



## Orientation and Mobility Division Update

[www.aerbvi.org/OandM](http://www.aerbvi.org/OandM)

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### *From the Chair -*

Having just finished my first year in this role, I have a new appreciation for everything that goes into the activities of our division. It takes a lot of effort from a lot of different people! I want to thank our Executive Committee members and officers, everyone serving on various committees and task forces, and everyone that assisted with the recent conference. This organization would not be possible without these volunteers. The AER International O&M Conference in Pittsburgh this past July turned out great! There were numerous outstanding presentations. And the city of Pittsburgh offered attendees everything from salsa dancing to fries and coleslaw on your sandwich. Thanks to the rest of our conference committee: Chair-Susan Langendonk, Chris Tabb, Laura Bozeman and Bonnie Dodson-Burke. Thanks to Penn-Del AER and the AER staff for their assistance!

I also have great expectations for what we are trying to accomplish over the next year. The strategic plan proposed by our Ad Hoc Committee has been approved by the division membership. We are currently working to identify where to focus our efforts and how to divide tasks between subgroups. Please let me know if you are interested in serving as part of this effort. We have already begun working on a Scope of Practice paper, professional development opportunities, developing an online wiki to share and access professional resources, and identifying the service provider requirements in every state. As part of this process, I will be sending an update on our progress with the strategic plan every 3-4 months. The plan and updates will be posted on the AER O&M Division website.

AER O&M Division: <https://aerbvi.org/about/divisions/orientation-mobility-division/>

#### Other Division News:

- The O&M Division hosted a professional development webinar on the 3D Pen for tactile graphics. This was presented on August 31<sup>st</sup> by Nick Leon, COMS.
- The AER International Conference in July 2018 will be in Reno, NV. Chair-Elect, Chris Tabb will be serving as the O&M Division liaison to the conference committee. Please look for the Call For Papers and consider presenting on O&M related topics for your own development and the professional development of your colleagues.
- Connect with the O&M Division and take advantage of the new digital O&M resources available. Professional resources are posted on the O&M Division Outpost at: <http://aerom.org>
- The AER O&M Division can be found as [aeromdivision](#) on Facebook and Twitter.

Please contact me if you have questions or if you would like to be involved in the Division activities.

Justin Kaiser, Chair  
[jkaiser@uscupstate.edu](mailto:jkaiser@uscupstate.edu)

## *AER International Orientation and Mobility Conference 2017*

The conference in Pittsburgh July 19-22 followed in the successful tradition of the other O&M-only conferences. From the many sessions presented by members of the O&M Division Environmental Access Committee to those presented by practicing O&M specialists, attendees were amazed by the wealth of new information.

Many of us enjoyed an evening watching the Pirates win against the Mariners. Our thanks to the Penn-Del Chapter members for organizing the activity and purchasing blocks of tickets so we could sit together. And the Pirates won!

The Rick Welsh Memorial Luncheon was sold out with more than 100 people attending. The program presented by Duane Geruschat, William Wiener, Bruce Blasch, Michael Bina and Mary Nelle McLennan was a moving memorial to Dr. Welsh.

We will be exploring when and where to host another O&M-only conference with New Orleans and December as a strong possibility. We'd like to hear your thoughts on this, so contact any of the O&M Division leadership to let us know.

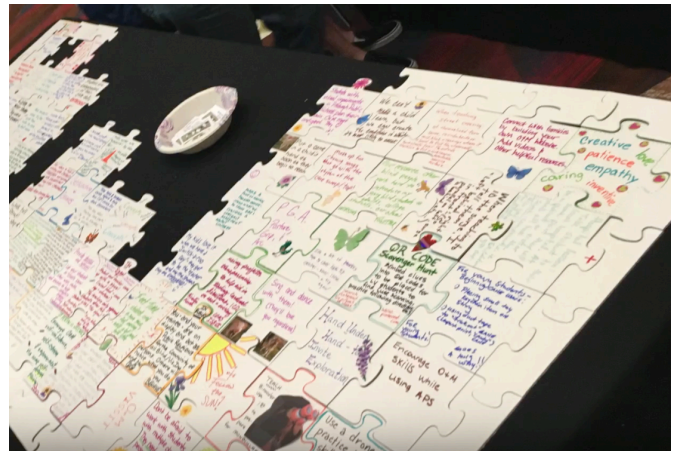


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### *You're the Missing Piece!*

'You're the Missing Piece!' is a video about a poster that was displayed at the AER International Orientation & Mobility Conference in Pittsburgh, PA on July 22, 2017.

Gina Schmid, the creator of this puzzle idea, wanted to be involved directly in the conference in a fun and interactive way, but she did not have the time to prepare a workshop or session. She felt that all of the attendees, like her, had something worth sharing about Orientation and Mobility at this conference. Thus, the puzzle idea of each attendee having the opportunity to share a strategy, concept, suggestion, etc. on a 4x4 inch puzzle piece and then building an O&M resource to share was created!



Thanks to everyone who took the time and creativity to share themselves through this puzzle! It was a fun event and the puzzle pieces were amazing!! We had 98 puzzle pieces completed in 1 hour! I hope you enjoy this O&M resource puzzle as much as I enjoyed watching it grow and making the video!!

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lajg8fl\\_u8&t=4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3lajg8fl_u8&t=4s)

## *Donald Blasch Scholarship Recipients*

This year we had 23 candidates submit applications for this scholarship. There were eight judges who used a scoring rubric for each candidate's submission. The two candidates that received the highest total points and the highest average scores became the 2107 scholarship recipients; the winners of this year's scholarship are Adrienne Shoemaker and Christine Guilbeault. Below are photographs and bit of information about each recipient so that Division Members will have a chance to get to know both Adrienne and Christine. So, without further ado it is an honor to share with you our two winners of this year's Donald Blasch Scholarship...

### **Christine Guilbeault:**



Christine Guilbeault is a nationally credentialed Deafblind Intervener. She has been working at the Center for Disability Services in Albany, NY for almost seven years. She is extremely dedicated to the field and loves to share her knowledge with her educational team. She helps her team learn sign language and also models how to work with the students in the class who are deafblind. Christine is excited to finish her Master's degree in Orientation and Mobility. She can't wait to start her new career as an Orientation and Mobility Instructor.

### **Adrienne Shoemaker:**



Adrienne lives in Concord, New Hampshire with her husband, three children (ages 15, 14, and 11) and black lab. She enjoys watching her kids play field hockey, golf, ice hockey, and lacrosse.

Adrienne has been working as a Teacher of the Visually Impaired for Concord School District in Concord, NH for nine years. Her caseload involves working with students ages 3-21 in the public school setting. She is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts Vision Studies Program, M.Ed and is currently obtaining her Orientation and Mobility certification from there as well. She is looking forward to providing Orientation and Mobility services to the students on her caseload. Her undergraduate degree is in Elementary and Special Education from Providence College.

Adrienne has had the honor of attending the American Printing House for the Blind at the Annual Meeting as the APH Scholar in 2012 and was selected to attend the NFB STEM2U Conference in 2014. She enjoys working with aspiring Teachers of the Visually Impaired. She supports them in their coursework and in connecting with the community of Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Instructors in the state of New Hampshire.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize the efforts of this year's Scholarship Committee Judges who volunteered their time to review and score each of the 23 submissions:

Laura Bozeman (MA), Shannon Cuniak (PA), Kerry Duncan (AZ), Erin Flaherty (PA), Anita Page (TX), Debra Scott (AL), Mary Shore (TX), and Jodi Sticken (IL).

## *Now - You Are Invited To Honor Another O&Mer*

The Orientation and Mobility Division Awards Committee invites you to tell us about a fellow O&M'er who deserves to receive one of our esteemed awards. Please consider submitting a letter nominating a deserving colleague for the Blaha, the Kronick or the O&M Citation of Excellence. Review the criteria listed below to determine the best fit for your distinguished colleague. The award presentation will be held at the 2018 AER International Conference July 25-29 in Reno, NV. Don't let this be the year that someone you know, could have, or should have been honored but you did not get around to submitting that letter!!!

2018 will be the 50th anniversary of the first presentation of the Lawrence E. Blaha Memorial Award!

Awards Committee members include: Susan Langendonk, Justin Kaiser (ex-officio), Christopher Tabb, Nick Leon, Bruce Blasch and Gala S. Brooks, Chair.

Nominations for the awards and letters of support may be submitted at any time. The deadline for submissions is April 30, 2018.

Submissions should be sent to Gala Brooks at [brooks6242@sbcglobal.net](mailto:brooks6242@sbcglobal.net). Award recipients will be notified and announced by June 1, 2018.

Should any Division member have questions or comments regarding the awards, the presentations or the celebration, please contact Gala Brooks at [brooks6242@sbcglobal.net](mailto:brooks6242@sbcglobal.net) or 708-345-5689.

### **Lawrence E. Blaha Memorial Award**

Lawrence E. Blaha Memorial Award is given every two years.

#### **Selection Criteria:**

a. The individual must have at least ten years experience in the field of blindness and must have distinguished himself or herself in activities related to Orientation and Mobility such as:

- contribute to the body of knowledge/literature
- excel in a leadership manner in the provision of O&M services
- recruit or otherwise impact the decision of a large number of individuals to enter the field of Orientation and Mobility,
- serve in a "mentor capacity" to a significant number of O&M professionals.

b. The achievements being recognized must have had a significant impact upon the field of Orientation and Mobility.

c. The individual must be an O&M Division member and be a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist unless retired or out of the field (administration).

d. Nominations and letters of support shall be made by members of the O&M Division with a letter of up to two pages in length. The number of letters submitted shall not influence the decision one way or the other.

**History:**

The Lawrence E. Blaha Award was initiated in 1968 to honor people who have shown exemplary behavior in the field of O&M, made outstanding contributions to the profession, and shown dedication to serving people with visual impairments. It is the highest honor that the O&M Division can bestow. Each recipient of this award is the Guardian of Sir Francis Campbell's cane until it is passed along to the next award recipient. The handle of the cane was used by Sir Francis Campbell, and can be seen in a photograph of him that is displayed in the C. Warren Bledsoe Orientation and Mobility Archives.

This award was named in honor of Lawrence Blaha who was a pioneer in the field of O&M. He is remembered for his wit, athletic abilities, philosophy, technical skill and his high standards. He was an educator whose ideas are remembered and continued through this award. In 1948, he began his career working with people with visual impairments at the Central Blind Rehabilitation Center for Visually Impaired and Blinded Veterans, VA Hospital, Hines, Illinois. He was one of a group of six individuals chosen for training to become the original O&M specialists at Hines. In 1961, he joined the faculty of Western Michigan University; from 1964 until his sudden death, he was Director of the O&M program at California State College, Los Angeles. The first Lawrence E. Blaha Award was given to him posthumously in 1968.

Sir Francis Campbell, whose cane handle is passed along to award recipients, was an American expatriate who was knighted by King Edward VII. Campbell was born in Tennessee and accidentally blinded before he was six. He was educated at the Tennessee State Institute for the Blind and at the University of Tennessee. Campbell taught music at the Perkins School for the Blind. At Perkins, he was involved in early efforts to teach Orientation and Mobility.

The names of past recipients of the Lawrence E. Blaha Award are published with the call for nominations:

1968 Lawrence E. Blaha, posthumously	1992 Everett "Butch" Hill
1969 Dr. Richard E. Hoover, MD	1994 Berdell "Pete" Wurzburger
1972 W.G. Debetaz	1996 William Wiener
1973 Stanley Suterko	1998 Bruce B. Blasch
1975 Russell C. Williams	2000 Gala Saber Brooks
1977 Donald Blasch	2002 Billie Louis Bentzen
1979 John D. Malamazian	2004 Dona Sauerburger
1981 John R. Eichorn, Ed.D.	2006 Steve LaGrow
1983 Leicester W. Farmer	2008 Janet Barlow
1984 C. Warren Bledsoe	2010 Eileen Siffermann
1986 Walter G. Olenek	2012 Richard Long
1988 Richard L. Welsh	2014 George Zimmerman
1990 Hugo Vigoroso	2016 Sandra Rosen

## **The Orientation and Mobility Citation of Excellence for Direct Service**

Orientation and Mobility Citation of Excellence for Direct Service is given only when a worthy nominee has been nominated.

**Selection Criteria:**

- a. The individual must be in direct service the year preceding the AER International Conference teaching Orientation and Mobility to either children or adults for a period of 5-10 years.
- b. The individual must be an O&M Division member and be a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

### **History:**

The Orientation and Mobility Citation of Excellence for Direct Service was established in 1985 to present "to a younger member of the profession, to encourage O&M specialists whose present excellent teaching records already foreshadow promising careers in our profession" (1996-97 Division newsletter). It continues to be awarded to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the profession during the first ten years of their career in O&M and to encourage these individuals to continue their promising careers in our profession.

Past Recipients of the Orientation and Mobility Citation of Excellence for Direct Service are:

1986	Peggy Madera, Judy Davidhizar-Holmes	2002	John E. Clare
1988	Joani Levy Myers	2004	Julie Hapeman
1990	Judy Hayes	2008	Danene Fast
1992	Bonnie Dodson-Burk, Darick Wright	2006	None
1994	Carol Otten, Colleen Calhoon	2010	Marcia Vickroy
1996	Sharon O'Mara Maida	2012	Shannon Cuniak
1998	Mary Konigsfeld-Wejrowski	2014	No Nominees
2000	James Scott Crawford	2016	Raychel Callary

## **The Sandy Kronick Distinguished Service Award**

The Sandy Kronick Distinguished Service Award is given only when a worthy nominee has been nominated.

**Selection Criteria:**

- a. The individual must have had at least ten years experience in the field of blindness with the majority of professional career in direct service teaching O&M to visually impaired people; and have demonstrated distinguished service by doing one or more of the following:
  - extend beyond the usual job requirements by using talents and expertise to enhance the field of O&M
  - initiate innovative or unique programs
  - serve as a mentor to other O&M specialists
  - present at local, regional, or international conferences
  - publish work in a professional journal
- b. The individual must have been a longstanding member of the O&M Division (majority of career) and be a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist unless retired or out of the field (administration).

- c. The individual must exemplify the standards outlined in the O&M Code of Ethics.

### History

The Sandy Kronick Distinguished Service Award was established in 1994 to recognize professionals who demonstrate distinguished service in O&M through a long-term commitment in direct service. The award was named after Sandy Kronick because of his lifelong commitment and dedication to teaching O&M to visually impaired people. He taught O&M in Oregon until his sudden death in May 1993. The first Sandy Kronick Distinguished Service Award was given to him posthumously and accepted by his wife, Bethanne Kronick, at the 1994 AER International Conference in Dallas. Sandy Kronick was chosen as the first recipient of this award because of his lifelong dedication to teaching Orientation and Mobility, while continuing to be actively involved with numerous professional activities and committees.

Mr. Kronick was a very active member of AER, especially during his last ten years. He was instrumental in forming the Oregon AER Chapter and served as its president. He served on several international committees and had just completed his term as AER's Northwest Regional Rehabilitation Representative at the time of his death.

The establishment of this award is a fitting tribute to Sandy Kronick and to all the O&M specialists who forego promotions or higher paying career changes in order to continue doing what they know and love best, namely teach Orientation and Mobility. The award will be given only when a worthy recipient is determined.

Past Recipients of the Sandy Kronick Distinguished Service Award are:

1994	Sandy Kronick, posthumously	2006	Laura Park-Leach
1996	Kathleen Newman	2008	None
1998	Richard Russo	2010	Pat Zeinstra
2000	Lukas Franck	2012	Gene Bourquin
2002	William P. McCloskey	2014	Lea Ann Myer, Tom Rotunno
2004	Vince Fazzi	2016	Marjorie Wood

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### *A child's first steps with a cane. Why not try the Dakota Disk?*

By now I would hope that most COMS in the United States have heard of the Dakota Disk and understand how it can be used on rough terrain and snow. Although the original goal was to develop a tip that was superior for rugged, outdoor conditions, I realized that it could also be ideal for preschoolers just learning how to explore and move with a cane. Push toys and pre-cane devices may often be the first tools to aid in movement, but I contend that a child-sized cane with a Dakota Disk might be just the combination to take learning to the next level.

It is a fun and rewarding experience guiding a young cane user to reach out and encounter the world. Ideally it is time to introduce prerequisite language and space concepts. At the same time it is imperative that we teach crucial safety concepts at this stage. The COMS must intervene wisely during lessons while allowing minor bumps and contact with objects.

This is how we let children interact with the objects and spaces around them in a real and meaningful way. When the cane tip goes over a curb or step there must be the recognition of risk and hopefully all movement ceases. It is imperative that cane users of any age feel the tip go over and react accordingly. I believe it is a universal experience, however, that new cane users often fail to make this connection at first. The subtle changes in sound and position of the cane and arm do not always register with the child as strongly as we would like. There is a high likelihood that the child will keep walking and falling. We deal with this by carefully monitoring, verbal cautions and physical intervention when necessary.

We have this wonderful opportunity to guide the young cane user while learning real life consequences and how to problem solve. This is mostly a cognitive exercise, but we also try to put developmentally appropriate tools in the hands of all our students. I believe that the Dakota Disk tip on an appropriately sized cane (including handle) is a sound developmental choice for many children.

Let me explain why I feel that the Dakota Disk tip can be especially helpful. It has a much larger surface area to contact the floor or ground. Surface changes are readily detected and objects in one's path are more likely to be located compared to other cane tips. I will concede that push toys and pre-cane devices are the fun and practical first tools of choice with little ones when they're first gaining confidence with forward movement. We should be thinking about the next phase of training. When we do determine that



it is time for a child to try a cane, we want their experience to be positive and effective. As the child moves forward with cane in hand, we guide him or her to keep it in front and even move it from side to side to a limited degree to search for objects like furniture or toys. I suggest that the success rate for finding specific objects will be much higher with the Dakota Disk. The 6-inch disk easily slides over surfaces and by virtue of its size will find targets much more readily. Furthermore, even though the disk is lightweight, the new cane user is not as likely to lift the cane into the air which becomes a safety hazard. The cane with disk tip is appropriate to take out into the community and it will be perfect for grassy areas and playgrounds. The same cannot be said for push toys.

Recognizing that the cane is more than an object detector, we know that it is an extension of the hand to learn about the world. Nevertheless, it is our role and responsibility to help children understand that this awesome tool serves a very important purpose for safety. It detects objects and drop-offs that the child must react to in order to be safe. When used both indoors and outdoors the tactile and sound cues are very noticeable which makes it easier to reinforce the subtle changes that will be meaningful to the traveler. The sensory cues provided by the flat underside of the tip are more obvious than other tips. This effect seems to be greatly enhanced because the surface area is much greater than any other cane tip available. In the same way, one of the most obvious benefits of the large tip is that it is unmistakable when it slides over steps or curbs. In my years of working with children of



all ages, I can attest that many do not quickly react to drop-offs or low lying objects. It has been my experience under blindfold myself that recognition of all hazards is enhanced.

At this point I have only anecdotal evidence to support my impressions that the Dakota Disk is a practical and desirable option for preschool children using a cane. I suggest for most children that moving on to other tip styles should be expected. This should always be determined through careful consideration by a team, however, and there may be some children who would be successful with this tip style in the long-term. Individuals with other physical limitations may also be good candidates for using a Dakota Disk tip with a standard cane.

I welcome those of you who have tried the tip to give it a try with a younger student. I do not think you will be disappointed. I would also be thrilled to have some hard research done with the tip for both adults and children. It is important for me to note that I have no financial benefit from the sale of this Ambutech product. I merely want to provide more awareness so that every potentially beneficial tool is made available to the children and adults we serve. Good luck and let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Paul H. Olson—COMS  
ND Vision Services/School for the Blind  
[polson@nd.gov](mailto:polson@nd.gov)

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### *Two New/Revised Programs about Street Crossings!*

There are 2 new or recently revised programs now available for O&M specialists and guide dog mobility instructors to help them teach students what they need to know about street crossings!

#### **Self-Study Guide: Crossing at Modern Signals**

**Dona Sauerburger, COMS; Dr. Eugene Bourquin, COMS; Bonnie Dodson-Burk, COMS**

Everybody knows -- modern signals ain't your grandfather's signals any more!  
Teaching our students to use traditional O&M techniques to cross puts them at great risk!!!

This new Self-Study Guide has all the information that you need to know about teaching students with visual impairments at intersections with traffic signals. Using friendly, easy-to-read text with videos and pictures, topics include: actuation; traffic patterns; pedestrian signals/pushbuttons; strategies for crossing; risk assessment and mitigation; APS; and teaching ideas.

The Self-Study Guide is FREE to practitioners and provides 5 hours ACVREP credit.  
[www.sauerburger.org/dona/signal](http://www.sauerburger.org/dona/signal)

## **Self-Study Guide: Preparing Visually Impaired Students for Uncontrolled Crossings** **Dona Sauerburger, COMS**

This revised and updated Self-Study Guide provides information and strategies for teaching students with visual impairment what they need to know for analyzing and dealing with unsignalized crossings. It is FREE to practitioners and provides 5 hours ACVREP credit.

<http://www.sauerburger.org/dona/crosscredit>

For more information about either of these Self-Study Guides, contact Dona Sauerburger at [dona@sauerburger.org](mailto:dona@sauerburger.org)

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### ***Randolph-Sheppard Act Employment Program***

*By: Ardis Bazyn, RSVA® 2nd Vice President*

The Randolph-Sheppard Act was sponsored by Representative Jennings Randolph and Senator Morris Sheppard and signed into law on June 20, 1936 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The purpose is to provide employment opportunities for blind individuals in the United States. On December 7, 1974, the enactment of the 1974 Amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act greatly improved the Act. The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) is federally mandated and is administered in each state by a designated State Licensing Agency (SLA). The Randolph-Sheppard Program gives blind persons the first right of refusal to operate food service facilities in federally owned government buildings in all 50 states. Most states also have mini Randolph-Sheppard Act laws so these businesses are primarily operated in city, county, state, and federal facilities. They include snack bars, cafeterias, vending machine facilities, vending machine routes, highway rest areas, visitor welcome centers, gift shops, convenience stores, and food service locations on military bases. These facilities generate over \$750,000,000 a year in sales, making the Randolph-Sheppard Program the 7th largest foodservice program in the nation.

RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD VENDORS OF AMERICA® (RSVA®) is a national membership organization committed to improving economic opportunities for blind vendors/managers. RSVA® promotes independent and effective participation in the Business Enterprise Program and encourages the creation of new business opportunities. This volunteer organization is composed of blind and visually impaired vendors and those individuals who support the Randolph-Sheppard Program. The purpose is to bring together blind persons engaged in the operation of vending facilities and individuals and groups supporting the goals and objectives of this organization and the Randolph-Sheppard vending facility program. RSVA® is an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind (ACB), America's leading consumer based advocacy organization working on behalf of all blind and visually impaired individuals.

RSVA® promotes the general welfare of blind vendors nationwide who are engaged in RS businesses and provides forums for discussion of issues affecting licensed blind managers in the Randolph-Sheppard program. RSVA partners in the development of practical, profitable self-help activities by working to improve the education and training available to blind vendors/managers through two national conferences, the RSVA® sponsored

Sagebrush National Business Enterprise Program training Conference and the annual summer national RSVA®-ACB conference. RSVA® provides technical and legal support to vendors/managers to ensure rights granted to them are not limited or voided by actions of property managers or State Licensing Agencies. Other services include legal consultation, advice, and assistance to promote the legal interest of blind vendors seeking proper implementation of the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

RSVA® can provide speakers at meetings or conferences to promote the Randolph-Sheppard Program. RSVA membership offers the opportunity for fellowship with peers, meet experts in the field, and participate in the governance of an organization important to a vendor's livelihood. RSVA®, with support from the ACB, monitors actions of legislative and regulatory bodies affecting the lives and businesses of blind vendors. RSVA® believes in promoting a positive image of blind vendors/managers as hard working, tax paying citizens who are contributing to the economy of the communities where they work. Members receive "The Vendorscope", RSVA®'S quarterly publication. Read past issues online at <http://www.randolph-sheppard.org>

- Contact the RSVA® national office: Phone (504) 328-6373 or email [rsa@randolph-sheppard.org](mailto:rsa@randolph-sheppard.org)
- The Durward K. McDaniel Memorial Fund was established by the Randolph-sheppard Vendors of America® to support legal endeavors to protect the Randolph-Sheppard Act and programs operating under Federal law.
- Learn more at the RSVA® 2018 Sagebrush

National Business Enterprise Program Training Conference in Las Vegas, February 12 — 16, 2018. The theme is "Leading and Growing Randolph-Sheppard into the next decade" The Annual Sagebrush Training Conference is the Longest Running Training Conference in the Randolph-Sheppard Program History.

## ***DISTRICT REPORTS***

### ***District 3 – Maggie Winn***

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ontario and Wisconsin

There will be a one-day Action Day Conference in Michigan's Upper Peninsula on October 17<sup>th</sup> conference for individuals with disabilities, their families, guardians, advocates and professionals. Northern Michigan University in Marquette, MI. For more information call 1 (800) 379-SAIL or follow the link below.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/action-day-conference-tickets-35260247349?aff=es2>

Leader Dogs for the Blind has a free bi-annual Pro Seminar for Orientation and Mobility Specialists. The next scheduled date is April 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>. Earn ACVREP approved CE credits. Follow the link below for more information.

<http://www.leaderdog.org/programs/o-and-m-seminars-for-professionals-and-universities/guide-dog-seminar>

Leader Dogs for the Blind Summer Experience Camp will be held June 23– June 30, 2018. Summer Experience Camp is a unique summer camp for boys and girls ages 16 and 17 who are legally blind combining summer fun, independent travel skill training, leadership development, an introduction to guide dogs and the opportunity to spend time with peers

facing similar challenges. Camp applications will be available online on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. Deadline for applications will be March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018. Follow the link below for more information. <http://www.leaderdog.org/clients/programs/summer-experience-camp>

SAVE THE DATE!

The upcoming NCOMA Conference will be held September 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> 2018 in Milwaukee, WI.

### ***District 4 - Lynnette McElwain***

Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, New Hampshire, New York, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Rhode Island, Vermont

As your new District Four Representative it is my privilege to serve on the O&M Board. This fall there are two great conferences planned for our members.

The first is being hosted by the New York State Chapter of AER (nysaer) and is titled. "Communication for Independence." It will be held at the Marriott Hotel at 189 Wolf Rd. Albany NY. The conference is scheduled for October 22-24, 2017. For more information contact [nysaer.aerbvi.org](mailto:nysaer.aerbvi.org)

The second conference is being hosted by the New England Chapter of AER (ne/aer). It will be held at the Downtown Waterfront Hilton Hotel in Burlington, Vermont. The date has been set as November 15-17, 2017. For updated information go to [neae.umb.edu](http://neae.umb.edu)

Please mark your calendar and save the dates. You won't want to miss these conferences.

### ***District 5 - JoAnne Chalom***

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Puerto Rico, Tennessee

District 5 O&Mers have been busy and here are some of the highlights.

#### **Alabama**

Alabama AER Chapter's 34th Annual Training Conference

October 2, 3, & 4, 2017

Lakepoint Resort State Park

Alabama's Annual Training Conference will be held at the beautiful Lakepoint Resort State Park. The theme for this year's training event is "Sensory Safari Through Life Transitions". Sessions addressing topics such as Spectrum Lighting, Transition to Work, Services for Deaf/Blind, and Ethics will be presented by knowledgeable professionals.

Join them on Monday evening for "BINGO BLAST" a chapter tradition raising funds for our BDS Scholarship while enjoying great fellowship and the opportunity to win the BIG prize. On Tuesday evening join the President's Award Dinner and "Costume Dance Party"! Come dressed in your best "Safari Outfit"!

Reservations can be made online at <http://www.alapark.com/lakepoint-state-park> or by calling 1-800-544-5253. When making your reservation use Group Code 4199.

## Florida

2017 Florida (FAER) Conference

September 27th - 29th, 2017

Holiday Inn Resort Lake Buena Vista

Join them for "It's a Magical affAER", September 27-29th, 2017. What tricks do you have up your sleeve? Come learn and share at the 2017 Magical affAER Conference!

Denna Lambert will be the opening speaker for the conference. Denna is currently a Project Manager with NASA, and has experience as the Disability Programs Manager with the Goddard Space Flight Center.

The closing session will feature the Executive Director of AER, Lou Tutt. Lou Tutt has been the Executive Director since 2011. His experience in the field ranges from teaching to being a superintendent of residential schools.

For more information, visit the hotel website or call 407.239.4500 to book a room for \$89 per night with the FAER room block. Use promotional code GFU to be sure you receive the discounted rate. For more information contact Jessica Alessio at [jessicaluciaalessio@gmail.com](mailto:jessicaluciaalessio@gmail.com).

## Kentucky

As a new addition to the Kentucky AER chapter's website, they have added a new section that highlights "Tips of the Trade." If you have a 'tip' that makes your job easier and more productive share it with KAER by submitting your tip. Title it Tips of Trade in the subject line and submit your tip to Ellen Cross at [ellen.cross@jefferson.kyschools.us](mailto:ellen.cross@jefferson.kyschools.us).

JoAnne Chalom, COMS, Ed.S.  
[jchalom@infocusmobility.com](mailto:jchalom@infocusmobility.com)

## *District 6 - Anthony Nigro*

Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virgin Islands, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington D.C.

Congratulations to special education vision studies doctoral student Kathy Alstrin on earning the Brosius Award from the Katz Business School. The Brosius Creativity Award is awarded to those students demonstrating exceptional creativity in their program of study. Kathy's project is a mixed-media canvas utilizing the components of creativity which are: elegance, magnificence and grandeur, originality, novelty and significance. #PittSOE



## *Division Executive Committee*

CHAIR: Justin Kaiser    SECRETARY: Kathryn Botsford

EMAIL: [jkaiser@uscupstate.edu](mailto:jkaiser@uscupstate.edu)    MAIL: [kdbotsford.ver@gmail.com](mailto:kdbotsford.ver@gmail.com)

PAST CHAIR: Susan Langendonk

TREASURER: Susan Bradley

EMAIL: [susanlangendonk@gmail.com](mailto:susanlangendonk@gmail.com)

EMAIL: [bradlesk@aol.com](mailto:bradlesk@aol.com)

CHAIR ELECT: Chris Tabb

EMAIL: [tabbc@tsbvi.edu](mailto:tabbc@tsbvi.edu)

DISTRICT 1: Loana Mason

EMAIL: [loanam@nmsu.edu](mailto:loanam@nmsu.edu)

(Alaska, Alberta, Arizona, British Columbia, Colorado, Hawaii, New Mexico, California, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Northwest Territories, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Yukon Territories)

DISTRICT 2: John McAllister

EMAIL: [jwmcallister@ualr.edu](mailto:jwmcallister@ualr.edu)

(Arkansas, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Manitoba, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Saskatchewan, Texas)

DISTRICT 3: Margaret Winn

EMAIL: [margaretkwinn@gmail.com](mailto:margaretkwinn@gmail.com)

(Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ontario and Wisconsin)

DISTRICT 4: Lynnette McElwain

EMAIL: [nortlyn@yahoo.com](mailto:nortlyn@yahoo.com)

(Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, New Hampshire, New York, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Rhode Island, Vermont)

DISTRICT 5: JoAnne Chalom

EMAIL: [jchalom@infocusmobility.com](mailto:jchalom@infocusmobility.com)

(Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Puerto Rico, Tennessee)

DISTRICT 6: Anthony Nigro

EMAIL: [anigromobility@gmail.com](mailto:anigromobility@gmail.com)

(Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virgin Islands, Virginia, West Virginia, Washington D.C.)

Visit the O&M website for a list of Committees: <https://aerbvi.org/about/divisions/orientation-mobility-division>



Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired  
1703 N. Beauregard St., Suite 440 ■ Alexandria, VA 22311-1744  
[aer@aerbvi.org](mailto:aer@aerbvi.org) ■ [www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org) ■ <http://oandm.aerbvi.org>