



# AERODYNAMICS

## The AER Canada Newsletter

A publication of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation  
of the Blind and Visually Impaired

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### BUSINESS CLASS

#### Extra! Extra! AER News

- The AER International Conference 2020, "Gateway to Community", July 22-26, 2020, Union Station Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri, is sure to be AER's best conference ever! New this year: Symposium Day, July 23, a day devoted to full- and half-day presentations and open to all conference attendees!
- The Call for Presentations for the AER International Conference 2020 is now open and ends February 3, 2020. [Visit this link for more information.](#)
- AER's History & Memorial Committee invites you to submit the names of colleagues in our "professional family" who have passed away in the 2018-2020 biennium. The Committee will present the Memorial List at the Opening Session of the AER International

Conference 2020. Please submit all names using the following link: [bit.ly/2018-2020Memorial](https://bit.ly/2018-2020Memorial)

- AER Power Ups! is a new series of virtual educational sessions provided to you free of charge as a member benefit. You can advance your knowledge, skills and abilities in various subjects and earn continuing education hours. Recent sessions have included September's "Making Sense of the Myths & Miracles of Marijuana" (Vision Rehabilitation Therapy), October's "Using a Positive Approach to Dementia Care" (Aging) and November's "Functional Vision Evaluations" (Itinerant Personnel). December's offerings include "The Changing Roles of the VRT" (Vision Rehabilitation Therapy), "Calendar Systems and Students with Deafblindness" (Multiple Disabilities & Deafblind), and "Blind Coding Academies: Overcoming Accessibility Barriers" (Employment & Rehabilitation Counselling). Watch your in-box for announcements of monthly sessions—all designed to make you the

best professional you can be! For more information on AER's Divisions, visit:

<https://aerbvi.org/about/divisions/>

- AER's Low Vision Rehabilitation Division is now on Facebook! Like us at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/AER-Low-Vision-Division-104083624284431/about/>
- AER is now on Instagram! Connect, follow and have a conversation with us! We want to hear from you. You can find us here:  
Like us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AERBVI/>  
Follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AERBVI>  
Follow us on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/aerbvi/>  
And add us on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/aerbvi/>
- For those renewing their memberships or sending donations by mail before the end of the year, remember AER's new address: 5680 King Centre Drive, Suite 600, Alexandria, VA 22315 USA.

### **Call for Presentations: CVTC 2020**

The 2020 Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference, "21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners", will take place from May 6-8, 2020, at the Sheraton Toronto Airport Hotel & Conference Centre in Toronto, Ontario, with Braille Literacy Canada holding its Annual General Meeting on May 8 as part of the conference schedule.

The CVTC conference welcomes all Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments, Orientation & Mobility Instructors, Deafblind Intervenors, Alternative Format Specialists, Students, Parents, Researchers, Health Care Practitioners, Adults, Early Childhood Educators, Community Partners and Agencies across Canada and beyond interested in the education, empowerment and advocacy of individuals with visual impairments.

Interested in presenting at CVTC 2020? Proposals are being accepted until January 1, 2020. Know an outstanding colleague? Award nominations must be received by February 6, 2020. For further details, [click here](#).

### **Important Changes from ACVREP**

Effective September 3, 2019, the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) has readjusted the timeline requirements for certification and recertification. For details, visit: <https://www.acvrep.org/newsitem?id=58>

In addition, as of January 1, 2020, most fees for certification and recertification, including application and exam registration fees, will increase. For all the details, visit: <https://www.acvrep.org/newsitem?id=60>

## Call for Papers: 13<sup>th</sup> International Low Vision Conference

The 13th International Low Vision Conference by the International Society for Low Vision Research and Rehabilitation will be held at Dublin, Ireland's Convention Centre from July 12 to 16, 2020. This year's theme will be "Imagining the Impossible". Abstracts are being accepted until January 20, 2020. Please visit the Vision 2020 website for more details: <https://vision2020dublin.com/abstracts-submission-guidelines/>

## Save the Date: The 2020 AFBLC

The next American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conference (AFBLC) will take place from March 26-27, 2020, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, Virginia. Held annually, AFBLC attracts established and emerging leaders in the blindness field. Conference attendees include technology experts, corporate representatives, university professors, and researchers. They come from diverse organizations and institutions spanning the public and private sectors.

The conference will have five primary areas of focus, including leadership, aging and visual impairment, education, technology and employment. An exciting program is being finalized and will be released soon, so please check back.

The 2019 AFBLC attracted over 400 attendees from 43 states and three countries and territories. For more information, visit: <https://www.afb.org/take-action/calendar/afblc-2020>

## THE JOURNEY

### Angel Fund Helps Visually Impaired Students

By Michelle Ruby

Brantford Expositor, October 24, 2019

A new charity has been created to ensure money donated to W. Ross Macdonald School goes directly to help its blind and deafblind students.

The WRMS Angel Fund, operated through the Brant United Way, will help students with their personal needs—pay for them to attend a world goalball championship, for example, or a trip to an

## Calendar of Events

January 29-31, 2020 -- [International Orientation & Mobility Online Symposium](#)

March 26-27, 2020 – [American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conference \(AFBLC\)](#), Arlington, Virginia, USA

May 6-8, 2020 – ["21st Century Learners" Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference \(CVTC\) 2020](#), Toronto, Ontario, Canada

May 10-15, 2020 -- [International Council on English Braille \(ICEB\) 7th General Assembly](#), London, England

June 22-25, 2020 -- [Challenges for an Inclusive Society International Mobility Conference \(IMC17\)](#), Gothenburg, Sweden

July 12-16, 2020 -- [13th International Conference of the International Society for Low Vision Research and Rehabilitation \(ISLRR\)](#), Dublin, Ireland

July 22-26, 2020 – ["Gateway to Community" AER International Conference 2020](#), St. Louis, Missouri, USA

out-of-province eye specialist. The money could pay for hearing devices or visual aids not covered by government programs, buy a musical instrument, or set up student bursaries and scholarships. "It could also help students who don't have the basics, like winter clothes and boots," said school principal Dan Maggiacomo.

It was while on walks with her dog and children near the 20-hectare W. Ross Macdonald campus at Brant and St. Paul avenues that Monica Bradshaw began thinking about how she could offer support. "Over the years, I'd seen students and been aware of the school," said Bradshaw, who lives nearby. She spoke with friend Kelly Thomson, who works at W. Ross Macdonald, about the operation of the school.

Founded in 1872, it is the only residential/day school program for visually impaired students in Ontario. But students—there are about 180 enrolled in junior kindergarten to Grade 12—come from all parts of the province and beyond. Maggiacomo said there are many students whose families are new to Canada, immigrating from Albania, India, Burundi, Ethiopia, Syria, Lebanon and other countries all over the world.

Older students live in residence at the school, returning home every weekend, and those who live within 70 minutes of Brantford travel home every night. Maggiacomo said the school is well funded by the Ontario government and has been generously supported for decades by local residents. But, because W. Ross Macdonald is provincially funded, money that donors intended go directly to students would instead go to the Ministry of Finance and dispersed as it saw fit.

Bradshaw, who has been working for 18 months, with the help of Cheryl Wiacek of Brant United Way, to set up the Angel Fund, said it "ensures funds being gifted and donated to the school, in fact, stayed at the school for their use, something that wasn't happening for some time. "We agreed that setting up the fund is the best way to capture anyone who wants to donate, and the money goes to the students who really need it," she said. "Often their needs are very extensive."

Maggiacomo said "far too many blind Canadians live in poverty." Although many W. Ross Macdonald graduates go on to college and university or directly into the workforce, "it's still a population that struggles, sometimes their entire lives, with joblessness and poverty," he said. The Angel Fund got one of its first contributions from Devlin's Country Bistro in Mount Pleasant, which runs a charity breadbasket program. When customers pay \$1 to have bread with their meal, the restaurant donates the money each month to a different charity, selected by an employee. "Last year I had the amazing opportunity to do my co-op at W. Ross Macdonald School and I can truly say it was one of the most life-changing and heartwarming experiences of my life," said Kendra McConkey, a Devlin's server who chose the school as the recipient of a \$770 donation. The school was originally named the Ontario Institution for the Education of the Blind and later was called the Ontario School for the Blind. It got its current name in 1974 in honour of Brantford citizen William Ross Macdonald, who served as lieutenant governor of Ontario from 1968 to 1974. Despite its long history in the city, many residents know little about the school. Bradshaw aims to change that by helping boost awareness of the school.

“There are so many new people to Brantford,” said Maggiacomo. “They just have no idea or have misconceptions. They don’t have a full idea of the nature and scope of what we do.”

The school has the largest braille-using student population in Canada. It offers a varied academic program that includes individual music lessons, modern technology, drama, outdoor education, swimming, and team sports. There are also weekend programs and summer camps.

School staff also support hundreds of visually impaired students enrolled in schools across the province.

“We have 20 staff who are constantly on the road,” said Maggiacomo. “Some of them travel by float plane to get to students. That doesn’t exist anywhere else in Canada.”

He said he has an open-door policy at the school and offers short tours “so people know what’s in the community.”

“It’s a special place that deserves a little more recognition and support,” said Bradshaw.

Donations can be made to the WRMS Angel Fund at: <http://www.brantunitedway.org/wrms-angel-fund-1>

Bradshaw can be reached at: <mailto:wrmsfund@gmail.com>

## **COAST TO COAST TO COAST**

### **CNIB’s Countrywide Partnerships**

Over the past few months, CNIB has undertaken and produced some unique and far-reaching partnerships. Check out the following articles for further details.

1. [CNIB Foundation Releases The ABCs of iOS Manual to Level the Playing Field for Children with Sight Loss](#)

The manual incorporates accessible apps with progressive educational content to help prepare children to be successful in mainstream classrooms. It specifically addresses age-appropriate VoiceOver skills for children, ages 3-8, who are or may become braille readers, dual media, or auditory readers.

Developed in collaboration with Diane Brauner, Educational Accessibility Consultant.

2. [Printbraille Pilot Project Gives Accessible Reading Materials to Kids](#)

In partnership with the TD Summer Reading Club, the CNIB Foundation provided printbraille copies of "My Heart Fills With Happiness" by Monique Gray Smith to 14 grade one students in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario. This fall, the CNIB Foundation will be equipping the school libraries of each of the 14 students with eight printbraille books, as well as a suite of braille and tactile materials for the teacher or itinerant teacher to use to engage the student in the classroom.

3. [eSight and CNIB Announce National Partnership to Benefit Canadians with Sight Loss](#)

Starting October 10, 2019, eSight 3 will be available at five CNIB locations in British Columbia, Ontario and Nova Scotia, together with training provided by both eSight and CNIB. The program will expand to CNIB locations across Canada in the following 12 months.

4. [CNIB Guide Dogs Celebrates Class of 2019](#)

25 guide-, buddy- and ambassador dogs will assist their new partners in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Newfoundland & Labrador, Nunavut, Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan.

## INTERNATIONAL

### WBU Launches Employment Survey

In order to understand how the World Blind Union (WBU) can best advocate for people who are blind or partially sighted, the agency has launched a survey to identify employment patterns among working age individuals with vision impairment around the world. This research will provide up-to-date information on the nature and type of employment undertaken by people who are legally blind, as well as the barriers they face.

The survey is accessible with screen readers and screen magnification, can be completed in 20-25 minutes and is available in English, French and Spanish. Please complete the survey and/or disseminate it widely to students and clients. Results of the survey will be reported at the [2020 World Blind Union/International Council on Education for People with Visual Impairment General Assemblies](#) in Madrid, Spain.

The survey can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/8ZP2KW3>

For more information, contact Dr. Karen Wolffe, WBU Employment Committee Member, at <mailto:karenwolffe@gmail.com>.

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