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WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE!

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

October—November 2006

"Want to Play?"

By Tanni Anthony

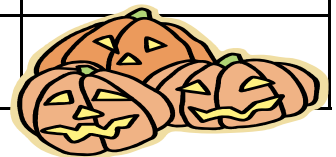
During the annual meeting of the American Printing House for the Blind, those in attendance were treated to an amazing evening presentation by author, entertainer, and disabilities-advocate Tom Sullivan. He talked about his time at Perkins School for the Blind, meeting of Helen Keller, and his early life as a kid who spent weekends in his home neighborhood wanting desperately to have friends. His parents, thinking it was Tom's for his protection, built a high fence around the backyard. For Tom, it kept him "in" and away from the neighborhood activities.

Tom yearned for life outside his fence, for friends his age. One day, new neighbors moved in and Tom heard words that changed his home life. Through the fence came a voice, "Want to play?" Mr. Sullivan still speaks those words in a manner that moves himself to tears, as well as those listening to his story. I think we all remember those kids who filled our childhood with fun and mischief and just how important they were.

We all want and need friends. This is one of the reasons that the Summer Enrichment Programs offered on the campus of CSDB is so very important for our students who live in all areas of the state. The dates and themes of the Summer Enrichment Programs are posted in this newsletter. It is not too early to get these dates on the calendar.

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Bits From Bonnie

Bonnie Snyder

BonnieLS21@Adelphia.Net

Wow! It sure was great to see so many of you at the State Conference. And it was a really good conference, too. I thought all the presenters did an outstanding job. We sure have a lot of creative and hard working TVIs in our state!

It was neat to be able to chat with many of you, and the subject of this article is the result of a discussion I had with Rita Albright and Janis Mountford. We sat together during a lunch break and Rita said that she thought it would be a good idea to have a technology loan bank. We could inventory all the technology for the visually impaired we have in our various districts and make that inventory list available to all the TVIs in the state. We realized that some districts might have trouble allowing the equipment to be loaned, but Janis had a really good idea about that: The equipment could still be listed and if a teacher sees a device on a list from a district that won't loan it out, the teachers can arrange to get together to try the device out. Also, if a student is using that device, he/she can show the other teacher and/or student how it works.

I would guess that we all have equipment from years ago, but it wouldn't be a bad idea to see if it still works and maybe it can still be used. This idea is still in the discussion stages, so if you have thoughts you would like to add to this, please send them my way and let's see if we can get this off and running this year.



Families Connecting with Families

July 13-15, 2007 ~ Omaha, Nebraska

A national conference covering all aspects of raising and educating a child with visual impairment, the 2007 FCF conference will include:

- ▲ Interactive sessions and panel discussions to address parents' most pressing interests: Braille, social skills, college preparation, getting a first job, children with low vision or additional disabilities and much more
- ▲ Networking with other families and professionals
- ▲ Daycare for children
- ▲ Activities designed especially for teens
- ▲ Fun for the whole family: a trip to Omaha's world-class Henry Doorly Zoo and
- ▲ a pioneer-style Family Cookout with campfires, music and stories of the Wild West



For more information, visit www.napvi.com

It would be great to have many CO families attend this wonderful event!

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!!!





TRANSITION INFORMATION

CSDB Transition for the Blind Program By Judy Polhemus, Job Coach and Tim Richard, Transition Teacher

The first quarter 2006 for the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind, Transition for the Blind has been quite successful. There are eight students who reside in the dorms at CSDB, three of whom are currently experiencing apartment living in the beautifully renovated Brown Hall single and double unit apartments. They are learning how to share house work, single living, as well as the joy of communicating with a roommate, organizing cupboards, cooking and the like. Students have been food shopping independently for the past several weeks. The shopping trip is the responsibility of each of the students, from planning recipes, to making a shopping list, to setting up transportation to and from the market, to utilizing customer service in the store. Yes, there have been some microwave meals and calls for pizza delivery but students are also experimenting with family recipes in addition to ideas they get from internet recipe searches.

Currently, there are two students taking classes at Pikes Peak Community College (PPCC). One student is enrolled in the Computer Information Systems (CIS) Area Vocational Program (AVP) and is doing very well, as reported by his instructor who loves having him in class. He is taking classes Monday-Friday mornings for 2 ½ hours each morning. Another student is enrolled in a World History class as well as a Biology class at PPCC. These classes relate to his work study position at the City of Colorado Springs Forest Service, where he works part-time tracking the city tree planting inventory. He hopes his skills with the forest service here will carry over to a job in Fort Collins with the Parks and Recreation department there. He plans to reside next year and enter the CSU Fort Collins program for Wildlife Biology. For classes and work, students either take the city bus or utilize Metro Mobility, a para-transit, door to door service in Colorado Springs, equal to Denver's Access-a-ride. We have one student employed with Worley Enterprises, part-time, earning above minimum-wage as a receptionist. This is this student's last year in the transition program and he hopes to secure a full-time position with Worley Enterprises, possibly in their upcoming telemarketing division. Another student is in his third week, in a work-study at Magnisight Inc. Here he assembles power switches for CCTVs, a job he loves to do. We have another student working at Downtown Dogs in Colorado Springs serving hot dogs and fries for the locals. He helps set up and gets the restaurant ready for the slew of customers during the day. The community is very welcoming and encouraging to these students and it is such a thrill to see the boost of self esteem the students get when they receive their paychecks. All students in the work-study program receive minimum wage pay at their jobs. We also have a work enclave of three students on campus folding towels for the CSDB laundry, and for a Paloma Day Spa located downtown. These same students also work at Domino's Pizza folding pizza boxes twice a week.

Career readiness and job skills are every day lessons in transition. Students continue to enhance their resumes, gather relevant data for their personal portfolios, work at mastering time sheets, and other work ethics related issues. We use the Life Centered Career Education curriculum and find it a great resource for instruction in occupational preparation, as well as daily living skills and personal social skills. In the DLS unit, students are expanding their knowledge of personal finances management, along with cooking, general citizenship and leisure activities. In the personal-social skills section, the class is discovering new avenues of self-awareness, social responsibility, decision making and independent living.

Every Friday, we have Life 101 class, presented by community merchant who is visually impaired and work-study employer, Ken Ball. This is a high energy, physical class that focuses on improved self-esteem and achieving goals. Students have broken wooden boards, shredded their limitations (that they wrote on paper), and danced, jumped and shouted weekly. This has been a fantastic outlet for expressing fears and successes through life's journey. The teaching and support staff in transition see their share of tears and frustration along with all of the successes shared here. Becoming an independent adult is difficult for every individual and more so when vision loss is an added component. As the school year progresses, we anticipate more challenges which in turn will produce continued personal growth among the transition students.

National Center on Low-Incidence Disabilities

NCLID has *FOUR* New Websites!

NCLID Home (<http://nclid.unco.edu/joomla>) – They have revamped our current NCLID website to reflect information-age and search-based formats.

- ▲ **Latest News** contains recent updates on information pertinent to the special education and low-incidence fields such as the recently released IDEA 2004 Federal Regulations, the latest Webinar from CEC, and upcoming conferences.
- ▲ **About NCLID** describes the National Center, who they are, and their missions. It also contains statistical information regarding students with low-incidence disabilities and upcoming courses offered by NCLID.
- ▲ **Resources** is their repository of information that contains practitioner and parent based information such as our Toolbox, Psychoeducational Assessment, Pop-Up IEPs.
- ▲ **Archived Newsletters** contains copies of last year's NCLID NewsLine information.

Research Clearinghouse Website (<http://nclid.unco.edu/rch/>) – NCLID has begun a website designed specifically for the support and development of collaborative research within the field of low-incidence disabilities. Here you can find information on current research and grant projects the Center has conducted and is currently pursuing, as well as information about other research happening across the field. If you would like to use this website as one way to disseminate the findings of your research, please send a summarized copy of the study to Dr. Ann Sebald (ann.sebald@unco.edu). This information will be reviewed by the NCLID Leadership Team, and approved submissions will be posted.

Research Clearinghouse Community (<http://nclid3.unco.edu/tappedin/>) – NCLID is working to establish an online community of researchers within the field of low-incidence disabilities. To support this effort they have developed a website that allows people to meet online for collaborative projects while accessing easy-to-use technology collaboration tools. Researchers can access information from their virtual office and hold private meetings while they meet other researchers and grant writers who are interested in collaboration. You can sign up for a FREE account!

NCLID Job Bank (<http://nclid.unco.edu/jobs/>) – Due to the overwhelming response to our Job Bank, NCLID has created a separate website designed specifically for this purpose. Be sure to visit this site often for the most up to date job postings on positions relating to the education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, and those with significant support needs. If you would like to post a job announcement to the *NCLID Job Bank*, please send an electronic copy of the job description and contact information to Dr. Ann Sebald (ann.sebald@unco.edu).

NCLID Listserv - One of the missions of NCLID is to carry out and support research within the field of low-incidence disabilities. To facilitate this mission, NCLID has created a nation-wide listserv. We have more than 1,000 members who are associated with the education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, and those with significant support needs! If you would like to use the listserv to support your research, please send a summarized copy of the study proposal along with a copy of the letter that would be sent out on the listserv. This information will be reviewed by the NCLID Leadership Team and approved submissions will be sent out on the listserv. Proposals or questions can be sent to Dr. Ann Sebald (ann.sebald@unco.edu).

Colorado Braille Mastery Test and Renewal Modules

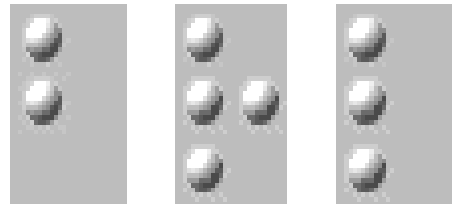
Information about the Colorado Braille Mastery Test is available on the Blindness/Low Vision webpage (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>). All Colorado TVIs are mandated to demonstrate braille competency in reading and writing literary braille, if they are providing braille instruction.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

To schedule the test, please contact Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or <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. More information about renewal modules is on the next page.

There are four CDE approved proctors:

Lucia Hasty
719-577-4710
Lhasty2@earthlink.net



Brenda Shepard
303-340-0504 (28539)
brendas@ctech.aps.k12.co.us

“Effective use of braille is as important to the blind as independent mobility, knowledge in the use of adaptive technology, and the core believe that equality, opportunity and security are truly possible for all people who are blind.”
Bob Ney

Sarah Sonnier
970-254-5414
ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us

Julie Wetzstein
303-216-6124
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>

Renewal Certificate for Braille Competency Information on Braille Modules

Once an individual has earned a CDE Certificate of Braille Competency, there is a one time renewal process. Within a five year period from the date the original CDE Braille Competency certificate was issued, the individual must earn 15 clock hours of CDE approved braille modules. A module cannot be repeated more than once to count toward the 15 needed clock hours. Currently there are 16 CDE-approved braille modules, which include ten literary braille modules, and one introductory-level modules apiece in Spanish, German, French, Chemistry, Algebra, and Geometry.

Each module involves the following activities: (a) a warm-up activity for the literary units; *Find the Errors*, is included for practice, but is not counted in your score, (b) an interline braille passage activity, (c) a transcription activity of approximately one page of braille, and (d) the need to proofread your work. The passing score of each unit is two or fewer errors in the transcription activity and two or fewer errors in the interlining activity.

One hour is allowed per module. One clock hour is earned for each module successfully completed.

Individuals taking the clock hours should bring the appropriate sized braille paper, a braille-writer, a braille erasure, and braille-reference materials. The modules must be completed with a braillewriter. The literary modules should be completed with 8.5 by 11 inch braille paper with a 28 cell line. All other modules should be completed with 11 by 11.5 inch paper with a 40 cell line.

The four approved CDE braille module proctors are:

Lucia Hasty	719-577-4710	Lhasty2@earthlink.net
Brenda Shepard	303-340-0504 (28539)	brendas@ctech.aps.k12.co.us
Sarah Sonnier	970-254-5414	ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us
Julie Wetzstein	303-216-6124	jwetzst@jeffco.k12.co.us

Arrangements to take a module(s) should be made with these individuals during the school year. There is no cost to taking a module.

A clock hour certificate will be issued after each module is completed successfully. These clock hours can be used toward teacher re-licensure. It is the responsibility of each person to maintain a copy of the certificates and a record of the specific units completed, and how many hours they have completed. When 15 hours have been completed, a renewal certificate of braille competency will be issued

Project Funding Opportunity

Request for Proposals will be available
February 5, 2007 on the CSDB website

www.csdb.org/about/grant.html

The **KENNEDY TRUST FUND** at the **Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB)** will begin accepting applications to fund new or existing projects serving **Colorado** children birth to 21 years of age who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing and/or Blind/Low Vision on February 5, 2007. The intent is to provide support when other sources of funding have been exhausted, are limited or unavailable. Awards will range from \$500 to \$5000.

Three funding strands are available:

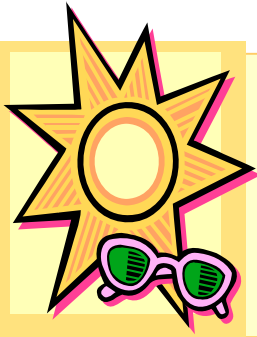
- ▲ Non-profit organizations use the *Request for Proposals from Non-Profit Organizations*
- ▲ Public school personnel use the *Request for Colorado School Districts*
- ▲ Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind personnel use the *Request for Proposals for Internal Projects Application*

(Editor's Note: These are the funds that Trina Boyd was awarded last year for her district CVI work.)

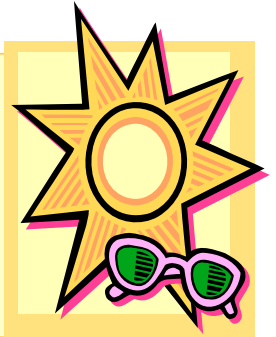
Contact Christine Vidal at 719.578.2244 or via email
at cvidal@csdb.org with specific questions.

Resources and Materials

- **Hadley School for the Blind** encourages enrolling in "Finding You Way," Hadley's tuition-free course that suggests many activities that can help elementary-school-aged children independently explore their surroundings. Although this course will not turn you into an O&M specialist, it can help you select games and activities that reinforce the orientation and mobility services your student is receiving. Successful completion of this five lessons course earns 3CUEs. This course begins by distinguishing orientation skills from mobility skills. It is full of activities you can do at school to further improve sensory, concept and motor development. It ends by describing several games that provide additional practice in fun ways. For more information call 800-526-9909 or visit www.hadley.edu
- **Sight Loss Web Site**—SightLossSolutions.org is designed to help people who have lost or are losing their sight. It includes information on access resources, high tech items, reference lists, national organizations, and a "just for fun" category.
- **Guidebook for Parents with Visual Impairment**—*Hands-On Parenting: A Resource Guide for Parents who are blind or Partially Sighted* was written by Debbie Bacon, a visually impaired mother of three adult children, and specialist in parenting by people who are visually impaired. The book provides a wide range of practical information, adaptations, and sources of information for parents who are visually impaired. The 212-page book is available in standard and large print, as well as in plain text on CD-ROM, for a cost of \$40. For more information, contact: National Resource Center for Parents with Disabilities, Through the Looking Glass, 2198 Sixth Street, Suite 100, Berkeley, CA 94710; phone 800-644-2666; email: tlg@lookingglass.org; web site: www.lookingglass.org
- **Book on Treating Pediatric Ophthalmic Patients**—*Visual Development, Diagnosis, and Treatment of the Pediatric Patient*, edited by Robert H. Duckman and written by clinicians, integrates the basic concepts of visual development with clinical diagnosis and treatment of pediatric vision disorders. The 400-page book, which includes more than 200 illustrations, is available in print paperback for a cost of \$79.95. For more information, contact Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 530 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106; phone: 216-521-8300; email: orders@lww.com; web site: www.lww.com/product/?0-7817-5288-4.
- **Brochure on Eye Safety**—*Don't Play Games With Your Eyes*, a sports safety brochure, was recently released by Prevent Blindness America. The brochure includes statistics from the Consumer Product Safety Commission, which estimates that there are 40,000 incidences of sports-related injuries in the United States every year. The free brochure is available in print from Prevent Blindness America. For more information, contact: Vision Learning Center, Prevent Blindness America, 211 W. Wacker Drive, Suite 1700, Chicago, IL 60606; phone: 800-331-2020; email: info@preventblindness.org; website: www.preventblindness.org/vlc



Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind Presents:
SUMMER ENRICHMENT
2007



Please put these dates on your calendar! Parents, this is a perfect opportunity for your child to meet friends from across Colorado and to learn new skills.

June 3 rd - June 8 th	Colorado Adventures
June 3 rd – June 15 th	Independent Living 2 Week Camp
June 10 th -June 15 th	Compensatory/Tech Camp, Evening O&M
June 17 th -June 22 nd	SPORTS EDUCATION CAMP (SEC)
June 24 th - June 29 th	Independent Living 1 Week Camp
June 24 – June 29 th	Cheyenne Mountain Zoo

***Sports Education Camp:** SEC empowers blind and visually impaired youth by teaching them basic sports skills and activities. The "Junior" camp, for 10-12 year old athletes, and the "Senior" camp, for 13-16 year old athletes.

Update on CSDB Outreach By Donna Keale (dkeale@csdb.org)

Short Term Placements: 3 day O&M - there are 5 students so far. The activities include touring the bus at the Metro bus barn, 2-3 trips to downtown Colorado Springs on the bus and one trip to the Walmart on Platte to purchase ingredients to make personal pizza's for dinner. This is our first attempt at answering the TVIs & O&Ms who want Short Term Placements but can't afford for their students to miss a week of school.

Other Outreach News: Is there a COMS interested in picking up a student on private contract in Alamosa? Services are 2 - 4 hours a month. (BOCES requested a range of services). Contact Donna, if interested.

APH - was a very productive set of meetings. All schools are having issues in the area of recruitment and retention of employees. Many states are offering on campus housing to attract teachers and several states have gone towards more Outreach programs and services. All Outreach Coordinators are being given a copy of the new curriculum from Perkins on training educators, schools personnel such as aides, dorm staff, and regular education teachers in the area of VI, O&M, LV etc. Each module comes with a Power Point CD. There will be several copies to share across the state, the Outreach Program, CDE and the CIMC will all have copies to share.



Music Therapist Back at CSDB

By Julie Novak

It is great to be back at CSDB as the Music Specialist after leaving for a year to pursue my Master's Degree in Music Therapy at Florida State University. I am thankful for all of the previous experiences I had while teaching at CSDB as well as my interactions with TVIs statewide. My experiences in Colorado enabled me to gain more from my studies and internships while attaining my Music Therapy Degree. I am thankful for all of the previous experience I had at CSDB and with other TVIs from around the state which helped compliment my Music Therapy degree immensely. As you probably already know, Music Therapy is a profession that uses music to address non-musical goals in physical, emotional, cognitive, and social areas for individuals of all ages. During my college experience I had the opportunity to work in a pediatrics unit of a hospital, a refuge house for domestic abuse, a K-12 school for students with special needs, and a school for students who are at-risk. The entire time I was at Florida State University I kept thinking how I can't wait to get back and share some of these ideas with colleagues, and especially use these concepts with my students.

Since my graduate work, the most important lesson I have tried to practice at CSDB is collaboration with the other professionals. Research indicates that music has been used in teaching positive academic, motor, social and verbal behavior. Speaking from my experience at CSDB, students who are blind and visually impaired tend to have an affinity towards music. Music can, therefore, compliment the Expanded Core Curriculum in many wonderful ways. Here are few examples of ways that music compliments the program for students functioning at all levels at CSDB:

Orientation and Mobility: Songs and movement are used to teach spatial concepts, body identification, directionality and fine/gross motor skills.

Social Interaction Skills: Songs can be used as a prompt or cue to teach appropriate conversational tools such as introductions. Music is also used as a reinforcement to teach desired behaviors such as a preschooler sitting in a seat for the first few days of school.

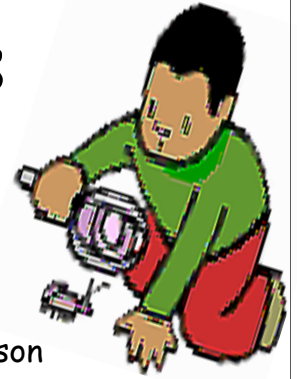
Recreational and Leisure Skills: Transition students participate in local community choirs or go to concerts given throughout the community.

I feel very lucky to be back in Colorado, teaching at CSDB and being able to collaborate with the most accomplished professionals in the vision field. I look forward to seeing and working with of all you during our State Vision Conference .

Editor's Note: We are thrilled to have Julie back where she belongs!



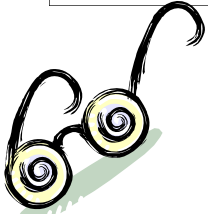
Low Vision Clinic News



<u>Region</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Site Coordinator</u>
Metro	January 25-27, 2007	Amber Rundle
Northern	February 23-24, 2007	Rita Albright and Vicki Pearson

Western Region LVE Clinic

By Donice Fennimore



The Low Vision Clinics for 2006-2007 school year got off to a great start at Grand Junction. The two-day clinic was completely full (one last minute cancellation) with the team seeing eleven students. There were seven TVIs involved and 1 classroom teacher from Norwood attended with her student. Thanks to **Robin Bremner, Julie King, Tracy Mosbarger, Phyllis Jordan, Kevin O'Brien, Angela Sims, and Sarah Sonnier**. New Mexico had representatives at the clinic to observe; they are in the process of starting low vision clinics in their state.

Students seen ranged in age from 1st grade to juniors in high school. Several low vision devices were dispensed and the students and parents appeared to leave with a better understanding of their/their child's eye conditions.

A new experience for many occurred during the clinic. It just so happened that two students with albinism, approximate same age, from different districts were scheduled back to back. When they met an instant bond was between them and between their parents. It was like the students immediately had an understanding that they were not the only ones out there with this diagnosis. It was a really "cool" thing to see.

Thanks to **Sarah Sonnier** and all the staff for making the first clinic a super one.

Southern Clinic

An update on how the Southern Clinic will be featured in the next newsletter. Due to weather conditions in Colorado Springs, two out of the three day clinic had to be rescheduled. Thanks to everyone's flexibility!



September 27, 2007

Dear Tanni:

The Low Vision Team did a wonderful job during our September 22 and 23 Western Slope Clinic. Eleven students were seen from various school districts in our part of the state. We received positive verbal feedback from several parents and other teachers who brought their child/student to the clinic. Everyone was impressed by the expertise, information, and devices that were presented at the clinic. We want to personally thank team members Dr. Tom Theune, Jim Olson, and Donice Fennimore.

Grand Junction did not place a single large print order for textbooks through the CIMC for this school year as a result of previous clinics. All of our low vision students are now using hand held or electronic magnification to access their educational materials. This has enabled them to access print in their school environment, as well as in real-life situations, without the need for VI teachers to run interference by providing large print. Our primary role with many of these learners has been to provide follow-up training in using both near and far devices recommended by the clinic to enable them to become independent learners. The minimal cost of these devices in comparison to the cost of large print materials is saving the Department of Education a substantial amount of money.

This year we also have three high school students who are approaching driving age. Dr. Theune's expertise in low vision driving and his sensitivity in addressing this emotionally loaded issue with young teens and their parents were outstanding. Both students and parents appreciated his honesty, advice, and referral to other resources if he felt driving was a possibility.

Above all, as a result of the clinic, our students are now able to access information in the educational environment that was unavailable to them in the past. We hope that it will continue to be funded at a state level, because of the tremendous impact it has for students, their literacy, life long learning, and access to visual information.

Thanks again for continuing to support the clinic financially and philosophically at the state level. The Low Vision Clinic team continues to be an outstanding group of professionals and we are very appreciative of the service they provide our students. It is a model program and we are fortunate to have this valuable resource in our state.

Sincerely,

Sarah Sonnier

Phyllis Jordan

Angela Sims

Cc: Dr. Ed Steinberg; Terri Connolly; Dr. Tom Theune; Jim Olson; Donice Fennimore



DOTS OF INTEREST BRAILLE UPDATE



IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE!

The National Braille Challenge returns to Colorado, and it is coming one week earlier!

On Friday, **January 19th**, the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind will be hosting the Preliminary Round of the **National Braille Challenge**, a two-level contest to recognize the best Braille students in the country! This is the third year we have hosted this contest, and we are planning a full day of competition and fun!
ALL LEVELS OF SKILL AND KNOWLEDGE ARE WELCOME!

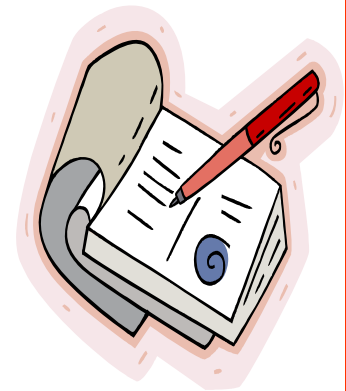
We will have a Rookie Contest again for Braille students whose skill level is not yet up to their grade level. And students can choose to compete at an easier grade level but will not be eligible for the final round of competition in Los Angeles next June. And don't forget: If you just cannot get here on January 19th, you can administer the tests to your Braille student and then send them in to the Braille Institute for scoring.

So make a plan to bring the National Braille Challenge to your students—and don't forget to practice that proofreading!

Look for pre-registration information in early December.

For more info, contact Randy Witte at CSDB: rwitte@csdb.org

(719) 578-2204



Braille Leaders Community Service Awards

The purpose of the Braille Readers Are Leaders program is to help blind and visually impaired children become good Braille readers. Good readers have confidence in themselves and in their abilities to learn and to adapt to new situations throughout their lifetimes. Furthermore, Braille literacy is one of the highest predictors of success in later life for blind students. It's estimated that about 85 percent of blind and visually impaired people who are employed are Braille readers.

The Braille Readers Are Leaders program generates enthusiasm, raises expectations, and instills pride as children come to realize that reading Braille is fun and rewarding. The program has four components: a national contest for students K-12; a community service award program for students grades 6-12; a recognition program for schools for the blind; and a preliteracy program for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

The Braille Readers Are Leaders Contest is a national contest for Braille students, kindergarten through twelfth grades. From November 1 to February 1, parents, teachers, or librarians help students keep track of the number of Braille pages they read of extracurricular material. All students receive recognition for their participation, and cash prizes and other awards are given to the top students in each category. Students who read 500 or more Braille pages for the contest also get special Honor Roll ribbons.

For more information, go to http://www.nfb.org/nfb/NOPBC_braille_readers_are_leaders.asp



◇ **Eye-Cycle:** Eye-cycle is a non-profit, tandem cycling club, which provides an opportunity for the visually impaired to ride tandem bicycle. Most rides take place on Sunday mornings from May through October. Usually rides begin at 9 AM and end at about 1 PM. They depart from Harvard Gulch City Park, Illif & Logan, where the city allows the tandems to be stored. The gate address is 2349 S. Logan Street., The schedule of 10 rides is developed in the spring and rides are not scheduled on holiday weekends or at the times of other major rides. Captains are recruited to volunteer for at least two rides per season. You needn't have tandem experience, as one of the leaders will prepare you beforehand. However, if you have a tandem and what to share your bike, that would be great! Also, if you know a visually impaired person who would like to ride, please share this invitation. For more information contact: Gc52kc@earthlink.net or leave a telephone message at 303-477-6446 *Thanks to Barb Galgano for sending in this information.*

◇ **Washington State School for the Blind (WSSB)** has a new service that is being offered on the WSSB web site (www.wssb.wa.gov). The school is developing a section titled Video Clips on Blindness Tips that is targeted toward parents, those working with the blind, and individuals that are blind or visually impaired and need assistance with various aspects of CORE Competencies for the blind. As of the time of this publication there should be two video clips with informational printouts and power point presentations available. The two clips are on: folding money and pouring liquids. They are hoping to have a large collection of these available over the next few years.

◇ **Reasonable Accommodations Document**—The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission recently issued a new fact sheet addressing the reasonable accommodation obligation under the American with disabilities Act. It is available in the web site, www.eeoc.gov.

◇ **InfantSEE**—InfantSEE is a public health program designed to ensure that eye and vision care becomes an integral part of infant wellness care to improve a child's quality of life. Under this program, American Optometric Association member optometrists will provide a comprehensive infant eye assessment within the first year of life as a no cost public health service. For more information, please subscribe to their InfantSEE Newsletter by going to www.infantsee.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:

<i>Patrick Chapman</i>	<i>Wendi Kispert</i>
<i>Colorado Department of Education</i>	<i>Colorado Department of Education</i>
<i>1560 Broadway, Suite 1450</i>	<i>201 East Colfax Avenue</i>
<i>Denver, CO 80202</i>	<i>Denver, CO 80203</i>
<i>Phone: 303-866-6780</i>	<i>Phone: 303-866-6815</i>
<i>E-mail: chapman_p@cde.state.co.us</i>	<i>E-mail: Kispert_w@cde.state.co.us</i>



IMPORTANT!

We have JOB OPENINGS!!

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

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.
- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Instructor (1 FTE).** Contact Kathy Grebbs of Adams 50 School District (north of Denver) at (720) 542-4537.

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
- ✓ There may be two other southern district openings—if you are interested in this area of the state, please contact Tanni at (303) 866-6681 for more information.

Corrections!



Donna Keale's phone number is (719) 578-2251. It was listed incorrectly in a couple of places in the August-September WHOT newsletter.

Tanni lost her mind – she knows better and she thought she corrected her evil twin's obsession to give the wrong name of Kristin Lavergne's husband in the last newsletter. It is Doyle! So, happy second baby to Kristin and Doyle. I am rerunning the announcement in this edition so if it makes it into Jared's baby book, he will have a correct version of his father's name.



Calendar of Events

2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006 2006

- November 3** **Northern TVI Regional Meetings - Longmont (DLS)**
Contact: Carol Love - love_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us
- 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
- November 16** **Metro TVI Meeting—Littleton from 2:00-4:00**
Contact: Nancy Cozart—(303) 347-4126 or ncozart@lps.k12.co.us
- December 1** **Northern TVI Regional Meetings - Longmont**
Contact: Carol Love - love_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us
- December 7** **Vision Coalition - Highline Building**
Contact: Tanni Anthony - Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- December 7,8,9** **CSDB Short Term Placement—Technology Session, JAWS & Braille Note**
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- December 8** **Last Day to Order a Braille or Standard Large Print CSAP Test**
- December 12** **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102

More Calendar of Events

2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007	2007
January 9, 2007										
January 16 - Feb 16										
January 17										
January 17-19										
January 19	<i>Date Change</i>									
January 21-26										
January 25-27										
February 2										
February 4-9										
February 7-March 9										
February 7-March 30										
February 12 - 23										
February 13										
February 13										
February 15-17										

More Calendar of Events

2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007

- 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** **Northern TVI Regional Meetings - Longmont**
Contact: Carol Love - love_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us
- March 2-4** **CTEVH Conference— Santa Clara, CA**
Contact: www.ctevh.org
- March 13** **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting—CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102
- March 21 - April 13** **CSAP Test Administration Period - All remaining grades/content**
- April 2-27** **11th Grade "Online" Alternate Administration Window**
- April 10** **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting — CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102
- April 12** **Vision Coalition - Centretech Conference Room**
Contact: Tanni Anthony - Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- 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 20** **Western TVI Regional Meeting - TBD**
Contact: Kevin O'Brien - kobrien@mcsd.k12.co.us
- April 22-27** **CSDB Short Term Placement—Technology JAWS & Braille Note with GPS**
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org

More Calendar of Events

2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007

- April 25** **CO ACT Initial Test Date**
- April 25-28** **NBA Professional Development Conference—Colorado Springs, CO**
Contact: www.nationalbraille.org
- May 4** **Northern TVI Regional Meetings - Longmont**
Contact: Carol Love - love_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us
- May 9** **CO ACT Make-up Test Date**
- May 10,11,12** **CSDB Short Term Placement—O&M and Public Transportation**
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- May 16** **Southern TVI Meeting—CSDB**
Contact: Chloann Woolley—ccwool5@yahoo.com
- June 1-3** **Family Learning Retreat - CSDB**
Contact: Diane Covington - dcovington@csdb.org
- June 3-8** **Summer Enrichment—Colorado Adventures—CSDB**
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- June 3-15** **Summer Enrichment—Independent Living (2 weeks)—CSDB**
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- June 10-15** **Summer Enrichment—Compensatory / Tech Camp -CSDB**
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- June 12** **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting — CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—719-578-2102
- June 17—22** **Sports Education Camp—CSDB**
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- June 21-23** **CO Assistive Technology Conference - Denver**
Contact: www.AssistiveTechnologyPartners.org.
- June 24-29** **Summer Enrichment—Independent Living (1 week) —CSDB**
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org

More Calendar of Events

- June 24–29** **Summer Enrichment—Cheyenne Mountain Zoo—CSDB**
Contact: Donna Keale—dkeale@csdb.org
- July 2-6** **Lions Club International Annual Convention—Chicago, IL**
Contact: 630-571-5466 or www.lionsclub.org
- July 13-15** **Families Connecting with Families—Omaha, NE**
Contact: www.napvi.org
- September 25-30** **Deafblind 14th International World Conference - Perth, Australia**
Contact: www.dblink.org
- November 9-11** **Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference—Montreal, Canada**
Contact: www.canada.aerbvi.org
- November 29-Dec 2** **Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference—St. Pete Beach, FL**
Contact: www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

- April 2-5** **CEC Annual Convention & Expo—Boston, MA**
Contact: CEC—conteduc@cec.sped.org
- July 7-10** **9th International Conference on Low Vision—Montreal, Canada**
Contact: www.opto.umontreal.ca/vision2008

TVIs:



*Remember that **December 8th, 2006** is the **LAST** date you can order a standard large print (18 point font) and/or a braille CSAP test. These special test formats must be ordered through your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC).*

Many thanks!

Vision Coalition Meeting

September 14, 2006

The minutes of each Vision Coalition meetings are published in the next newsletter. This was the first opportunity to publish these minutes. Some events have happened since this meeting.

Persons Present: Barbara Adams (TVI representative from the western region), Tanni Anthony (CDE State Consultant on Visual Impairment), Nancy Cozart (TVI representative from the metro region), Ann Hicks (Director of the CIMC), Carol Hilty, Superintendent of CSDB, Samantha Hoffman (CAER representative), Donna Keale (School for the Blind Outreach), Carol Love (TVI representative from the northern region), Karla McKechnie (TVI representative from the School for the Blind), Judy Mumford (TVI representative from the Southern Region) and Lou Tutt (Principal of the School for the Blind).

Persons Absent: Kay Ferrell (National Center for Low Incidence Disabilities)

Acronym Glossary:

CAER – CO Chapter of the Association of the Education & Rehabilitation of the Blind Visually Impaired

CDE – Colorado Department of Education

CIMC – Colorado Instructional Materials Center

CSDB – Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

NCLID – National Center on Low Incidence Disabilities

TVI – teacher certified in the area of visual impairment

UNC – University of Northern Colorado

VC – Vision Coalition

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Barbara Adams who is representing the Western Region

Carol Love who is representing the Northern Region

Karla McKechnie who is representing the CSDB School for the Blind

Cathy Smyth who is representing Anchor Center and CSDB Early Intervention VI Program

Donna Keale who is representing the CSDB Outreach Program

PROGRAM UPDATES

Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

Our first meeting will be held on Tuesday September 19th in Aurora, CO. Paula Conroy will be presenting on the use of para-professionals in the classroom. The hope is to give some information and have plenty of time for dialogue. We also will finish planning for our second semester meetings, go over topics from Vision Coalition and fulfill a request from author Ann Cunningham to TVIs to gather information about using her book with young visually impaired children.

The second meeting will be in Littleton in November. Ann Hicks from CIMC and Lou Tutt from CSDB will lead discussion on current issues. Ann Cunningham will also stop by to get a bit of feedback on her book, *Sadie Can Count*. We also will be getting information out about this year's Low Vision Clinic to be held in early 2007.

There are a handful of TVI/O&MS openings in the metro area. JeffCo currently has an opening for a TVI/O&MSs. This is a high need district with 22 braille readers. There may be a small contract FTE in Adams 14. Anchor Center has a full time FTE opening.

North Region (Carol Love)

We had our first meeting on Friday, Sept. 8th. The meeting dates for the 2006-2007 school year will be (Fridays) Nov. 3rd (Janice Schmidt to present on basic Daily Living Skills to our group), Dec. 1st, Feb. 2nd, and March 2nd, and May 4th. We are planning to host an evening social for parents on the subject of basic Daily Living Skills/Skills for Independence (date to be announced later) that will be coordinated by Janice Schmidt. Teresa Szymanowski and Elaine Karns will be coordinating the annual Snow Shoe weekend (February 17-19, 2007). The group discussed the protocol regarding CIMC textbook ordering policy for Braille and large print book requests. Our group was feeling that the protocol for ordering textbooks in February may be too premature. Often times, master schedules for teachers are set by principals in July with school boards making their approvals in June/summer. Thus, the TVIs feel hard pressed for placing orders for textbooks with the CIMC in February, as that may change come summer (a different teacher is teaching the class, different textbooks are added or deleted to your list, etc.).

Another topic for discussion that came up was regarding the email discussion surrounding service provider hours (does this include preparation time, para time, etc.).

Our group would like further clarification on what “service provider hours” entails. Our group would also like to know the status of the movement toward a statewide IEP, as well as the role of the TVI/O&M specialist regarding differentiated learning/tiered model of programming. Yet another item that came up was the possibility of having a state conference on the topic of technology or on the topic of the older academic student (especially regarding teaching chemistry or higher level math).

Southern Region (Judy Mumford)

First of all, Congratulations to Kristen and Doyle Lavergne, a TVI in District #20, on the birth of her son of Jared Roy! More details to follow.

The Southern region used to meet on a monthly basis throughout the school year but voted last May to meet 7 times this academic year, deleting our December and March meetings, due to conflicting school calendars around winter breaks, spring breaks, and CSAP testing that takes place in March. We try to have a presentation, discussion, or specific training at each of our meetings. The topics for this year’s meeting will be determined at our first meeting.

The first meeting will be on September 20, 2006, 12:30-3:00 p.m., Lions Conference Room/CSDB campus lead presenters: D20 Judy Mumford, Melissa Shular, (Kristen Lavergne will be on maternity leave). Topics: (1) data collection, documentation, etc., (2) How people list service times on IEPs (a follow-up discussion referencing the ‘DPS issues’ emails that have been written recently), and (3) Low Vision Clinic appointments.

Dates of other meetings during the 2006-07 school year include: October 18, November 15, January 17, February 21, April 18, and May 16. Chloann Woolley and Jim Olson have updated our distribution list for the 2006-07 school-year and it has been expanded to include our Douglas County colleagues and those staff members of the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) who wanted to be included.

The Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic will be held on October 26-27-28, 2006. There are openings for 6 kids per day, beginning at 8 a.m. – ending at 5:30 p.m. each day. (18 total)

Western Region (Barbara Adams)

Mesa: As far as program updates, we welcome Angela Simms as a new teacher on board, to work with Sarah Sonnier and Phyllis Jordan. She is doing a great job! We’ve also got two new instructional assistants (Ed Rudolph and Shelli Rauen) that are doing a great job and great learners! Ed has a background in technology and is a great resource in that area and Shelli is quickly catching on to braille production through Duxbury! This feels like the first time in 10 years that we have had adequate staff to meet the needs of the kids.

The Western Slope is hosting the first LV Clinic of the year and it looks like all 12 slots will be filled. Sarah and staff have been organizing the Grand Junction Clinic. Robin Bremner, from Moffat and NWBOCES will be bringing a student for the first time.

Sarah shared that the National Braille Press has a good resource for computer braille code called Computer Braille Code Made Easy in both print and braille format. Although it is not an end all resource, it is pretty straight forward and I have given the braille copy to a student as a resource and he really enjoyed teaching himself over the summer. It would be worth purchasing it and adding it to teachers' shelf of resources.

Mtn. BOCES: With schools starting from Aug. 15th through Sept. 5, it seems like we've been going to school for quite a while but still seems like a brand new year. Julie King has returned half-time, for her second year, while continuing to take the UNC on-line courses. Dorothy Cladas has returned for her 3rd year as instructional assistant in Salida and Barbara Adams has hired a new instructional assistant in Rifle, Nancy Hogenson. Both Dorothy and Nancy are wonderful, diligent, fast learning members of the TVI/O&M teams and we are so lucky to have them in our districts.

Delta/Montrose: Student numbers have remained remarkably consistent with both Delta and Montrose. Beth Myers, the newly certified brailist in Delta is off and running! Kevin is working on organizing a western slope TVI meeting for this school year which will hopefully include a half day inservice on technology training. Kevin will contact Bonnie Snyder to explore what possibilities her outreach services could provide in this area. One topic Kevin has suggested in the past is a workshop which could compare and contrast Jaws and WindowEyes. We will be looking at meeting sometime in March or April.

UnBOCS: Tracy Mosbarger has increased her hours with the UnBOCS to meet the service needs of a new student. She is also coming to the Western Region LVE Clinic with another New Mexico colleague. New Mexico is designing their low vision clinic structure and would like to see the Colorado model.

Anchor Center for Blind Children and CSDB Early Intervention News (Cathy Smyth)

The summer and fall of 2006 are providing a variety of exciting experiences and challenging changes for Anchor Center for Blind Children. Our new building is closer than ever with our official groundbreaking on September 14 from 2-4 p.m. Updated drawings with incredible features have the staff and families anxious for next fall's move to Stapleton!

www.AnchorCenter.org has the same address, but a new look! New features on the website include monthly resources for families and teachers that tie into our Story of the Month for both our Preschool and Toddler program and a direct donor page.

The Anchor Center has received a grant from the Lillis Foundation to offer practicum experiences for college students to understand the world of very young children with visual impairments. Intensive hands-on experiences in center-based programming, home visits, outreach and hospital visits under the supervision/mentoring support of a professional who works with young children with visual impairments will be provided for the lucky recipients as well as a stipend. We look forward to providing these opportunities for career development within early childhood therapies/special education and the education of visually impaired study topics. *Housing: Carol Puchalski has asked for our help in thinking about housing possibilities for interns. Samantha volunteered to take this request to the next metro TVI meeting to see if people have some ideas and/or might be willing to host a visiting interim.*

A conversation with Louise Gettman at CSDB revealed the exciting changes happening in their Early Childhood Education Department. Welcome to Jennie Germano, who will be leading the newly developing Preschool at CSDB. Louise is excited about the four day a week. V.I. Preschool that will be located next to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Preschool, and the increased opportunities there will be for Parent Education and Support.

The changes in Colorado's Early Intervention Services this summer have kept all of us busy as we look for our niche regarding the federal and state guidelines for Results Matter. Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers with Blindness and Deafblindness have unique needs as they grow and develop that require additional evaluation processes, such as Functional Vision Evaluations, that we will continue to provide. We are all committed to high quality services for the birth-to-three population, fulfilling our mission of teaching life skills to young children with visual impairments; and providing services to their families.

Speaking of providing services to families, Anchor Center for Blind Children is proud to announce the hiring of Karen Roberts as our new Family Resource Coordinator! Some of you may know Karen as the Family Specialist for the Com-

bined Vision and Hearing Loss Project, and she is a former Anchor Center Parent. We are very excited to welcome her as part of our team and we will miss Edie Smith as she pursues her new career as a TVI for Douglas County Schools.

Results Matter: Colorado has selected three early intervention assessment tools that must be used on all birth-to-three children. The tools are: *AEPS*, *Creative Curriculum*, and *High/Scope*. There are concerns as to how best to adapt these tools for young children with sensory impairments. Anchor Center and the Colorado Home Intervention Program will soon be meeting with the Results Matter staff to discuss these concerns. Tanni will be a part of the discussion on young learners with vision impairment and deafblindness. A question is whether IEP goals generated from the assessment tools are mandatory; there is a concern as to whether these goals align with the needs of some learners with sensory disabilities

Follow-Up Notes from Tanni on Results Matter: The Results Matter project plan currently focuses on participation of the Colorado Preschool Program, Part C (infant-toddler intervention), and Part B - Section 619 (preschool special education). The outcomes system in development includes means to: (a) measure short-range child progress during the early childhood years using authentic on-going assessment systems; (b) measure long-range outcomes such as linkages to CSAP outcomes or graduation/transition rates; (c) measure program and classroom quality and to analyze data linking program quality indicators to child outcomes; (d) measure and analyze consumer feedback including parent engagement in their child's program, parent perceptions of progress, parent ratings of program quality, and kindergarten teacher perceptions of child readiness. Tanni will provide more information about Results Matters in future WHOT newsletters.

CAER (Samantha Hoffman)

After a lovely summer, the CAER board members met for the first time on September 12, 2006. The board regularly meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. If members have questions, concerns, or suggestions it is great to get information to a board member before the monthly meeting so that issues can be brought up at that time. The current board members include: Julie Wetzstein- President; Elaine Karns- Past President; Samantha Hoffman- Vice President; Barb Galgano- Secretary; Ann Hicks- Treasurer; Trina Boyd-Pratt- Board Member; Melissa Shular- Board Member; Amber Rundle- Board Member; Tim Richards- Board Member; Louise Gettman- Board Member; and Janet Anderson- Board Member

During the summer many members of CAER attended the International AER Conference held at Snowbird, in Utah. For those who attended, CAER is providing some partial reimbursement. Our Colorado chapter was also the only chapter of AER to host a hospitably room at the Conference. It was well received and reported to be quite enjoyable.

In addition to the support provided for conference attendance, CAER regularly considers requests by members for grants in a variety of areas. This fall we are providing some travel support to two families of students who received honorable mention awards in the APH Insights Competition. We would also like to remind members that financial assistance is available for those who are renewing or applying for initial licenses with ACVREP. If members are interested in receiving partial reimbursement for licensure from CAER, they should submit a request along with a copy of an initial or renewed license to Ann Hicks. Grant requests should also be submitted to Ann for board consideration.

This fall, the board is active in supporting the annual Fall Vision Conference to be held on October 5-7th. As in previous years, CAER is a co-sponsor of the conference with CDE. This year the conference is featuring in-state talent. In order to show our appreciation for our local presenters, CAER will waive conference fees for those sharing their talent. CAER would also like to support our colleagues that have to travel a great distance to attend professional development activities. Our colleagues that travel over 150 miles will be receiving a stipend to offset costs incurred. We look forward to a well attended conference that will feature Anna Swenson on Saturday.

There are many other CAER projects in the works for this year. Amber will share information to the field regarding our new website at the fall conference. We are planning meeting with legislatures at some point during the year as well as participating in another session of Common Ground. CAER welcomes input and is off and running for the 2006/2007 school year.

UNC (Paula Conroy)

UNC is off to a strong start this semester with 35 active students. We currently have a term position open in the area of visual impairment. This is such good news. We hope to hire someone for the Fall of 2007. Kay Ferrell will spend 70% of her time working for AFB this year. We are excited for her. There are 11 UNC students working as TVIs in Colorado. This is a great increase over past years. There is still room on the multicultural grant for new students so please have anyone who is interested email Paula at paula.conroy@unco.edu.

Colorado School for the Blind (Lou Tutt and Karla McKechnie)

We are off to a busy school year! The administration and new staff had a chance to experience our new climbing wall to help build team work. On September 7, CSDB had a "Back to School Night" for the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind. We had about 10 families attend for the School for the Blind. Our CSDB Parent Goal Ball team played the students for Back to School Night as well as Homecoming. Our 2006 Homecoming weekend was a success with Volleyball, Goalball and Football games. The School for the Blind has a student on the football team this year.

We have many new staff and position changes to share! *Rhynette Rivera* is the new Multi-Handicapped classroom teacher *Karla McKechnie* has moved to the Elementary classroom in the School for the Blind. *Jan Megarry* is teaching Adaptive Technology. *Amy Gunning* is the interim Pre-School teacher for the School for the Blind. *Donna Keale* is full time Outreach, although she is not on the School for the Blind staff, she is housed in the School for the Blind Adams Bldg. *Jim Olson* is full time Low Vision Therapist and runs the Low Vision Clinic which is housed in the School for the Blind. *Diann Cullen* is the new librarian for the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind. She is being mentored by Marianne Arnold and Janet Rose. Diann will be at the School for the Blind 2 days a week. We also have parent volunteers assisting in the library.

We have 53 students in the School for the Blind from Pre-school thru Transition. This year we have 3 new students (all elementary), 7 seniors, and 4 students attending Palmer HS. The CSDB Transition Program is under the supervision of Reid Hunt and lead teacher Tim Richard. The Transition program is a combined program for the School for the Blind and the School for the Deaf. Staff at CSDB is implementing the new web-based IEP program, Clarity. Jan Megarry and Randy Witte are staff trainers.

The students at the School for the Blind had a great time on a fishing trip with the Sertoma Club on Wednesday September 13th. The Sertoma Club has expressed an interest in doing some recreational activities with Colorado Springs' area kids who are blind/visually impaired. For more information, contact Randy Witte at rwitte@csdb.org

Our CSDB Board meetings are now on the 2nd Tuesdays of each month at 5:00PM. The Board will be acting on the staff Braille Competency Policy at the September meeting. The CSDB Board of Trustees met this past Tuesday and reviewed the Braille Competency policy at CSDB. The policy is still in progress. The Board has seven members. Dr. Laura Douglas has replaced a vacancy on the board. Laura is a past employee of both CSDB and CDE. She currently is the Special Education Director of Lewis Palmer. The Board of Trustees is addressing the implementation of the strategic plan. One area of interest is the area of recruitment and retention.

The School for the Blind is partnering with a performing arts school, CIVA. The students will do a service learning project at CSDB.

The preschool program for children who are deaf/hard of hearing has been certified. It is anticipated that the preschool program for children who are blind/visually impaired will be certified shortly.

CSDB Outreach (Donna Keale)

Donna is now full time outreach. She is also working on Short Term Placements (STP). Information about the dates and themes of the STPs were posted in the August-September *WHOT* newsletter. The short term placements involve three days of onsite time. The first one will be offered in October and will focus on bus travel. There is a minimum need of two students in order for the STP to happen.

Discussion: It was asked whether a STP come to a region. For example, could the northern region host a STP if they find a location etc? This might be a good next direction once this model has been tried over the course of the year.

Donna and Bill Muir on working on some orienteering activities for Colorado based on a presentation at the AER Conference. We are in hopes of incorporating the activities with a short term placement or summer activities. If this works we would like to do some traveling activities throughout the state. Anyone interested in helping?

The STP in December is Technology and Bonnie will join the team. Depending on what people are requesting this STP could be 3 days intense training on what is needed throughout the state. Your recommendations are welcome.

Summer 2007 Schedule is waiting on CSDB approval and should be posted in the next *WHOT* newsletter.

CDE – Tanni Anthony

CSAP and CELA Braille Format: Tanni Anthony, Sarah Sonnier, and Nancy Cozart will be heading back to the National Braille Press in early December to review the braille format CSAP tests with NBP staff and a representative from CTB McGraw Hill, our CSAP test publisher. Tanni has also been asked by the CDE Assessment Unit to organize a review of the braille format CELA tests.

Discussion: Nancy Cozart brought up the need for more training on braille format. It was suggested that we provide information to our teachers on braille formats based on information that we gather from Lucia Hasty about what might be the best resources to share.

CIMC (Ann Hicks) (Update and Discussion Items)

Ann shared the following data on the number of books that have been order, thus far, for this current school year.

Orders sent in by May 31, 2006

Total Books	628	
Shipped Complete	545	87%
Shipped Partial	24	04%
Purchased	40	06%
Sourcing	01	0%
Returns	01	0%
APH	12	12%
Inks	04	01%

There were four instances where a book could not be braille because it was not accompanied by a needed inkprint. This is an improvement from last year, but still means that four books were not in the hands of students who needed them at the beginning of the school year.

The CIMC has received 233 new book orders since the beginning of the school year.

As of September 13, 2006

Total Books	861
Shipped Complete	81%
Shipped Partial	04%

Ann also developed a Q and A document for the Vision Coalition members to review. The questions were drafted as result of the input at the May 2006 Vision Coalition meeting and those generated though input of the CIMC of TVIs last spring. The Q and A document will be published in the October *WHOT* newsletter.

There have been several changes on CIMC internal communication policy since May. Ann receives a copy of all emails

sent to TVIs that confirm that an order has been received. The CIMC staff has also committed to responding to all emails and voice mails within 24 hours of a work week.

Ann is working with Tammy on developing a database for instructional materials. The purpose was to know that an order has been processed.

If an instructional aid is in good condition and is not needed anymore, it can be returned to the CIMC, though this is not expected. If the item can be used with another student, this is fine. Districts are expected to keep track of their instructional aid equipment.

The mailing list has just been updated. Any changes in addresses should be sent to Ann.

CIMC Registration of Students: The count that is sent to each of the administrative units is based on the registration count. The first Monday of January of each year is when the count is determined for each district. It does not matter if a student has moved out of district. The same is true if a student moves into a district after the January count.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The issue of recruitment and retention is on everyone's minds. The State Improvement Grant at CDE has a strong focus on recruitment and retention of other special education professionals. The SIG has provided funds for recruitment and retention of rural teachers of the visually impaired and teachers of the Deaf/hard of Hearing for the past three years. Tanni Anthony and Sheryl Muir are involved with the distribution efforts of these funds. Recruitment and retention are also the recent focus of the Commission of the Colorado Department of Education and the CSDB Board of Trustees.

Four years ago, a survey was mailed to the then working TVIs and O&MSs in Colorado with a close to 100 percent return. Data indicated that we would be facing several retirements over the course of the next 2-3 years. *Since the VC meeting, Tanni has had a chance to review the data. Since the time of the survey, we have lost through retirement, moves out of state, or career changes: 5 people in the metro region, 2 in the northern region, 6 in the southern region, and 2 in the western region. We have gained: 8 in the metro region, 2 in the northern region, 3 in the southern region, and 2 in the western region. The latest project is that at least 2-4 TVIs will retire in the next two school years.*

It was discussed that the Vision Coalition may want to focus on this topic by gathering and preparing recruitment materials and specifically targeting new people to our field.

BUDGET

The activities funding through the CDE Set Aside funds were posted in the August-September WHOT newsletter. The Vision Coalition's input was responsible for the maintenance of most projects and the inclusion of the technology consultation pilot project. Vision Coalition members were asked to continue to talk to parents and colleagues about how they are accessing funding projects and their recommendations for future projects. There will be time to discuss the 2007-08 budget at the next meeting in December.

MISSION AND MEMBERSHIP

"The purpose 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).

Membership centers on intervention and educational services of children, ages birth through 21 years. The intent is to have a workable size of membership that allow for discussion and needed work products. Persons interested in attending a meeting or a part of a meeting should notify Tanni ahead of the meeting to determine the schedule.

BRAILLIST POSITION DESCRIPTION

Over the summer months, Tanni collected a handful of job descriptions about school braillists. Thanks to Elaine Brown, Carol P---, and Nancy Cozart for sending examples to Tanni. The goal is to develop a description of a school braillist to put on the CDE Webpage on Blindness/Low Vision. We want to advertise what a braillist is and how someone who might be interested in this profession can proceed with training.

AUDITORY LEARNERS

At the May 2006 Vision Coalition meeting, there was a conversation about our true auditory learners, students who by nature of their disabilities cannot access print or braille, and they ability to participate in state and national level tests. Kevin O'Brien expressed concerns about a student of his who cannot read print or braille, but considers her primary and only reading mode as auditory. The CSAP reading test is only administered through print or braille as it is intended to measure a child's reading level. Randy Witte shared a situation where he administered an auditory version of the ACT to a student. Both Kevin and Randy wrote follow-up letters to the Colorado Assessment Unit and to the ACT headquarters and agreed to share a copy of the letter for the Vision Coalition members to read.

Next Meeting Dates: December 7, 2006 (Highline Building) and April 12, 2007 (Centretch)

Assignments for the December 2006 meeting

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
All	Electronically submit program updates to Tanni	December 1, 2006
Tanni, Carol, Nancy	Draft a description of the job of a school braillist. Send it to VC members via email for review.	October 15, 2006
Ann, Tanni	Ann will make a few changes to the CIMC policy documents; Tanni will resend the documents to TVIs and Directors of Special Education.	October 2006
Teacher reps	Continue to talk to parents and colleagues about the use and value of CDE funded projects, and activities might be good ideas for funding for the 200-08 school year.	Between now and the December 2006 meeting.

School for the Blind Update by Lou Tutt

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind has gotten off to a fast start this 2006-2007 school year. Three new elementary students were enrolled and five previous students transferred back to their home schools with support from the CSDB Outreach Coordinator as requested. At the beginning of the second quarter, we have the following:

Infants and toddlers	28	Preschoolers	4
K-12	40	Transition	12

Four of our high school students are taking classes at a local high school in Colorado Springs and doing well. The CSDB boys and girls goalball teams participated in goalball tournaments in New Mexico and Texas in October and brought back first and second place trophies. Some of our Hispanic deaf and blind students, with the leadership of one of our new para-educators, performed skits, dances and reading in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month in October. The Low Vision Program was the featured program for the CSDB Board of Trustees in October also.

Our new teachers, paras and students are adjusting nicely as we adjust our sails towards the end of the first semester!

Colorado Instructional Materials Center

Q & A's

Questions/concerns regarding CIMC from Colorado's Teachers of the Visually Impaired

Q: Why do we need to order all books before April 15 as a lot of books for the next school year are not determined by this date?

A: When the CIMC receives an order for a textbook, we first look at our data base to see if we have the book in the CIMC. If we do, then we pull the book off the shelf, check the book out to the requesting TVI, pack it in boxes, label it and mail it out. That process generally takes about two working days. If the book is not in the CIMC, it is then sourced. For books that have been brailled or produced in large print, we check the price and the time it will take to get the completed book to us and order from the best source both in terms of price, quality and timeliness. If the book has not been produced in large print or in Braille, then we must have an ink print edition of that book before we can find someone to agree to produce it for us. Without that book in our hands, we cannot answer any questions like:

- How many pages are in the book?
- How many graphics are in the book?
- What kind of graphics are in the book?

The sooner we can have the ink print edition of a book, the sooner we can find a vendor that will produce the book for us. Generally large print books are not a problem because we produce the large print at the CIMC. We know that some schools do not choose their textbooks early but we are just asking that you give us the ink print as soon as you can. There has to be a bottom line of when we receive an ink print and when we can guarantee its production.

Q: Why can't we get more of a timely response to orders?

A: We experienced problems with the automatic email response that was set up in the past so starting at the end of the 2005-2006 school year, we began sending an individual email reply to each order received so that the requesting staff person would know for sure that the order was received. As a result of the CIMC survey completed in May, 2006, it was decided that each of us at the CIMC will commit to answering all phone calls and emails, including orders, within 24 hours.

Q: Is it possible for us to be kept updated on order status?

A: We keep a data base called the Access Log on every large print and Braille book order. A copy of that Access Log is sent to each district contact person once a month if that district has at least one book that has not been sent complete. This data base has the following information on it: Access #, Order Date, Administrative Unit, Student, Teacher, Media, Need by date, Title/Name, Publisher, Copyright, ISBN, Date sent complete, Date Sent Partial, Purchase Order #, Source Tammy, Source Donice, Waiting on Returns, APH, Burt/Braille, Donice/Large Print, Ink Requested, Ink Received, Cost, Quota, and Ink With Order. We do not have a similar data base for the instructional aids and professional materials but we will develop a similar data base for these orders. For braille book orders that have been sent to a vendor, we may or may not have an estimated completion date. If we do have that information, we use the vendor that will give us the best price, the quickest service and quality Braille.

Q: Why are there delays in returned phone calls (though many reported timely returned calls)?

A: The CIMC staff commitment is to return all phone calls and emails, including orders, within 24 hours.

Q: Why, on occasion, have orders been mailed to the wrong person?

A: During the 2005-2006 school year we processed 963 book orders and so far for the 2006-2007 school year we have processed 861 book orders. To my knowledge, we made shipping mistakes on about four of those orders. In addition to that, we have processed over 2,000 orders of professional materials and instructional aids. Within that time we have had some changing of staff and two times we have used temps to help us out. The other thing that we do here is help each other out when one team member is overloaded with a project. We do make mistakes, but we are constantly working on ways to improve our systems here at the CIMC.

Q: Why do we need to fill out a separate order form for each item for the same student?

A. The reason we ask that each book order have it's own form is that we may have one book here at the CIMC, another book may need to be produced by one vendor and a third book may be done by another vendor. So that way, we can keep track of each separate order. If a TVI fills out just the student name, school, date needed, and any other information that applies to all the book orders for that student and then makes several copies, you only need to fill out the information pertaining to each particular book.

Q: Why aren't materials sent marked with the ordering teacher's name on them?

A.: The way that our system works is that the contact person for each district is responsible for sending in all orders and is also responsible to see that each teacher receives the correct books and materials when the contact person receives them. (See "The Job of "Contact Person"" in the CIMC Handbook on the first page of Section 2) When we send out boxes, we mark each one with the name of the book and the number of boxes in the shipment. We place a copy of the order form inside the box so when the box arrives, the box can be opened to see which teacher placed the order.

Q: Is it possible to look at census form on line (to assure students are signed up)?

A: The data base that we register students on belongs to the American Printing House for the Blind. The CIMC does not always have access to it and we have no way to make that available to TVIs.

Q: Some APH products don't work (particular to some low tech devices) – who to communicate to?

A: As an Ex Officio Trustee of APH, Ann Hicks can take your concerns to APH. If you have questions about specific orders from APH, CIMC should take care of those for you. But if you have general comments to help APH improve their services or products, they always welcome your comments. You can contact APH directly by going to their website which is www.aph.org.

Q: How can I change an address?

A: When an address change is given to one of us here at the CIMC, we now send an email to all of us as well as changing our list on the computer. The other thing that we must be sure to do is to make new labels for the mailing table. The position that is in the process of being hired will be responsible for ensuring that the address is changed in all the places that it needs to be. One person handling that should reduce errors.

Q: How do we know when it is APH's task to send something and it is out of the CIMC's hands (so the TVI understands that the CIMC's role with this order is complete)?

A: If the TVI has sent in an order for something out of the APH catalog, we may have it on our shelves and will send it out within a week. If we do not have it here, then it is ordered from APH and we ask them to send it directly to the requestor. If it is in stock at APH, the requestor may receive it fairly quickly. However, if they are out of stock and have to order it, it may take several months to receive it. At this point in time APH is our slowest vendor. When the contact person gets the Access Log, it will say on it if an item was ordered from APH.

Q: If it is an APH responsibility, can CIMC help connect with an APH contact?

A: Yes, the CIMC does, at times, contact APH to ask about the status of orders. Many times we are told that a certain item is back ordered and they do not have an expected delivery date.

Q: Can a team of TVIs be involved with restructuring the CIMC?

A: The Vision Coalition acts as the Advisory Committee for the CIMC. The CIMC is always open to suggestions for improvement. Please contact Ann Hicks by phone at 719 (578-2195) or 1-800-765-5951 or email at ahicks@csdb.org

Q: Why is there inconsistency with personal replies of book orders?

A: Each person at the CIMC has specific duties so not all of us are aware of all the particulars of a book's progress. The following is the breakdown of some of these duties.

Tammy McCullough at (719) 578-2196 or tmccullough@csdb.org is the person who receives all orders initially and checks to see if the books or materials are available currently in the CIMC. If they are available, she pulls them from the shelves, checks them out to the requester, and puts them on the mailing table. Tammy also is responsible for all purchase orders and making sure the vendors are paid as well as many budget issues. If the books or materials are not available, the order goes to Donice.

Donice Fennimore at (719) 578-2198 or dfennimore@csdb.org gets the orders and sources them. This may involve looking at several different places on the internet (the main source being LOUIS at APH), contacting that source to see if a copy is available and what the cost will be. Some TVIs have already sourced a book for us and tell us that they found the book on LOUIS when we receive the order. When Donice calls that source she may be told that "yes, that book is available". She then asks "how long will it take to get that book after they receive the Purchase Order from us". Today (September 7th) she was told that it would take a certain vendor 8 to 10 weeks to emboss, bind, label, and mail the book to us. This is because there are so many requests ahead of us. If large print books are not available, then we ask for an ink print edition and we produce that book here at the CIMC. Donice also is the person to talk to regarding the VI Registration. Another part of Donice's job is to be the Coordinator of the Colorado Statewide Low Vision Clinic. If a Braille book is not available, the order is given to Burt.

Burdine Haas at (719) 578-2197 or bhaas@csdb.org is responsible for getting all books transcribed into Braille. She must have the ink print edition before she can find a vendor to transcribe that book. (see previous answer) Burt also labels all braille books.

The CIMC is down a position currently. That position answers phones, produces large print, shelves books, and takes care of the mail. We have been without this position part of the summer and we are hoping to fill it soon.

The Coordinator of the CIMC is Ann Hicks 719 (578-2195) or 1-800-765-5951 or email at ahicks@csdb.org.

Ann's job is to see that this whole process works well so that students can have their books on time. When you have questions that deal with certain areas of the CIMC, we will try to have you talk to the appropriate person. If this is not possible, we look up the order on the Access Log and tell you what we see. Whenever there is a concern, a contact should be made to Ann by phone or email.

Q: Can each order be confirmed by specific title of the book?

A: Yes, we are now confirming each book order by the title.

Q: There have been many moments of great assistance with braille needed textbooks.

A. Thanks. We appreciate the compliment.

Q: The CIMC's involvement with the Braille Challenge has been very positive.

A: Thanks again. We enjoy meeting some of the student's that we provide books and materials for.

Collaborative Information Centers

The collaborative information centers is a consortium of six federally-funded national information and dissemination centers that collect and provide information on disability-related issues. To learn more about these services and their publications, contact the individual center.

Laurent Clerc National Deaf-Education Center—Info to Go—<http://clercenter-galludet-edu/InfoToGo>

NICHCY, the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities—www.nichcy.org

DB-LINK, The National Information Clearinghouse of Children who Are Deafblind—
www.dblink.org

The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center, national Clearinghouse of Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities—www.heath.gwu.edu

National Center on Low Incidence Disabilities—www.nclid.unco.edu

Project Forum—www.nasde.org/forum.htm



Conference Follow Up: Thank YOU!

A state conference is about a year in the making in order to line up the speakers and the hotel. This year's conference *Know Your ABCs: All Blind Children* was a homerun event with so many people involved in making it a successful and fun learning and networking opportunity.

THANK YOU!

- ▲ To **Jennifer Lockhart** at CDE for the certificates, name tags, and packet organization.
- ▲ To **Sharon Benn** for her work on providing the handouts in braille.
- ▲ To braille proctors on Thursday afternoon: **Brenda Shepard** and **Julie Wetzstein**.
- ▲ To CAER Board members for their pre-conference and onsite support: **Janet Anderson, Ann Hicks, Samantha Hoffman, Barb Galgano, Tim Richard, Amber Rundle, Melissa Shullar,** and **Julie Wetzstein,**
- ▲ To the great line up of people who shared about statewide resources on Thursday evening: **Tanni Anthony, Alice Applebaum, Ann Hicks, Carol Hilty, Kimberly Johnson, Elaine Karns, Donna Keale, Elaine Karns, Lisa McGill, Debbi Macleod, Lindsey Palumbo, Lou Tutt, Kim Ann Wardlow,** and **Julie Wetzstein,**
- ▲ To our Friday home talent team of **Susan Otey, Nancy Cozart, Paula Conroy,** and **Trina Boyd-Pratt.** Wow, wow, wow, and wow! To CAER for their financial support of the make'n'take materials for Trina's CVI presentation.
- ▲ To **Anna Swenson** for her amazing Saturday presentation. To **Trina Boyd-Pratt** for her organization of the braille cell packet. To CAER for their financial contribution of the materials for this activity.
- ▲ To all of **YOU** who attended, participated, and worked together to make it a wonderful learning and networking experience.

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