



# AERODYNAMICS

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of the Blind and Visually Impaired

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## BUSINESS CLASS

### AER International Conference 2018

Are you ready for the AER International Conference 2018? It is the one-stop destination for networking, information gathering, innovative ideas, evidence-based practices and strategies used to best serve your students and clients. With its keynote speakers, special agenda items and now over 180 educational breakout sessions, this conference has something for everyone. What's more, it is approved by the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) for continuing education hours.



AER's biennial international conference will be held July 25-29, 2018, at the Peppermill Resort in Reno, Nevada. Special items on the docket include a pre-conference seminar on neurological visual impairment, a leadership academy, an

AER awards luncheon, a new member reception and 3 general sessions led by leading authorities in the field. Why not take advantage of this golden opportunity for professional growth in the Silver State of Nevada? For the full schedule and registration details, go to <https://aerbvi.org/professional-development/conferences/aeric2018/>.

## Braille Pals: For Practice & Friendship

AER's International Services & Global Issues Division's initiative, "Braille Pals", puts braille learners/users of any level in touch with their peers around the world to practice their braille or to make new friends. Although the main idea is to encourage braille as well as develop

friendships in places where it is more difficult to establish relationships with others, individuals with low vision and non-braille users are welcome to participate. In fact, we initially connect Braille Pals through email, but then it is up to the Pals themselves to exchange addresses to begin writing in braille or continue communicating through email.

We invite both children and adults to participate. We currently have a classroom of students from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired communicating with other students in India. We would love to have more classrooms or individual students communicating and practicing braille with their peers around the world. In addition, we have a list of 15 adults from many countries who are learning/using Unified English Braille (UEB) and would like a Braille Pal to communicate and practice with. These interested parties come from countries such as Algeria, Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Macedonia, and Poland. They often speak English as their second language but want to grow, communicate and meet someone with whom they can practice braille.

Anyone interested in practicing braille or making a new friend should contact Lisa Johnson at [lmjohnson1025@gmail.com](mailto:lmjohnson1025@gmail.com), and include their name, age, gender, location (e.g., province, country), languages they speak, their level of braille in English (they may include other languages they braille), and any other information that might help us connect them with an appropriate Braille Pal. Visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/aerglobalissues/> to see what else we are doing!

## **Survey: Education Curriculum Via Games**

Over the past four years, Blindfold Games (<http://www.BlindfoldGames.org>) has created 80 accessible games downloaded by more than 20,000 visually impaired people. These games range from Puzzle Games to Card Games to Sports Games to TV Game Shows to Board Games to Word Games. About a dozen of the games are used by teachers of the visually impaired (TVIs) for orientation and mobility (O&M) practice.

Now, we want to take our successful game concept and use it to support the work of TVIs, O&M specialists and others who support the educational programs of students with visual impairments. We are launching a new company to provide education curriculum via games for preK-12 students with visual impairments and need your help. Please take five minutes to complete this survey. You may be one of the 50 winners to receive an Amazon Gift Card! Visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/k12vi-survey>.

## **Study: Calling Adult Braille Learners**

We are seeking participants for a research study that is being conducted through the University of Montreal to better understand the experiences of adults who have learned braille. The results

from this study will help us to better understand the facilitators and barriers that adults experience during their braille training and how to improve training provided in the future. We are seeking participation from people who are blind or who have low vision, are 40 years or older, and who have learned braille sometime within the past ten years. Participation would involve a single, confidential, anonymous phone interview that will take between 60 and 90 minutes to complete.

We will send a consent form in advance with more information about the study in either large print, braille or email format to anyone interested in participating. Participants also have the option of requesting a copy of the questionnaire in advance, to get a better idea of the kind of questions we'll ask.

The results from this study will help rehabilitation professionals design braille training programs that better meet the needs of adult and senior learners. To learn more, email [natalina.martiniello@umontreal.ca](mailto:natalina.martiniello@umontreal.ca).

## THE JOURNEY

### CNIB Celebrates a Century of Change Adapted from [CNIB's website](#)

Ottawa—Joined by special guests and supporters, CNIB commemorated a century of remarkable change and progress for Canadians who are blind or partially sighted and ushered in a bright new future at its 100th anniversary national celebration on March 21, 2018. More than 400 guests, including clients, volunteers, donors, staff and community partners, joined the charity for an inspirational reception at the Canadian War Museum, a fitting venue for an organization founded in 1918 in the wake of the First World War.

"When our seven founders came together a century ago, they envisioned a future of ability, opportunity and equality for every blind and partially sighted citizen," said John M. Rafferty, President and CEO of CNIB. "That vision has been at the centre of CNIB's work ever since, propelling us to drive powerful change for the millions of Canadians we have served. That impact is their legacy, and we're proud to celebrate it."

### Calendar of Events

July 25-29, 2018 – [AER International Conference 2018](#), Reno, Nevada, USA

September 28-29, 2018 – North Central O&M Association (NCOMA) Conference, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA

October 18-19, 2018 -- [CNIB Braille Conference](#), Toronto, Ontario, Canada

November 8-10, 2018 – [Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists \(AVRT\) Conference](#), Cleveland, Ohio, USA

November 14-16, 2018 -- [Northeast AER Conference](#), Newport, Rhode Island, USA

December 8-11, 2018 -- [Southeastern O&M Association \(SOMA\) Conference](#), Tampa, Florida, USA

February 28-March 1, 2019 – American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conference (AFBLC), Arlington,

The evening's celebrations were hosted by Craig Oliver, with a key focus on acknowledging trailblazers who shaped the CNIB of today and forged new paths of opportunity for people with sight loss in Canada. These individuals and organizations were presented with the Century of Change Award, a special award created to honour extraordinary contributions to CNIB and Canada's sight loss community.

Speakers included the Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson, CNIB National Board Chair Ronald J. Kruzeniski, and Minister of Public Services and Procurement Carla Qualtrough, herself a recipient of the CNIB Century of Change Award, and who spoke of her own experience with partial sight and the impact CNIB has had on her life from a young age.

The event also featured special exhibits on CNIB's past, present, and future. Highlights included a meet-and-greet with CNIB guide dogs in training Barney and Danson, a look back at blind literacy through the years, and assistive technologies from early tools to leading-edge digital devices and apps. Also on display were a newly released coin set created by the Royal Canadian Mint and designed by partially sighted artist Meghan Sims and a commemorative envelope created by Canada Post, both paying tribute to CNIB's 100th anniversary.

While the evening emphasized CNIB's storied history, the century-old organization also set out its bold ambitions for the future, renewing its original mission with a new vigour and purpose.

"As we look ahead, I couldn't be more excited as CNIB continues our work in shaping a brighter future for Canadians with sight loss. Increasing access to employment and technology, advocating for more accessible communities, connecting more Canadians with guide dogs—we are ready to take on these challenges and more," said Kruzeniski.

"We need to aim high--be bold in our ambitions--and not settle until we've created the inclusive, equal future our founders envisioned," said Rafferty. "That's what the next century will be about for CNIB."

## **ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES**

### **CNIB SK Kids Camps**

Our summer day camps in Regina and Saskatoon provide an opportunity for kids to enjoy recreational activities with their peers while enhancing life skills. Each camp focuses on traveling safely, independent living skills, socializing and self-advocacy. Past activities have included swimming, kayaking, dragon boating, games, crafts, horseback riding, receiving first aid training, practicing O&M skills, money management and more!

CNIB Summer Day Camps are now accepting registrations for the following dates: July 10-11, 2018, for ages 5-11; July 31 and August 21, 2018, for ages 12-18. In Saskatoon, <mailto:ashley.hay@cnib.ca>, and in Regina <mailto:ashley.nemeth@cnib.ca>.

## **VIEWS ON Music Camp**

From July 15-21, 2018, children aged 8+ from throughout the province of Ontario who are blind or have low vision are invited to the W. Ross Macdonald School in Brantford for a week-long music camp featuring fun and educational activities. Camp activities include choir, ear training, learning music braille, and private vocal, piano, guitar or drum lessons, as well as technology for music composition and literacy for those who are blind or have low vision. Campers can also enjoy drama, dance, games and peer socialization.

All application documents and payment must be received by June 15, 2018. For further details, go to <http://viewson.ca/braille-music-camp/>

## **COAST TO COAST TO COAST**

### **Only Half of Canadians Seek Treatment for Symptoms of Potential Eye Disease**

Reprinted from [the COS website](#)

Toronto--A new survey, commissioned by the Canadian Ophthalmological Society (COS), reveals the majority of Canadians (59%) experience symptoms of potential eye disease, yet only half of these people (54%) reported they had seen a healthcare professional. This is particularly concerning as early detection is key in preventing eye disease from progressing or resulting in vision loss or blindness. Ophthalmologists--the physicians that specialize in medical and surgical eye care--are committed to preventing vision loss and helping people maintain healthy eyes and vision as they age. With National Vision Health Month happening in May, they emphasized the importance of having regular medical eye exams, as part of the ongoing See the Possibilities campaign by the COS to raise awareness about eye health.

"We were concerned that a majority of Canadians may be experiencing early symptoms of potential eye disease, yet have not had a medical eye exam," says Dr. Phil Hooper, MD, FRCSC. "Regular, dilated comprehensive eye exams are important as some serious eye diseases produce no symptoms at all until they are very advanced. If these diseases are caught early, effective treatments are available to preserve vision. This is even more important in those who are experiencing changes to their vision, who have a family history of eye disease, or have a chronic disease such as diabetes."

Eye symptoms reported by Canadians included difficulty seeing at night (27%), problems reading up close (25%), blurry vision (22%), red, watery eyes (22%), seeing flashes of light (10%) and double vision (6%). Some of these symptoms may develop as a result of serious eye disease.

When it comes to eye health, knowledge is power, yet awareness of common eye diseases in Canada is low. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of vision loss in Canada, yet the majority (51%) of Canadians are not familiar with the disease or the severe damage it can cause. Diabetes is the leading cause of blindness in Canadians under 50 and diabetic retinopathy affects half a million Canadians. Even with its strong prevalence in Canada, almost half (41%) of Canadians have never heard of this disease and a third (34%) only recognize the name but not the condition. Other common eye diseases, such as glaucoma and cataracts, can be detected through a comprehensive eye exam. In the case of glaucoma, if caught early, effective treatments are available to preserve vision.

The study also showed that millennials (18-34-year-olds) have an even lower awareness of major eye diseases than the national average and were less likely to see a physician (44%) after experiencing common symptoms of potential eye disease.

“A common misconception is that regular eye exams are just to correct vision, but they are also key to the overall health of the eye,” says Dr. Hooper.

Last year, the COS launched the See The Possibilities campaign, educating Canadians about eye health and the important role ophthalmologists play in eye health care. Visit <http://www.seethepossibilities.ca> for more information.

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