

The AER Voice



Welcome to the February 2022 Issue of AER The Voice

Volume 4, Issue 2

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I'm sending you all a great big Valentine to say how much I admire you and what you do every day of the year. I wish it could be chocolate, but electronic will have to suffice. Spread the word...you are loved!

It's Low Vision awareness month and I have a challenge for you. At least once per day, talk with someone about what you do to help people who are blind or have low vision to prosper and succeed. We need everyone to know more about what we do. In turn, they can tell others. The older lady next door who lives alone needs to hear there is hope, despite the fact that her vision is deteriorating. The person you talked to just might talk to her. The student with multiple disabilities that were never offered vision services just might hear about you from the lunchroom lady. You never know where the seeds you scatter will land, but as we know, some will fall on fertile ground and grow. You might just talk to someone who knows someone that is looking for a new career or trying to decide on a major and because of your conversation, they choose to join us! Spread the joy...they will be loved.

I hope you are as excited as I am about our upcoming conference in St. Louis. July 20-24 promises to be a great experience, especially when you consider that most of us have not seen each other in what feels like forever. Spread your wings...you will love it!

Neva Fairchild, President, AERBVI
nfairchild@afb.org

**Good Things Come in Two's...
Learn More Soon!**



2022 AER BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION: CALL FOR NOMINEES!

2022 AER is announcing the Call for Nominees for our Board of Directors.

We are seeking nominations for the following 2022-2024 Board of Directors positions: President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and District Representatives.

You can nominate a colleague or self-nominate. The AER Board of Directors governs AER and is instrumental in ensuring that AER continues to make a difference! There is no better chance to expand your professional network, meet new colleagues, lend your voice, and be a difference-maker.

Use the links below to submit your nomination(s).

[AER Officer Position \(President-Elect, Secretary, or Treasurer\)](#)

[AER District Representative](#)

[AER Canadian Representative](#)

Contact michele@aerbvi.org with any questions.

2022 AER AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS!

2022 AER Awards: Nominations are now Open!

AER recognizes the outstanding achievements of individuals working in our field through our biennial Awards program. We are pleased to announce the 2022 AER Awards nomination process is now open!

The deadline to submit your nomination is April 15, 2022. Any additional documentation must be emailed to aer@aerbvi.org, with the name of the award and the nominee in the subject line.

Please use the links below to complete the nomination form and return to AER.

- [Alfred Allen Award](#)

Honors professionals who have spent their careers in direct service to people with visual impairments. Through the extent and quality of the services that they have provided, these professionals exemplify the character, dedication, insight, and sharing that epitomize the spirit of and commitment to direct service.

- [Mary K. Bauman Award](#)

Honors an individual who has made significant and outstanding contributions to the education of children and youth who are blind or visually impaired.

- [C. Warren Bledsoe Award](#)

Is given in recognition of a particularly noteworthy piece of literature in the field of blindness.

- [Douglas C. MacFarland Award](#)

Honors an individual who has provided leadership in the field of blindness and visual impairment and who

made innovative, significant, or outstanding contributions to the education or rehabilitation of people who are visually impaired through either direct service, professional organizations, research, literature and/or preparation of professionals and is retired from the field. These contributions should have had an impact on a national or international level.

- [John H. McAulay Award](#)

Honor professionals who have contributed outstanding efforts and achievements leading to the placement of people with visual impairments in productive employment.

- [Outstanding Chapter Award](#)

Recognizes a chapter whose membership efforts have been outstanding. Criteria includes: increase in the number of members; the number and quality of services and/or programs offered by the chapter; and legislative activity significantly affecting the lives of blind people.

- [Ambrose M. Shotwell Award](#)

Was established to honor an individual who has made significant outstanding contributions to the personal adjustment or rehabilitation of adults who are blind or visually impaired.

- [Richard L. Welsch Award](#)

Was established to recognize professionals who have contributed outstanding efforts in **AER chapter leadership**. Nominees will demonstrate activity and achievement, either past or current, in the role of AER President-Elect, President, Past-President, Secretary, or Treasurer at the chapter level.

2022 AER William and Dorothy Ferrell Scholarship!

AER proudly offers educational scholarships for individuals continuing their education in the field of providing services to the blind and visually impaired. The William and Dorothy Ferrell Scholarship is awarded every other year in even years to two selected applicants who are legally blind and are studying for a career in the field of services to persons who are blind or visually impaired.

The letters of recommendation and signed Certification of Visual Status must be emailed to aer@aerbvi.org with the name of the applicant in the subject line.

[William and Dorothy Ferrell Scholarship Application](#)

2022 Donald Blasch Scholarship

The Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Division of AER will begin accepting applications for the 2022 Donald Blasch Scholarship on February 1, 2022.

AER's O&M Division presents an annual scholarship competition for students enrolled in an AER-approved O&M program. The scholarship recognizes the vital contributions of the late Donald Blasch to the profession of O&M during his long tenure at Western Michigan University.

Individuals selected for the scholarship receive an unrestricted award of \$1,000.00. Two scholarships are awarded each year (depending on the availability of funds). Please access the application by clicking the link below.

Visit <https://aerbvi.org/about/divisions/orientation-mobility-division/> to download the scholarship application.

The deadline for receiving applications for the Blasch Scholarship is March 11th, 2022.

All O&M students enrolled in AER-accredited programs are encouraged to apply. For questions, contact Margaret Winn, Chair of the Blasch Scholarship Committee, at MargaretKWinn@gmail.com

CONFERENCE CORNER!

Registration for the 2022 AER Biennial International Conference will be open soon! We are in the process of reviewing the submitted proposals and should have the full conference lineup ready for you soon.

Stay tuned...

NEWS YOU CAN USE

The AER eLearning Center

Stay Warm Inside and Earn CE Credits!

Join us in the AER eLearning Center this month to stay warm inside and earn some CE credits! Check out courses in the following topic areas:

[Advocacy and Public Policy](#)

[Orientation and Mobility](#)

[Rehabilitation Counseling and Employment](#)

[Vision Rehabilitation Therapy](#)

Looking for something specific? [Search in the AER eLearning Center](#) to see what is available!

[Email Megan Doty](#) with any questions about webinars or the AER eLearning Center.

Help us honor difference-makers in the blindness field

As colleagues in the blindness field, all of us work on a daily basis with others who strive to enable and empower people who are blind or have low vision to thrive in the classroom, the workplace, and in their daily lives. These friends and colleagues are worthy of recognition, and that is where your valuable recommendations come in. We need your nominations to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of these individuals!

The [Miguel Medal](#) is the highest honor in the blindness field, given annually by the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) to exceptionally deserving recipients whose dedication and achievements have significantly [improved the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired](#).

The Migel Medal Awards Committee selects just two honorees each year. Nominees should be those whose work affects services on a national level. The first Migel Medal is bestowed to a professional in the field of blindness whose contributions have significantly improved the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired. Prospective candidates include individuals with training and expertise in education, orientation and mobility, vision rehabilitation therapy, technology, personnel preparation, health, administration, or a related field.

The second Migel Medal is reserved for an individual who works outside the traditional field of blindness, but whose career accomplishments or innovations significantly improve the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired.

Nominations should be e-mailed to afb1c@afb.org with "**Migel Medal nomination**" in the subject line. Nominators should send a one-page description of the nominee and accomplishments, and must also submit two letters of recommendation with the nomination from those familiar with their work. **We have extended the deadline from February 1 to February 28.** The medals will be bestowed at a special ceremony later this year.

One of the most powerful affirmations we can bestow on our team members in the field is the gift of well-earned recognition. Please take a moment to reflect and nominate a deserving colleague.

Invitation to Participate in Doctoral Research Survey

Dear Colleagues,

My name is Mike Pompano and I am a teacher of students with visual impairments (TSVI) in Connecticut and a doctoral candidate at the University of Bridgeport. I am completing research on understanding how TSVIs view teacher-efficacy and the way it impacts teaching and supporting the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC).

I would like to ask for your assistance by participating in a 7-10-minute survey. You will be asked to appraise your ability to provide instruction and consultation to students who are blind or visually impaired and their teams. All information will remain completely confidential. The survey link is included below.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact me at mpompano@my.bridgeport.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), you may talk to UB's IRB Administrator at irb@bridgeport.edu.

Thank you for your assistance!

Sincerely,
Mike Pompano

Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TSVIsurvey>

Participants Needed For Research on Data Sonification

We are researchers studying how to use sound techniques, such as sonification, to convey meaningful aspects of ocean science data to increase access to ocean data and ocean literacy.

Initially, we will conduct small group design sessions, some with teachers who work with students who have vision impairment, (and different groups with experts in ocean data concepts).

During the session, you will be asked to share with the researchers all the ways you use sound in the classroom, including (if applicable) for communicating quantitative information (data).

The study is part of an NSF-funded Advancing Informal STEM Learning (AISL) collaboration between Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Georgia Institute of Technology, University of Oregon, and Your Ocean Consulting, Inc.

We are seeking interested teachers in any subject that includes data, e.g., Any and all of the sciences, mathematics, statistics, and social science, and who work with students with visual impairments.

You will be grouped with 2-5 other participants for a session. We plan to hold these sessions over Zoom. The meeting should take **no more** than 60 minutes.

Unfortunately, there is no compensation for your participation. But hopefully you will find great satisfaction in contributing to research that will help make data more **accessible to all learners**.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Prof. Jessica Roberts (jessica.roberts@cc.gatech.edu) ASAP.

OIB-TAC Webinar

The next Older Individuals who are Blind Technical Assistance Center (OIB-TAC) webinar on Friday, February 18 at 2:00 PM (CST). Join us to learn about two national call centers, the Eldercare Locator and Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL), and how these resources can be used for making appropriate and accurate referrals to both the aging and disability networks. For more information and to register, visit our [Community of Practice event page](#).

The NRTC is excited about the launch of our webinar and podcast series for individuals with blindness or low vision called Employment Insights! This series focuses on enhancing employment outcomes for individuals who are blind or have low vision (B/LV). Read our [news item](#) for more information.

Our most recent webinar, “Who Needs to Know?: When and How to Disclose Vision Impairment,” shared insight about the implications and benefits of disclosure in the workplace. Did you miss it? Visit our [webinars_and_podcasts page](#) to view the webinar.

Perkins E-Learning

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 next session 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.

WELCOME TO THE NEWEST AER MEMBERS!

Join us in welcoming the newest members, who joined AER in January 2022. 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:

[Development Associate: Development Services & Donor Engagement – Full Time](#)

Overbrook School for the Blind, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

[Orientation and Mobility Supervisor](#)

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc., Seattle, Washington

[Donor Relations Manager](#)

The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc., Seattle, Washington (but could be hybrid)

[Orientation & Mobility Specialist](#)

Alphapointe, Kansas City, Missouri

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 February issue is 1/25/2022.



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