

The AER Voice



Welcome to the September 2022 Issue of AER The Voice

Volume 4, Issue 9

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A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hello AER!

September: the final days of summer, that last weekend trip to the lake for Labor Day, school in full swing for students and faculty, county fairs, and the return of Friday Night Lights. For AER, it's a month of final preparations for the fall conference season, initial phases of budget preparation, the first meeting of newly formed Board Committees, and hopefully the announcement of the 2024 AER International Conference location.

I shared last month that I planned on announcing the host city for the 2024 AER International Conference by September 1st, but regrettably, I won't be able to do that. I have discovered that the city that is the top selection for 2024 is significantly more expensive than I originally thought. If negotiations are successful, then we will announce the host city later this month. If not, then it's back to Google maps and the drawing board. I'll keep you posted.

This past week I began work on AER's 2023-2024 Biennial Budget. In 2021, AER converted from an annual to a biennial budget to align the financial operations of the association with programming and conference scheduling. On August 29th, I emailed the leadership of AER's 16 divisions requesting information that I will need for the budget. If you are a division leader and did not receive my email, please let me know as soon as possible.

This past month I joined the Georgia AER Board of Directors for their monthly meeting. It was great to hear the positive report from those who attended the conference in St. Louis, but more so to hear the excitement as they discussed their chapter conference for Spring 2023. The agenda item that really caught my attention though was their goal to increase their chapter membership by 50% before December 2022, and I'm certain they will meet it. This week I

shared with the Membership Committee that I have a goal of 4,000 members by the 40th Anniversary Conference in 2024, but after thinking about the GAER's goal, I will be raising that number. Chapter Presidents, please send me the name and email of your Membership Committee Chair/Board Member, I will need their assistance with this project.

My daughters started the fall semester last week at Texas Tech. Many of our members are back in the college classroom as well, either as faculty or students. I have one final request. I would love to hear from the membership a piece of advice, an atta-a-boy or a word of wisdom that could be shared with our student members as they prepare to enter the profession. I'll share some of my favorite submissions in my next letter. Please fill up my inbox!

Lee Sonnenberg, Executive Director, AER
lee@aerbvi.org

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

September is a time when we are all looking forward to a nice cool down and bracing for the smells and sounds of Fall. We might be looking forward to a cool down, but things are heating up with the AER Board! We had our first Board meeting of the biennium last week. We will be working on updating our By-Laws so be on the lookout for emails from AER to vote on updates.

I want to thank the Conference Committee for putting on a successful conference this summer in St. Louis! What a beautiful venue and awesome presentations! After two years of being apart due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, we came back in full force with over 600 people in attendance. It was so nice to be all together once again, and we are looking forward to being together again in 2024. Thanks to all of you who attended and helped to make this one of our most successful AER Conferences to date!

As President, I have the awesome responsibility of putting together committees to help the business of AER move forward. I will be reaching out to the membership soon to ask for volunteers for various important committees that will keep us moving forward through these next two years and keep AER the successful, important, and prominent organization that it is.

It is an honor to be your President. I look forward to the next two years working with you. Please feel free to reach out to me with comments and ideas. I'd love to hear from you!

Olaya Landa-Vialard, President, AERBVI
olvialard@aph.org

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Bill of Rights for Children

It is the beginning of another new school year. Are you excited about being with students again and all the possibilities? For those of you who are teachers, O&M specialists or other professionals in education this is always an exciting time. Everything is just perfect....right? Wait. You do have some concerns about some of your students getting the support, time and resources they need? You are a little worried about some of your students not getting enough time in all areas of the expanded core curriculum? Some of the parents

tell you their concerns about their children and need help advocating at IEP meetings?

Yes we are doing a great job and yes we are excited but there are real challenges for our students. There are gaps and there is often a great deal of awareness needed among our education colleagues and administrators. Your experience and your voice are critical in helping develop plans that really do provide FAPE. Are you using the "Bill of Rights for All Children and their Families that are Visually Impaired" to educate and advocate for your students? It is a resource that is at your fingertips when you need it. It simply reinforces the things you know are needed and helps explain to other team members a few well established special education laws and a few ideals that we hold up as rights for our kids who do deserve the best education we can provide.

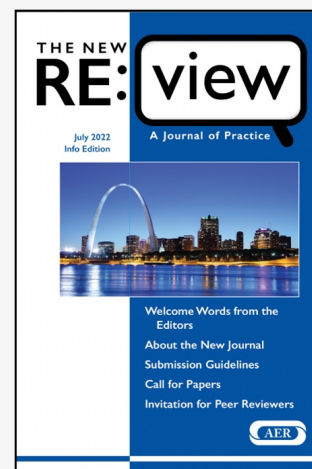
The Bill of Rights was written as a joint project by the Council of Schools and Services for the Blind and AER prior to Covid hitting and it is as relevant as ever as we move into a new period of time with renewed expectations. Please review it yourself, print it and hand it to parents, bring it to your general education peers. It is the beginning of a conversation in your team to help you design the best plan you can.

Please find the Bill of Rights for All Children and their Families at:
<https://aerbvi.org/resources/publications/>

Submitted by Paul Olson and Emily Coleman

***The New RE:view* Info Edition Debuted at AER Conference! Now Available on the AER Website!**

Attendees of AER's 2022 International Conference held in St. Louis in July were given a sneak peek at our association's new practitioner-focused journal, *The New RE:view* (TNR). This booklet provides a welcome from the journal's editors, a listing of the people behind its development, and introduces the Associate Editors who will guide the peer review process of articles to be published. The booklet also outlines manuscript preparation, the submission process, and how you can become a peer reviewer for the journal.



So, after three years of intense planning and "construction," AER's new journal of practice—*The New RE:view*—is ready for your participation! Please don't be shy!

[Click here for the full content of the Info Edition of The New RE:view](#)

AER Accreditation Web Page Updates

Both the Higher Education Accreditation page and the Organizations and Schools page have been updated over the summer.

Higher Education Accreditation (HEAC) resources are here: <https://aerbvi.org/the-national-accreditation-council/higher-education/>.

Check out the listings for O&M, VRT, TVI, LVT and AT. Changes include expiration dates for each listing, additional entries for TVI programs on the map, and a link to Accreditation Decision Summaries and Reports. This link is a completely new component of this page and is required by the Council for

Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). AER is pursuing recognition of its Higher Education Accreditation from CHEA. The link provides the most recent Annual Report from each accredited program and a summary of the AER Accreditation Council decision process leading to Full Accreditation of each program accredited over the past two years. Additional decision summaries will be added as they become available.

Now is the time to review the revised Annual Report which will be sent out in January 2023. The report also reflects improvements per the requirements of CHEA. Take a look now so you will be ready to respond in January. The reports will be due in March 2023.

Organizations and Schools Accreditation (OSAC) resources are here: <https://aerbvi.org/the-national-accreditation-council/organizations/>.

The layout of the standards has been changed to reflect requests both from organizations seeking initial accreditation or re-accreditation. The main concern was lack of clarity as to the categories of the self-study forms. As always, the Management Standards must be completed by every agency or school for the blind pursuing accreditation. Now, the Program Standards are divided into two groups: standards for services to all ages, and standards for services particularly for birth through school-age consumers. Selections can be made from either or both groups.

Annual Update Forms and Invoices will be sent in January and will be due in March of 2023.

Conference Corner

Attention Conference Attendees:

Have you submitted your session evaluations and opening and closing codes yet? In order to generate your CE certificate, you must log into the AER Conference Website and enter in the opening and closing codes.

Please visit the Attendee Service Center here to get started:

https://s5.goeshow.com/aerbvi/bic/2022/registration_update.cfm

Contact us with any questions: conference@aerbvi.org

Opportunities for Practice Based-Learning

AER has 16 divisions which are professional learning communities. Each division provides practice-based learning and focuses on a specific area. As an AER member, you can join 3 divisions FREE; and can join more for as low as \$10 each. Some divisions are position specific like our Orientation and Mobility, VRT and Low Vision divisions; and others are subject or domain focused like our Infant & Preschool, Education Curriculum, Itinerant Personnel, Aging, Administration and Leadership, Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling & Employment Services, Multiple Disabilities & DeafBlind, Psychosocial Services, Information & Technology, Personnel Preparation, International Services & Global Issues, Physical Activity & Recreation and Neurological Visual Impairment divisions. No matter the subject, AER has a division that addresses your needs. [AER Divisions](#)

National Virtual Yoga Program

Imperative Movement Consulting, a leader in adaptive recreation and sports programming, is pleased to consult with Blind & Vision Services Rehabilitation of Pittsburgh (BVRS) to implement and promote a national yoga program for people of all abilities with extra care and instruction for individuals who are blind and have low vision.

Blue Awning Yoga and Wellness, a division of BVRs, offers innovative in-person and virtual programming at its stunning studio in the heart of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. An extensive array of yoga classes that include chair, senior movement, restorative, power, and gentle flow are offered. There is a class and experience for everyone!

This program promotes:

Health & Wellness

- The studio embraces all levels of practice and is fully focused on the whole person and their physical and emotional needs
- Each class is designed to create a sense of harmony, balance, and mindfulness
- Our instructors take care, take time, and truly support participants ultimate journey to wellness

Inclusion

- An open environment for people of all ages and abilities
- Embraces **ALL** by removing predetermined stigmas and barriers
- Offering virtual classes so that anyone, anywhere can participate

Community Engagement

- Provides opportunities to interact with people of all backgrounds; specifically, individuals who are blind or vision impaired in non-traditional roles
- Creates a sense of community by eliminating obstacles that lead to isolation
- All classes are interactive and engaging that embrace **EVERYONE**; the instructors provide feedback, and the participants can ask questions

We hope you will join us on this journey by helping us:

- Provide health and wellness opportunities for your staff, clients, and students so that they feel encouraged to attend a virtual class
- Help promote this innovative and unique program within the blindness field
- Endorse "Yoga for All" so that we build a stronger and more inclusive society

We invite you to visit www.blueawningyoga.com to learn more about this unique program and the benefits it provides to those you employ and serve. Individuals can sign-up for a class by simply clicking the **Join Us Now** button on the homepage which will redirect them to www.mindbodyonline.com for registration.

If your agency is interested in learning more regarding this one-of-a-kind national yoga program that is aimed at improving the health and wellness of your clients, students, and employees, please contact Mark Lucas at 719.352.9134. We are happy to tailor a class, class time, or offer private sessions if there should be a need. Our goal is to serve the greater community therefore, we are flexible and willing to collaborate with you.

Recreationally yours,

Mark Lucas
CEO, Imperative Movement Consulting, LLC

Erika Petach
President/CEO, Blind & Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh

TCDB Professional Development Modules Now Available

Now available! The first module of an important new series for educators

provides practical, need-to-know information essential for working with children who are deaf-blind. Access it free on the NCDB website and add it to your PD program!

<https://youtu.be/xIIC8XWRw-o>

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.

WELCOME TO THE NEWEST AER MEMBERS!

Join us in welcoming the newest members, who [joined AER in August 2022](#). We are glad to have you!

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:

[Volunteer Opening on AER Accreditation Council](#)

Remote, AER

[Assistive Technology Instructor](#)

Phoenix and surrounding area, Arizona
Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

[Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist](#)

Phoenix and surrounding area, Arizona
Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

[Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist](#)

Phoenix and Surrounding Areas, Arizona
Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

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

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 September issue is 9/25/2022.



Visit our website

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