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# WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers  
 of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired

August-September 2006

## Welcome to School Year 2006-07!

By Tanni Anthony


Whatever you did on your summer vacation, I hope it was wonderful. I talked to folks who hiked, camped, went to Europe, visited family in other states, tried out new jobs, bought houses, and just caught up on the reading list of "not work related" books. I also know of people who worked at the Summer Enrichment Program or Sports Camp at CSDB and/or who attended professional conferences and/or the Family Learning Retreat.

Now we are all back to a new school year and those trips, summer books, and part-time jobs are behind us. I am happy to share that one of my summer projects is almost behind me and it has been a labor of maybe not love, but strong affection ... *This* newsletter has been pieced together over the summer months. The goal was to provide you with a GREAT resource tool of all the fabulous education and support activities we have in Colorado, as well as key contact information. My thanks to the many people who helped contribute to these pages including several of the good folks at CSDB. Thanks also to Jennifer Lockhart for putting it all together.

Please hold onto this edition as it will serve as a resource throughout the school year. There will be more newsletters, but not with this specific information about all of these activities.. If you have something to contribute to future editions, whether it be events/dates, resources, announcements, or information articles, please send them my way.

Welcome back to a new school year! Please be in touch with your learning and support needs.

### Table of Contents

| Page                  | Page                     | Page  |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1 Welcome!            | 13 Letter from Dr. Tom   | 26 Sports Camp  |
| 2 New CO TVIs!        | 14 Dots of Interest      | 27 State Resources  |
| 3 What's Happening    | 16 Check it Out          | 28 Resources/Materials  |
| 8 Bits from Bonnie    | 18 Family Literacy Packs | 30 Field Testing  |
| 9 ST Placements       | 19 PEP Conferences       | 31 CO Connections   |
| 10 Summer Enrichment  | 20 Calendar of Events    | 33 Braille Testing  |
| 11 Jobs in CO         | 25 CEC Awards            | 34 Who Ya Gonna Call  |
| 12 Low Vision Clinics | 26 Research Study        |  |



## Welcome New TVIs to Colorado Schools!

**Lori Graham – new to Adams 12:** I am starting this fall as the cool new TVI/O & M for Adams 12 Schools in Thornton, Colorado. :) After leaving Fort Collins six years ago, I am returning to be near friends and family and a place I love. I graduated in 1996 with a BA in English from the University of Iowa and went on to teach preschool. I stayed home following the birth of my son in 1999 and my daughter in 2001. At 4 months old, my daughter was diagnosed with retinoblastoma and is now a 5-year-old cancer survivor with a visual impairment. She is my inspiration for entering the program at UNC. I have enjoyed every minute of my coursework at UNC and look forward to teaching in the Adams 12 schools.

**Michael Plansker – new to Adams 12:** I am starting my final year in the TVI/O&M program through UNC and will be completing my practicum while working for Adams 12. I spent the past two years working and learning from the vision teachers at JeffCo. I am in the vision field thanks to my mom's suggestion. She works for the Helen Keller National Center as an event coordinator and thought I would like mobility. She was right. I volunteer for the National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD) in the winter and the summer. During the winter I teach sit-skiers and in the summer I work with their rock climbing program. I also work as a backcountry instructor for multi-sport adventure trips for teens in the summers. I must say that I am both nervous and excited about having my own caseload with Adams 12 in the fall.

**Edie Smith – new to Douglas County:** I have provided services to persons with disabilities in both Canada and the United States. My employment experience includes program administration, staff training, community college instruction, service coordination and child welfare. I have an undergraduate in Family Studies from the University of Guelph (Canada) and am presently completing the program at UNC. For the past six years, I have been at Anchor Center for Blind Children as the Family Resource Coordinator. My husband Rob and I have three children; along with a loopy bichon named Spike. I am so excited to be able to walk to work from my home in Highlands Ranch.

**Angela Sims - new to Mesa Valley:** I am currently a student at UNC working on my master of art degree in visual impairment/orientation and mobility. I have an elementary teaching certification which I completed through an alternative licensure program. I have a background in data reporting for the nuclear industry as well as the nursing home industry. I am a resident of Grand Junction where I have lived for the past six years. I will be working at Mesa Valley School District as a TVI.

**Mimi Schaper - new to Cherry Creek:** Hello Everybody in Colorful Colorado! After a 5 year stay in New Mexico and a 10 year stay in Iowa, I have moved to Denver to work as an O&M and TVI for Cherry Creek Schools. Colorado is no stranger to me as I was raised in various Colorado towns and have returned to the state after a 32 year absence. Luckily, my 25 year old son is now gainfully employed in San Antonio so I just have to take care of myself and my car. In 1991, I earned a dual MA in O&M and Rehab Teaching from Western Michigan University. Back in the dark ages, I was a graduate of good ol' Colorado State University. Spare time for hobbies is rare but I enjoy sewing when I can. It is good to be home!

**Stephanie Isbel - new to Cheyenne Mountain and contracting in El Paso 11:** I graduated in 2004 from Texas Tech with a dual certification as a TVI and COMS. I recently moved to CO with my husband and two children. My husband is also a teacher. (Stephanie had the honor of having Dr. Alan Koenig as her braille class instructor!)

## WELCOME NEW CSDB STAFF!

**Jessteene Clifford—new to CSDB:** I am the new Curriculum & Assessment Coordinator for CSDB. My main focus this year will be to help implement the recently adopted school-wide curriculum and to keep on top of state/school assessments. My degrees and experience are in deaf education but I am extremely excited to learn more about blind education. I have just come from Northern Arizona and am really excited to see all this rain!

**Diann Cullens—new to CSDB:** My educational background is a BS in Health and Physical Ed. K-12 and post-baccalaureate certification in Elem. Education from Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania, graduate work in counseling at Boston University and MA in Educational Media K-12 from the University of Northern Colorado. I am the new librarian/media specialist for the CSDB (both libraries) located in Colorado Springs. This is my first media specialist position. I was in the Army for seven years. I have lived in Germany and Canada and eight states. I am the mother of four sons and a community volunteer. It's a good day when I learn something new. I have led a most interesting life so far. :) I will be very busy this year running two libraries and learning American Sign Language and Braille.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AND WHAT'S FUNDED

School Year 2006-07

Compiled By Tanni Anthony

We have a busy year ahead of us with many training and support activities! Unless otherwise noted, please contact Tanni Anthony if you have any questions about the highlighted activities. Tanni's email is <anthony\_t@cde.state.co.us> and her phone number is (303) 866-6681. Contact information for many projects is also listed in the *Who Ya Gonna Call* section at the end of this newsletter

## Legend for Acronyms:

**CDE** = Colorado Department of Education

**CIMC** = Colorado Instructional Materials Center

**CSAP** = Colorado Student Assessment Program (our statewide tests)

**CSDB** = Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

**TVI** = teacher certified in visual impairment

The funding for each project is listed after its title. CDE Set Aside Funds = federal discretionary funds approved in Tanni's CDE budget.

**Adult Role Model Team** (CDE Set Aside Funds flowed through CSDB) Article by Roger Harwell: The Adult Blind and Visually Impaired Role Model Team's purpose is to provide students who are blind or visually impaired, their parents and teachers the opportunity to meet accomplished and motivated blind and visually impaired adult role models. To openly and frankly discuss, from personal experience topics related to low vision, vision loss and blindness. Team members share their experiences, triumphant and otherwise, on topics ranging from low vision aids and high-tech devices to overcoming denial and when and how to seek support. We also discuss careers, social interaction, drivers' license, organizations, resources, orientation/mobility, daily living skills and all sorts of other frenzied topics that can and do come up. We certainly don't have all the answers, however many questions can be answered, "Been there done that," let me tell you what worked and didn't work for me. For over a decade this diverse group of accomplished blind and visually impaired adults and college students have volunteered to mentor Colorado's blind and V/I elementary, high school and transition students. We celebrate those teachers, students, and role models who have participated and supported this effort. We have all grown richer in spirit and understanding as a result. As a member of the Role Model Team since 1990, I have seen the positive impact role models can and do make. If you think a Role Model Team member might make a positive difference for even one of your students I encourage you to contact me. Roger Harwell, Project Facilitator, Adult Blind and Visually Impaired Role Model Team - E-Mail: r.harwell@juno.com; Cell: 719-648-6844; CSDB: 719-578-2201.

**Braille Competency** (CDE Set Aside Funds): Funds have been reserved for four braille proctors (Lucia Hasty, Brenda Shepard, Sarah Sonnier, and Julie Wetzstein) to provide opportunities to TVIs / Brailleists to take the Colorado Braille Mastery Test and/or the 15 clock-hours of renewal modules. For information about braille competency testing and renewal requirements, please contact Tanni Anthony.

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**Braille-Format Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) Test Review** (CDE Set Aside Funds): TVIs had the opportunity to meet with the CDE Assessment Unit and the CSAP publisher to review the large print and braille CSAP tests each year since June 2004. Thanks to the feedback of many of you, we had helpful data to draft "theme recommendations" for improvement to future CSAP tests. Funds have been reserved to review the 2007 braille tests BEFORE they are sent to Colorado. Sarah Sonnier, Nancy Cozart, and Tanni Anthony will return to Boston's National Braille Press in early December for a second year of onsite test review. They will meet with the tactile graphics experts and the test publisher over a two day period.

**Braille Transcriber Project** (Set Aside Funds flowed through CSDB) Details provided by Ann Hicks. The Braille Transcribers Mentor Project is for experienced Library of Congress certified braillists to mentor new braillists who are working on their LOC certification. Ann Hicks, who is in charge of this project, needs to know who is interested in being mentored. She will then link the new braillist with a veteran braillist. Arrangements will also be made to pay the mentor for his or her time. For more information, contact Ann at (719) 578-2195 or <ahicks@csdb.org >.



**Close Up:** Close up involves a 7 day learning adventure in Washington, D.C. for high school students and educators. Experience the excitement of Close Up's flagship program! This 7-day, 6-night program develops students' knowledge of basic concepts of government and citizenship. Students will gain greater understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a participatory democracy; learn how constituents, interest groups and party politics affect the legislative process; understand the impact of the Framers' views of limited government on the structure of government outlined in the Constitution; and explore diverse viewpoints concerning domestic and international policy questions facing Congress, the executive branch and the courts. Through onsite study-visits, students will also see the city's monuments and memorials, explore the Smithsonian museums, and enjoy the cultural diversity of D.C.'s historic neighborhoods. On Friday, students have independent time to visit colleges, and explore sites not covered during the program. The pinnacle of the week is Capitol Hill Day where students have the opportunity to spend time with their Senator(s), Representative(s), and/or staff. CSDB & Outreach Services will be attending CLOSE UP for a week in February 2007. It is the hope of CSDB to send one student from the state of Colorado as an Outreach student and one student from CSDB. Students interested in going need to apply to Donna Keale, CSDB Outreach Coordinator for the Blind, 33 N. Institute St. Colorado Springs, CO 80903; <dkeale@csdb.org>.

**Colorado Center for the Blind Summer Activities:** Each summer, the CCB offers programs to students who are blind/visually impaired. During summer 2006, they offered programs for elementary, middle, and secondary aged students. The Youth Services Coordinator is Eric Woods. He can be reached at (303) 778-1130 (ext. 230) or 800-401-4632 or <ewoods@cocenter.org>.

**Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC)** (Set Aside Funds flowed through CSDB, district-assessment fees of \$200 per identified child with visual impairment): The role of the CIMC is to provide braille and large print textbooks and materials for all students who are visually impaired in Colorado. The CIMC is housed on the campus of the CSDB. CDE funding of the CIMC has been supplemented by district fees (\$200 per student with visual impairment). The CIMC worked through the summer to order / produce books for our Colorado students. For questions, CIMC, contact Ann at ahicks@csdb.org or (719) 578-2195.

**CIMC Brailist Scholarships** (Sponsored by the CIMC) Details provided by Ann Hicks: The CIMC is again able to offer scholarships to help three certified Library of Congress braillists attend the National Braille Association conference this fall. Persons who are selected to receive a scholarship will be required to share the information gained with other braillists in Colorado. We have \$200 for the first three LOC certified braillists to apply for assistance. For more information, contact Ann Hicks at ahicks@csdb.org or (719) 578-2195.

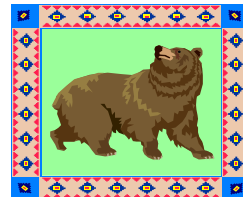
**CSDB Lending Library** (Sponsored by CSDB): The library provides materials and information in a variety of formats for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing and/or blind/visually impaired, as well as their parents and those who work with them. Most items may be borrowed by anyone with a Colorado Library Card (available at public and academic libraries throughout CO) or through interlibrary loan from any library. The libraries are open Monday through Friday during the school year from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Because school activities sometimes interrupt this schedule, it is recommended that persons call before coming in person to either library. For more information, please contact Diann Cullen at dcullen@csdb.org or (719) 578-2206.



**CSDB Short Term Placements** (Sponsored by CSDB): CSDB will offer short term placements to focus on the expanded core curriculum during this school year. The three-day placements that will begin on a Thursday afternoon and run through Saturday afternoon. Check out dates and a description of short-term placements for the 2006-07 school year in the this edition of *WHOT*. If you have immediate questions, contact Donna Keale at [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org) or (719) 578-2248.

**CSDB Summer Enrichment Program** (Sponsored by CSDB): Each summer a series of programs are offered to students who are blind/visually impaired across the state. The programs focus on braille/O&M/social skills, social relationships, and lots of recreational fun. The dates and themes for the 2007 Summer Enrichment Program will be shared in future editions of *WHOT*. For more information, contact Donna Keale at [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org) or (719) 578-2248.

**CSDB Touch Museum** (housed on the campus of CSDB in Colorado Springs): The CSDB Touch Museum is closed for the 2006-2007 School Year. The collection is currently being inspected to make sure they are still safe to touch adhering to the new Federal Wildlife Standards. It is the hopes of CSDB to have the Touch Museum reestablished for the 2007-2008 School Year. Watch for future updates.



**Colorado O&M Workshop** (CDE Set Aside Funds): This training is co-sponsored by CDE, CAER, CSDB, and Insights Inc. A planning committee is currently working to determine the theme, presenters, dates, and location. Be watching future newsletters for more details on the dates. This training is reserved for Orientation and Mobility Specialists.

**Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project** – (Funded by the federal office of Special Education Projects, housed at CDE): The project will soon be in its fourth year of a federally funded five-year-cycle. There are currently 125 children and youth, age birth through 21 years, who have combined vision and hearing loss (deafblindness) in Colorado. Free technical assistance is provided the families and service providers of these children. The project has a newsletter, *Vibrations*, which is disseminated three times over the course of a school year. The project website has over 60 fact sheets (in English and Spanish) on information specific to deafblindness. The library is open to parents and professionals and is stocked with great resources, including about 50 items specific to visual impairment. The library's inventory is listed on the website, where there also is a downloaded book-loan order form. For more information, contact Tanni at (303) 866-6681 or [Anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us) or Gina Quintana at (303) 866-6605 or [Quintana\\_g@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Quintana_g@cde.state.co.us) and/or go the project webpage: [www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Deafblind.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Deafblind.asp)



**Family Learning Retreat 2007** (CDE Set Aside Funds flowed through CSDB and CSDB funds): The Family Learning Retreat will take place at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind on **June 1-3, 2007**. The weekend retreat is for any family who has a child who is deaf/ hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired, or deafblind. There was a very positive turn out of families of kids from all three strands this past summer. This retreat allows families to come together and learn ways of coping with the hardships of raising a child with a disability.

This is a great opportunity for families to meet other families and share their stories, have fun, make friends, and learn something new. Louise Gettman, who works as a TVI at CSDB, and Stefanie Morgan, a parent, represent the blindness/visual impairment on the retreat planning committee. Gina Quintana and Shannon Cannizzaro will represent deafblindness. More information about the Family Learning Retreat will be posted in future *WHOT* newsletters.

**Family Literacy Packs** (CSDB supported, housed at the CIMC): Each Family Literacy Pack contains several books ( braille and print) along with a Video or DVD of all the stories and several Activity Kits placed in a colorful child's back pack. Students keep the items they make and return the extra materials to the pack. These activities may be a game, a song or an activity. These are well thought out and well put together activi-

ties and stories that the whole family can enjoy together. The packs are available for TVIs to check out by contacting Ann Hicks at <hhicks@csdb.org>.

**Low Vision Device Training** (CDE Set Aside): A two-day training will be offered to CO teachers of students with visual impairments and certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists on low vision devices. Chrissy Cowan will be the key presenter. The participants will learn how to train students on these tools and will have hands-on learning practice with a multitude of devices. The date of the training has been set for **November 10-11, 2006**. Registration information will be emailed to TVIs in late September.



**Low Vision Evaluation Clinics** (CDE Set Aside): The Low Vision Evaluation Team was once again funded for four regional clinics. The clinic team consists of Dr. Tom Theune (optometrist), Jim Olson (certified low vision therapist and TVI) and Donice Fennimore (clinic coordinator). Donice will continue to be responsible for clinic paperwork, including getting the reports out the door, and will be the contact person for setting up each clinic. Donice's low vision clinic duties have been built into her job as an Administrative Assistant with the CIMC. The dates of the 2006-07 clinics are posted within this newsletter, as are the local site coordinators for each clinic.

**National Braille Challenge** (Sponsored by CSDB, information provided by Randy Witte): This regional contest will again be held at CSDB on Friday, **January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007**. Students compete at our preliminary contest in various categories such as spelling, reading comprehension, speed and accuracy, proofreading, and charts and graphs. The top 12 students from each age group in the US are then invited to the final round in Los Angeles on June 23, 2007, where they can win prizes including a Braille notetaker valued at over \$5000. We hope to score the tests at CSDB this year and award some prizes, but CO has yet to place a student in the finals. Last year, 27 students competed, and we would like to see more come and celebrate Braille. The weakest area for our students was not reading comprehension or spelling or charts and graphs; it was **PROOFREADING!** Our Braille students need to brush up on grammar and punctuation rules! Plan for a day of fun, competition, and camaraderie! Contact Randy Witte at CSDB for more information: [rwitte@csdb.org](mailto:rwitte@csdb.org) or (719) 578-2204. Or go to: [www.brailleinstitute.org](http://www.brailleinstitute.org) and then find pages on the National Braille Challenge.

**New Teacher Mentor Project** (CDE Set Aside Funds): This will be the third year of the mentor project! The goal is to provide mentoring assistance to students enrolled in the UNC Visual Impairment Program, as well as new teachers in Colorado school districts. Each participant will be paired with a mentor teacher currently working in Colorado. Mentors are required to provide services for two years, and will receive a \$500 annual stipend for their time and commitment. Julie Wetzstein is the project coordinator and can be reached at <jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us>.

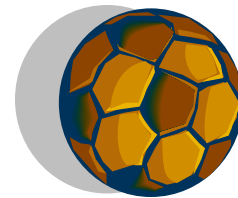
**Regional Technology Consultation** (CDE Set Aside Funds): Thanks to the input of TVIs to their Vision Coalition teacher reps, funds were built into this year's budget to sponsor a pilot project for technology consulting in each region. Bonnie Snyder has been hired to provide 20 days of consultation across the state. Each region will have five days of Bennie's consult time. Information will be sent to each Regional Meeting Coordinator (Carol Love – northern, Nancy Cozart- metro, Chloann Woolley – southern, and Kevin O'Brien –northern) about how to access Bonnie's time.

**Snow Shoe Weekend** (sponsored by hardworking teachers!): Details provided by Elaine Karns The 5th Annual Snowshoe Weekend is tentatively booked for **February 17-19, 2007** at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park. Teachers have graciously volunteered their time to staff this event over the years. Anyone interested in this exciting outdoor opportunity should contact Elaine Karns at (970) 225-6720 .



**SMART Team** (staffed by CSDB personnel): The Statewide Multidisciplinary Assessment Resource Team (SMART) at CSDB is available to consult with your districts' OT, PT, SLP, & School Psychologist staff in the area of blindness. The specialists in each area are certified in their fields and have 7 to 10+ year of experience in working with students who are blind and visually impaired, including learners with multiple disabilities. Contact Donna Keale, CSDB, 719-578-2251; [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org) for more information.

**Sports Camp:** Sports Camp is a wonderful opportunity for students to get moving and involved with sports and recreation events. Sports Camp has been funded the last 2 years by ABAC, Association of Blind Athletes of Colorado & United States Association of Blind Athletes. Contact for ABAC is Ken Armbruster (President) 719-210-3978 or Donna Keale at [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org).



**State Conference on Visual Impairment:** (CDE Set Aside Funds): The dates for the state conference are **October 5-7, 2006**. The conference is co-sponsored by CDE and the Colorado Chapter of AER. It is for parents and professionals who work with children and youth who are blind/visually impaired. The State of State is scheduled for Thursday, October 5<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This is a chance for conference participants to learn more about VI-related activities across the state. Friday's training will include several local presenter sessions. Saturday is dedicated to Anna Swenson, who will share information on working with braille readers. One semester hour will be available for those interested in attending the full conference (Thursday night and all day Friday and Saturday). A conference flyer and registration will be emailed to TVIs in early September. If you would like this information sent to you, please contact Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or [Anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us)

**What's Happening Out There (WHOT) Newsletter** (CDE Set Aside Fund): A monthly to bi-monthly newsletter will be mailed to parents of children with visual impairments, and the following professionals working in Colorado schools (TVIs, braillists, VI-paras, and O&M Specialists). It will also be posted on the Blindness/Low Vision website. The newsletter began in 1994 as a result of a Vision Coalition discussion on how to upgrade statewide communication on issues related to visual impairment. If you have something to contribute to future editions, please send it to Tanni at [Anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us).



**Vision Coalition** (CDE Set Aside Funds): The mission of the Vision Coalition is to bring the collective resources of the group together to address state priorities improving services to students who are blind/visually impaired." (April 1998) The VC meets three times during a school year. Membership includes representatives from: CDE, CAER, the CIMC, CSDB, NCLID, UNC, and teacher representatives from CSDB and the metro, northern, southern, and western regions. Reps are listed in the *Who Ya Gonna* Call section at the end of this newsletter. The meetings minutes are published in the *What's Happening Out There* newsletters.

**VIISA Training** (CDE Set Aside Funds): The "Working with Preschoolers with Blindness and Vision Impairments in Center-Based Settings" course is anticipated to be offered during January – April 2007 (dates yet to be set) in the Denver metro area. The course will be open to TVIs, COMSs, parents, and other interested early-intervention professionals. Be watching the newsletter for more information.

**There are so many wonderful events and systems of support in place in Colorado for children and youth with visual impairments, their families, and service providers. Please be in touch with key contact people to learn more about these listed activities. Best wishes for a fun and successful school year!**

# BITS FROM BONNIE

## *She's BAAACCCCKK!*

*Editor's Note: We are happy to report that Bonnie Snyder will once again be offering regional technical assistance on assistive technology. For more information, please read about this project in the article on What's Happening and What's Funded. Thank you to Bonnie for the following article.*

After five years, it looks like, for all practical purposes, I have flunked retirement. Retirement was really great. I enjoyed it immensely. I got to play on my computer twenty four/ seven ... and there were many days when I did just that! But then, Tanni called me and the flunking process began. And, you know what? I'm really excited to be able to work with you all again! There's a lot of really great technology out there for you and for your students. And, there's some not so great stuff that you should steer away from. I'm thinking, too, that you have had some really interesting experiences with technology that you would like to share so we all can become better consumers and users.

This particular column is going to address, what I call "You Too Can Love Your Students' MP3 Players." Honest! I know they can be a bit annoying, playing all that stuff they call music (uh, oh, I think I'm sounding like my parents). However, that MP3 player can also be used as an educational tool. Perhaps several of you are already doing this. If so, I'd love to hear about what programs you are using to make use of the MP3 player.

I have been surfing the Net looking for programs that convert text to MP3s. Using Google, I put in "text to MP3" and received back some really neat choices. Those that I found up front, were shareware and VERY reasonably priced, I might add. The two that stood out for me were Universal Audio Recorder and TextAloud. The first one is \$14.95 and the second is \$29.95. I found that both of them were very easy to install and figure out how to use. There's no reason why most of your students, themselves, couldn't use the programs, as well as their teachers. They both have a large variety of voices. They both have options to change the pitch and speed of the voices (with numeric indicators so that we can make a note of each student's preferences in those areas). U A R seemed a bit limited on its ability to work on large text files, but that may be because I was using their downloadable demo version rather than the full purchased version.

One thing that I particularly liked about TextAloud was that it put a tool bar in my browser and I could use it to select anything I wished to hear spoken AND, if I needed the text size increased, I could do that, too (which should add to the browsing pleasure of some of our low vision students). Also, when the text size increased, it was reformatted so that you didn't have to scroll all the time to read text past the right or left display margins. Also, with TextAloud, a student can be browsing the Web and find a page that looks interesting but, perhaps too long to read at that point in time. With TextAloud, you can save the file as a TextAloud "article" which then allows you to save it as an MP3 file right then, or after your Web session is completed. Both programs have other things that they can do. With UAR, for instance, it has another module that allows you to directly record from a microphone, so you could read the text to the student if you wished. Or you could record instructions.

I know that with the advent of networking in the schools, that getting shareware programs installed may be akin to pulling teeth. IT people, with good reason, are a bit paranoid about what they install on "their" computers. However, it's always a good idea to create a good relationship with the IT folks and talk to them with kindness and respect. If you can clearly explain to them what these programs will do for your students, you just might be able to convince them to do the installation. Also, it probably wouldn't be a bad idea to run the programs through every virus checker you can think of, and let the IT people know you have done so.

The programs mentioned above are for the PC. I don't presently have access to a Mac, but will try to find some stuff for it, too, as time goes by.

Also, please let me know if there is a subject you would like me to address in this column in the future, and I will make every effort to do so.

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## What's New This Year with Short Term Placements

TVIs have asked for it and CSDB has tried to design a program to try to meet those needs. The most frequent request was for a Short Term Placement that will not interrupt the entire week of school. CSDB will offer beginning this year three-day placements that will begin on a Thursday afternoon and run through Saturday afternoon. Your students will only miss 1 ½ days of school.

Our first Short Term Placement of three days will be October 26, 27, & 28<sup>th</sup> and is designed for young students who are in need of Orientation and Mobility: An Introduction to Bus Travel. At this time this is reserved for students in rural areas or who have limited exposure to bus travel. We must have a minimum of 2 students to offer the program. We are also opening up Short Term Placements to grades 2-12 and we will design the program accordingly to meet the age group that applies.

For those not familiar with the Short Term Program concept, it was designed 10-12 years ago in Texas to help meet the needs of students who attended public school, but needed additional instruction in the Expanded Core Curriculum areas. More information is available on the CSDB Website ([www.CSDB.org](http://www.CSDB.org)).

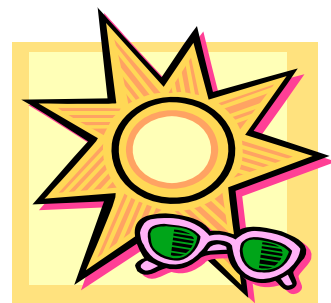
### Short Term Placement Schedule for 2006-2007 School Year:

| <b>Dates:</b>       | <b>Expanded Core Curriculum Focus</b>   | <b>Suggested Grade Level</b> |
|---------------------|---|------------------------------|
| October 26, 27 & 28 | Introduction to Bus Travel O&M  | Elementary/Middle School     |
| November 5-10       | Daily Living Skills & O&M   | All Grades                   |
| December 7, 8, 9    | Technology Session JAWS and Braille Note  | Middle School/High School    |
| January 21-26       | Compensatory Skills & Social Skills, ending the week with the Braille Challenge | All Grades                   |
| February 4-9        | Daily Living Skills & Recreation and Leisure                                    | All Grades                   |
| April 22-27         | Technology Session: JAWS and Braille Note w/ GPS                                | Middle School/High School    |
| May 10, 11,& 12     | O&M and Public Transportation   | All Grades                   |

For more information contact: Donna Keale, Outreach Coordinator for the Blind, CSDB (719) 578-2251, [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org)

## Summer Enrichment 2006

Every spring we at CSDB start to panic as we are trying to fill the camps with enough students to make them cost-effective. This year was no exception. After some quick calls to TVIs to say, "Help! We need a few more students," we were able to hold all the planned camps. A special thanks to Suzan Barlow and Julie Tueros for rounding up the troops and ensuring the numbers to keep the camps open. This year we had students from Dillon, Fort Collins, Aurora, Thornton, Denver, Colorado Springs, Delta, Beulah, and Alamosa. All together there were nearly 50 students in attendance this summer.



The Independent Living Camps and the Technology Camps were joined for activities at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs in the area of technology. Orientation and Mobility sessions were moved to nighttime due to the limited number of students. Adding the night mobility made a high impact on many students. They realized they needed to use their canes! The two elementary camps were a big success. We met new friends and had a few returning friends. Activities included fishing, hiking, going to the zoo, visiting parks, horseback riding, fun days at the amusement park, and even a trip to see the jail!

Summer Enrichment 2007 is under construction at this time. More data will be available in December. For more information contact Donna Keale, Outreach, CSDB (719) 578-2251



## TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

### **Improving Employment Outcomes For Persons who are Blind or Visually Impaired Through Research, Training, and Dissemination**

Established in 1981, the RRTC on Blindness and Low Vision is the nation's only RRTC conducting employment-related research and training programs to improve employment and independent living outcomes for persons who are blind or visually impaired. For more information about our research or training programs, please visit our website: [www.blind.msstate.edu](http://www.blind.msstate.edu). RRTC on Blindness & Low Vision, Mississippi State University, PO Box 6189, Mississippi State, MS 39762; phone: 662-325-2001; TTY: 662.325.8693; email: [rrtc@ra.msstate.edu](mailto:rrtc@ra.msstate.edu)

# Jobs

# IMPORTANT!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for the next school year. It is never too early to advertise an expected opening. Please keep in touch with Tanni about your job openings.

## Jobs for School Year 2006-07

### Western Region:

- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Instructor** (1 FTE). Please contact Jackie Howard at (970) 254-5421 or [jhoward@mesa.k12.co.us](mailto:jhoward@mesa.k12.co.us) of the Mesa 51 School District in Grand Junction.

### Metro Region:

- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairment with Early Childhood Training or Experience (O&M and/or training specific to deafblindness preferred (.5 to 1. FTE).** Contact Alice Applebaum at Anchor Center for Blind Children at (303) 377-9733.
- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Instructor** (1 FTE). Contact Susie Sutherland - (303) 982-7202 or Larry O'Connor – (303) 982-6672 in JeffCo School District.

### Southern Region

- ✓ **TVI with focus on vocational education / daily living skills** (1 FTE) at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (School for the Blind) located in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at CSDB at (719) 578-2114 or [clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org)

## *CSDB Board of Trustees*

The Board of Trustees meets in the Lions Conference Center on the CSDB Campus. Please contact Sue Pfaffenhauser at (719-578-2102 (v/tty)/ [spfaffenha@csdb.org](mailto:spfaffenha@csdb.org)) to confirm a meeting date, to obtain the guidelines for addressing the Board, and/or to acquire additional information regarding the Board of Trustees. Welcome to new board member, Dr. Laura Douglas! Members include:

|                           |                      |  |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--|
| <b>Dave Ek</b>            | (719) 590-4470       | <a href="mailto:david.ek@earthlink.net">david.ek@earthlink.net</a>       |
| <b>David Dawson</b>       | (303) 786-7777 x 101 | <a href="mailto:rrsr@rrsr.org">rrsr@rrsr.org</a>                         |
| <b>John Dickinson</b>     |                      | <a href="mailto:jcdickinson@earthlink.net">jcdickinson@earthlink.net</a> |
| <b>Dr. Laura Douglas</b>  | (719) 481-9447       | <a href="mailto:ldouglas@lewispalmer.org">ldouglas@lewispalmer.org</a>   |
| <b>Dr. Kay Ferrell</b>    | (970) 302-1995       | <a href="mailto:kay.ferrell@unco.edu">kay.ferrell@unco.edu</a>           |
| <b>Dick Hartman</b>       |                      | <a href="mailto:dhartma@bresnan.net">dhartma@bresnan.net</a>             |
| <b>Dr. Morris Ververs</b> | (719) 541-2339       | <a href="mailto:vermor@bigsandytelcom">vermor@bigsandytelcom</a>         |

# Low Vision Clinic News



| <u>Region</u> | <u>Date</u>           | <u>Site Coordinator</u>         |
|---------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Western       | September 22-23, 2006 | Sarah Sonnier                   |
| Southern      | October 26-28, 2006   | Jim Olson                       |
| Metro         | January 25-27, 2007   | Amber Rundle                    |
| Northern      | February 23-24, 2007  | Rita Albright and Vicki Pearson |

The clinic paperwork has been emailed to all Site Coordinators for their dissemination. Please be sure to work with your Site Coordinator to understand the needed timelines and expectations of bringing a student(s) to the clinic. It is so important that both the student and the parent have a clear understanding of what to expect at the clinic. TVIs also have important follow-up responsibilities with interpreting the report to the parents, training on low prescribed devices, and including low vision device use and training in the student's IEP.

Thanks to everyone for their team work in the area of low vision!

## Survey Says!

By Jon Vigne, CSDB Director of Special Education



In February 2006, the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), conducted a survey of service providers of students who are blind and visually impaired. The survey was designed to gather information regarding the utilization and effectiveness of outreach programs. Forms were distributed through CDE's email distribution list, CSDB's website and to Colorado Special Education Directors. CSDB accepted surveys through April.

Eighteen service providers from thirteen school districts responded. Overwhelmingly, respondents ranked *What's Happening Out There* newsletter, the Colorado Instructional Materials Center, and the Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic very high for their rate of use. Likewise, survey results showed the prior programs, as well as the Colorado Sports Education Camp, Family Learning Retreat, Snowshoe Weekend, Adult Role Model Team, Braille Challenge, CSDB Library, CSDB School for the Blind Short-term Placements and Summer Enrichment programs as highly effective and readily accessible. CSDB and CDE will use these results, as well as the survey comments to continually improve outreach programming. Thanks to all of the respondents!

# A LETTER FROM DR. THEUNE

School Year 2006-07

Dear Colorado Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments,

It is with great excitement and anticipation that we, your Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Team, prepare for the 2006-07 school year. We continue to strive to bring the latest and best technical and optical devices to you, your visually impaired students and their guardians.

## **Additions to the clinic inventory for this year include:**

***Enhanced Vision “Amigo” portable electronic magnifier:*** This desk top portable CCTV has a larger viewing screen than the other hand held CCTVs and may be plugged into a TV at home to increase screen size and magnification. It may also be worn around the neck for easy portability. The Amigo will join Telesensory’s “Olympia” as an intermediate CCTV option.

***Eschenbach “Max Detail” & “Max TV”:*** These lightweight, 2X spectacle binoculars allow a student to extend their working distance from a computer screen or a television set which will improve posture and lessen fatigue.

***Lighthouse Powermag High Plus reading glasses:*** Lighthouse has taken their popular, metal frame style and provided us with powers up to 48 diopters. This style will be more “user friendly” for students and the price will be more user friendly for parents and guardians.

## **The importance of re-evaluations of your students**

Many teachers have told us that they “have sent all of their students to previous clinics and have no more to send.” In our experience, students who return to a clinic after one to three years become much more interested and involved with the clinic’s “tools”. The students and their guardians have a better understanding of the use of low vision aids and are much more excited about the clinic experience.

Please remember that low vision devices have specific uses to access ever-changing visual information in ever-changing settings. The initial assessment is to determine the potentials of low vision devices. As your student matures and progresses through school, their low vision needs will change as well.

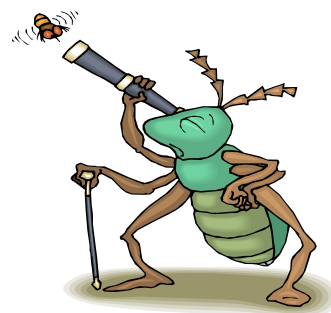
As teachers, you are the only professionals who can make the low vision clinic available to your students. Your continued training and teaching with the low vision devices remains the key to success or failure with the new “tools” your students are using in their everyday life.

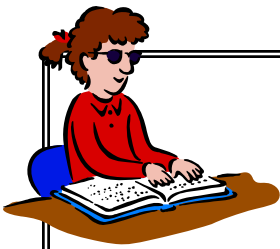
Jim Olson, Donice Fennimore, and I are here to support you and help you make your low vision students as productive and independent as possible. Thank you for your continued dedication to your profession. If you have any questions, please call any of us at any time.

Sincerely,

Tom

Thomas W. Theune, OD





# DOTS OF INTEREST



## BRAILLE UPDATE

- ▲ **BrailleInk—BrailleInk** is a new nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing the experience of reading by providing materials with both print and Braille in a unique, easy-to-use format that encourages shared reading and promoted Braille awareness. The **BrailleInk** format maintains the original print and illustration in the top portion of the page and adds Braille in the bottom portion. Corresponding print characters are placed directly above each Braille cell so the Braille reader's hand don't block what their sighted reading partner is trying to see. **BrailleInk** recently announced its first two titles. You can view sample pages of *Guess How Much I Love You* by Sam McBratney and Anita Jeram and *The Dot* by Peter H. Reynolds by visiting [www.brailleink.org/sample1.html](http://www.brailleink.org/sample1.html). For more information, contact Bruce Curtis at 800-324-2919, 2401 E. McKinney Street, Suite 1526, Denton, TX 76209
- ▲ **Free Braille Translator**—Rod Pierce has developed a free Braille translator. It prepares Braille as selectable text dots (for inserting in e-mails, forums, etc.) and as images. The images can also be saved as JPEG files. It translates to contracted Braille with better than 98% accuracy. Find this Braille translator at [www.mathsisfun.com/braille-translation.html](http://www.mathsisfun.com/braille-translation.html)
- ▲ **Online Braille Textbook Transcriber Certificate Program**—The National Center on Low-Incident Disabilities has announced that the Northwest Vista College (NVC) is the first community college in the nation to offer an online program to certify Braille textbook transcribers. NVC and its partners pioneered a college curriculum to develop "Braille Textbook Transcribers," professionally trained individuals to meet a critical and growing need for transcribers so Braille readers have equal access to textbooks and other written information. The NVC coursework for Braille Textbook Transcriber is completed in an online environment over a three semester period. The first semester begins August, 2006 and students completing the program will receive their certificate the following August. It is a challenging program, requiring about 20-30 hours of work each week. For information on costs, prerequisites and other details about the program, contact [nvcbrail@accd.edu](mailto:nvcbrail@accd.edu). For general information about the college, call 210-348-2020 or email [nvcinfo@accd.edu](mailto:nvcinfo@accd.edu).



# MORE DOTS OF INTEREST

▲ On July 27th, 2006 President George W. Bush signed into law the Louis Braille Bicentennial-Braille Literacy Commemorative Coin Act, which commemorates the 200th anniversary of the birth of Louis Braille, who created the raised-dot system of reading and writing for the blind that bears his name. It calls for the Secretary of the Treasury to issue up to 400,000 silver-dollar coins commemorating this bicentennial anniversary. The bill is part of a larger campaign initiated by the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) to encourage Braille literacy among blind youth. The coins, which go on sale in 2009, will emphasize Braille literacy by featuring Louis Braille's image and raised dots that spell out "Brl" - the Braille contraction for the word "Braille." This will be the first coin ever minted by the United States Treasury with a Braille symbol. To learn more about the Louis Braille commemorative coin, Braille literacy campaigns, or for general information, contact the NFB at (410) 659-9314, or visit [www.nfb.org](http://www.nfb.org)

▲ **Braille Slate Pals**—**Slate Pals** is a program for children in grades K-12 that matches students who want Braille pen pals. The program is sponsored by the National Organization of Parents of Blind Children (NOPBC) of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), and is available, free of charge, to children around the world. Slate Pals enables children who are blind to correspond with one another in Braille. It also finds blind pen pals for sighted children who are interested in learning the Braille code. Slate Pal requests have come to us from all fifty states and most of the Canadian provinces. We have also received requests for Slate Pals from many nations overseas, including Taiwan, South Africa, Denmark, Hungary, Uganda, El Salvador, Germany, Australia, and Great Britain. In matching Slate Pals the primary considerations are age range, gender, and interests. We also try to match each prospective Slate Pal with someone who lives in a distinctly different geographic locale. If you have a child or student who would like one or more Slate Pals, contact: Debbie Kent Stein, 5817 North Nina Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60631; Phone: 773-631-1093 • Fax: 773-792-8245 • E-mail: [dkent5817@att.net](mailto:dkent5817@att.net)



## GETTING IN TOUCH WITH LITEARCY 2007

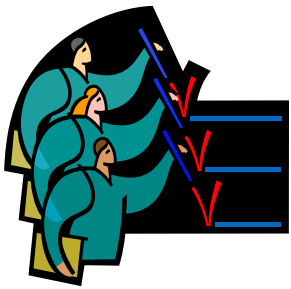
The 2007 *Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference* will be held in St. Pete Beach, Florida on November 29 through December 2, 2007. The Call for Papers will be announced this November. Colorado is doing so many wonderful things in the area of literacy— please consider submitting a paper!

For more information about the conference, contact (813) 837-7829 or [kratzlaff@fimcivi.org](mailto:kratzlaff@fimcivi.org) or go to [www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org](http://www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org)



- ◆ **Assistive Technology Help Line**—The Chicago Lighthouse has established a telephone assistive technology support line. The toll-free number for the new service is 1-888-825-0080. They will assist with any hardware or software relating to assistive technology as long as the customer is visually impaired or calling on behalf of someone who is visually impaired.
- ◆ **APH Launches New PE Web Page**—The Parent/Teacher Resource for Children with Sensory Impairments is set up as a place to exchange ideas among those who want to create activity programs for individuals or groups who are blind, deafblind, or who have low vision. It lists adapted physical education programs, adapted athletic/sports organizations, equipment resources, sports camps, articles, toys and games, books, and services available on the national, regional and state levels. For more information or to submit additional resources, visit [www.aph.org/pe](http://www.aph.org/pe)
- ◆ **Two New Hadley Courses**—The Hadley School has recently launched two new courses, *Business Writing* and *Basic Nemeth Code*. *Business Writing* includes four lessons that present the information and practice you need to write successful business communication. *Basic Nemeth Code* (now open to blindness professionals and family members of blind individuals) gives you the tools to read and Braille the basic symbols of the Nemeth Code. After briefly describing the development, use and production of the Nemeth Code, this course introduces the symbols and basic rules for brailing math computations. Each course is free, but each has prerequisites. For course and enrollment details, call 1-800-526-9909 or visit [www.hadley.edu](http://www.hadley.edu).
- ◆ **Low Vision Technology Update Course**—The Johns Hopkins Vision Research and Rehabilitation Center is offering a 2 Credit CE course on Low Vision Technology Update through its Low Vision Rehabilitation Network. This online course is free of charge and has been approved by ACVREP, COPE and the Maryland Board of Occupational Therapists for 2 CE credits. Bob McGillivray and Ken Bradley, AER Low Vision Division (Division 7) members provide lectures that deal with the latest advances and changes in video magnification and lens technology. This course is free to members of the LVRN. Register for this course by going to [www.lowvisionproject.org](http://www.lowvisionproject.org) and completing the registration information on the left hand side of the screen—Join LVRN. Direct questions to Jim Deremelik via email at [jderemeik@jhmi.edu](mailto:jderemeik@jhmi.edu) or phone 410-502-6431
- ◆ **Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS) Toolkit** — The U.S. Department of Education, announces the release of the *Tool Kit on Teaching and Assessing Students With Disabilities*, which is a collaborative effort of OSERS and the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), to assist states in raising the





achievement of all students with disabilities, was released on April 25, 2006. The Tool Kit provides up-to-date guidance on designing and implementing high-quality assessments for students with disabilities. They have included a set of technical assistance products that offer practical, research-based approaches to the challenges schools are facing in the areas of assessment, instruction, behavioral interventions and use of accommodations for students with disabilities. To facilitate broad dissemination of these materials, a web site has been launched, accessible through [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers), which includes the materials in the Tool Kit. The web site will be updated with additional materials as they become available.

◆ **Audio Book Resources**—Wendy Schlageter put together a wonderful list of audio book resources: Thanks, Wendy!

- ▲ Colorado Talking Book Library ([www.cde.state.co.us/ctb](http://www.cde.state.co.us/ctb))
- ▲ Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic ([www.rfbd.org](http://www.rfbd.org))
- ▲ Radio Reading Services of the Rockies ([www.rrsr.org](http://www.rrsr.org))
- ▲ Pod Casting (download items with an accessible MP3 player)
- ▲ Baen Free Library ([www.baen.com/library/](http://www.baen.com/library/))
- ▲ Project Gutenberg ([www.gutenberg.org/](http://www.gutenberg.org/))
- ▲ Planet PDF ([www.planetpdf.com](http://www.planetpdf.com))

◆ **Colorado Guidelines for School Vision Screen Programs: Kindergarten Through Grade 12:** The January 2006 update to these guidelines can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/RSS-Nurse.asp> This link has also been added to the CDE webpage on blindness/low vision, along with the link to the 0-5 Vision Screening Guidelines that were developed in 2005.



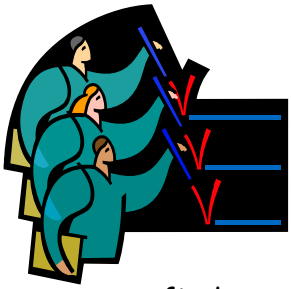
◆ The theme of **World Sight Day** on October 12th, 2006 is low vision. For more information, go to <http://www.v2020.org/>

*The Colorado Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age, in access to, employment in, or provision of any of CDE's programs, benefits, or activities.*

*The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding this policy. Please contact either:*

*Patrick Chapman  
Colorado Department of Education  
1560 Broadway, Suite 1450  
Denver, CO 80202  
Phone: 303-866-6780  
E-mail: [chapman\\_p@cde.state.co.us](mailto:chapman_p@cde.state.co.us)*

*Wendi Kispert  
Colorado Department of Education  
201 East Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203  
Phone: 303-866-6815  
E-mail: [Kispert\\_w@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Kispert_w@cde.state.co.us)*



## MORE THINGS TO CHECK OUT!

◇ CO AT Project Trainings: The Colorado Assistive Technology Project has some exciting trainings scheduled for this school year. To register for and/or to find out more information about the trainings, which will be held in the Denver area, please contact Christina Perkins at 303.315.1278 or [christina.perkins@uchsc.edu](mailto:christina.perkins@uchsc.edu) For more information about the CO AT Project, contact Assistive Technology Partners at (303) 315-1280 or 1.800.255.3477 or visit our website at [www.AssistiveTechnologyPartners.org](http://www.AssistiveTechnologyPartners.org)

- ▲ **September 22, 2006**: Microsoft Accessibility Training 3:00-4:30. Learn to accommodate low vision by modifying color, contrast, font size and using the built-in magnifier.
- ▲ **September 28, 2006**: Kurzweil Vendor-Sponsored Training 4:00-5:30. Learn about the benefits of Kurzweil Educational software to support reading, writing and learning in children with dyslexia, ADD and low vision/blindness.
- ▲ **June 21-23, 2007**: Collaborative Assistive Technology Conference of the Rockies. This conference is a must for anyone who uses or recommends assistive technology (AT). More than 70 sessions cover all aspects of AT for every age and disability. Last year's sessions included: Kurzweil 3000 - a software solution, Comparison of the Features of WYNN and Kurzweil, ADL AT & Strategies for the Blind and much more. Don't miss the Adapted Home and Accessible Classroom to visit with highly knowledgeable teachers and AT professionals. Visit with the vendors in the exhibit hall for all the latest in blind and low-vision products.

### Family Literacy Packs

By Ann Hicks

Janet Rose asked the CIMC to house the Family Literacy Packs for use by the Southern Vision Teachers and CSDB. These have been used by these teachers and now we would like to make them available for the used of all teachers and families in Colorado.

Each Family Literacy Pack contains several books ( braille and print) along with a video or DVD of all the stories and several Activity Kits placed in a colorful child's back pack. Students keep the items they make and return the extra materials to the pack. These activities may be a game, a song or an activity. These are well thought out and well put together activities and stories that the whole family can enjoy together. So far families, students and teachers have been careful with them and they are in good shape. Janet comes by several times a year and checks these packs and replaces items for the activities.

The CIMC currently has the following Family Literacy Packs available: *Money, Ocean, Food, Family, Friends, Bugs, Plants, Birthday, Community, Dogs, Feelings, Health, and Sports.*

These may be ordered by TVIs on a regular Instructional Aids Order Form from the CIMC.

# Parents Encouraging Parents Conferences



Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conferences are family centered conferences designed to offer support, information, and education to parents and professionals. PEP promotes the partnerships that are essential in supporting and including children with disabilities and their families in all aspects of the school and community. These conferences are available to persons residing in Colorado who have a child with a disability - ages birth to 21 years. Also, administrators, principals, teachers, medical and other service providers interested in the Parent-Professional Partnership are invited to participate in a PEP Conference.

The two and one-half day PEP Conference begins Thursday evening, at 5:00 p.m. and continues through Saturday afternoon, until 3:30 p.m. Child care is NOT provided - instead, the Colorado Department of Education pays for all meals (excluding Friday evening) and lodging. With these provisions, we hope to provide the opportunity of the PEP experience to all families interested.

The purpose of this conference is to bring parents and other professionals together, allowing them an opportunity to share ideas, discuss concerns, celebrate successes, and obtain information relating to parenting, educating and supporting a child with a disability.

Conference dates and locations for the 2006-2007 school year

✻ **November 2, 3 & 4, 2006 Breckenridge**

✻ **March 1, 2 & 3, 2007 Estes Park**

For more information, please go to <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP.asp>

## **CHECK YOUR CLOSETS!**

Mesa County Schools 51 is looking for an **MPRINT** by TeleSensory that was discontinued about 10 years ago. The MPRINT attaches to a Perkins Braille Writer and back translates for printing on an ink-print printer. If you have this product sitting in the back of a closet collecting dust we would appreciate a call.

Please contact: Sarah Sonnier or Phyllis Penniston, 410 Hill Avenue, Grand Junction, CO 81501 or phone 970-254-5415. Many thanks!



# Calendar of Events

2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006

- September 12**                      **CAER Board Meeting** - 5:30 at Centretch  
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - [jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us)
- September 12**                      **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102
- September 14**                      **Vision Coalition**—Highline Bldg. in Aurora  
Contact: Tanni Anthony—(303) 866-6681
- September 14-16**                      **Research in the Rockies:** Summit on Low Incident Disabilities-Vail, CO  
Contact: <http://nclid.unco.edu/summit/index.php>
- September 19**                      **Metro TVI Meeting**—Aurora from 2:00—4:00  
Contact: Nancy Cozart—(303) 347-4126 or [ncozart@lps.k12.co.us](mailto:ncozart@lps.k12.co.us)
- September 20**                      **Southern TVI Meeting**—CSDB  
Contact: Chloann Woolley—[ccwool5@yahoo.com](mailto:ccwool5@yahoo.com)
- September 21-24**                      **Envision 2006 Conference**—Kansas City, Missouri  
Contact: Michael Epp - [michael.epp@envisionus.com](mailto:michael.epp@envisionus.com)
- September 21-24**                      **Canadian Conference on Deaf-Blindness** - . Winnipeg,  
Contact: Cathy Proll - [cathy@cdbraontario.ca](mailto:cathy@cdbraontario.ca)
- September 22-23**                      **State Conference on Autism**—Denver  
Contact: —<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Autism.asp>
- September 22-23**                      **Western Region LVE Clinic** - Grand Junction  
Contact: Sarah Sonnier - [ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us](mailto:ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us)
- September 29-30**                      **Reading in the Rockies**—Vail, CO  
Contact: [www.readingintherockies.org](http://www.readingintherockies.org)
- October 5-7**                              **State Conference on Visual Impairment** - Denver, CO  
Contact: Tanni Anthony - [anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us)

## *More Calendar of Events*

- October 10**                      **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102
- October 12-14**                      **American Printing House for the Blind Annual Meeting**—Louisville, KY  
Contact: info@aph.org
- October 16-20**                      **Guide Dogs for the Blind Advanced Seminar**—San Rafael, CA  
Contact: Leslie Edmonds—ledmonds@guidedogs.com
- October 18**                              **Southern TVI Meeting**—CSDB  
Contact: Chloann Woolley—ccwool5@yahoo.com
- October 20-21**                      **Closing the Gap Conference: Computer Technology**—Minneapolis, MN  
Contact: www.closingthegap.com
- October 25-29**                      **Guiding Eyes for the Blind O&M Seminar**—Yorktown Heights, NY  
Contact: www.guidingeyes.org
- October 26-27**                      **Braille Conference**—Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
Contact: 800-563-2642 or brailleconference@cnib.ca
- October 26-28**                      **Southern Region LVE Clinic - Colorado Springs**  
Contact: Jim Olson—jolson@csdb.org
- October 26-28**                      **CSDB Short Term Placement**—Intro to Bus Travel O&M  
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- November 2-4**                      **NBA Professional Development Conference**—Charlotte, NC  
Contact: www.nationalbraille.org
- November 2-4**                      **Parents Encouraging Parents Conference - Breckenridge**  
Contact: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP.asp>
- November 5-10**                      **CSDB Short Term Placement**—Daily Living Skills and O&M  
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- November 10-11**                      **Low Vision Device Training** — Denver  
Contact: Tanni Anthony— Anthony\_t@cde.state.co.us
- November 14**                              **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102
- November 15**                              **Southern TVI Meeting**—CSDB  
Contact: Chloann Woolley—ccwool5@yahoo.com

## *More Calendar of Events*

**November 16**                      **Metro TVI Meeting**—Littleton from 2:00-4:00  
Contact: Nancy Cozart—(303) 347-4126 or ncozart@lps.k12.co.us

**December 7,8,9**                      **CSDB Short Term Placement**—Technology Session, JAWS & Braille Note  
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org

**December 12**                      **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102

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| 2007 | 2007 | 2007 | 2007 | 2007 | 2007 | 2007 | 2007 | 2007 | 2007 | 2007 |
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**January 9, 2007**                      **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102

**January 16 - Feb 16**                      **CELA Testing**

**January 17**                      **Southern TVI Meeting**—CSDB  
Contact: Chloann Woolley—ccwool5@yahoo.com

**January 21-26**                      **CSDB Short Term Placement**—Compensatory and Social Skills  
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org

**January 25-27**                      **Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic - Aurora**  
Contact: Amber Rundle - amber@ctech.aps.k12.so.us

**January 26**                      **Braille Challenge - CSDB**  
Contact: Randy Witte: rwitte@csdb.org or (719) 578-2204

**February 4-9**                      **CSDB Short Term Placement**—Daily Living Skills & Recreation/Leisure  
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org

**February 7-March 9**                      **CSAPA Administration Window - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Reading/Writing**

**February 7—March 30**                      **CSAPA Administration Window - Grades 4-10 / All Content Areas**

**February 12 - 23**                      **CSAP Test Administration Period - 3rd Grade Reading & Lectura**

**February 13**                      **Metro TVI Meeting - Cherry Creek** from 2-4:00  
Contact: Nancy Cozart—(303) 347-4126 or ncozart@lps.k12.co.us

**February 13**                      **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102

## *More Calendar of Events*

- February 17-19**      **5th Annual Snowshoe Weekend — Estes Park**  
Contact: Elaine Karns—(970) 225-6720
- February 21**      **Southern TVI Meeting—CSDB**  
Contact: Chloann Woolley—ccwool5@yahoo.com
- February 22-24**      **AFB Workshop Braille Literacy: A Functional Approach—Atlanta, GA**  
Contact: www.afb.org
- February 23-24**      **Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic - Fort Collins**  
Contact: Rita Albright - rita.albright@bvsd.org  
Vicki Pearson - vpearson1@yahoo.com
- March 1-3**      **Parents Encouraging Parents Conference - Breckenridge**  
Contact: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP.asp>
- March 2-4**      **CTEVH Conference— Santa Clara, CA**  
Contact: www.ctevh.org
- March 13**      **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102
- March 21 - April 13**      **CSAP Test Administration Period - All remaining grades/content**
- April 2-27**      **11<sup>th</sup> Grade "Online" Alternate Administration Window**
- April 10**      **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102
- April 18**      **Southern TVI Meeting—CSDB**  
Contact: Chloann Woolley—ccwool5@yahoo.com
- April 18-21**      **CEC Annual Convention & Expo—Louisville, KY**  
Contact: CEC—conteduc@cec.sped.org
- April 22-27**      **CSDB Short Term Placement—Technology JAWS & Braille Note with GPS**  
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- April 25**      **CO ACT Initial Test Date**
- April 25-28**      **NBA Professional Development Conference—Colorado Springs, CO**  
Contact: www.nationalbraille.org
- May 9**      **CO ACT Make-up Test Date**

## *More Calendar of Events*

- May 10,11,12**                      **CSDB Short Term Placement—O&M and Public Transportation**  
Contact: Donna Keale—[dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org)
- May 16**                                **Southern TVI Meeting—CSDB**  
Contact: Chloann Woolley—[ccwool5@yahoo.com](mailto:ccwool5@yahoo.com)
- June 1-3**                              **Family Learning Retreat - CSDB**  
Contact: Diane Covington - [dcovington@csdb.org](mailto:dcovington@csdb.org)
- June 12**                                **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102
- June 21-23**                          **CO Assistive Technology Conference - Denver**  
Contact: [www.AssistiveTechnologyPartners.org](http://www.AssistiveTechnologyPartners.org).
- July 2-6**                                **Lions Club International Annual Convention—Chicago, IL**  
Contact: 630-571-5466 or [www.lionsclub.org](http://www.lionsclub.org)
- July 13-15**                            **Families Connecting with Families—Omaha, NE**  
Contact: 212-502-7600
- September 25-30**                    **Deafblind 14th International World Conference - Perth, Australia**  
Contact: <http://www.dblink.org>
- November 9-11**                      **Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference—TBD**  
Contact: [www.canada.aerbvi.org](http://www.canada.aerbvi.org)
- November 29-Dec 2**                **Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference—St. Pete Beach, FL**  
Contact: [www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org](http://www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org)

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- April 2-5**                                **CEC Annual Convention & Expo—Boston, MA**  
Contact: CEC—[conteduc@cec.sped.org](mailto:conteduc@cec.sped.org)
- July 7-10**                                **9th International Conference on Low Vision—Montreal, Canada**  
Contact: [www.opto.umontreal.ca/vision2008](http://www.opto.umontreal.ca/vision2008)
- July 22-27**                              **AER International Conference—Chicago, IL**  
Contact: [www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org)

**WOW—THAT IS A LOT HAPPENING!**



# CEC Awards



The Colorado Council for Exceptional Children sponsors several awards and a college scholarship annually. Check the Colorado CEC website to see if you or someone you work with may be eligible to apply! Visit the CEC website at [www.coloradocec.org](http://www.coloradocec.org) for information.

*Joe Todd Annual Service Award* – This award is an engraved plaque given to a professional or paraprofessional who has contributed outstanding service to the field of education for exceptional children in Colorado.

*Sy Wallach Direct Services Project Award* is a \$600 award for a project providing services to individuals with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. This award may be applied for individually or as a team.

*Colorado Council for Exceptional Children Scholarship* for undergraduate or graduate study. This scholarship is available for any college student, certified teacher or other professional working with/or planning to work with students in the field of special education. You must be a resident of Colorado to apply.

*CEC Student Achievement Award* – Students and youth with disabilities can be recognized in 9 categories of achievement. Winners are also eligible to be nominated for the Foundation for Exceptional Children Yes! I Can Award, presented at the CEC National Convention every April.

*CEC Teacher of the Year* – This award recognizes an outstanding teacher of exceptional children/youth. The recipient of this award may be nominated for the National CEC's *Clarissa Hug Teacher of the Year Award*.



**"Let no child be demeaned, nor have his wonder diminished, because of our ignorance or inactivity, let no child be deprived of discovery, because we lack the resources to discover his problem. Let no child ever doubt himself or his mind because we are unsure of our commitment." Alan Martin**



## PARTICIPATION REQUEST

Charles Farnsworth, Megan Babkes Stellino, Stefan Ward and Jamis Perrett of the University of Northern Colorado are conducting a study to investigate the social influence on attraction to physical activity and perceived physical competence among youth with visual impairments aged 5-18 regardless of the cause or severity of their visual impairment. At this stage it is possible for students with visual impairments from all over the state to participate via mail, internet and by telephone contact with the researchers. Participation will entail the completion of a survey available in either hard-copy Braille or via email attachment for use with screen reading software. Students in this age range with disabilities in addition to visual impairments are invited to participate as well as students with multiple disabilities provided that they are able to independently read and respond to the survey items and to participate in a telephone interview with one of the researchers.

If you are a parent of a student with a visual impairment and your child would be willing to participate in this study please contact the researchers. If you are a teacher with students who you think may wish to participate in the study, please ask the student's parents to contact the researchers so that materials can be sent to them. For information on how to participate in this study please contact Charles Farnsworth at [charles.farnsworth@unco.edu](mailto:charles.farnsworth@unco.edu) or by telephone at 970-373-3360

### Sports Education Camp (SEC) - Summer 2006



The fourth annual SEC was held June 11-16, 2006, in Colorado Springs on the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind Campus. Eighteen athletes participated in the camp. Each athlete was introduced to a variety of sports, including judo, goalball, swimming, tandem cycling, track and field, karate, and wrestling. We were fortunate to have coaches from the Olympic Training Center coach both wrestling and judo. Dian and Jan Megarry taught the Tae Kwon Do, and the USA Women's goalball coach Ken Armbruster, with team members Jen Armbruster and Robin Theyoung, ran the Goalball Clinic.

The remaining events were run by TVIs Ann Marie Jansen, Donna Keale, Jim Olson, and Coach Louis Tutt. We also had wonderful volunteers who helped to get athletes to the right venue, kept them hydrated, and basically did anything we asked. These valuable people included Kyle Thomas, Ashley Fisher, Victoria Guin (from the Colorado Women's goalball team, Kristen Millerov (from the Michigan women's goalball team), and Tim Dornbrock (from the Florida men's goalball team). A huge thanks to all the volunteers who are made excellent role models for our athletes.

The United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) also helped support the SEC financially as well as by providing an intern, Mary, to help with whatever we needed. Thanks to Mark, Ryan, Keith Michalkewicz and Brian Anser for the many trips to the park on the tandem cycles. A special thanks to all who encouraged athletes to attend. It is an awesome experience for all involved to watch athletes learn a sport and find a passion to connect to the sport. Everyone went home tired and exhausted, but is still talking about what we did.



Stay tuned for next year since we are investigating fencing as the new sport. Come watch, stay for the fun, and see your athletes participate in an exciting camp.

For more information contact Donna Keale, CSDB Outreach, 719-578-2251

## IMPORTANT RESOURCES IN OUR STATE!



● **The Colorado Talking Book Library** provides free library service to Colorado's print-disabled. Both the school and the individual can have separate accounts with CTBL. We are responsive to students who need books for school by filling a school request within 24 hours if it is specifically called in to the library. While we do not provide textbooks, we do have the other books that students need for English or research in other classes. We also have the only circulating collection of Braille books in the state. The collection includes many Print-Braille titles which are good for students just learning Braille with sighted people. For more information contact 303-727-9277 and speak with a Reader Advisor.

● **Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D)**, created in 1948, is a nonprofit organization whose volunteers record textbooks for students who are blind, visually impaired or physically challenged. The Rocky Mountain Unit, created in 1951, is located at 1355 S. Colorado Blvd., Ste. C-406, Denver. Our volunteers record textbooks for students attending k-12, college and graduate school. We record textbooks from 8am to 8pm Monday through Friday. We offer individual memberships to students for \$100 per year the first year, and \$35 per year from then on. This membership allows the student to order up to 35 audio textbooks per year. We offer school memberships for \$350, \$500 or \$950 per year, offering teachers the ability to order audio textbooks for their students during the year. Nationwide we serve over 150,000 students and continue to grow and serve. Please check out our website at [www.rfbd.org](http://www.rfbd.org). If you would like a presentation, information, or interested in volunteering, please call Betsy Boudreau, Executive Director at 303-692-9213 or email her at [betsyrfbd@qwest.net](mailto:betsyrfbd@qwest.net)

● **The Radio Reading Service of the Rockies (RRSR)** is a volunteer based, audio information service for Colorado's blind, visually impaired, and print handicapped citizens. Children's programming is available, as well as, newspapers and magazines that can be used for school assignments. English and Spanish language programming is provided. Schools and individual students may register with RRSR. Audio services include: broadcasts on the Secondary Audio Programming (SAP) of Rocky Mountain PBS, pre-tuned radios, Information-On-Demand Telephone Reader System, live broadcast via telephone, live streaming and podcasts at [www.rrsr.org](http://www.rrsr.org), and broadcasts on some local cable channels. All services and equipment are provided at no cost. For more information call 303-786-7777 or 877-443-2001.

# Resources and Materials

- **Book Port Webcasts**—If you missed the American Printing House's (APH) interactive webcasts on using the Book Port, the eight presentation are now available on demand on the APH website. To access these webcasts go to: [www.aph.org/advisory/webcast.html](http://www.aph.org/advisory/webcast.html) and click on the link that reads "Go to the Webcast Archive."
- **Dialogue**— Is now a bimonthly publication. Published by Blindskills, Inc., the magazine's purpose is to empower people experiencing vision loss to adjust to a different life situation and to achieve their goals. **DIALOGUE** is available in large print, Braille, cassette, diskette and e-mail formats. Call 800-860-4224 or visit [www.blindskills.com](http://www.blindskills.com)
- **WVATS**—" *Technologies for Easier Living*" is a new publication produced by the WVATS (West Virginia Assistive Technology System) Tech Team located with Easter Seals in Wheeling. This guide features assistive devices for daily living with phone numbers and web addresses to find these devices. There is also a page devoted to web sites and phone numbers of various assistive technology resources. For more information call the WVATS core office at 800-841-8436 or the Northern Panhandle Tech Team at 800-677-1390.
- **MedMaster Eye Book**—" *Ophthalmology Made Ridiculously Simple*" by Stephen Goldberg and William Trattler provides vital materials for the non-ophthalmologist, with emphasis on common disorders, diagnosis and management, and referrals. The book is 82 pages in length with 72 illustrations and includes an interactive CD, as well as video clips of common ocular surgical procedures. For more information, contact MedMaster, PO Box 640028, Miami, FL 33312; phone: 800-335-3480; email: [mmbks@aol.com](mailto:mmbks@aol.com); web: [www.medmaster.net](http://www.medmaster.net). The cost of the book is \$19.95. *Editor Note: We have this book in the DB lending library.*
- **Got a Sweet Tooth?**—Sweet Tooth has chocolate Braille candy bars for sale. Each bar measures 4 x 6 1/2 x 1/4 inches and weighs 4 ounces. They come in 6 different sayings: Happy Birthday, Love You, Thank You, Have A Nice Day, Merry Christmas, and Happy Holidays. Each bar has a saying in Braille, with the greeting written in cursive above it. Chocolate selection includes white, milk, and dark. Plain bars cost \$2.25 each; bars with rice crisps or nuts cost \$2.50 each. Shipping and handling costs are \$6.95 for one to six bars; \$11.95 for seven to twelve bars. Contact Sweet Tooth, 32 Vinton Road, Rochester, NT 14622; phone: 585-544-1853; email: [judydavis12@rochester.rr.com](mailto:judydavis12@rochester.rr.com) Checks or money orders only.
- **IDEA Reauthorization Resource**—There is an online resource for school districts and parents about how the reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act provides for students with disabilities enrolled in private elementary and secondary schools. A document entitled *Questions and Answers on Serving Children*

*with Disabilities Placed by Their Parents at Private Schools* is available at [www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html)

2742; email: [apha@pbd.com](mailto:apha@pbd.com); web: [www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org)

- **Free Guide for Science Instruction**—The Chabot Space and Science Center and the California School for the Blind in Fremont recently published the curriculum, *Explore It After School: Technology and Science for Students with Visual Impairments*, which is based on Techbridge, the after-school science program that was launched in 2000 by Chabot Space and Science Center in order to engage girls in technology and science and later was adapted for students with visual impairments. The guide is available for free download from [www.techbridgegirls.org/ExploreIt.html](http://www.techbridgegirls.org/ExploreIt.html). For more information contact: Techbridge, Chabot Space and Science Center, 10000 Skyline Blvd., Oakland, CA 94619; phone: 510-336-7332; email: [techbridge@chabotspace.org](mailto:techbridge@chabotspace.org).
- **Handbook on Treating Cataracts**—*Fighting Global Blindness: Improving World Vision through Cataract Elimination*, by Sanduk Ruit, Charles C. Wykoff, D. Phil, and Geoffrey C. Tabinis, is about the experiences of a team of surgeons as they perform cataract operations throughout the developing-and the developed world. This step-by-step manual shares the team's story and demonstrates how surgical procedures can be simplified and made more efficient, accessible, and less expensive. This 186-page spiral-bound book is available for the cost of \$45. For more information contact: American Public Health Association, 800 I Street NW, Washington, DC 20001; phone: 202-777-
- **Online Glaucoma Guide**—U.S. News & World Report in conjunction with Johns Hopkins has recently launched an online guide to glaucoma. Visit the guide at [www.usnews.com/usnews/health/eye\\_vision/glaucoma/glaucoma.about.htm](http://www.usnews.com/usnews/health/eye_vision/glaucoma/glaucoma.about.htm)
- **Blind Psychologist's Memoir**— *To the Left of Inspiration: Adventures in Living with Disabilities* is written by Katherine Schneider, a woman blind from birth. She writes about the activities of her daily life, like talking to children about disabilities, traveling, going to church, and working. This is available through online book sellers and in accessible format through [www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)
- ***Making it Work: Educating the Blind/Visually Impaired Student in the Regular School***, by Carol Castellano, copyright 2005, Information Age Publishing, Inc., is available in regular print and on CD: Print: \$25 plus shipping and handling; CD: \$25. The book may be ordered from: Information Age Publishing at [www.infoagepub.com](http://www.infoagepub.com); The National Federation of the Blind at [www.nfb.org](http://www.nfb.org) (click on Aids & Appliances, Books, Education); Parents of Blind Children-NJ at [www.blindchildren.org](http://www.blindchildren.org).
- Tanni has one copy of the ***ACVREP Study Guide for the Low Vision Therapist Examination*** and the ***ACVREP Orientation and Mobility Certification Examination Study Guide*** in her office. They can be checked out for two week periods by contacting her at (303) 866-6681 or [Anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us)

**The National Center on Low-Incidence Disabilities (<http://nclid.unco.edu/joomla/>)  
is pleased to announce the following field testing opportunity:**

### **Unique Field Testing Opportunity for Students who are Visually Impaired**

Recent studies indicate that less than 12 percent of students who are visually impaired have skills in Braille. Yet the majority of experts in this field claim that Braille skills are paramount for persons with visual impairment to acquire literacy in reading. An official with the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) argues that literacy cannot be gained through listening alone.

**Do you know the literacy level of your students who are visually impaired?** You have a unique opportunity to find out if your students have the literacy required for life and work in the community. This is not just simply translating some academic test items into Braille. This is the first time that test items are realistically applied to the daily life and work activities of persons who are visually impaired.

**About the CASAS Braille Field Test** The Braille field test was developed by CASAS in cooperation with the American Printing House (APH). It began in 2005 and will continue through the 2006-2007 school year. The development of the Braille reading items involved extensive field review and feedback from programs for the visually impaired. The test items consist of twenty-five multiple-choice questions. The items reflect realistic daily life and work scenarios of persons who are visually impaired.

**Who can participate?** Youth age 16 through adults who are blind/visually impaired from secondary education, State Schools for the Blind, secondary diploma, adult education, community-based organizations and adult rehabilitation programs can participate in the field test.

**How will I know if my students qualify?** Test items are written in contracted or Grade 2 Braille. Students functioning at CASAS skill levels A through D (third to ninth grade equivalent in reading) may participate in field-testing.

**What accommodations are allowed?** Frequent breaks and field-testing a few items at a single time period are allowable testing accommodations. Students do not need to complete every test item if they do not know the answer. Teachers who are visually impaired may receive the administrative directions electronically.

**What materials need to be completed?** CASAS provides participating agencies with Braille field-test booklets, Braille answer sheets with special marking stickers, test administration directions, and a pre-paid UPS label to return all field-test materials to CASAS. Interested parties can request a preview copy of the test items.

To sign up or to request more information, please e-mail your contact information to Dr. Virginia Posey at [gposey@casas.org](mailto:gposey@casas.org) or [power@casas.org](mailto:power@casas.org).

Feel free to visit CASAS at their website - <http://www.casas.org/casasnewweb/Index.cfm>



# COLORADO CONNECTIONS

- ✿ We were sad to say goodbye to **Dana Lien** who had been a TVI/O&M in Adams 12 for many years. Dana and her husband moved to Madison, WI in July. We wish her all of the best!
- ✿ Yay! Another CO AER member—**Barbara Seever** has joined AER.
- ✿ Congratulations to **Elaine Karns** who earned a CDE Renewal Certificate of Braille Competency! YAY! To **Evie Roll** and **Barb Galgano** for earning Braille module renewal hours over the summer months. Congratulations to **Beth Myers**, new brailist in Delta, and **Deb Carlisle**, TVI in Denver, for passing the Colorado Braille Mastery Test over the summer months! Thanks to summer braille proctors **Lucia Hasty**, **Brenda Shepard**, and **Sarah Sonnier** for their assistance!
- ✿ Colorado was well represented at the AER International Conference held in Snowbird, Utah on July 14-19. In attendance were: **Barbara Adams, Tanni Anthony, Trina Boyd Pratt, Hui-fen Chen, Paula Conroy, Deborah Dunaway, Chuck Farnsworth, JC Greeley, Katherine Hegemann, Donna Keale, Loana Mason, Madeline Milian, Bill Muir, Pam Newton, Jim Olson, Jamis Perrett, Phyllis Penniston, Carol Puchalski, Lou Tutt, Dean Tuttle, Naomi Tuttle, Patty Wagner, and P. Stefan Ward**. There were also Colorado folks representing MagniSight, LevelStar, and Kaiser Permanente. Colorado folks on the speakers and poster session agenda included: **Tanni Anthony, Hui-fen Chen, Paula Conroy, Chuck Farnsworth, Loana Mason, Madeline Milian, James Perrett, Lou Tutt, and P Stefan Ward**. **Lou Tutt** was acknowledged in the program for his work on the Awards Committee and he was the Master of Ceremony for the Awards Luncheon, looking very fine in a tux!
- ✿ Thanks to the CAER Board, UNC, and CSDB for co-hosting a CO reception at the AER Conference. Many people stopped by to enjoy the treats and to catch up with CO colleagues.
- ✿ Thanks to the following COMSs who met over the summer to begin draft work on a workload formula guideline document for Orientation and Mobility. More information will be shared at the State of the State session on Thursday night of our Fall Conference on Visual Impairment (October 5th): **Tanni Anthony, Trina Boyd Pratt, Nancy Cozart, Ann Gillmeister, Elaine Karns, Nancy Knight, Pat Lewis, Cheryl Liedich, Jim Olson, and Brenda Shepard**.
- ✿ Many thanks to the CIMC staff who worked diligently over the summer months to ensure braille and large print books were available to students at the beginning of the school year: **Ann Hicks, Tammy McCullough, Burt Haas, Donice Fennimore, and Christina Pfaff**.
- ✿ **Kay Alicyn Ferrell** was appointed associate director for Policy Research for the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) in June 2006. In her position as associate director for Policy Research, Dr. Ferrell will continue teaching graduate students at UNC and will maintain a residence in Greeley, Colorado.
- ✿ "Way to Go!" to **Patty Wagner** who was recently recognized by ACVREP as being ACVREP certified in all three areas (Low Vision Therapy, Orientation and Mobility, and Vision Rehabilitation Therapy)! Patty is one of 15 people who have these three national-level certifications!!!
- ✿ Wow! **Wendy Schlageter** gave a knock-out presentation on technology for students with visual impairments for her classmates of the AT course. She is a major technology wizard and has so much to share! Wendy also received a grant from the Aurora School District to develop a tactile library for

students with visual impairments in her district ... very exciting stuff!!

- ✿ We had an exceptionally great turn out at the 2006 Summer Institute on Deafblindness, which was held in Breckenridge on August 7-9, 2006. Close to 90 people attended. TVIs who attended included: **Barbara Adams, Tanni Anthony, Robin Bremner, Glenda Nash Buscarello, Nancy Cozart, Louise Gettman, Ann Gillmeister, Ann Hicks, Ann Marie Jansen, Donna Keale, Nancy Knight, Charlotta Morgan, Bill Muir, Nancy Knight, Jim Olson, and Wendy Stoltman.**



✿ Congratulations to **Kristen and Boyd Lavergne** on the birth of their new son Jared Roy LaVergne! Jared was born on August 14 and weighed in at 8 lb. 1 oz!

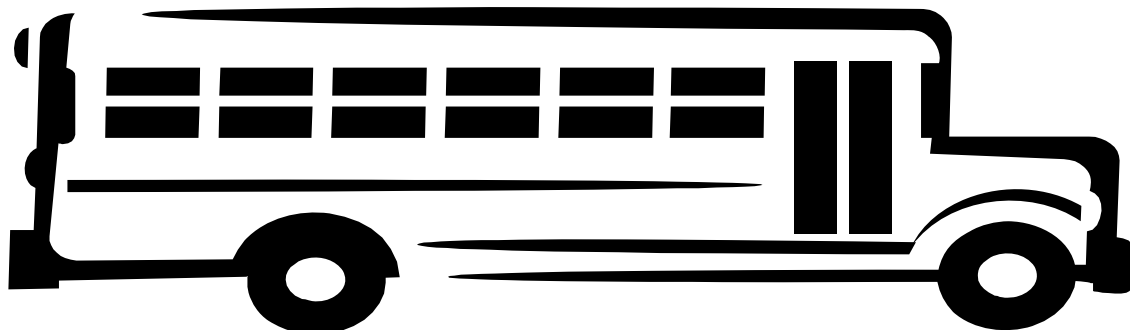
- ✿ YIPPEE for **Mike Plansker, Deb Carlisle, and MeLinda Carter** who all passed the PLACE Test on Visual Impairment for their official CDE licenses as TVIs in Colorado! We are so very proud to have these folks fully licensed and employed!
- ✿ Our best get well wishes to **Elaine Karns** who is mending a broken ankle and great thanks to the wonderful **Val Vickarelli** who is helping Poudre out in Elaine's absence.
- ✿ Welcome to New CDE State Director of Special Education **Dr. Ed Steinberg!** Dr. Steinberg, former Special Education Director of Cherry School District, began his new role with CDE on July 1.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

**Parents:** If you are moving out of state or your child is graduating, please be in touch so we can remove you from our newsletter mailing list. Also, please be in touch with your address changes if you move to a new Colorado location.

**TVIs and O&MSs:** If you have any changes in program contact information over the summer months, please help us out and send Tanni these changes.

**Thanks to everyone for helping to keep our mailing list up to date!!!**





# Colorado Braille Mastery Test and Renewal Modules

Information about the Colorado Braille Mastery Test is available on the Blindness/Low Vision webpage (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>). All Colorado TVIs are mandated to demonstrate braille competency in reading and writing literary braille, if they are providing braille instruction. It is recommended that district braillists demonstrate braille competency, if they have not earned a Library of Congress Braillist Certificate.

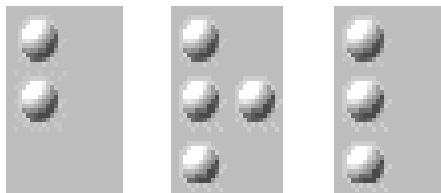
To schedule the test, please contact Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or <[anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us)>. Test proctors can be used for outside the greater Denver area. Otherwise the testing site is at the Colorado Department of Education in Denver.

Once an individual has passed the Colorado Braille Mastery Test, there is a mandated one time renewal process. Within a five year period, the person must pass 15 clock hours of renewal modules. The renewal modules are designed to be taken in hour long increments. They can be taken in a group or individual setting. They must be proctored for grading purposes. There are four CDE approved proctors:

**Lucia Hasty**

719-577-4710

[Lhasty2@earthlink.net](mailto:Lhasty2@earthlink.net)



**Brenda Shepard**

303-340-0504 (28539)

[brendas@ctech.aps.k12.co.us](mailto:brendas@ctech.aps.k12.co.us)

If you are overdue on earning a CDE Certificate of Braille Competency or a renewal certificate and you are working with a braille student(s), please contact Tanni or a braille proctor to schedule the test or renewal modules. Letters will be mailed to Special Education Directors in mid-October about possible issues of ECEA compliance

**Sarah Sonnier**

970-254-5414

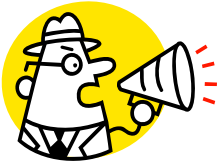
[ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us](mailto:ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us)

**Julie Wetzstein**

303-216-6124

[jwetzst@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:jwetzst@jeffco.k12.co.us)

Please contact Tanni if you have any questions about the Colorado Braille Mastery Test or the renewal process. There is also an explanation document on the CDE webpage on blindness/low vision: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>



# Who Ya Gonna Call?



2006-07

**Barbara Adams** at (970) 945-7088 or [badams@mtnboces.k12.co.us](mailto:badams@mtnboces.k12.co.us)

- \* Representation of Western Slope TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition meetings

**Rita Albright** at (303) 447-5001 (ext. 8772) or [rita.albright@bvsd.org](mailto:rita.albright@bvsd.org)

- \* Site Co-Coordinator for Northern Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

**Tanni Anthony** at (303) 866-6681 or [anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us)

- \* Braille Competency Testing / Braille Certification Renewal
- \* CDE web pages on Blindness/ Low Visio, Deaf-blindness, and Orientation and Mobility,
- \* Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project
- \* Eligibility of Learners with Visual Impairments
- \* Job Clearinghouse – positions within Colorado
- \* Learning Media Assessments / Plans for Learners with Visual Impairments
- \* State Conference on Visual Impairment / Annual O&M Conference
- \* Teacher Licensure Questions
- \* *What's Happening Out There* newsletter
- \* Vision Coalition

**Betsy Boudreau** at 303-692-9213 or [betsyrfbd@qwest.net](mailto:betsyrfbd@qwest.net)

- \* Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D)

**Paula Conroy** at (970) 351-1651 or [paula.conroy@unco.edu](mailto:paula.conroy@unco.edu)

- \* UNC's Teacher Training Program on Visual Impairment

**Nancy Cozart** at (303) 734-3090 or [NCozart@lps.k12.co.us](mailto:NCozart@lps.k12.co.us)

- \* Representation of Metro TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition meetings
- \* Metro Region TVI Meetings

**Diane Cullen** at (719) 578-2205 or [dcullen@csdb.org](mailto:dcullen@csdb.org)

- \* CSDB's Library (School for the Blind )

**Julie Deden** at (303) 778-1130 or [jdeden@cocenter.org](mailto:jdeden@cocenter.org)

- \* Colorado Center for the Blind

**David Dawson** at (303) 786-7777 x 101, [rrsr@rrsr.org](mailto:rrsr@rrsr.org)

- \* Radio Reading Services of the Rockies

**Donice Fennimore** at (719) 578-2198 or [dfennimore@csdb.org](mailto:dfennimore@csdb.org)

- \* Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Coordinator

**Kay Ferrell** at (970) 302-1995 or [kay.ferrell@unco.edu](mailto:kay.ferrell@unco.edu)

- \* National Center on Low Incidence Disabilities (housed at UNC)

**Louise Gettman** at (719) 578-2189 or [lgettman@csdb.org](mailto:lgettman@csdb.org)

- \* School for the Blind Infant Toddler Program
- \* Family Learning Seminar – Blind Strand

**Jennie Germano** at (719) 578-2116 or [jgermano@csdb.org](mailto:jgermano@csdb.org)

- \* CSDB Early Education

**J.C. Greeley** at (303) 337-9732 or [jandkgb@aol.com](mailto:jandkgb@aol.com)

- \* Anchor Center for Blind Children

**Roger Harwell** at cell: 719-648-6844; CSDB: 578-2201, or [r.harwell@juno.com](mailto:r.harwell@juno.com)

- \* Adult Role Model Team

**Lucia Hasty** at (719) 577-4710 or [lhasty2@earthlink.net](mailto:lhasty2@earthlink.net)

- \* Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

**Ann Hicks** at (719) 578-2195 or [ahicks@csdb.org](mailto:ahicks@csdb.org)

- \* Braille or Large Print Materials for Students
- \* CIMC Loan Materials
- \* Annual CIMC registration of students with Visual Impairments
- \* Braille Transcribers Mentoring Project

**Samantha Hoffman** - (303) 216-6251 or [shoffman@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:shoffman@jeffco.k12.co.us)

- \* Representation of Colorado Chapter of AER at Vision Coalition meetings

**Elaine Karns** at (970) 225-6720 or [elk@psdschools.org](mailto:elk@psdschools.org)

- \* Coordinator of the Annual Snow Shoe Weekend

**Donna Keale** at (719) 578-2251 or [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org)

- \* CSDB Summer Enrichment Program
- \* Sports Camp
- \* CSDB Short Term Placements

**Carol Love** at (303) 776-8674 or

[love\\_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us](mailto:love_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us)

- \* Northern Region TVI Meetings
- \* Representative of Northern Region TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition Meetings

**Debbie Macleod** at (303) 727-9277 or

[Macleod\\_d@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Macleod_d@cde.state.co.us)

- \* Colorado Talking Book Library

**Karla McKeachie** at (719) 578-2201 or

[kmckeachie@csdb.org](mailto:kmckeachie@csdb.org)

- \* Representation of CSDB TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition meetings

**Judy Mumford** at (719) 234-1360 or

[jmumfrd@d20.co.edu](mailto:jmumfrd@d20.co.edu)

- \* Representation of Southern TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition meetings

**Kevin O'Brien** at (970) 874-7607 or

[kobrien@mcsd.k12.co.us](mailto:kobrien@mcsd.k12.co.us)

- \* Western Region TVI Meetings

**Jim Olson** at (719) 578-2283 or [jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org)

- \* Site Co-Coordinator for Southern Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

**Vicki Pearson** at (970) 490-3248 or

[vpearson1@yahoo.com](mailto:vpearson1@yahoo.com)

- \* Site Co-Coordinator for Northern Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

**Susan Pfaffenhauser** (719) 578-2102 or

[spfaffenha@csdb.org](mailto:spfaffenha@csdb.org)

- \* CSDB Board of Trustees' meetings

**Gina Quintana** at (303) 866-6605 or

[quintana\\_g@cde.state.co.us](mailto:quintana_g@cde.state.co.us)

- \* Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project

**Tim Richard** at (719) 578-2173 or [trichard@csdb.org](mailto:trichard@csdb.org)

- \* CSDB's Transition Program Lead Teacher

**Amber Rundle** at (303) 326-3074 or

[amberr@ctech.aps.k12.co.us](mailto:amberr@ctech.aps.k12.co.us)

- \* Site Coordinator of the Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

**Brenda Shepard** at (303) 340-0520 (ext. 28539)

or [brendas@ctech.aps.k12.co.us](mailto:brendas@ctech.aps.k12.co.us)

- \* Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

**Bonnie Snyder** at (719) 322.3854 or

[bonniels21@adelphia.net](mailto:bonniels21@adelphia.net)

- \* CDE Regional Technology Assistance

**Sarah Sonnier** at (970) 254-5414 or

[ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us](mailto:ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us)

- \* Site Coordinator for Western Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic
- \* Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

**Lou Tutt** at (719) 578-2200 or 2201 or [ltutt@csdb.org](mailto:ltutt@csdb.org)

- \* CSDB School for the Blind

**Jon Vigne** at (719) 578-2177 or [jvigne@csdb.org](mailto:jvigne@csdb.org)

- \* CSDB Outreach Services (D/HH and B/VI)
- \* Scheduling Assessments and Evaluations

**Julie Wetzstein** at (303) 216-6124 or

[jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us)

- \* Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor
- \* Coordinator of CDE Mentor Project
- \* CAER President

**Chloann Woolley** at (719) 499-6886 or

[cwoolley@wpsdk12.org](mailto:cwoolley@wpsdk12.org)

- \* Southern Region TVI Meetings



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