following resolutions:

1. Read the history of the Margaret Bluhm Award during the business meeting at each fall conference.
2. Commemorate deceased AER Arizona members with a roll call.
3. Create a Memorial Committee.

Several of our members volunteered to participate on committees, including Venetia Hayden (Archives), Kartar Khalsa (Archive and Membership), DeEtte Snyder (Program), Lenetta Lefko (Program) and

Colleen Oakes (Scholarship). We invite all chapter members to contribute their talents to our committees and welcome their collaboration.

We recently had a change on our board. **William Koehler**, member-at-large, has decided to focus his energy and attention to building the educational programs at Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB). We thank Bill for his service on the board these past months. We have approved **Diane Shifflett** to fill Bill's position until his term ends in November 2015.

We encourage all our members to get involved with AER AZ. Members can contact any board member for information on how to contribute their talents and expertise for the benefit of our membership. (Executive Board: Sandra Stirnweis, Tamara Bishop-Amavilah, Colleen Oakes, Jenny Wheeler, Rajiv K. Panikkar; Board Members: Becky Hole, Lenetta Lefko, Anna Miller, Ruth Parsons, Diane Shifflett and DeEtte Snyder)

The board is currently working on the conference certificates and plans to distribute them via email in the next few weeks.

The spring workshop will be on **Friday, March 28, 2014** at **ASDB** in Tucson. The board is busy planning this workshop, and details will be posted on the AER AZ website as well as shared through the listserv. If you have any questions, please contact one of the members of the Program Committee. (Co-chairs: Sandra Stirnweis and Tamara Bishop-Amavilah; Members: Lenetta Lefko, Rajiv K. Panikkar, Ruth Parsons, DeEtte Snyder and Jenny Wheeler)

We would like to remind our chapter members of the scholarships and grants available to them. I encourage everyone to visit the AER AZ website

(<http://azaer.aerbvi.org/>) to determine if these scholarships and grants would benefit students/clients or members themselves as professionals.

The following grants were awarded in 2013:

- ♦ **Faye Gonzalez**, Professional Scholarship (\$175)
- ♦ **Somaya Tarin**, Student Merit Scholarship (\$500)
- ♦ **Jerry Quang**, Student Merit Scholarship (\$500)
- ♦ **Jane Erin**, Professional Mini-Grant (\$440)
- ♦ **DeEtte Snyder**, Professional Mini-Grant (\$429)

For additional information about the grants and scholarships, please contact Colleen Oakes at coakes@seeitourway.org.

The board has begun planning our fall conference for November 2014. Details will follow as soon as we confirm a location and keynote speaker.

In closing, we would like to add that we are extremely proud to be members of AER AZ and to have the opportunity to work with so many outstanding and dedicated professionals.

SincAERly,
Your AER AZ Board

Sandra Stirnweis, Tamara Bishop-Amavilah, Colleen Oakes, Jenny Wheeler, Rajiv Panikkar, Becky Hole, Lenetta Lefko, Anna Miller, Ruth Parsons, Diane Shifflett and DeEtte Snyder

Louisiana

Laissez Les Bon Temps Rouler! "Let the good times roll!"

The AER Louisiana Chapter had a hospitality table at the AER International Orientation and Mobility Conference in New Orleans in December 2013. It was a Louisiana Party! Chapter President Lynn Blanchard, along with volunteer members, gave away Mardi Gras beads and souvenirs and assisted conference participants with tourist information. Participants also had the opportunity to listen to Cajun music, sample some homemade Cajun pecan candy and purchase fresh Louisiana pecans to take home for holiday baking. There were also two raffles for baskets filled with Louisiana-made goodies.

Besides representing our state chapter of AER at the conference, AER Louisiana also represented the Affiliated Blind of Louisiana Training Center in Lafayette, the Louisiana Center for the Blind in Ruston and the Louisiana School for the Deaf and Visually Impaired in Baton Rouge. The Lighthouse of Louisiana also had its own information table. Several of our members also participated in many of the sessions during the conference.

We would like to thank everyone from our chapter and the state who assisted us at the conference, and everyone from around the country—as well as from many other countries—for visiting with us. It was particularly fun renewing old acquaintances on our home turf. We hope to see you all again real soon—like maybe at the AER International Conference in San Antonio, Texas, in July.

Presently, AER Louisiana is busy planning its next state chapter meeting and a workshop, tentatively scheduled for mid-May 2014. The workshop will include technology training for the blind



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and deaf-blind with a focus on iProducts. Among topics for discussion will be the iPhone (iOS 7), Braille Display Output (FCC), iPad (iOS 7), Apple TV, the Mac (Mavericks) and the Android (JellyBean and KitKat) including Microsoft Office 365, as well as the Google Chrome operating system.

The chapter meeting will feature training on conducting functional vision assessments on babies, young children, and older students, with the idea of helping those working with these individuals to make the best choices in methods and materials. Also, the nominating committee, appointed by the president, will present the slate of candidates for officers for 2014–2016. The slate will comprise candidates submitted electronically by chapter members following the committee's request for nominations in April. Chapter members will vote on the officers, and results will be announced before the close of the meeting. More information concerning this event will be forthcoming.

Northern California

Submitted by Geoff Perel, NorCalAER chapter president

The AER Northern California chapter has changed its name to "NorCalAER," and the new contact e-mail is: NorCalAER@yahoo.com.

NorCalAER will hold its annual Spring Event on Thursday, June 5, 2014, at the Orientation Center for the Blind in Albany, Calif. This year's speakers will include Lainey Feingold (<http://lfelegal.com>), co-recipient of the California Lawyer of the Year for Disability Rights Award, and Carlo Rossi, special education advocate and adjunct faculty member at San Francisco State University. Feingold will speak about her recent work on accessibility to public and private services and facilities, and Rossi will discuss current issues in law and ethics for parents, teachers and students in the provision of K-12 special education services.

The Spring Event is also NorCalAER's annual meeting and will include chapter

elections and the biennial chapter award presentation.

Northern Rockies

The AER Northern Rockies Chapter (Wyoming, Montana, Idaho) will hold its annual convention in Paradise Valley south of Livingston, Mont., at Chico Hot Springs, October 15–17, 2014. Chico is just a short one-hour drive from the northern entrance to Yellowstone Park. The program includes academics, several physical activities such as aerobic swimming, trail walking and GPS, and a fascinating presentation by Warriors and Quiet Waters, a program that brings wounded vets to Montana to learn to fly fish. Please contact Kerri Norick for information at knorick@msdb.mt.gov.

Pacific Northwest

On February 21–22, 2014, the AER Pacific Northwest Chapter, along with the Washington State School for the Blind and Washington Sensory Disability Services, hosted Dr. Diane Wormsley for a braille workshop. She presented her meaning-centered approach to braille literacy (I-M-ABLE). With an audience of nearly 50, Diane was warmly received and feedback was overwhelmingly positive. She was part of an effort to bring more professionals in the blindness field to Washington state for workshops. We look forward to working with our state agencies again soon for similar collaborative endeavors.



AER PNW President-Elect Emily Coleman, right, with Dr. Diane Wormsley

Penn-Del

The AER Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter will hold its annual conference April 23–25, 2014, at the Best Western Premier Central Hotel and Conference Center, in Harrisburg, Pa. The conference

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Chapter News *Cont. from page 33*

theme is "Forging Links for Better Services: Everyone's Responsibility."

This nationally respected conference will include 32 concurrent sessions on timely and provocative topics including presentations by special guests, Dr. Anne Corn, Mr. Chuck Huss and Dr. Sandra Rosen.

AER Penn-Del is proud to announce four impressive general sessions featuring speakers with rich experience in advocacy for improved education and rehabilitation services:

Keynote address, Wednesday, April 23: **David DeNotaris**, director, Pennsylvania Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services, and nationally recognized motivational speaker

Midnote address, Thursday, April 24: **Kathleen Megivern**, executive director, Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) and former executive director of AER

Footnote address, Friday, April 25: **Ned Whitehead**, family trainer through Mentors for Self-Determination, a member of the PA Waiting List Campaign and a 20-year special education advocate

Special general session commemorating the 50th anniversary of the University of Pittsburgh Vision Studies Program, Thursday, April 24: A panel of prominent Pitt alumni as well as current and former faculty will highlight the impact of the Pitt Vision Studies Program on training professionals, research, literature and our professional organizations. *You will not want to miss this impressive gathering!*

The list of panelists participating in this celebratory event include:

Dr. Frances Mary D'Andrea, University of Pittsburgh

Dr. Jane Erin, professor emerita, University of Arizona

Dr. Kay Ferrell, professor, University of Northern Colorado

Dr. Kathy Huebner, professor emerita, Salus University

Dr. Christine Roman-Lantzy, CVI Resources

Dr. Audrey Smith, professor and dean, Salus University

Dr. Kim Zebehazy, assistant professor, University of British Columbia

The list of past and current faculty participating in this celebratory event include:

Dr. Bruce Blasch, retired research scientist, VA Medical Center, Decatur, Ga.

Dr. Lynn Fox, PaTTAN consultant

Dr. Ralph Peabody, professor emeritus, University of Pittsburgh

Dr. Rebecca Renshaw, director, Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children

Dr. Ellyn Ross, retired, Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit

Dr. Rick Welsh, retired president/CEO, Pittsburgh Vision Services

Dr. George J. Zimmerman, coordinator, Pitt Vision Studies Program

Attendees and presenters will be offered certificates of attendance to submit for continuing education credit for Pennsylvania Department of Education Act 48, Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals (ACVREP) and for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Credits (CRC).

The 2014 Penn-Del AER Awards Banquet, on Thursday evening, April 24, will honor the recipients of the Penn-Del AER Service Award, the Elinor Long Educator of the Year Award, and the Penn-Del AER Scholarship Merit Award. The banquet provides a wonderful opportunity to

recognize the recipients of these awards and acknowledge their outstanding contributions to our profession.

For additional information on the conference, the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the University of Pittsburgh (Pitt) Vision Studies Program, our service awards, our scholarships, and other happenings in our chapter, please visit our website at www.penn-delaer.org.

We look forward to seeing you in April!

West Virginia

History & conference. When I first moved from New York to the mountains (and a lake) of West Virginia almost 3 years ago, I transferred my AER membership to my newly adopted state and was quickly surprised to discover this chapter was on the verge of folding with only 23 members from the entire state. The officers had valiantly held their positions for close to a decade, mostly because they could not convince anyone else to step in.

My first AER WV summer conference had only three planned sessions and less than 10 attendees. The following year, we had no summer conference; the chapter was unable to plan one. During that year, I agreed to become president-elect, and one of my jobs was to coordinate a conference.

I'm pleased to report that last summer, we held our chapter conference at Alpine Lake, where I live. Many of my friends from near and far came to present, including Penny Rosenblum from Arizona (university professor/teacher trainer), John Kelly (past-president of AER) and Yvette Blitzer from New York, and Frances Mary D'Andrea (president of BANA) and Carlton Cook-Walker (president of National Organization of Parents of Blind Children), both from Pennsylvania. We also pulled in local talent to present: Lynn Boyer, superintendent of the WV Schools for the Deaf and the Blind; Patty Myers, university professor and state outreach coordinator for VI and Mary Kay Bond, coordinator of Read Aloud West Virginia. We had 38 participants,

including Joelle Ward who represented AER International, and a representative from APH, who displayed products and did a presentation on them as well.

This coming summer 2014, we are again holding a summer conference at the lake. We are working to improve the conference, based on feedback from summer 2013 participants. We have two keynote speakers: Dennis Thurman, past superintendent of the Iowa Blind School, and Derrick Smith, university professor/teacher trainer and TVI/O&Mer from Alabama. I have already had communication with some of our local folks who are interested in presenting: Annette Carey from our State Education Department, Judy Hurst (past-president of AER WV), Becky Coakley and Trina Britcher (past Braille Teacher of the Year from the Braille Institute). We will also offer ACVREP credits this summer, which (I hope!) will increase our conference attendance. We are doing this with a budget of zero...planning (hoping!) to raise funds from our conference registration fee and silent auction to pay our bills. We also plan to have a small/modest exhibit hall

this summer.

Membership. Partly as a result of the conference last summer—we offered a registration discount to members, and we will do so again this summer—and the efforts of our Membership Committee, we added 4 new members to our state chapter while retaining all our present members. This might not seem like much, but it equates to a 17% increase in membership for this very rural state.

Onward and upward. When I joined this chapter, it was on the verge of folding. It existed on paper, but we had no ongoing activities.

In the past two years, we have held three chapter meetings, and we are starting to work toward a chapter that we can all be proud of. We have a new slate of officers. We had to cajole folks to become an officer, but they said yes! We formed a membership committee to do outreach with the WV School for the Blind, the school counties and the two WV universities that prepare our future teachers. We started a scholarship program where we will pay the AER

membership for one student member of each university (Marshall and West Virginia universities) based on their application for this scholarship and the decisions of this committee.

We donated \$100 to Landon's Library, a local community-based effort that provides monthly books for preschoolers. The AER WV chapter also donated \$50 to the WV Regional Braille Challenge to purchase prizes for some of the students. Finally, I plan to attend the AER International Conference 2014 in San Antonio as a representative of this state.

I hope this information helps us gain some recognition for our efforts and helps us continue the motivating trends that we are trying to maintain and expand upon.

Thank you for your consideration. If you would like any further information, please let me know.

Sheila Amato
President-elect AER WV

Ronnie Milsap to Kick Off AER International Conference 2014



AER is proud to announce the AER International Conference 2014 will kick off with a special appearance by acclaimed music legend Ronnie Milsap.

Mr. Milsap will give an uplifting talk about his journey from a small Appalachian town in North Carolina to the Governor Morehead State School for the Blind and on to Nashville and the world, sharing his love of music along the way. A popular and influential performer, he became a successful crossover artist blending country and pop music in the 1980s and is credited with six Grammy Awards between 1975 and 1988.

This is just one of the treats in store for you at next summer's must-attend event. Please join us in San Antonio, Texas, as we celebrate AER's 30th year as an association, July 30–Aug. 3, 2014!



2014

Calendar of Events

For more information about upcoming events, or to have your event listed, visit our website at www.aerbvi.org and click on "Calendar" in the side navigation bar.

March

Mar. 31–Apr. 3: 11th International Conference on Low Vision, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, Melbourne, Australia — For more information, visit their webpage at <http://www.vision2014.org/>.

April

Apr. 2–4: AER Virginia Chapter 2014 Conference, Sheraton Roanoke Hotel and Conference Center, Roanoke, VA — For more information, visit their website at <http://virginia.aerbvi.org/>.

Apr. 4–6: Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association Conference, Embassy Suites, Cary, NC — For more information, visit <http://nora.cc/2014-conference.html>.

Apr. 23–25: AER Penn-Del Chapter 2014 Conference, Best Western Premier Central Hotel and Conference Center, Harrisburg, PA — For more information, visit their website at <http://www.penn-delaer.org>.

Apr. 24–26: AER North Carolina Chapter Conference, Embassy Suites, Winston-Salem, NC — For more information, visit their website at <http://www.ncaer.net/>.

May

May 1–2: AER Michigan Chapter Annual Conference, Marriott at Laurel Park, Livonia, MI — For more information, visit their website at <http://www.maerbvi.org/>.

May 2–3: AER Board planning meeting, Reno, NV

May 4–7: Seeing Beyond the Horizon—2014 Canadian Conference for Educators, Parents and Professionals of Children and Youth who are Blind or Partially Sighted, Halifax Marriott Harbourfront Hotel, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada — For more information, visit their website at <http://apsea.ca/pep2014/>.

May 7–9: AER Dakotas Chapter Conference, Ramada Inn, Aberdeen, SD — Join us for "AER is Oz-some"! For more information, visit their webpage at <http://www.aerbvi.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1316>.

June

June 27–29: AER West Virginia Summer Conference, Alpine Lake, WV — More details forthcoming!

July

July 30–Aug. 3: AER International Conference 2014, Grand Hyatt San Antonio, San Antonio, TX — Celebrating AER's 30th Anniversary!! Visit the AER website for updates, <http://aerbvi.org/international2014/>.

October

Oct. 15–17: AER Northern Rockies Annual Convention, Chico Hot Springs Resort & Day Spa, Chico Road, MT — For more information, visit their website at <http://nraer.aerbvi.org/>.

Get Connected

AER is social! Follow daily news from the association and interesting articles and information about the blindness field via social networking. Also, share your news and information about individuals and organizations.



Join the AER group page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/aerbvi>



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Connect to AER's company page at http://www.linkedin.com/companies?trk=hb_tab_compy

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Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired



From the Listserv:

Helping a 7-year old find his school bus

One of the many benefits of AER membership is AERNet, our Listserv that brings together blind education and rehabilitation professionals from around the world. Members can gain valuable insight and advice on important issues in the field.

Recently, member Karen Meyers, TVI, posed the following question on AERNet:

Can you please share with me what strategies/techniques your totally blind students use to find their specific bus when it's among a whole line of other buses in the school parking lot? The buses park perpendicular to the sidewalk based on who got there first, so they aren't always in the same order. My student is 7-years old and can travel independently with a cane.

Members from near and far shared thoughtful recommendations, which centered on human guides and using technology to increase independence. The discussion also highlighted the importance of finding a developmentally appropriate solution.

Suggestions to consider

Several members suggested working with school staff and bus drivers on how to support the blind student. One member observed:

Many of the schools I serve have people stationed outdoors for the young kids so they don't accidentally get on the wrong bus. A system could be developed so those aides help spot the correct bus. Another school I used to serve dismissed the young kids by grade so they went out in

a systematic order, and it was easier for them (and the drivers). Sounds like the school might be asked to adapt some of its dismissal routines. I've also found the bus "captains" (head of the drivers) to be very helpful in developing strategies and encouraging the drivers to be helpful and watch out for kids with special needs.

Taking the idea of training school personnel one step further, another member shared, "The V.I. and I have trained teachers in an in-service on proper techniques. Also, the student and I have trained three of his classmates on proper human guide techniques in crowded hallways until he is able to maneuver them himself. The three classmates rotate helping out. My student enjoyed training them, and he practiced self-advocacy at the same time. Win! Win!"

Other suggestions included asking the school to use assigned spots for the buses so the same bus is in the same location every day. "Having buses in different places every day seems confusing for everyone," shared one member. "I would ask if they would [consider assigning spots] for the benefit of everyone. If the school [does] not go with a saved slot system for all the buses, then I would suggest [saving] a slot for this bus—maybe the farthest away. The student would still need to inquire before boarding to be sure that it is the right bus in case of a substitute driver."

Another bus-related suggestion was to ask all buses to turn off their engines except for the blind student's bus; that way, the child could use audition to identify his correct bus. Of course, he would still need to confirm with the driver before boarding.

In terms of using assistive technology, one member shared:

I've been using a portable sound source with my kindergarten student. The buses line up along the curb in no particular order. When the students are dismissed, he just walks along until he hears the beep. He's thrilled that he can go to his bus independently, but it's not an ideal solution. The students are noisy, and he cannot hear the beeping until he gets fairly close; and substitute drivers may forget to turn it on. Overall, it has worked 95% of the time.

The device in question is an APH sound machine, which has various sounds and speeds so multiple students can use the machines in the same area and be trained to recognize their specific sound.

Another member suggested a "low-tech" solution: using a laminated card with the bus number on it. The student would then hold up the number as he walks along the bus line, and the driver can acknowledge the student when he gets to the right bus.

Ultimately, students need to learn various methods for finding their way on public transportation. As one member stated, "Students could rotate using different methods—sighted guide, sound source, checking with drivers, etc. Ultimately learning to travel in the real world means learning to problem solve, rely upon others, share responsibilities, take turns, use audition, use taction, etc."

Independence vs. interdependence

While members provided excellent suggestions, they also discussed how much help to provide versus training students to navigate the "real world," as posed by one member, "I'm wondering...do we want a student to think that systems such as bus dismissals change to accommodate him (all engines off, a driver activating a beeper), or do we want him to have the real world scenario that is real life, and learn how this would work in any school at any dismissal?"

The recurring theme was to consider what the individual needs. Said one member, "I think that, in light of the child's age, some accommodations might be appropriate, which could be reduced as he got older." Another member echoed, "It may be unreasonable for a 7-year old who is totally blind to be expected to find his own bus, at least initially. I can't imagine the anxiety this will cause to him and to those responsible for him."

Another member expanded on this idea:

We should have different expectations as our students grow up. At this point in time, I would have someone assist the student to the bus each day. As the years go by the student may find friends on the bus, and they can walk together. We don't need to solve every problem our students have. Sometimes, we need to let them try

different options to see which ones work.... If you notice the student is becoming too dependent on other people, that might be a time to step in.

One member used her own life experience to put the accommodations question in perspective:

Using the card or having a guide to locate the bus is very appropriate for a young child. [I] don't know about the school this child attends, [but some schools often have] staff outdoors who could also direct the child to his bus. I use buses and at times have to transfer at a location where many buses stop. I get assistance, am 60+, blind, and many times have someone—usually a security official at the transfer station—guide me.... One must realize that there are limits to "independence." We are interdependent. There is always someone around willing to help.

Finally, one member provided this food for thought:

The key here is what the student is ready to do and is invested in learning. I always look for pockets—pockets of independence and pockets of interdependence. Given that there are adults supervising the end of day process, one skill the student **MUST** have is recognizing when, who, and how to ask for help. So, if ideally the student is independent most of the time, on an icy day he should know about requesting assistance. If this student is vested on getting to the bus himself most times, creating accommodations that include and develop audio skills (listening for a specific sound amidst a background, the sound of a particular engine, orienting to the bus based on the engine, etc.) is not only reasonable but integral to developing skill and confidence in this fairly protective environment. Given that, if the daily routine to find his ride is an anxiety provoking exercise for this student, then ... train everyone and develop a supportive social structure to get him to the bus. This decision and strategy has to be developed between the COMS, student, and his family.

Thanks to all the members who posted their recommendations. It's important discussions like this that make AERNet such a great resource for our members. No matter what your question is, one of our many AER members will have some ideas and experiences to help you find your way.

Do you have a question for AER members? Or do you have your own suggestions to share? Sign up for AERNet and join the discussion on the Listserv!



AER Job Exchange

The Vision Community's Most Active Job Bank



Looking for a new job? Check out what AER Job Exchange, the largest online career resource in the field, has to offer. The following is a sample of available positions from AER Corporate Members. Additional job opportunities and complete details on the following positions are available at www.aerbvi.org.

HELP WANTED

IOWA

Teacher of the Visually Impaired Iowa Braille School Vinton

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's degree in education plus experience using a computer and other office equipment required.
- Candidates must meet State of Iowa teacher licensure requirements with an endorsement in visual impairment by the time of appointment.
- The ability to travel throughout a designated region within Iowa on a daily basis also required.
- Master's degree in education preferred.

DUTIES:

- In collaboration with area education agencies (AEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs), and using an itinerant model, the teacher of the visually impaired (TVI) provides appropriate support and/or instruction to students with visual impairments, in their local schools and home settings. Support is also provided to parents and local school personnel.
- Responsibilities include occasional overnight and out of state travel.

Full time, faculty, 189-day continuing contract position starts August 2014. Service regions cover multiple Iowa school districts. Specific service region and office location to be determined. Criminal and other relevant background checks required.

Position is posted until filled.

HELP WANTED

SALARY: \$41,895–\$78,528

CONTACT: Send cover letter, resume, transcripts and copy of teaching license to:

Director of Human Resources

Iowa Braille School

1002 G Avenue

Vinton, IA 52349

Email: jruegg@iabvi.org

For additional information contact Justin Ruegg at 319-472-5221 Ext. 1226.

NEW MEXICO

Developmental Vision Specialist-Infant Toddler New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Albuquerque

The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Infant Toddler Program is seeking a developmental vision specialist. This individual will provide family/home intervention services that support young children 0–3 years old with visual impairments/developmental delays. Required to collaborate with child's family and therapy team and support caregivers as advocates for their child.

This position will serve the northwestern portion of New Mexico. Must be eligible for a Developmental Specialist II or III license with the New Mexico FIT Program; must have obtained a BA or higher in early childhood, special education, child development, or occupational, speech or physical therapy; and have experience with young children who are blind or have visual impairments. Prefer MA level; bilingual (English/Navajo); experience in home-based settings and studies in visual

HELP WANTED

impairment or be willing to acquire. Will be required to become braille proficient. 11-month contract. Position starts July 2014. A valid driving license is required and extensive driving is a job requirement. Applications accepted until filled.

CONTACT: New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Early Childhood Program

801 Stephen Moody SE

Albuquerque, NM 87123

Phone: 505-271-3060 or 505-764-6380

Fax: 505-291-5456

Email: cfaris@nmsbvi.k12.nm.us

NORTH CAROLINA

Teacher of the Visually Impaired Invision Services, Inc. Hillsborough

Invision Services, a private practice offering educational and rehabilitation services for people with vision loss since 1992, is seeking qualified applicants for full- and part-time teacher of the visually impaired positions for the 2014-15 school year, contracted within the public school setting to serve the educational needs of students, ages 3–21.

Qualifications:

1. A bachelor's or master's degree in special education with an emphasis on visual impairment.
2. The ability to obtain lateral entry licensure for NC VI Certification.
3. The ability to travel between sites.

Responsibilities and duties include:

1. Perform functional vision and learning media assessments on new referrals and 3-year re-evaluations
2. Interpret eye medical reports as they relate to educational environments
3. Contribute to the development of the IEP with goals, modifications, leaning styles
4. Recommend appropriate specialized evaluations as needed, such as low vision, orientation and mobility, psychosocial and adaptive physical education
5. Consult with diagnosticians, classroom teachers, students

HELP WANTED

and parents concerning appropriate evaluations, modification and test administration

6. Obtain modified standardized testing materials (SAT, ACT) and administer or assist in the administration of the test as needed
7. Work as liaison with other agencies in the vocational assessment process
8. Participate in team assessments for students with moderate to severe cognitive disabilities
9. Assist in determining and procuring classroom equipment and materials necessary for the student with visual impairments to learn (braille, low vision devices, assistive technology, computer) including ensuring necessary room modifications and lighting changes
10. Provide the classroom teacher with information regarding the specialized strategies needed to teach a VI student
11. Consult with other instructional staff to provide information to incorporate the expanded core curriculum into the entire instructional setting
12. Provide modified materials to the classroom teacher
13. Provide braille, recorded/enlarged materials and tactual symbols as appropriate for each child

Direct instruction includes:

1. Monitoring the students' progress in academic subjects and provide instruction in compensatory skills as needed in the areas the students may have difficulty with as a result of the visual impairment
2. Braille reading and writing
3. Low vision devices
4. Abacus
5. Typing/keyboarding
6. Adaptive devices (e.g., computers, note takers, tape recorders)
7. Listening skills
8. Visual efficiency
9. Concept development (especially for infants and early childhood students)
10. Organizational and study skills
11. Self-advocacy

Support services:

1. Provide assistance to students with visual impairments in understanding their attitudes and those of others concerning

Continued on p. 46

- their visual impairment
2. Facilitate social integration and interaction with peers
 3. Provide training and support to parents of students with visual impairments to enhance their children's independence
 4. Provide the teachers, staff and family of students with visual impairment with information regarding their individual needs, methodology and strategies
 5. Participate with other school personnel and agencies to secure job-related experiences for students
 6. Participate in transition planning

Administrative/record keeping duties:

1. Provide updated pupil information (VI registration, deaf blind census, textbook projections)
2. Submit requests for instructional materials, conferences, field trips and personnel needs
3. Inform various special education and campus personnel of progress and needs of the students with visual impairment on a regular basis
4. Identify and set up a work and storage space at each school to be used by the VI teacher to instruct students as necessary
5. Provide input into students' schedules, planning for all special services, such as direct instruction and orientation and mobility
6. Maintain adequate record of all assessments, IEPs, ARD papers, progress reports and signed parental release forms for things such as photographs and registration with various agencies

7. Provide 6-week, 9-week or 12-week progress reports as indicated by school policy on students with visual impairment in regular education classes and follow up with teacher and/or parent conferences as appropriate
8. Register students with visual impairment with appropriate agencies such as Recordings for the Blind and NC State Textbooks Library, and assist with referral to the NC State Services for the Blind
9. Communicate with low-vision specialists, ophthalmologists and optometrists concerning exams, and attend exams when appropriate
10. Supervise material preparation and acquisition

We offer competitive compensation, collaboration with Invision's seasoned team of TVI and COMS professionals and opportunities to grow and learn with us while enjoying the natural beauty and temperate climate of North Carolina as well as other employment opportunities nationwide.

Visit us at: www.invisionservicesinc.com.

Send resume/references to:

Invision Services, Inc.

Attn: TVI Search

960 Corporate Drive, Suite 203

Hillsborough, NC 27278

Electronic copies: move.forward@invisionservicesinc.com



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By Steven J. La Grow and Richard G. Long

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O&M specialists and other vision professionals will find the skills, techniques, and sequence of instruction presented in this book helpful in instructing individuals with vision loss who want to regain the ability to travel independently. The book describes human guide, self-protective, directional familiarization, and cane techniques, along with strategies for indoor and outdoor travel, including those required for crossing streets, planning routes, and using public transportation.

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Names In The News



AER Board President **James C. Adams** was honored with the 2013 Leadership Award at the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) annual Awards and Recognition Program March 4, 2014, at the National Center for Employee Development. Adams serves as superintendent of the Oklahoma School for the Blind in Muskogee. The Leadership Award goes to DRS employees who possess exemplary and exceptional leadership skills as well as being creative and self-

motivating. Adams was honored for his ability to understand the concerns of his staff; motivating them to achieve excellence and outreach within the community.

Sheila Amato will be honored with the Distinguished Service Award presented by the Division on Visual Impairments at the Council for Exceptional Children Conference on April 10, 2014, in Philadelphia, Pa. The Distinguished Service Award is presented to a DVI member who provides exemplary leadership and commitment to the field.



The AER Board of Directors has named **Deborah Gold, Ph.D.**, as Canadian Representative to the Board of Directors for the remainder of the 2012–2014 biennium. She replaces Doug McJannet, who resigned in 2013. Dr. Gold serves as national director of research and program development for CNIB in Toronto and as associate professor of the Department of Occupational Science and Occupational Therapy, University of Toronto.

Holly Kaczmariski was elected to a two-year term on the Citizen's Advisory Committee of Ben Franklin Transit in Tri-Cities, Wash. She works with the agency teaching travel training to transit passengers who are blind, disabled and elderly so they can ride fixed-route buses, allowing for greater independence.



Thomas A. Panek joined Guiding Eyes for the Blind in February as president and CEO. Previously, Panek was the vice president of relationship management at National Industries for the Blind in Virginia. He succeeds **William D. Badger** who retired after 20 years with Guiding Eyes.

The international committee that developed the landmark publication *Guidelines and Standards for Tactile Graphics, 2010* was recently honored with the Braille Excellence Award from the Braille Authority of North America (BANA). CBA-BANA Joint Tactile Graphics Committee, which was co-sponsored by the Canadian Braille Authority (CBA) and BANA, received the award on Dec. 5, 2013, in Providence, R.I., at the Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference. Members of the committee included: **Lucia Hasty, Colorado; John McConnell, New Brunswick; Janet Milbury, Nova Scotia; Irene Miller, Alberta; Allison O'Day, Minnesota; Aquinas Pather, Ontario; and Diane Spence, Texas.**

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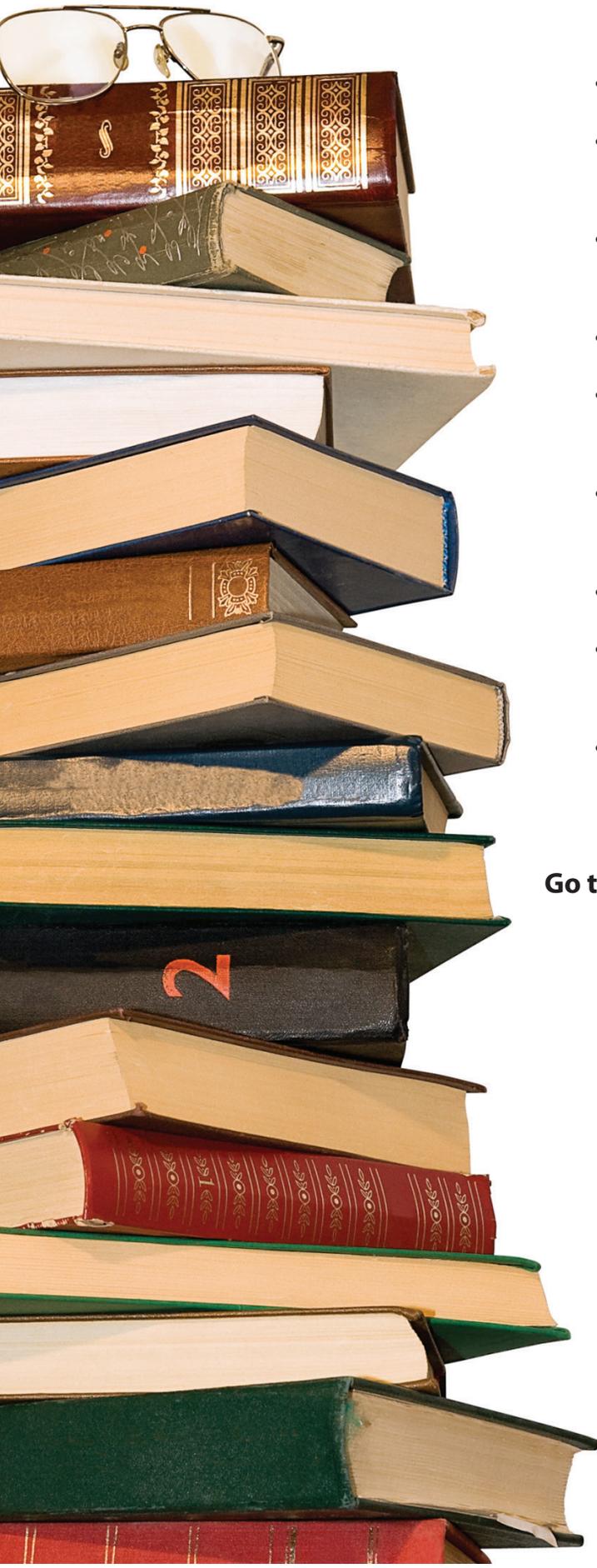
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