

# The AER Voice



## Welcome to the January 2023 Issue of AER The Voice

Volume 5, Issue 1

### A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I hope you had a wonderful holiday season; time to rest and relax, time to play, and time to fellowship with family and friends. I could write several paragraphs on all that is happening or in the planning process at AER for 2023, but instead, I'll keep this letter short and simple, leaving you with an Irish blessing for this upcoming year.

*May love and laughter light your days,  
and warm your heart and home.*

*May good and faithful friends be yours,  
wherever you may roam.*

*May peace and plenty bless your world  
with joy that long endures.*

*May all life's passing seasons  
bring the best to you and yours!*

Wishing each of you a healthy, happy, and prosperous 2023.

**Lee Sonnenberg, Executive Director, AER**  
[lee@aerbvi.org](mailto:lee@aerbvi.org)

### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy New Year!

I send well wishes to all who are celebrating a holiday or special day this month. Follow this link for U.S. holidays <https://www.calendarr.com/united-states/calendar-january-2023/> and this

link: <https://www.wincalendar.com/Calendar-Canada/January-2022> for Canadian holidays to see what is being recognized and celebrated this January.

If you haven't done so, be sure to check out AER's e-learning offerings. There are great topics and trainings there just waiting for you! As always, feel free to reach out to me at [olandavi@gmail.com](mailto:olandavi@gmail.com) with any comments, concerns, or suggestions.

**Olaya Landa-Vialard, President, AERBVI**  
[olvialard@aph.org](mailto:olvialard@aph.org)

## **CALL FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE AER BYLAWS**

The AER Bylaws and Structure Committee announces a call for amendments to AER's 2020 Bylaws. [Access the Bylaws here.](#)

According to AER's current Bylaws, voting members have 60 days from this date (January 6, 2023) to submit suggestions to the Bylaws and Structure Committee.

Please submit your suggestions in writing (email is fine) by March 9, 2023, to Lee Sonnenberg at [Lee@aerbvi.org](mailto:Lee@aerbvi.org).

## **NEWS YOU CAN USE**

### **A Gift for the New Year**

With another holiday season of gifts and gratitude in the rearview mirror, the shiny new year ahead offers fresh beginnings—surprises, challenges, changes, and opportunities. While the 2022 giving season is now history, gifts are never out of style, and AER has a gift for YOU!

Starting in January 2023, AER is giving all its members a second online journal that comes with association membership! You heard about this new journal of practice when it was first announced on 2-22-22; you learned more about it at the AER conference in St. Louis; and this month, *The New RE:view* (TNR) will become a reality—a gift that keeps on giving!

Three years in the making, *The New RE:view* didn't happen quickly, but it did unfold carefully. It took many months of intense planning and "construction" to develop the policies and machinery necessary to produce a quality journal. Good things *DO* take time!

Volume 1, Issue 1 of *The New RE:view* will hit your electronic mailboxes in January. The editorial team is already busily working on issues 2 and 3. They encourage you to share your successful practices and strategies or your applied research through the pages of TNR. You can submit a manuscript at [The New RE:view Submission Process](#), and we promise to be honest but gentle!

So now, as 2023 opens with promise and potential, AER's new journal of practice begins its journey with the goal of providing an additional source of information and learning focused on professional practices in our field. We hope to see your name and your ideas in a future issue of TNR!

## **2023 WAYFINDER FAMILY SERVICES CAMP BLOOMFIELD LOCATIONS & SCHEDULE**

Since 1958, Wayfinder Family Services, Camp Bloomfield has been sharing the joys of the great outdoors with our youth, teens, and adults who are blind and have low vision and families. Held in a natural and safe environment, the summer residential program offers all the traditional camping activities in addition to adapted activities for campers of all ages and abilities who are blind and have low vision. Our goal is intentional. At Camp Bloomfield, the staff who are recruited and trained during a five-day orientation program are taught to enhance campers' self-esteem, empower them to build their independence, and provide activities that promote making new friendships and rekindling the old friendships. Camp Bloomfield is the only one of its kind for campers who are blind and have low vision in the State of California that is offered free of charge to participants.

Camp Bloomfield is an intentional community where we emphasize caring relationships, high expectations, meaningful participation where safety, belonging and respect are fundamental. Undistracted by personal technology, our campers have a once in a lifetime opportunity to slow down and create an emotional and social safe support network for each other.

In 2023, Camp Bloomfield will take place in two separate locations. Our first location will be Camp Whittier in San Barbara. There, we will conduct our traditional camping program divided into three separate sessions: Youth and Teen session, Adult session and Family Camp session.

### **Camp Whittier**

2400 Hwy 154

Santa Barbara, CA 93105

Operated by the United Boys and Girls Clubs of Santa Barbara County

[www.unitedbg.org](http://www.unitedbg.org)

### **Staff Orientation**

June 15-19

20 staff

### **Youth & Teen Session**

June 21-25

Campers ages: 7-17

60 campers

### **Alumni Session**

June 27-30

Campers 18-years old and up

60 campers

### **Family Camp**

July 2-5

100 Campers

The second camp location, called Wayfinder's Camp Bloomfield will be held at Camp Bob Waldorf on Glendale, CA. Wayfinder Family Services and the Jewish Big Brothers of Los Angeles are partnering to successfully integrate up to twenty-four (24) blind and visually impaired campers between the ages of 7-17, into an existing summer camp session at Camp Bob Waldorf which is attended by more than one hundred sighted (100) children between the ages of 7-17-year-old in attendance. Camp Bob Waldorf is nestled on 112 acres in the Verdugo Hills of Glendale, just fifteen miles from Downtown Los Angeles. There is no cost for campers to attend this camp. Interested campers will be required to complete and one-page questionnaire for consideration to attend this incredible camp experience.

Selection will be competitive based on the camper's success in school, community and family.

The goals of **Wayfinder's Camp Bloomfield; "Getting to Know You"** are as follows:

- To introduce blind or visually impaired campers to a mainstream summer camp experience and teach them how to integrate and successfully advocate for themselves in a safe, positive and fun environment.
- To educate sighted campers and staff on the abilities of children who are blind and visually impaired.
- For campers to develop and learn new skills to practice in their everyday life.

### **Camp Bob Waldorf**

1041 Shirleyjean St.

Glendale, CA 91208

Operated by the Jewish Big Brothers of Los Angeles

[www.campbobwaldorf.org](http://www.campbobwaldorf.org)

July 23-29

**Wayfinder's Camp Bloomfield: "Getting to Know You"**

Camper 7-17 years old

24 campers for all over California and the United States

For more information contact:

Mark Lucas, Camp and Recreational Programs Manager

M: (310) 913-2846

E: [mlucas@wayfinderfamily.org](mailto:mlucas@wayfinderfamily.org)

Franco Certeza, REC Programs Assistant

M : (323) 627-0765

E : [ecerteza@wayfinderfamily.org](mailto:ecerteza@wayfinderfamily.org)

[Please click here for information on Open Positions – Camp staff, Counselors and Counselors in Training!](#)

**Contributed by AER member Mark Lucas**

Exciting news!! Information provided by the 4to24app, created by the National Research & Training Center on Blindness & Low Vision, is now available through an online portal for professionals!

This portal is available through the NRTC's web-based learning management system and provides access to the 4to24 app's content and topic areas. The app modules include information, activities, and links to resources about the skills and experiences that will be helpful to blind or low vision (B/LV) youth as they grow.

To register for the 4to24 online portal, you must be a professional working with people who are B/LV. To apply for access, please visit our [4to24 Portal for Professionals page](#).

For more information about 4to24, [visit our website](#). We would love for you to share this announcement with anyone who might benefit from it.

If you need any other information or have questions about the app, please email Karla Antonelli at [kantonelli@colled.msstate.edu](mailto:kantonelli@colled.msstate.edu).

**Contributed by AER member Sarah Moody**

## OIB-TAC November Update

### OIB-TAC Webinars

All 2022 OIB-TAC webinars are recorded and available. We invite you to visit our [webinar page](#) to see the list and watch past recordings.

The next live webinar is Friday, January 20, at 2:00 p.m. Central. The topic is [Introducing Braille](#). How do you approach the topic of braille with your older adult consumers or clients? How does your own philosophy and attitude about braille have an impact on their interest and motivation? Join us as Dr. Natalie Martiniello, CVRT, and Polly Abbott, CVRT, share creative ways to present braille as a tool to help get things done. For more information and to register, visit our [website](#).

### 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](mailto:perkins.elearning@perkins.org).

## MEMBER BENEFIT SPOTLIGHT

With your AER membership, you qualify for discounts on insurance, car rentals, and hotel stays; and our insurance discount program includes professional liability insurance and more!

### [Discounts at Hotels and on Car Rentals](#)

Hotels: Hyatt, Marriott, Hilton, Holiday Inn, Omni, Drury, Westin, and Choice Hotels

Car Rentals: Alamo, Auto Europe, Avis, Budget, Hertz, National, and Payless

### [Member Insurance Program through Forrest T. Jones](#)

#### **Professional Liability Insurance**

- Educators Professional Liability Plan Safeguard your career and personal assets from a costly work-related lawsuit with insurance dedicated solely for your protection. Our plan for employed educators pays all defense costs in addition to the liability limit you choose, and it features job protection benefits if you're subject to administrative action.
- Private Practice Professional Liability Plan Protect your career and your personal assets against a broad range of claims with liability coverage for self-employed educators or those engaged in partnerships, limited liability companies, and corporations. Choose from three liability limits and three deductibles for economical protection that meets your needs.
- Student Educator Professional Liability Plan Young educators doing student teaching, internships and practicums face many of the same risks as licensed instructors. Our student plan costs \$25 a year for \$1 million in coverage and pays all defense costs over and above the limit of liability.

#### **Life Insurance**

- Group Term Life Insurance Help protect your family's future with our most basic and competitive term life coverage from New York Life. Members and their spouses can request up to \$1,000,000 of insurance, and spouses qualify at the member's rate, regardless of age. Coverage for dependent children is also available.
- 10-Year-Level Group Term Life Insurance This New York Life coverage combines the utility of term life insurance with rates guaranteed to remain the same for the first 10 years. Up to \$1 million in coverage is available for members and their spouses at group rates specially designed for TIE association members.
- Group Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance How would your family cope if you suffered a disabling injury or were in a fatal accident? This competitive coverage pays up to \$300,000 in benefits in addition to any other life, health or disability insurance you may own, and it features double benefits for school-related or common-carrier travel accidents.

#### **Auto & Home Insurance**

- LegalShield & IDShield Have you considered what would happen if you need legal counsel? Or what it would cost you to restore your identity if it were compromised? Worry no more. As an association member, you can save up to 36% off regular monthly rates for LegalShield legal services and IDShield for identity protection.
- GEICO Auto, Motorcycle, and Boat Insurance Save even more car insurance when you buy through your professional association. As a

member of a TIE association, you may qualify for additional discounts on top of the savings GEICO already provides to its customers.

- Homeowners, Renters, and Condo Insurance GEICO is synonymous with car insurance, but the company provides even more ways to save. Whether you own a home, rent an apartment or live in a condo, having coverage to protect your personal property is critical. Get a quote and find out if GEICO fits your residential insurance needs.

### **Disability Insurance**

- Group Disability Income Protection Insurance Get replacement income up to \$5,000/month in case you can't work due to a disabling illness or injury. Choose a benefit amount, waiting period, and benefit duration to fit your needs with benefits paid directly to you.

### **Health Insurance**

- Individual & Group Health Insurance Compare health insurance plans from leading insurers side-by-side, and purchase and enroll in coverage online through eHealth, a leading private health insurance exchange. eHealth features educational resources and licensed agents to help consumers select coverage.
- Educators Dental Plan This simple, economical plan pays up to \$1000 per person per year to a participating dentist of your choice after an annual deductible (\$50 Individual, \$150 Family) and applicable co-payments. Preventive care is covered immediately at up to 100% with no waiting period. Basic Restorative care is also covered with no waiting period. Major Restorative procedures are covered after a six-month waiting period.
- Educators Vision Plan Help lower your and your family's out-of-pocket costs on eye exams, glasses, lenses and more with MetLife Vision Insurance. With affordable co-payments and nationwide access to discounts, you'll be seeing your way to clear savings in no time.
- International Travel / Medical Don't put your health at risk when traveling outside the U.S. Our plans cover foreign health care costs that standard medical plans or Medicare don't. Choose from more than a dozen plans for every type of travel – individual or group, short-stay vacations to foreign study / cultural exchange programs.
- Long Term Care Your association membership comes with complimentary access to LTCRplus, a new program to deliver a more personal and customized approach to long-term care services. LTCRplus provides powerful tools and advice to help you find the best and most cost-effective care for you or a family member.
- Medicare Supplement Insurance Retirees can view rates and benefits for multiple plans offered by leading insurers, then enroll for coverage online through eHealth, a leading private health insurance exchange. eHealth



features educational resources and licensed agents to help consumers select coverage.

[www.ftj.com/aer](http://www.ftj.com/aer)

## CHAPTER NEWS

### **Virginia AER**

#### **Summit 2023: Better Together**

**Who?:** Professionals in the field of Education and Rehabilitation of people with Blindness and Visual Impairments

**What?:** A retreat style Summit for people in our field to discuss pressing issues, new training techniques, and collaborate with colleagues

**When?:** March 13-14, 2023 (*Mon & Tues*)

**Where?:** The Natural Bridge Historic Hotel in Natural Bridge, Virginia

**Why?:** After a few years apart, we know that as professionals we are BETTER TOGETHER! This will be a relaxed training retreat to discuss big ideas

Visit [www.aervirginia.org](http://www.aervirginia.org) to learn more and to register.

### **Georgia AER**

Georgia AER Conference 2023, Together at the Beach!

**When:** March 23-24, 2023

**Where:** Hotel Tybee, Tybee Island, GA

[Click here for more information and to register!](#)

### **Pacific Northwest AER**

The Pacific Northwest (PNW) Chapter of the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) is pleased to announce our 2023 Spring Conference, Collaboration, Innovation & Beyond, March 16-18, 2023. [Registration is now open.](#)

A vital part of the 2023 PNWAER Spring Conference, Collaboration, Innovation, and Beyond is our vendors. For the first time in three years, we will be hosting our state-wide conference in person. We are expecting over 250 vision professionals from across the state, marking our largest conference since our inception. We will be implementing a vendor passport to encourage attendees to visit all vendor booths. When an attendee fills up their passport card, they will be able to submit it for a raffle prize.

As a vendor you will be able to:

- Connect with vision professionals who utilize your products and services.

- Network with professionals from across Washington State.
- Build quality, lasting relationships with professionals.
- Showcase your company's expertise and expand your customer base.

### **Vendor/Exhibit Hall Information:**

Our dedicated exhibit hall hours for conference attendees to explore vendor booths is Friday, March 17, 8:00am - 5:00 pm. Vendor booths include access to our mid-morning and afternoon snack break stations and (2) tickets to our Awards luncheon. Set-up for vendor booths is Thursday, March 16, 4:00pm - 6:00pm or Friday, March 17, 7:00am. Vendors will receive (one) linen, skirted 8'x24"table, additional tables upon request.

To submit an application to become a vendor, please fill out this [google form](#). Applications will be reviewed upon receipt. We will inform you within two weeks if your application has been accepted. Payments will be collected through our Eventbrite registration site.

We are still looking for sponsors for our 2023 conference. If you are interested in having your business featured throughout the event, and on our social media, please contact us directly.

### **Texas AER**

#### **Pathways and Perspectives, March 23-25, 2023**

Don't miss TAER 2023, featuring renowned artist [John Bramblitt](#) as the keynote speaker!

Please stay current and watch for more conference details on the TAER website at <http://www.txaer.org/> and our TAER Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/TxAER/>.

For questions related to the conference, email: [webmaster@txaer.org](mailto:webmaster@txaer.org)

### **Penn-Del AER**

#### **Save the Date! 2023 Penn-Del AER Chapter Conference**

We are happy to announce that our annual conference will be an in-person event April 19 – 21, 2023. Our nationally respected conference offers a wide range of opportunities for professionals in the field of education and rehabilitation of individuals with visual impairments. It provides experiences to enhance one's skill set, time to share expertise and experiences, and opportunities to network with professionals in the field.

**When:** April 19 – 21, 2023

**Where:** Best Western Premier Central Hotel and Conference Center in Harrisburg, PA

**Format:** Full in-person event

**Coming Soon:** The Call for Presentations for sessions, posters and exhibitors will be distributed by the end of September

**Join us!** We invite you to submit a call for presentations, call for poster, and/or register to be an exhibitor. Accept this opportunity to share your knowledge and expertise of innovative programs, creative techniques, employment strategies, research results or design in any area of our field.

[Learn more about the Call for Concurrent Session and Poster Presenters here.](#)

## **WELCOME TO THE NEWEST AER MEMBERS!**

Join us in welcoming the newest members, who [joined AER in December 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:

[Dual Certified TVI/OMS](#)

Council Bluffs, Iowa

Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired

[Orientation and Mobility Specialist – Tampa](#)

Tampa, Florida

Lighthouse for the Blind & Low Vision

[Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments – Early Intervention Program](#)

Winter Haven, Florida

Lighthouse for the Blind & Low Vision

[Early Childhood Classroom Teacher](#)

Albuquerque, New Mexico

New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Early Childhood Program

Check out these jobs and more by visiting the [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](mailto:news@aerbvi.org).

**The deadline for article submissions is the 25th of each month.**



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