

The AER Voice



Welcome to the October 2021 Issue of the Voice
Volume 3, Issue 10

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy Fall Y'all!

I hope October finds you well and enjoying cooler temps, wherever you are. Fall is my favorite time of year. It's a sense of completion and yet new beginnings just around the corner that appeals to me.

I hope you saw the call for presentations for the 2022 AER International Conference that dropped into your inbox last week. I am so excited to think about getting together, going to sessions, talking to old and new friends along the way, and giving anyone who's willing a hug to say, "Hello!" Our conferences are so much more than an excellent learning opportunity for me. They recharge my batteries, make me think in new ways, rekindle connections that would have never happened another way and give me hope and inspiration for a world where blind or visually impaired children, adults, and seniors live independent, fulfilling lives, no matter where they are or what they want to do. It is my hope that full inclusion and diversity will always be AER's norms, and that equality is a value embraced by all. Thank you for all you do every day to make my dream a reality; one student, one consumer, one person at a time.

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CHECK OUT THE APH CONNECTCENTER

AER would like to send out a special thank you to our friends at APH ConnectCenter for their continued support of AER. We encourage you to take a moment to check out the amazing projects they are working on.

FamilyConnect and The APH ConnectCenter Have a New Look!

Welcome back to School! APH ConnectCenter is excited to reveal our rebranded websites ([FamilyConnect](#), [APH CareerConnect](#), and [VisionAware](#)). Our new look is dynamic, in high contrast with our websites still offering a wealth of curated resources on all aspects of living, learning, and working with vision loss.

Back to School with APH FamilyConnect!

FamilyConnect is a treasure trove of resources for families navigating school with a child with a visual impairment. **Browse by Age** or jump straight to **Education** on the home page tabs to find curated articles on the [Expanded Core Curriculum](#) and [Know Your Rights](#) to help you navigate IEPs and services for your child. By Age, families can find resources on Babies and Toddlers, [Grade Schoolers](#), and [Teenagers](#). Speaking of teens, the new school year is a great time to work on critical self-advocacy skills. For ideas, check out [Expect Your Teen to Dialogue with Teachers Prior to the School Year](#).

ParentConnect: A Parent Support Meeting

FamilyConnect hosts a parent meeting on the first Wednesday of each month from 7:30 pm – 8:30 PM (ET). APH FamilyConnect and the Chicago Lighthouse are pleased to offer this virtual support group for parents and families of children who are blind or visually impaired. These monthly sessions are for families to connect with and learn from each other about the joys, challenges, and adventures of raising children with visual impairments and blindness. These sessions are open to families and will meet on the first Wednesday of each month. **Please share with families** and have them visit the Webinars section on www.APHConnectCenter.org details.

APH CareerConnect and APH ConnectCenter Transition Resources for Fall

Just in time for the new school year, the new APH ConnectCenter Transition Hub is a one-stop, easy-to-use, searchable resource of transition programs across the United States available for school-age students, teachers of the visually impaired, vocational rehabilitation professionals, and families. Users can search for programs by state and program type; if a program has attendance fees, if a program is offered in languages other than English, or if a program is offered year-round or seasonally. Visit the APH ConnectCenter main page to find the APH ConnectCenter Transition Hub and see the possibilities unfold at www.APHConnectCenter.org.

APH CareerConnect has lots of resources for teachers and rehabilitation counselors looking for Career Education curriculum for this school year. Be sure to check out the *For Teachers and Professionals* tab on <https://aphcareerconnect.org> for a host of resources ranging from [Using FamilyConnect to Prepare Your Teen for Transition](#) to curriculum to support critical transition skills like [What is Work?](#), [Social Skills](#), and [Money Management](#).

NEWS YOU CAN USE

2022 AER Biennial International Conference Update: The Call for

Presenters is now open!

AER is excited to announce that the session proposal submission website for the 2022 AER Biennial International Conference is now live! We are now accepting proposals for sixty-minute breakout sessions, ninety-minute breakout sessions, and posters to be given from July 21-24, 2022 in St. Louis, Missouri.

The following items are required to complete your submission:

- Presenter Biography and Headshot
- Session Title, Description, and Knowledge Level
- Topic and Type
- Presentation Summary
- Three Learning Objectives

The deadline to submit your proposal is Monday, November 15, 2021.

[Submit Your Session Proposal](https://s5.goeshow.com/aerbvi/bic/2022/abstract_submission.cfm)

[\(https://s5.goeshow.com/aerbvi/bic/2022/abstract_submission.cfm\)](https://s5.goeshow.com/aerbvi/bic/2022/abstract_submission.cfm)

The AER eLearning Center: Don't Miss Out on Live Webinars This Month!

There are many opportunities to earn continuing education credit in the AER eLearning Center this month! Check out all the upcoming live events:

[Mississippi AER 2021 Conference: Mapping Our Way Forward](#) – October 7-8

[Reflections on Providing Low Vision Services to Persons with Albinism in Tanzania](#) – October 14, 7:00 pm Eastern

[The Impact of the Need for Closure for Students and Youth who are Deafblind](#)
– October 21, 1:00 pm Eastern

Can't make any of these live webinars? [Browse our growing library](#) of content to find just what you need.

During the month of October, the AER eLearning Center is once again being sponsored by the APH ConnectCenter. Visit them at www.APHConnectCenter.org.

AER 2022 Biennial International Conference: SAVE THE DATE!

AER is excited to announce that we will be holding our 2022 Biennial International Conference in St. Louis, MO, July 20-24 at the beautiful Union Station Hotel. The call for presentations is now open (see above!), and the conference registration will open in January!

Updates from OIB-TAC!

The 2021 virtual conference, September 13-16, was a big success! If you missed any of our Empower or Educate sessions, you may visit the [OIB-TAC Community of Practice](#) to watch the recorded presentations.

Note CEUs are only available for those who attended the live conference

sessions.

IL OIB-TAC October Webinar

Join us for our October webinar “Taking Control of the Bus: From Passive Passengers to Adventurous Advocates” on Friday, October 15 at 2:00 p.m. CST. This webinar focuses on techniques for people who are blind or visually impaired to navigate the transit services in their communities successfully. For more information and to register, visit our [Community of Practice event page](#).

Safe Toddlers to Receive Research Funding

New York. September 24, 2021. For 40 percent of children born with a visual impairment, learning to walk independently is a difficult, if not dangerous challenge. In addition to not being able to see where they are going or to avoid obstacles, they are too small to hold and maneuver the standard white cane often used by visually impaired adults. For this reason, many young children who are blind experience harmful collisions or falls when they attempt to walk independently, and are, as a consequence, fearful of exploring the environment and slow to develop effective motor skills. The resulting delays in concept, language, motor, and social development in turn affect the ability of too many youngsters to grow into independent, self-confident adults.

To address this unsatisfactory state of affairs, Safe Toddlers, a non-profit whose mission is to provide blind toddlers with a solution for walking safely, will be participating in a potentially groundbreaking research study with the help of the Lavelle Fund for the Blind and conducted by Northern Illinois University. The developer of a pediatric belt cane worn by young children too small to use a standard cane, the organization has received a two-year grant from the Lavelle Fund to provide 80 blind children ranging in age from 18 to 60 months with belt canes and study their independent walking progress.

Dr. Grace Ambrose-Zaken and Professor Marom Bikson of City University of New York are the inventors of the pediatric belt cane and will work with Northern Illinois professors Bill Penrod and Dr. Ximena Bergin, co-principal investigators, to conduct this investigation. According to Ambrose-Zaken and Bikson, “The pediatric belt cane has demonstrated the ability to significantly improve the lives of children born blind and severely visually impaired by providing them a means of independent safe mobility. This study will provide the statistical data needed to demonstrate the effect of providing safe mobility to a large population of children who are blind and visually impaired.”

Susan Olivo, Lavelle Fund Executive Director, described the two-year project as “a key research undertaking conducted to investigate the use of mobility tools to improve safety in children under the age of five years. The Lavelle Fund is proud to support efforts that have the potential to dramatically improve the lives of blind children.”

For more information about the project, contact Grace Ambrose-Zaken at Safe Toddlers 845-244-6600; www.safetoddles.org; or grace@safetoddles.org.

AER members receive a 20% discount on the total cost of Perkins self-paced tutorials. Each provides an opportunity to enhance your knowledge, skills and abilities, and job performance! AER members only may use the voucher code 20aer20 to take advantage of this member benefit and earn CE hours. Click here to get started: [Perkins Discounts](#)

Instructions: Select the tutorial. Add to your cart and when checking out enter code 20AER20 in the Voucher Box. Enter re-calculate and the discount will appear. On the next screen, sign in (if you already have an account with Perkins Learning Center or Register if you do not yet have a Perkins Learning Center account. On the final page, enter your AER member number in the Phone Number field. Your AER member number will be verified. If you encounter any problems or have any questions, please email perkins.elearning@perkins.org.

CHAPTER UPDATES

Georgia AER Chapter

Georgia AER has scheduled our 2021-2022 Conference! This year we are joining forces with the Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Training (GVEST) to host a virtual two-day conference. The first day of the conference will be on Friday, October 15, 2021, and the second day will be on Friday, March 11, 2022.

We will offer concurrent sessions that will be recorded so attendees will have the ability to earn up to 21 CEU credits (ACVREP and CRC). The two-day conference is \$75 with a discount to all AER members at the rate of \$50.

Learn more by visiting gaaer.org or gvest.org website.

Dakotas AER Chapter: 2021 Conference, Work It!

Join us at NDVS/SB for the Dakotas AER Conference. Participate virtually or in-person in sessions on employment and transition.

Click here for more information and to register:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2021-dakotas-aer-conference-work-it-tickets-164031210767>

Deadline to register is October 1, 2021!

New York AER Chapter

NYSAER is inviting you to attend the upcoming NYSAER Conference: The Many Hats We Wear. October 25-26, 2021

With the surge in Covid-19 cases, the NYSAER Board voted to postpone meeting in-person for at least one more year. Therefore, our workshops will be offered virtually via the Zoom platform. The cost of the conference is \$50 for professionals and will be free to all full-time students. We will offer 18 sessions,

spread out over two days, October 25 and 26. With the exception of our keynote presentation, attendees will have the option to choose between concurrent sessions. We have also invited our vendors to join us for a session, where attendees can visit vendor breakout rooms. Attendees can earn up to 14 continuing education units for ACVREP, CTLE and/or CRC.

To Register:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdP-J0oil_HJL8Wd7x9ZWEF9airPal65FIfdmOvADhF2DvMSg/viewform?usp=sf_link

Workshop Schedule:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZmYbnhqkWFJbFjcZm3Ji7s5l_nO_fKkX5WMLsrF7U3k/edit?usp=sharing

If you have questions, please reach out to the Conference Committee at NYSAERConference@gmail.com

Northern Rockies AER Chapter

October 26—arrival, check-in with sessions beginning at 1:00

Wednesday, October 27—conference sessions all day; dinner and silent auction

Thursday, October 28th—conference sessions until noon

To register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/northern-rockies-aer-conference-tickets-161134905841>

Northeast AER Annual Conference: Navigating Our Way Together

November 4, 2021- November 5, 2021, Virtual Online Conference

<https://www.nercve.org/ne/aer-2021-conference>

Texas AER Chapter

The Call for Presentation Proposals for the Texas Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired - TAER 2022 Conference March 31-April 2, 2022, at Kalahari Resorts and Conventions in Round Rock, Texas is open now through October 31, 2021. Our conference theme in 2022 is “A Whole New World: Renew, Recharge, Refocus!”

All presentations will be done in person at the 2022 TAER Conference. Please consider sharing what you do and know with others in our field by submitting a presentation proposal. This is a conference you won't want to miss! We have not had an in-person conference since 2019, so please submit a proposal and plan to attend this conference at the amazing Kalahari Resort and reconnect with all of your colleagues to Renew, Recharge, and Refocus!

Submit Presentation Proposals for the 2022 TAER Conference at this link:

<http://www.txaer.org/2022call.html>

The deadline for Proposal Submission is October 31, 2021.

Florida AER Chapter: 2021 FAER Future In Focus Conference

November 30, 2021 – December 1, 2021, St. Pete Beach, FL

Sharpen your image of the future at the 2021 FAER Conference!

This conference will focus on rehabilitation topics that include: employment, mental health, transition, deafblindness, orientation and mobility and assistive technology.

Earn ACVREP/CRC credits, dip your toes in the Gulf and network with other likeminded professionals while walking along the beach!

Register here: <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ehlzge1p57922702&oseq=&c=&ch=>

DIVISION UPDATES

Multiple Disabilities and Deafblind

Session: The Impact of the Need for Closure for Students and Youth Who are Deafblind

Date: October 21, 2021

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 pm EDT

Register here: <https://aerelearning.org/courses/32835>

Earn 1.5 CEs! All are welcome to attend! This session will answer the questions:

- What is closure?
- Why do we want and need closure?
- What happens if we do not get closure?
- Why might lack of closure be a significant source of stress for children and youth who are deafblind?
- What can we do to provide closure for children and youth who are deafblind?

Description:

Join us as we continue a conversation begun during the 2021 Texas Symposium on Deafblind Education. Maurice Belote will share his thoughts on the basic human need for closure, the impact of lack of closure on individuals who are deafblind, and ways that service providers might reduce stress, identify motivators, and increase active engagement. A panel discussion featuring David Brown, Mary Gyori, Adam Graves, and Linda Mamer, and a member of the deafblind community will follow. Stay after the formal presentation for an opportunity to chat about this topic more informally.

WELCOME TO THE NEWEST AER MEMBERS!

Join us in welcoming the newest members, who joined AER in September 2021. We are glad to have you! [Newest AER Members!](#)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Check out the new positions that are available in the field. There are many exciting jobs that are posted via the AER Job Exchange:

[International Program Coordinator](#)

Overbrook School for the Blind, Philadelphia, PA

[Regional Director](#)

Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, Arizona

[Registered Nurse, Full-Time](#)

New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Alamogordo, NM

[Director of Statewide Services](#)

Maryland School for the Blind, Baltimore, MD

[Orientation and Mobility Specialist](#)

Maryland School for the Blind, Baltimore, MD

[Orientation and Mobility Supervisory](#)

Maryland School for the Blind, Baltimore, MD

For more jobs that are available, please visit: [Job Exchange](#)

The AER Voice is a monthly newsletter that serves as an information hub for members and offers an easy and dependable way of keeping current. This electronic newsletter includes AER updates, events, special announcements, useful tidbits and so much more. If you have news, resources, information, recipes, or any updates that you would like to share with the membership, please send them to AER at

news@aerbvi.org.

The deadline for the November issue is 10/26/2021.



[Visit our website](#)