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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 2007

Access, Sweet Access


By Tanni Anthony

Access is a term that we use frequently when describing the educational needs of students who are blind/visually impaired. When we provide access to instructional materials, we know that our students can be true contenders in their learning, literacy, and life pursuits. The certified teacher of students who are blind/visually impaired works with the student and educational team to ensure books are ordered and received in large print and braille formats, that students are involved in our state low vision clinics to acquire low vision devices, have instructional opportunities to learn and use braille, and have the needed technology to acquire information and participate in their daily learning and travel environments. Access is what we work hard to ensure and provide. This is a good thing.

Accessibility is a life long issue. Recently while attending the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) of Colorado Annual Convention, I had the opportunity to listen to and interact with adults of many ages who are blind/visually impaired. The issues of access are paramount: access to transportation in both urban and rural communities; access for college students to the same types of books and materials provided to them during their public school years; and access to participate in our voting process in a manner that protects both opportunity and privacy. We have made many strides in our communities over the years in accessibility, but we still have a long way to go to achieve full and continual access across all life environments.

We cannot take for granted all of what the federal law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), has protected for our children during their school years. Together we have a responsibility to advocate for lifelong access beyond the days of public school. Together, we must work together to ensure access, sweet access, is for all ages of the lives of individuals who are blind/visually impaired.

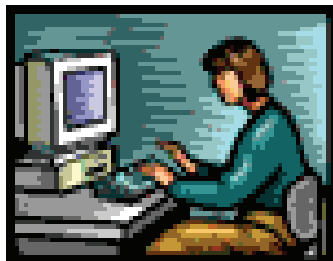
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Bits From Bonnie

By Bonnie Snyder

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Have you heard of NVDA? The name stands for NonVisual Desktop Access. It is an open source screen reader that works with Windows XP and Windows Vista. I first heard about it from Nimer Jaber who had learned of it from Barb Galgano in the Cherry Creek School District.

NVDA doesn't have all the bells and whistles of the commercial screen readers ... yet. But, because it is open source, it is constantly being added to and improved by the author, Michael Curran, and other programmers who program in the Python language.

NVDA comes in two forms: the usual install program for use on one's own computer, plus it has a portable format that you can carry around on a thumb drive and plug into any Windows XP or Vista computer without ever having to install it. The portable version is more useable than the JAWS portable version because the JAWS version requires installation of a video intercept file whereas NVDA does not have to install anything on the host computer.

Since not all blind computer users can afford to run out and buy JAWS or Window-Eyes, I would strongly urge TVIs to inform their students about the existence of NVDA and even provide copies of it to them for use on their computers at home.

You can download NVDA from the following site: <nvaccess.org>.

NVAccess

Editor's Note: Please continue to use the TVI / COMS listserv to discuss your technology needs and to report your successes. We have great talent and experience in Colorado, so use this resource as discussion and information-sharing opportunity. Also, Bonnie is available to provide technology-specific consultation to YOU throughout the school year.

Low Vision Evaluation Clinics



Remaining Low Vision Evaluation Clinics for the 2007-2008 academic year:

Region:	Dates:	Location:	Regional Site Coordinators:
Southern	October 25-27, 2007	Colorado Springs	Melissa Shular
Metro Denver	January 24-26, 2008	Stapleton (Anchor Preschool)	Nancy Knight
Northern	February 22-23, 2008	Fort Collins	Carol Love & Sally Eldridge

Please contact your regional site coordinator(s) or a member of the clinic team with any questions you may have specific to your upcoming clinics. The clinic team includes:

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Clinic Coordinator

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Certified Low Vision Therapist

CSDB Outreach Department

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Western Region Low Vision Evaluating Clinic

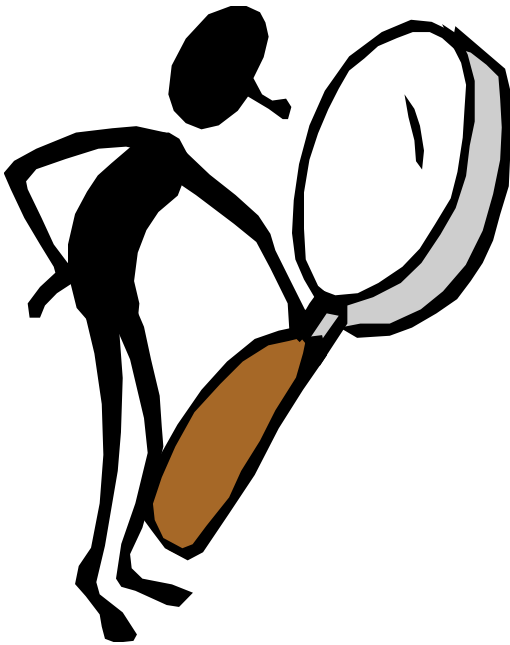
By Donice Fennimore

We're off and running – the first low vision evaluation clinic for school year 2007-2008 was held on September 28th and 29th in Grand Junction.

At the Western region clinic 11 students received evaluations and 6 TVIs, Sarah Sonnier, Angela Sims, Phyllis Jordan, Julie King, Barbara Adams, and Kevin O'Brien were present with their students.

The students seen ranged from pre-kindergarten age to transition students. The variety of ages made it possible for evaluations to be done for those just starting their academia to those who are at the point where they are taking the step into the work force, higher education, and/or independent living phase of their life. Students and their parents received a better understanding and purpose of devices for students with low vision and many left the clinic not only with a better understanding, but also with the suggested devices in their possession.

Thanks to Sarah Sonnier, Mesa 51 District, the staff of the Hawthorne building, and all those who helped organize this clinic. It went smoothly and a lot of good things were accomplished with the students, parents and teachers. Since this is the kick-off of the clinics, the low vision team would also like to thank Tanni Anthony, CDE, and all those at CSDB for promoting and supporting the low vision clinics for the students of Colorado



A CLOSER LOOK: LOW VISION NEWS

By Jim Olson, CSDB Outreach Department

Looking for accessibility options for your Apple computer? If you have a current operating system, just go to your Spotlight bar in the upper right corner of your screen and type in “Universal Access”. Click on the top Universal Access hit display which gives you free options built into the Apple operating system. Four tabs provide assistance with ‘seeing’, ‘hearing’, modifying the ‘keyboard’, and controlling the ‘mouse and track-pad.’

If you click on the ‘Seeing’ tab, three options show up. Just select the ‘on’ or ‘off’ buttons with your mouse and the following utilities start up.

“VoiceOver”

Select the ‘on’ or ‘off’ button with your mouse or the keyboard shortcut to toggle between on and off modes.

You can make adjustments by clicking the “Open VoiceOver Utility” bar which allows you to:

- control the verbosity,
- navigations items,
- adjust the rate, pitch, and volume of 23 voices.
- choose how much punctuation you want to hear.

“Zoom”

Selecting the ‘on’ or ‘off’ button with your mouse or use the keyboard shortcut lets the user select from:

- between 2X to 20X magnification
- keyboard access can be used anytime Zoom is turned on
- the image can move continuously with the pointer, when the pointer meets an edge, or the pointer can be at the center of the image.



Display

Let the user adjust their display from the following choices:

- Black on White
- White on Black
- Grayscale
- Reduce and Increase Contrast

If I can be of any assistance to you throughout 2007-2008 academic year, please feel free to contact me:

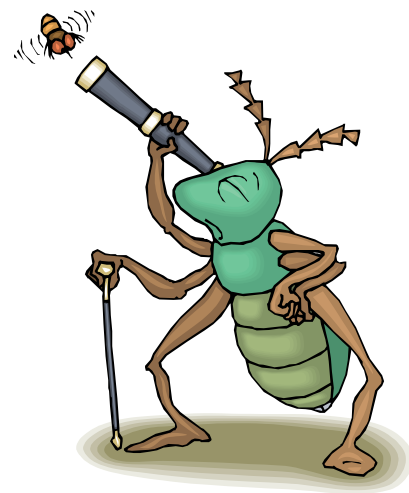
Jim Olson, Certified Low Vision Therapist
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Editor's Note: Isn't it great that Jim is contributing a regular column to this newsletter? Thanks, Jim, for all your information. Jim's expertise and his role within the CSDB Outreach Department will help to ensure further that our Colorado learners have a full toolbox for literacy and learning.

It is exciting to see how our statewide efforts specific to low vision have grown over the years with first the formation of a low vision task force that resulted in creating our regional low vision clinics and the PCO training of many CO TVIs a few years back. In addition to Jim, we have 16 other ACVREP certified low vision therapists in Colorado. They include:


Barbara Adams, Rita Albright; Tanni Anthony, Gwen Carroll, Ruth Chizum, Kristen Lavergne, Cheryl Leidich, Tracy Mosbarger, Glenda Nash-Buscarello, Sue Newhart-Larson, Kevin O'Brien, Theresa Shumaker, Sarah Sonnier, Wendy Stoltman, Patty Wagner, and Susan Zekert. We also have also developed a bank of sample IEP objectives specific to the use and care of low vision devices that can be found on the CDE webpage on blindness/low vision.


Thanks to everyone for their continued commitment to the educational and life needs of our learners with low vision.






TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

 **Webcast on Transition** Perkins School for the Blind has just released the first of an on-going series of webcasts. **School-to-Work: Developing Transition Portfolios for Students with Significant Disabilities** by Dr. Mary Zatta, Assistant Supervisor of the Deafblind Department at Perkins can be viewed at <http://www.perkins.org/professional/webcasts/>. It is approximately 30 minutes in length. In this and subsequent webcasts, there is the opportunity to review specific segments of by clicking on the appropriate outline button and to download the PowerPoint. Also, you may interact with the presenter via email through a special email box that is set up for each presenter.

 **R S A - Rehabilitation Services Administration** Fiscal Year 2007 was the first year of implementation for the Rehabilitation Services Administration's (RSA's) new monitoring process. Their goal was to undertake a review process that was performance-based, collaborative, closely linked to the agencies' state plans, transparent, timely, and tailored to individual state agencies. The following is a link that will connect you to RSA's Fiscal Year 2007 Monitoring Reports on the Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living Programs as well as a link to a survey of input provided by 2007 monitoring participants. The link to the index page for the monitoring reports for all the states is:

<http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/rehab/107-reports/2007/index.html>

The link to the survey page is: <http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/rehab/107-reports/2007/survey.html>

 **CareerConnect®: A Free Resource for Teens AFB** AFB's CareerConnect is a free resource for people who want to learn about the range and diversity of jobs performed by individuals who are blind or visually impaired throughout the United States and Canada. It's free and easy to register with CareerConnect-and the site is a great resource for teenagers who are beginning to explore careers for the first time.

In the *For Teens* section of CareerConnect, young people interested in the world of work can begin by unraveling the mystery of what type of jobs they would enjoy and be good at on the *Getting Started Exploring Careers* page. For anyone to effectively investigate careers, it is important to consider individual interests, talents, and values. In this section teens can learn to prepare a self-analysis profile sheet to consider what they have to offer a prospective employer.



CareerConnect also offers *Tips on Exploring Careers*. Teens can use this section to search for careers by key word, job title, interest area, or occupational category. Using any of these approaches, they will find detailed job descriptions, a listing of related jobs, and (if available) workers with visual impairments in the CareerConnect mentor database doing these jobs. Many visitors get firsthand advice from these mentors by communicating with them by email.

This site also includes a section where teens can read articles by and about other blind or visually impaired teens. In addition, the newest section of CareerConnect, *On Your Mark, Get Set...Go to Work*, focuses on young adults and their first jobs and was produced by AFB and the Braille Institute. This section contains two videos that feature firsthand accounts from numerous teens and adults talking about their first work experiences. Another great feature of the site is the section called *For Family and Friends*. Parents, teachers, mentors, or others will find a guide to the CareerConnect site, learn more about career options for blind or visually impaired individuals, and a list of helpful links for more resources. Parents interested in learning more about supported employment will also find the information they need to know in this section.

 **AER William & Dorothy Ferrell Scholarship Program & Douglas C. MacFarland Stipend Program**

AER's Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that they are now accepting applications for the William & Dorothy Ferrell Scholarship, which helps to support two legally-blind individuals who are enrolled in a college or university program. In addition, they are also accepting applications for the Douglas C. MacFarland Stipend. Up to five members may be selected for these stipends, which assist in defraying the cost of attending the AER International Conference. For an application or additional information, please visit AER's website at www.aerbvi.org. Please note that the submission deadline is **February 15, 2008**.

In celebration of Meet the Blind Month, Access gallery is proud to present:

IT'S ALL ABOUT TOUCH

A tactile exhibit of art that invites you to close your eyes and open your mind.

October 19—November 10, 2007

Opening Reception: Friday, October 19 from 6-9 p.m.

Events:

Opening Night Reception, Friday, October 19: Close Your Eyes and Open Your Mind. The entire gallery will be darkened so patrons can experience the art tactually. Hosted by The National Federation of the Blind of Denver and the Colorado Center for the Blind with food provided by Little India.

Family Art Day, Saturday, October 27, 11a.m.-1 p.m: Making your own tactile art, Ann Cunningham, author and nationally know tactile artist, and Pam Cooke will lead this workshop. Free and open to the public.



First Friday, November 2, 6-9 p.m: Hosted by The National Federation of the Blind of Denver and the Colorado Center for the Blind with food provided by Jose's Restaurant. Special musical Guest: Eddie Salcido.

Wednesday, November 7, Gallery Talk, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m: A workshop for educators, arts administrators and designers facilitated by experts in the field Ann Cunningham and Buna

Dahal on how to make show more accessible for people who are blind or have visual impair-

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 your name 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 school year, please help us out and send Tanni these changes.

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

**Just send your changes to anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or to
Tanni Anthony, CDE, 201 East Colfax, Denver, CO 80203.**

Resources and Materials

📖 The ZERO TO THREE Policy Center recently published a chart entitled **Tracking Services for Infants, Toddlers and their Families: A Look at Federal Early Childhood Programs and the Roles of State & Local Governments**, The chart provides a summary of the primary federal programs currently focused on serving very young children. It is available online at <http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/FedITProgramsAug07.pdf?docID=4041>

📖 Please visit **the Colorado AT Project's** website for links to AT Funding \$ Sources and AT Match, two exciting new resources for Assistive Technology acquisition. www.assistivetechologypartners.org

📖 To order or find a newsletter specific to microphthalmia and other types of support information, please go to the website of **MAPS: Microphthalmia Anophthalmia Parent Support** at <http://www.maparentsupport.com/>

📖 A new PBS show, "**A Chance to Read**," highlights new strategies that special education teachers across the country are using to help students find success. With a provocative premise that claims society "assumes" children with disabilities can't learn to read well, the program highlights a young student in Denton, Texas, who reads Braille fluently. The program also covers emerging assistive technologies that help people who are blind find independence. "A



Chance to Read" also profiles a program for students who are deaf and hard of hearing; explores an innovative literacy program for students who have cognitive disabilities; and follows an unusual program for students who are "twice-exceptional." Hosted by actress Molly Ringwald, who grew up

reading to her jazz musician father, who is blind, "A Chance to Read" will air on public television stations this fall (check local listings). For more information about the show, or to watch it online, go to <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/16686>

📖 **The Hall of for Leaders and Legends of the Blindness Field** is housed at the American Printing House for the Blind. It is in the process of being filled with special displays of artifacts, photographs, videos, and plaques honoring the great names of the profession. Included in the Hall for Leaders and Legends is a wall of tribute. The wall is made up of inscribed stones, places on detailed wooden columns. There are five sizes of inscribed stones for sponsors to select to honor a colleague. For more information about how to provide a stone to the wall please contact APH at <fame@aph.org>.

The Hall of Fame (photo—APH website)



Summer Enrichment 2007

By Donna Keale, , CSDB Outreach

After canceling the Sports Education Camp last year I was so afraid that many more of our summer programs for students across the state would be canceled also. Thanks to the many TVIs from all around the state that were able to help me mid-May to get the information into the hands of families.

We were able to offer two camps for the elementary aged students. The first camp was Colorado Adventures with nine students. Sincere thanks to **Cathy Kearney, Diane Fitzkee** and **Ellen Landis** for all their hard work to bring about a fun camp for students. The second elementary camp was the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo Adventure where we partner with the zoo and several other non profit organizations in the Pikes Peak area to talk about things that live besides ourselves. Although, they didn't die of exhaustion, many thanks to **Karla McKenchie, Jim Olson,** and **Doug Geist** with their hard work in this camp. Everyday was a new outdoor adventure. No students were left behind however they sure had a hard time keeping up with all those water bottles and putting gas in the vehicles.

The two elementary camps would not be successful without the wonderful residential staff at CSDB who planned evening meals and activities for the students. Who would have ever thought a night at swimming with nine kids would require so much work!

The other camps; Independent Living for Middle School, Computer Technology, Compensatory & O&M, and the two-week Independent Living Camp for Jrs & Srs were all rolled into one camp with a little of everything from the expanded core curriculum. Why might one do such a thing? The decision was very easy, we only had one to two students signed up for each camp and that was not financially feasible. So, instead of canceling any more camps we talked with the students about attending the two-week Independent Living Camp. On Sunday night when registration began, we were expecting six students. The most extraordinary moments were yet to come; the door bell rang to the dorm and in walked another family. Then the door bell continued to ring for the next hour and more and more families walked in with paperwork in hand. My eyes were the size of pancakes as I looked at Mr. Tutt, he signed to me, "It is ok, we will make it work." All that was going through my head was the thought that I hadn't budgeted for all these students or the staff to help, nor transportation and the thought of the CSDB Accountant sending me an email about being over budget! However, the story at this point has a happy ending, we had a great camp with 15 students from across the state. Some students only were able to stay for a week; others spent the weekend with their families and returned on Sunday night.

The crew for the "all inclusive camp" were wonderful; **Deb Carlisle, Randy Witte, Linda Witte, Karla McKechnie, Wendy Unwin, Doug Geist, Lori Hall, Tyrone Threats, Michele Holland,** and **Jim Beal.** Activities included a wonderful dinner out with the Role Model Team led by Roger Harwell. Students had great questions and discussion with the team about what it was like to grow up with vision impairment. Many students were very interested in the aspects of dating, continuing education, and recreational activities. Students went to the bank to talk about bank accounts, ATM cards, and savings accounts. Then on to an apartment to see what all it takes to move into an apartment and what are some of the key aspects to looking for an apartment. Students were treated to a dinner by Seeing Eye and spent much time questioning Chelsey (our area representative) about guide dogs. The two weeks were loaded with activities and adventures! Many thanks to everyone who helped make this a huge success for students.

CSDB Outreach is currently exploring Summer Enrichment for Summer 2008. Keep looking in the *WHOT* newsletter for the updated schedule of activities. I know we are all already thinking about Summer 2008!



DOTS OF INTEREST BRAILLE UPDATE



Open Up a Whole World of Possibilities at Braille.com

Join the free Children's Braille Book Club. Sign up for free *ReadBooks!* bookbag (for U.S. families of children who are blind/visually impaired, ages birth to 7). Order educational materials on analogies, phonics, the Nemeth reference sheet, computer manuals. Order Braille tests and textbooks. For a free print or Braille catalog: National Braille Press, 88 Saint Stephen Street, Boston, MA 02115 or (800) 548-7323; <www.braille.com>.

Touch of Genius Nominations



National Braille Press is pleased to announce the Louis Braille Touch of Genius Prize for Innovation is now open for applications. The Gibney Family Foundation initiated the Touch of Genius prize as a tie-in to NBP's recently published biography of Louis Braille to stimulate new thinking in the area of tactile literacy.

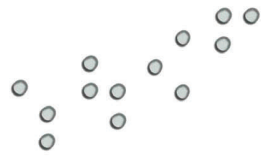
The Louis Braille Touch of Genius Prize for Innovation will be granted to an individual or group of individuals who advances the cause of tactile literacy for blind and deaf-blind people worldwide. Louis Braille was an innovator, and this \$20,000 award seeks to identify a similar pacesetter and inspire future innovators. For more details and an application, visit www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/braille/louisbrailleprize.html.

Braille Mentoring Project

The Braille Mentoring Project is part of the Blind Needs Grant given to the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind from the Colorado Department of Education monitored by Tanni Anthony. This particular project is overseen by Ann Hicks, Coordinator of the Colorado Instructional Materials Center. A set amount of money is set aside each year in order for Brailleists who wish to become certified by the Library of Congress (LOC) to receive help from a Library of Congress certified Brailleist. We are able to pay any LOC certified Brailleist twenty dollars an hour to mentor a Brailleist who is striving to become a LOC Certified Brailleist themselves.

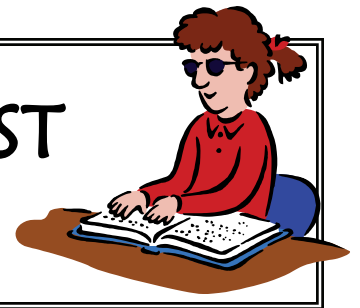
If you are a LOC Brailleist and wish to mentor another Brailleist who wishes to become Library of Congress certified or if you are a Brailleist who wishes to become LOG certified, just contact Ann Hicks at ahicks@csdb.org or (719) 578-2195 and I will fill out the appropriate paperwork and you may begin shortly thereafter. This is a wonderful opportunity for Colorado to expand the number of LOC certified Brailleists. Please let Ann Hicks know at (719) 578-2195 or ahicks@csdb.org if you have questions or concerns.





DOTS OF INTEREST

Continued



HumanWare Braille Literacy Scholarship Program

Every parent wants the best for their child and braille literacy is fundamental to a blind child's success. Starting blind children on the road to literacy as early as they are able and choosing the right tools is key to their success.

By using modern and appropriate tools, very young children can start scribbling with dots, having fun and beginning to learn through experimentation and play. Parents can become actively involved in their child's literacy development. Appropriate expectations for children can result from giving them independence to learn and explore. HumanWare is proud to launch a Braille Literacy Scholarship Program that comprises two awards:

The Mountbatten Learning System Award: A Mountbatten Learning System and all associated software and accessories will be awarded to one child in the United States. Applications on behalf of children between the ages of three and eight years, who are learning braille or are assessed as a future braille learner will be accepted. In one thousand words or less, tell us why you feel braille literacy will be key to your child's success and describe the role you think the Mountbatten Learning System will play in their future. The winner will receive a Mountbatten Learning System Educational pack containing: MB Learning System, Mimic Display, keyboard and MB comm PC to MB communication software. Applications must be submitted with the signature of an Early Childhood or early intervention professional and/or parent. Parents and professionals are welcome to provide any supporting material to their application.

Jot A Dot Notetaking Award: Vital to self organization and as a general aid to memory, blind students need good notetaking skills. Five US students will each receive a Jot a Dot Pocket Brailier. The award is open to applications from students in primary or secondary education who use braille. Using a maximum of 15 lines of 20 characters, students must describe in braille why notetaking is an important skill in their lives. Students can submit any number of entries and use various writing styles including poetry, verse or humor. Applications can be sent directly from students or on their behalf by a teacher or parent. All winners must be willing to participate in promotional events and to attend a public award ceremony. Entries should be mailed to: HumanWare, Braille Literacy Scholarship Program, 175 Mason Circle, Concord, CA 94520 and postmarked no later than **December 31, 2007**.



For more information, contact:

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Direct: 312-432-1147
Visit: www.HumanWare.com



CALL FOR PAPERS

for presentation at the
2008 AER International Conference
July 22-27, 2008
Chicago Downtown Marriott

Submit your paper online at www.aerbvi.org (<http://www.aerbvi.org>)

We invite you to submit a paper for presentation at the meeting in Chicago, IL, July 22-28, 2008. This exciting meeting will have invited speakers, workshops, panel presentations, posters and much more. You can submit your paper now until close of business, **October 31, 2007**.

The International Conference is a great opportunity to network with other professionals and provide a chance for you to share your knowledge and experience.

Be sure and check your email frequently as well as the AER website (<http://www.aerbvi.org>) as we share exciting information about the meeting!

We hope you will enjoy this new online submission program. If you have any questions regarding the process please contact the AER Office at abstracts@aerbvi.org (<mailto:abstracts@aerbvi.org>) or by calling 877-492-2708.

We look forward to seeing you in Chicago!

Greg Goodrich, Chair

April 24-25, 2008

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Assistive Technology Conference

Call for Papers is now open

The Deadline to submit proposals is October 26, 2007

Suggested Topics

Job Accommodations

Learning Accommodations

Youth Transition

Aging and Disability

Higher Education

New Technologies and Solutions



The deadline to submit proposals is October 26, 2007.

Call 1-800-866-2253 or Visit www.nmtap.com if you have questions.



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 2007-08

Metro Region:

- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Specialist (.5 FTE)** Contact Ann Marie Jansen in Adams 12 (northern metro area) at <annmarie.jansen@adams12.org>.

Southern Region

- ✓ **Middle / High School Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / Social Studies and English (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 will be a number of vacant positions for TVIs and O&M Specialists in the 2008-2009 school year 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.
- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Specialist (.5 to 1 FTE)**. Contact Kim Lovelace at lovelkm@dll.org or d11.org in El Paso 11 District in Colorado Springs for more information.

Stay in touch with the Colorado Department of Education

The new communications office at CDE is open for business. Please pass the word about how to stay in tune with the latest information about the department.

- News, updates and announcements
- Board of Education agendas and meeting reports

Visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/index.html> and fill out the brief e-mail subscription form at the bottom of the page.

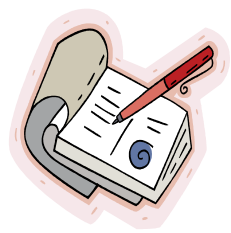
Follow the verification step and you will be set to receive information from CDE on a timely basis.



Calendar of Events

2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007

- October 18-20** **Colorado Fall Conference on Visual Impairment—Denver**
Contact: Tanni Anthony— anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- October 25-27** **Southern Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—Colorado Springs**
Contact: Melissa Shular —melissa.shular@asd20.org
- November 2** **Northern TVI Meeting**
Contact: Carol Love - love-carol@stvrain.k12.co.us
- November 8** **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser—spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
- November 8** **Metro TVI Meeting - Anchor Center- 2:00-4:00**
Contact: Nancy Cozart - ncozart@lps.k12.co.us
- November 9-11** **Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference**
Contact: www.canada.aerbvi.org
- November 13** **CAER Meeting**
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us
- November 14** **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
- November 15** **Deadline for Tools of Life applications**
Contact: Dr. Tom Theune— (719) 471-3200
- November 29-Dec 2** **Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference—St. Pete Beach, FL**
Contact: www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org
- November 30** **2nd Annual Common Sight, Common Vision Breakfast**
Contact: Diane Covington—dcovington@csdb.org or rortiz@usaba.org



More Calendar of Events

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

- January 8** **CAER Meeting**
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us
- January 10** **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
- January 16** **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
- January 24-26** **Metro Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—TBA**
Contact: Nancy Knight— nknight@lps.k12.co.us
- January 25** **Northern TVI Meeting**
Contact: Carol Love - love-carol@stvrain.k12.co.us
- Jan 30 - Feb 2** **AT Industry Association (ATIA) Conference—Orlando, FL**
Contact: www.atia.org or call (877) 687-2842
- February 1** **Braille Challenge - CSDB**
Contact: Randy Witte - rwitte@csdb.org
- February 8-10** **Snowshoe Weekend**
Contact: Elaine Karns - elk@psdschools.org
- February 12** **CAER Meeting**
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us
- February 14** **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
- February 20** **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
- February 21** **Metro TVI Meeting - Anchor Center- 2:00-4:00**
Contact: Nancy Cozart - ncozart@lps.k12.co.us
- February 22-23** **Northern LVE Clinic—Ensign Center**
Contact: Carol Love— love_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us
Or Sally Eldridge— eldridge_sara@stvrain.k12.co.us

More Calendar of Events

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

- March 1** **Deadline: See the Future Fund Scholarship Applications**
Contact: Dr. Tom Theune - twtheune@prodigy.net
- March 11** **CAER Meeting**
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us
- March 13** **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
- April 2-5** **CEC Annual Convention & Expo—Boston, MA**
Contact: CEC—conteduc@cec.sped.org
- April 8** **CAER Meeting**
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us
- April 10** **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - or spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
- April 11** **Metro TVI Meeting - Anchor Center- 2:00-4:00**
Contact: Nancy Cozart - ncozart@lps.k12.co.us
- April 16** **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
- May 13** **CAER Meeting**
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us
- May 14** **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
- June 5-7** **Family Learning Retreat - CSDB in Colorado Springs**
Contact: To Be Announced
- June 12** **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
- June 12** **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org

More Calendar of Events

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

June 12-14

Collaborative AT Conference of the Rockies - Denver

Contact: www.assistivetechologypartners.org/conference.html

July 7-10

9th International Conference on Low Vision—Montreal, Canada

Contact: www.opto.umontreal.ca/vision2008

July 22-27

AER International Conference—Chicago, IL

Visit www.aerbvi.org for more information

Help us keep the Calendar of Events as up to date as possible! Please send Tanni the dates, title, location, and contact information of any regional TVI meetings, conferences, important meetings, etc. so they can be posted in future editions of the *What's Happening Out There* newsletter. Thanks.

APH Annual Meeting—Some Cool Things to Share!

The Annual Meeting of the American Printing House for the Blind was held in Louisville, KY on October 11-13, 2007. The meeting was packed with updates on APH committees, research projects, and new products. There are many exciting new products to share! Key highlights include:

On the Way to Literacy: Early Experiences for Children with Visual Impairments (2nd Ed). This updated handbook draws upon research and practice to guide teachers and parents in supporting early literacy.

Growing Up: A Developmental Curriculum. The curriculum includes a profile to help parents understand the developmental needs of their children.

Building on Patterns: Primary Braille Literacy Program: K Level: This updated BOP is a complete primary literacy program designed to teach beginning braille-users to read, write, and spell in braille.

Push Button Padlock: Each lock comes with large print and braille instructions, plus two large print/braille combination cards.

Walk/Run for Fitness Kit: Comes with personal guide wire system, two talking pedometers, guide book in both large print and braille, and shoulder sling carrying pack.

Scattered Crowns: This tactile attribute game encourages young children to develop tactile skills.

Lots of Dots: Coloring Book Series: Set of three raised-line coloring books, which are designed for sequential use to develop character recognition, pre-literacy, and pre-math skills.

Period Table of the Elements: Presented in large print and braille format.

Address: Earth: This atlas is specifically designed for students with visual impairments.

Announcing The SEE THE FUTURE Fund's “Tools for Life” Program

Applications Now Available

***Application Deadline:
November 15, 2007***

The Need:

Visually impaired or blind students may be highly motivated to learn, but without the proper “tools” they are not able to perform at their highest level. Visually impaired and blind children need special “tools” or devices to interact and compete in a world with their sighted peers. These tools allow visually impaired and blind students greater access to information in a variety of settings and it is the hope of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund that the “tools” improve literacy and independence allowing students to reach and exceed their hopes and dreams.

The Mission:

To provide financial assistance to visually impaired and blind students and their families, who are residents of Colorado. This assistance is to help purchase necessary adaptive equipment, which students may own and utilize in their home, school, and community. This adapted equipment will help support literacy which will enhance both career and personal success.

To apply for a “Tools for Life” scholarship and to obtain more information, please go to: www.seethefuture.org and click on “Tools for Life” scholarships.

You may also call Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund at (719) 471-3200.





The Colorado Chapter of the Association of the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired

Greeting AER Members,

Your Scholarship Committee is please to announce that we are now accepting applications for the William & Dorothy Ferrell Scholarship which help support two legally-blind individuals who are enrolled in a college or university program. In addition we are also accepting application for the Douglas C. MacFarland Stipend. Up to five members may be selected for these stipends which assist in defraying the cost of attending the AER International Conference. For an application go to <http://www.aerbvi.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=506> and click on the 'scholarship applications' link.



Please note that submission deadline is **February 15, 2008**

Sincerely,
Jim Adams
Chairman, Scholarship Committee

AER Update

The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired is a membership organization representing professionals who provide services in all phases of the education and/or rehabilitation to blind and visually impaired persons. AER's membership consists of administrators, rehabilitation professionals, orientation and mobility specialists, low vision therapists, teachers certified in visual impairment, and support personnel who work with infants, toddlers, school age children and youth, adults, senior citizens, and veterans who are blind/visually impaired.

Executive Director Jim Gandorf and President Dr. Sandy Ruconich gave a brief update on AER membership at the Annual American Printing House for the Blind meeting in October. Currently there are 4,500 AER members. They announced a goal to increase membership to 5,000 over the next year. Each chapter has been challenged to increase membership by 10 percent.

If you are not an AER member and would like to learn more about AER benefits/ goals and the activities of our Colorado AER chapter, please contact one of the following CAER Board members: Janet Anderson, Trina Boyd Pratt, Paula Conroy, Samantha Hoffman, Louise Gettman, Elaine Karns, Mike Plansker, Sally Eldridge, Barb Galgano, or Julie Wetzstein.

APH Products that are Overstocked or Discontinued A new listing of overstocked and discontinued APH products is now available at www.aph.org/products/leamarket.html. This discounted inventory is available on a first come, first served basis. Please order early to take advantage of the extra dollars off.

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) has launched a new public engagement and advocacy campaign and website (<http://www.WholeChildEducation.org>) that call on parents, educators, policymakers, and communities to join forces to ensure our children become productive, engaged citizens.

In the link: [The Whole Child Meets No Child Left Behind](#) ASCD discusses how the success of comprehensive education for all children (PS through college) depends on broad engagement of all stakeholders; parents, teachers, communities, and policy makers.

Tactile Graphics: Touching on the Basics On the afternoon of September 11, more than 200 people across the country joined the APH live, interactive webcast on *Tactile Graphics: Touching on the Basics*. Tactile graphics packets containing samples of released test items and a graphic produced in four different formats were mailed to webcast registrants. Participants included test developers and publishers, special educators, teachers of students with visual impairments, accessible media producers, program coordinators, assessment staff, and school psychologists. Fred Otto and Karen Poppe, APH Tactile Graphic Project Leaders in the Research Department, provided some general practices, information on tactile vs. visual learning, approaches to adapting images, terminology, production methods, and more. To view the archived webcast, visit the [APH Webcast Archive](http://www.aph.org/webcast/index.html) at <http://www.aph.org/webcast/index.html>, and select the Tactile Graphics webcast by Karen and Fred. Questions asked during the presentation and responses will be posted on the APH website early in October. If you plan to view the archived web cast and need a tactile graphics packet, please contact Debbie Willis at dwillis@aph.org. For additional information on "Tips and Techniques for Creating Quality Tactile Graphics," select the Tactile Graphics webcast by Betsy Burnham and Yan Zhang.

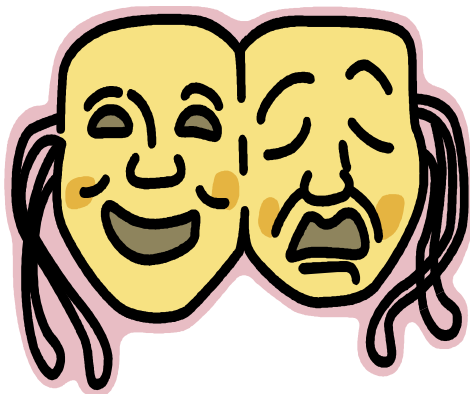


Wanted: First Grade Building on Patterns Field Testers! The prototype of the Patterns revision, the first grade level of Building on Patterns, will be ready soon. The American Printing House for the Blind expects that the first volume of the Teacher's Edition, which includes the first four student reader books, will be in the hands of those randomly selected for field testing by the second week of January 2008. A second volume with the remaining three books and lessons will follow at a later date.

Eligible students will be braille readers, five to eight years old, who know

- all the letter words
- contractions for and, for, of, the, and with
- short vowel sounds
- common sounds for the consonants

It is not necessary that the students be in first grade. They may be currently in Kindergarten (progressing quickly in braille reading), first grade, or second grade (progressing more slowly in braille reading). If you are interested in evaluating this product, and have one or more appropriate students, please provide APH with the following information for *each student*: child's first name, age, grade school/agency name. Please also indicate your teaching material preference (print or braille). Send all information to Rosanne Hoffmann at rhoffmann@aph.org



Dear Backstage Sensory Tour Guests,

It is time for another wonderful season of ballet and the Backstage Sensory Tours for the blind. I hope you will join us for this magical season; we are now taking reservations!

Tactile tours will be provided for blind and visually impaired patrons and their guests before each show. We will again collaborate with nationally recognized tactile artist Ann Cunningham who brings the art of ballet right to your hands. After tactile tours lunch will be provided and then guests are invited to the performance

which is audio-described through headsets.

We will return to our favorite holiday classic, *The Nutcracker* on December 1st and on March 1st we are looking forward to presenting *Coppélia*; a magical event for everyone with an imagination and a funny bone. Start with one eccentric toy-maker, throw in a plan to bring a mechanical doll to life and mix well with a red-blooded young lover, a jealous fiancé and an array of mischievous maidens. Don't miss this enchanting tale and playful choreography!

Tickets this year will be \$30 per guest, this price includes a ticket to the production in addition to the tour.

Reservations are required in order to attend each tour so please call 303-339-1632 for a reservation.

Please let me know if I can answer any questions about the sensory tours.

Hope to see you soon!

Tiffany Pallotto
Director of Education & Outreach
303/339-1632
tiffany@coloradoballet.org

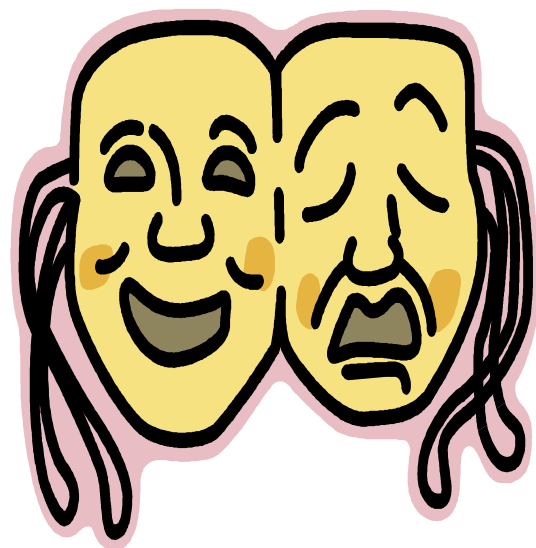
Sensory Tour Schedule:

The Nutcracker- Saturday December 1st

Tour: 12 PM
Show: 2 PM

Coppélia- Saturday March 1st

Tour: 12 PM
Show: 2 PM



The Collaborative Assistive Technology Conference of the Rockies

Hyatt Regency, Denver Tech Center

June 12-14, 2008

Computer Access Power Mobility, Universal Design, AT Outcomes & Data Power Mobility, Inclusion,
Adaptations for School, Work & Play, AAC, Accessible Home & Classroom

Visit our website at

www.assistivetechologypartners.org

Call for Papers available on-line or call: 1.800.255.3477

Please submit by Oct. 31, 2007

To receive materials in an alternate format please call: 303.315.1280

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room, more than 60 exhibitors and the opportunity to
earn college credit!



University of Colorado at Denver

and Health Sciences Center

Assistive Technology Partners/SWAAAC

601 E 18th Ave. Suite 130

Denver, Colorado 80203

SAVE THESE DATES:

Preconference: June 12, 2008

Conference: June 13 & 14, 2008



NIMAC Milestone

The National Instructional Materials Access Center has reached a new milestone with more than 2,000 NIMAS file sets now available for download by authorized users to convert into specialized formats, including braille! To date, 13 states have downloaded files or assigned them to Accessible Media Producers to download and convert on their behalf. In addition, 475 NIMAS files have been downloaded since NIMAC opened less than one year ago. Colorado's designated user for NIMAC files is the CIMC!

VISION COALITION

September 14, 2007

Persons Present: Tanni Anthony (CDE), Barbara Adams (Western Region), Nancy Cozart (metro region), Donna Keale (CSDB Outreach), Stephanie Isbell (Southern Region), Ann Hicks (CIMC), Elaine Karns (CAER), Karla McKechnie (CSDB), Judy Mumford (Southern), Vicki Pearson (Northern Region), Cathy Smyth (Anchor Center) and Julia Zanon (CDVR).

Persons Missing: Louis Tutt (Karla represented the School for the Blind), Kay Ferrell (NCLID), Paula Conroy (UNC)

Acronym Glossary:

Anchor	Anchor Center for Blind Children
CAER	CO Chapter - Association of the Ed & Rehab of the Blind Visually Impaired
CDE	Colorado Department of Education
CDVR	Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
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

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Welcome new members: Stephanie Isbell who will be representing the southern region and Vicki Pearson who will be representing the northern region.

VISION COALITION 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 has changed over the years from a “representational” perspective. Teacher reps, CAER representative, and rehabilitation representation were added in recent years. The CAER representative has both school age and rehabilitation service interests. Membership centers on intervention and educational services of children and youth, 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.

EXPECTATION OF VISION COALITION MEMBERS

- Attendance of meetings
- Representations of and to the identified constituencies.
- Sending in timely update reports prior to the meeting.

REVIEW OF THE ASSIGNMENTS FROM LAST MEETING

- ☆ We reviewed the status of our assignments from the April 2007 meeting. Key highlights included:
- ☆ Tanni will share the new CDE IEP form at a next VC meeting and we can specifically highlight where to note the hours of a brailist on the IEP. The VC agreed that the common place for noting these hours is in the narrative section of the services page.
- ☆ We thank Julia Zanon for a fabulous Q and A document on DVR services. This document was published in the August-September 2007 newsletter. It received rave reviews from one of CDE's secondary-services consultants!
- ☆ The CIMC Annual registration form has been modified to include the student's state ID number, The APH quota and VI Registration form will now include information on the student's exiting status and a field for possible drop outs. This will help us be more proactive with data collection and analysis of outcomes for learners who are blind/visually impaired.
- ☆ We would still like to gather more information about financial resources for a student to have an eye exam. Tanni will post this request on the CDE state listserv.
- ☆ The brailist / VI paraprofessional example job descriptions are on the CDE webpage specific to blindness/low vision. Thanks to the VC for all their work on these documents!

PROGRAM UPDATES

Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

The metro area vision teachers are planning to have their first meeting on Friday September 21st from 2:00-4:00pm in Littleton. This day was chosen to help accommodate some school district TVIs who are more available on Fridays. The hope is to offer different days through the year, so the same students aren't cancelled in order to attend and all local TVIs have at least some opportunities to attend. On Friday, September 21, Debbie and Tammy from the CIMC will be joining us to go over procedures and answer questions. We will also be updating everyone's contact information and going over the notes from Vision Coalition meeting on September 14th.

Through emails and at the 1st meeting, we will be finalizing the dates for future 2007-2008 meetings as well as determining topics of interest. A key interest currently is meeting with Jennifer Berg with Children's Eye Physicians. She has been trying to build an avenue through the medical offices of support and information to families who have a child with specific diagnoses that should be receiving assistance from VI Programs in the schools. The goal is to have set operations in place for communication between medical personnel and the educational teams so the families have a smooth transition of services and supports. Other topics include revisiting Functional Vision Assessments and Learning Media Plans, using the para modules and "Show and Tell" of what works for individual TVIs, etc.

Northern Region (Vicki Pearson)

The Northern Region will meet on September 7th in Longmont. It was decided that the region would meet again in Longmont. Everyone is very busy settling into a new school year.

At the meeting we discussed the need for the Technology Task Force as well as having Bonnie come up for technology training. The group also discussed the Low Vision Clinic, which will be held in Ft. Collins at the Ensign Skills Center on February 22 and 23. Sally Eldridge and Carol Love will be the clinic coordinators this year.

Additionally, Sally Eldridge and Carol Love will attend a seminar by Eschenbach/Opik on "Low Vision Care-What's It All About" on September 19th in Ft. Collins.

Discussion: There was a question about providing services before or after school for academic learners – how is this reflected on the IEP. Some districts can be more creative with early and late starts. Others have been told that they cannot add to the hours of a student's school day. There also may be concerns of professional liability if services are provided beyond the scope of typical school day. This might be a good topic for the regional TVI meetings to discuss strategies. Ultimately, TVIs and O&M Specialist should take direction from their local administrative unit.

Southern Region (Judy Mumford and Stephanie Isbell)

The first Southern Region Meeting will be Wednesday, September 19th at CIMC. We are grateful to be able to meet at the CIMC and it allows us to pick up/drop off materials easily. Stephanie Isbell is our new Coalition Representative and the coordinator of the southern region meetings.

Thank you, Stephanie, for taking on both of these roles. We have some great topics for meetings this year and that schedule will be out after our first meeting.

The Southern Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic will be Thursday, Friday, Saturday October 25th, 26th, and, 27th. Melissa Shular is the coordinator and the days are filling up!

Western Region (Barbara Adams)

Mesa (Sarah Sonnier): This year got off to a good start. We lost a few students, but then as the doors opened to school--of course there were new students arriving! We are fully staffed this year (YAHOO!) with everyone returning from last year. This year we will lose one of our braillists, who has been key to the quality of braille work going out of our office. She has been with us for 7 years and will be leaving us in December to begin her student teaching and complete her elementary education degree. We wish her luck! Our other instructional assistants are working hard to get prepared to take the Colorado Braille Competency Test.

Grand Junction will again be the host for the Western Slope Low Vision Clinic to be held on September 27th and 28th. We continue to be thankful to CDE for sponsoring this much needed service to our students. At this time we are expecting a full clinic with all 12 slots scheduled.

We thank Barbara Adams for her continued work in being our Western Slope Representative!

UNBOCs: Tracy Mosbarger reports status quo at UNBOCS.

Delta and Montrose (Kevin O'Brien): We are off to a busy start of the school year. I had been gearing up BIG TIME to hire and train (i.e., braille) the first vision paraprofessional for the Montrose School District due to the expected enrollment of a new high-needs VI student but the student did not enroll after all and the family moved out-of-state very suddenly. There was quite a whirlwind of activity canceling orders, etc, and we're back to "business as usual". Thankfully, no one had yet been hired for the position.

Delta and Montrose caseloads are remaining steady. Early Childhood numbers in Delta County are increasing significantly so we're keeping a close eye on these children....a BIG "THANK YOU" (again and again) to JC Greeley for her outstanding 0-3 outreach in our part of state.

Two students from Delta County will be attending the low vision clinic on September 28th. Both of the students have attended in the past and it is just great to see how truly excited they are to return and spend time with the team once again. We look forward to seeing everyone there.

Lastly, it is my hope that we can pull together another regional TVI meeting on the West Slope this year. We have so many irons in the fire right now that I will wait until after the fall conference to put "feelers" out to our west slope colleagues. Stay tuned for more info on this.

The western slope did have a meeting in Grand Junction last year with 100% attendance with Bonnie Snyder offering technology training.

October 2007

Mountain BOCES (Barbara Adams): Another year; students move in, students move out, and we scramble to get the paperwork for the first Low Vision Clinic of the year filled out on time. We are all looking forward to Dr. Tom, Jim, and Donice making the big drive to the Western Slope. It is official, Julie King is working full time on the Eastern side of Mtn. BOCES. That is about all, hope everyone has a great year.

Discussion: We had a discussion about what we could do to help further educate families and school districts about the educational needs of students with visual impairments. Many families are not aware of the expenses involved in securing needed equipment or the advance time needed to order and receive large print and braille textbooks.

An idea we talked about was to highlight some individual students as far as what services and equipment must be in place to educate the learner. Another idea is to develop a one page handout that could be given to classroom teachers about what daily instructional materials need to be identified for large print and braille transcription.. We need to work with Curriculum Directors about how to flag the need for NIMAC materials. We will include a letter to Special Education Directors from Tanni and Ann for the October directors' meeting.

CIMC (Ann Hicks)

The CIMC has been extremely busy processing, receiving, boxing, and mailing out Braille Books, Large Print Books and Instructional Aids for all students with visual impairment in Colorado. Orders received as of May 31st, 2007 was 587. Braille orders total 405 and Large Print 182. 500 orders were shipped complete (85%). Orders received as of September 4th, 2007 is 907 total with 600 Braille and 307 large print. 675 orders have been shipped complete (74%) and 82 shipped partial (9%). As of this writing on September 5th, 2007, 147 orders have been received just since August 1st, 2007, and another 10-15 more since September 4th, 2007.

KLAS, the database that is used by the CIMC, is in the process of up-graded on all of our computers. This database is going to be much more user-friendly and will also come with an exciting addition. The CIMC staff is starting the training on September 11, 2007 for all of us to be able to get on this data base and be able know much more about the status of all of our books. The exciting addition is that the TVIs in Colorado are going to be able to log on to our system in order to see if we have a particular book and maybe able to actually check that book out on line. I am sure that we will have a few "glitches" with starting up this new version but we are going to try hard to keep the flow of orders going as smooth as possible.

The supervision of the CIMC has been moved from Lou Tutt, the Principal of the School for the Blind to Dr. Laura Douglas who is in charge of the Outreach Department. We enjoyed the past four years under the direction of Mr. Tutt and are looking forward to working with Dr. Laura Douglas.

There is a trust fund connected with the CIMC that has been used in past years to support professional development opportunities for braillists. This year, the funds will support Burt Haas and Bonnie Snyder to attend a pre-conference training of the Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference. The CIMC would like to take this training content and host a Colorado training in early 2008.

Ann presented to the CSDB Board of Trustees at their September 13th meeting. She shared the handouts at our meeting. One was a database document, called the Access Log, of book orders. This document is sent out monthly to the district contact person in the VI Program. It is important that the document be reviewed back at the local level as a checks-and-balances system to confirm that all the book orders that a district has been made are indeed in process. Ann asked for input on how to improve this document. There was a question by the TVIs as to if this document is truly mailed monthly. Ann will also verify the content person of each AU. This information will go out in the CDE listserv. She will need to verify the content person, the contact information, and the preference for email mailing and mailing. It will be important each VI program to determine in-house system of communication.

Last year, the Vision Coalition asked the CIMC to confirm the receipt of a new order within three school days of its receipt. The membership would still like to see this policy implemented.

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

Of course, the biggest news is the opening of our new facility at 2550 Roslyn St. in Stapleton. The Ribbon Cutting is at 1:00 on Friday, September 28, and you are welcome! Of course we hope there will be many opportunities to visit as we become a place to gather, meet, and learn about young children with Visual Impairments. The Strategic Planning for the next three years includes exploring research opportunities, becoming a more active teaching facility for new teachers and a national leader in services for young children with visual impairments and their families. A large part of the excitement over the new building is how it is helping the children learn without our intervention! The sensory garden and naturally lighted hallways are amazing places. We hope the community room will be a choice for the Vision Coalition to meet.

Our Lillis Grant practicum student this semester is Paula Stallman, a parent of one of our former students. It is great to have her with us and we are looking forward to her graduation from the UNC program this December so that she can become our newest TVI! This will bring us up to five full-time TVIs and some much needed help! It is fabulous to have Sarah Bickford join us this semester.

A meeting to discuss the Federal initiative, Results Matter, is scheduled for November 13th. CSDB early intervention teachers will be joining us. Hopefully this will be a brainstorming session that generates a list of “red flags” that would alert an EI provider to consult with a TVI when conducting the assessments. Now that we have more experience with the different assessments, we can bring our working concerns to the table. We hope to set up some meetings with the AEPS authors to work through appropriate adjustments to the test itself. As a Denver Public School preschool site, we also hope to learn what the expectations are for testing with this population.

We continue to work on our possible research project and journal article addressing the work Anchor Center has done around Feeding Strategies for the Visually Impaired Infant. The article should be ready for submission by January, and the Gerber Foundation is considering our research project. Stay tuned!

CAER (Samantha Hoffman)

CAER is very excited to welcome our new board members; Julie Adams an O&M Specialist from DVR, Sally Eldridge TVI/O&M from St. Vrain,, Mike Plansker TVI/O&M for Adams 12 and Paula Conroy associate professor for UNC and TVI/O&M for Boulder Valley. Additionally, we are happy to have two previous board members filling officer position. Trina Boyd-Pratt is the new treasurer and Louise Gettman is the new secretary.

The board would like to invite all CAER members to participate on committees and take more active rolls in chapter activities. Some of the active committees include; membership and recruitment, legislative, and website and communications. All board meetings are open to members. Members are encouraged to join committees and bring suggestions and issues to the board by contacting a board member or attending a meeting. Board meetings will once again occur monthly on the following dates:

October 9th, 2007	November 13th, 2007
January 8th, 2007	February 12th, 2007
March 11th, 2007	April 8th, 2007
May 13th, 2007	

The fall deadline for mini-grants is fast approaching. CAER is excited to continue to provide support to members through mini-grant awards. Professionals, clients, students and families can request a mini-grants or financial assistance by going to the website, filling out a request form and e-mailing it to caerboard@gmail.com. The next board review of requests will occur in November of this year and April of 2008. Deadline for submission is November 1 and April 1.

As a reminder to members, another benefit is partial reimbursement for ACVREP certification. Members renewing their certification can receive \$50 and those applying for initial certification can receive \$100 by submitting a copy of the certificate and a request to the new treasurer, Trina Boyd-Pratt. Additional information about member benefits can be found on the CAER website, <http://www.co.aerbvi.org>. Please check it out.

Finally, CAER is once again excited to co-sponsor the annual fall vision conference on October 18, 19, and 20, 2007. We look forward to great attendance and seeing all our wonderful colleagues and friends.

Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Julia Zanon)

The Rehabilitation Counselors for the Blind (RCB) met on June 5 specifically for training on transition guidelines and practices. Cheryl Carver, transition coordinator for CDVR facilitated this training and we all should now be on the "same page" throughout the state regarding when to take a referral, attend staffings and provide services for transitioning blind students. CDVR is also coming out with a new "transition kit" that will soon be available to help counselors work with students and schools more effectively. RCBs from all over the state recently met on September 11 to learn about new assistive technology for the blind and tour the Colorado Center for the Blind. We are also collaborating with the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado to promote the Possibilities Fair on October 4 at the Doubletree Hotel in Denver. This event is not just for seniors and will host various service agencies providing services for the blind and vendors of assistive technology. The event is open to anyone interested in finding out more about blindness services.

The application for membership on the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impairment, which will be a statewide advisory council on Colorado services to individuals who are blind/visually impaired, were due on September 1. The advisement focus will be primarily on adult services.

There is a gap in the rural communities for low vision specialists for adults. The DVR counselors want to help solve this dilemma. It was suggested that some of our low vision service entities consider a traveling clinic.

UNC (Paula Conroy)

We are 3 weeks into the UNC semester and off to a quick start. We have 45 students and the traineeship grant for this year is full. I am encouraging students to look to Fall 08 as their entrance date. People interested in the program should still email and call for information and be put on the waiting list in case room on the grant opens up earlier than next fall. Silvia Correa-Torres has joined the UNC faculty full time and is doing a great job getting up to speed with the way the College and School of Special Education runs. Faculty is busy with accreditation renewal reports and with program assessment.

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

A new school year is here and there are many exciting things happening at CSDB! We have ---20 new students in the School for the Blind (pre-school through transition). Elizabeth Umphress and Loretta Finnegan-Nelson are two new energetic staff members. Elizabeth is teaching in the Elementary Classroom and Loretta is in the Transition program. The School for the Blind is also pleased to have Paula Cochran as a para professional in the split Elementary Classroom, Christiana Walker-Potts as our library aide and Tammy Villalovos as 1:1 for a student in the Elementary classroom.

We are excited to share that Jim Olson has been selected as a 2007 APH Scholar and will be traveling to Louisville, Kentucky in October. Also the proposal for the 2007 Getting In Touch with Literacy (GITWL) conference submitted by Jim Olson, Karla McKechnie, and Lou Tutt has been selected as a poster presentation. Ann Hicks and Janet Rose will be presenting on literacy packs at GITWL.

Our new CSDB Outreach Department is growing! Dr. Laura Douglas is the new director with the following staff now under her supervision: Jim Olson, Donna Keale, Helen Freeman, Bonnie Ottmar, and Ann Hicks, including CIMC.

The CSDB Board of Trustees has changed their meeting date and times. The monthly work sessions and meeting will be on the 2nd Thursday and the Board meeting will begin at 4p.m. for the public. Dr. Douglas, as mentioned above will also supervise the two School for the Deaf Coordinators this school year. They are Deb Burton, former math teacher and Kent Swearingen, former voc/tech teacher in the School for the Deaf.

Karla McKechnie, our DLS/Transition teacher is also the School for the Blind Senior class sponsor. Six of our blind students are seniors this year. This year, none of our blind students are being mainstreamed this first semester. We have

moved Amy Gutowski, former PE teacher to the Elementary/Special Needs classroom because of an unusually high number of K-3 enrollments this year.

The School for the Blind is off to an exciting beginning of the 2007-2008 school year. Best wishes to Ann Hicks, Randy Witte, Linda Witte and Cathy Kearney as they are in their final year at CSDB!!

CSDB Outreach (Donna Keale)

Outreach at CSDB has now become a department that is directed by Dr. Laura S. Douglas. Donna Keale is still the contact person for Short Term Placement, Sports Abilities Days and Summer Enrichment. The 2007-2008 Short Term Placement schedule is currently under construction and should make the October newsletter as well as posted on the CSDB website (www.CSDB.org).

USABA has requested dates to facilitate the Sports Abilities Days in collaboration with CSDB. By creating several different abilities days throughout the state we are hoping to revive the Summer Sports Education Camp. This was canceled in 2007 due to low enrollment.

The 2007 Summer Enrichment Program brought in over 50 blind and visually impaired students. We were able to offer two elementary camps and one Independent Living 2 week camp that focused on all aspects of the Expanded Core Curriculum.

CSDB is currently working with two districts to provide O&M services to students in areas where there is not an O&M staff available.

Feel free to contact Dr. Laura S. Douglas (719-578-2110) or Donna Keale (719 578-2251).

CDE (Tanni Anthony)

CSAP, CSAPA, and CELA Braille and Large Print Formats: Janet Anderson, Tanni Anthony, and Nancy Cozart met with Holly Baker of the CDE Unit of Student Assessment in early August to review the 2006-2007 TVI-submitted CSAP comments. Thank you to all the teachers who took the time to submit their feedback. Each comment was analyzed for its accuracy. If it was a valid observation, it was classified as to whether it was a TVI training issue, a test question alteration issue, and/or a test preparation issue. The 29-page document that was completed was submitted to the assessment unit and the test publisher. Tanni will also be reviewing TVI-training issues at the State of the State portion of the 2007 Fall Conference on Visual Impairment and in follow-up *WHOT* articles. In addition, the CSAPA and CELA comments from last year's test administration were reviewed with appropriate CDE personnel.

ECEA Rules Specific to Braille Competency: The ECEA Rules are currently in a public comment period. The proposed changes to ECEA section 2220-R-4.00 Child Identification And Planning Process 4.02(4)(l) include: (a) renaming Literacy Modality Plan to Learning Media Plan; (b) adding learning to the phrase learning and literacy mode; (c) inserting language that braille competency is expected of all CO teachers licensed and endorsed in the area of visual impairment; and (d) adding a statement specific to guidelines developed by the Colorado Department of Education. As of September 14th, there was one public comment, which was in support, specific to these changes.. The proposed ECEA Rule changes will need to be approved by the Colorado State Board of Education.

Recruitment and Retention: We have some new faces in Colorado TVI positions. Debbie Mendoza is now in Adams 12; Holly Guinan is with Pikes Peak BOCES, Elizabeth Umpress is with the School for the Blind, Loretta Finegan-Nelson is with the CSDB Transition Team, Judy Wiefert is with Cherry Creek, Kaitlin Lombardi is with Denver, Bill Muir is with Aurora, Lorraine Hutcheson is part time in Aurora and Cherry Creek, Carol Jordan is with Douglas, Danielle McGrath is work Brighton, and MeLinda Carter is now with JeffCo. We still have vacancies in Adams 12, Douglas, and El Paso 11. CDSB has already announced several vacancies for the next school year. This is a good example for everyone! We all need to be highly proactive with our expected future retirements! Please be in touch with Tanni as your administrative unit has positions to announce!

Fall 2007 VI Conference: The 2007 State Conference on Visual Impairment has been scheduled for October 18-20, 2007. Conference registration has been sent out in the August-September What's Happening Out There newsletter. We will have a Thursday evening State of the State, a full day on Friday with Dr. LaRhea Sanford, and a series of speakers (Samantha Hoffman, Dr. Tom Theune, Jim Olson, and Dr. Penny Rosenblum) on Saturday!

Low Vision Clinics: We have our four regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics scheduled. The forms are posted on the CDE Blindness/Low Vision page. The tally of the LVE Clinics from last year (parent survey and TVI survey) has been sent to the four regional TVI meeting coordinators for review at a regional meeting. There were some great things to celebrate and some concerns. A concern is that parents are reporting that the report is not being reviewed with them by the local TVI. There were very few surveys that indicated that a child's IEP goals and objectives reflect the use and care of a low vision device.

Technology Consultation for Next Year: Bonnie Snyder will once again provide technology consultation across the state. Each of the four VI-regions will have seven days of Bonnie's time. This includes travel, onsite, phone, and email time. TVIs in each region should let their TVI Regional Meeting Coordinator know if they are requesting Bonnie's time. Bonnie will also be keeping track of region-specific time.

O&M Conference: Be watching for dates, times, and speaker /presentation content of this conference.

NIMAS and NIMAC: All Colorado administrative units have turned in a public assurance document specific to their work with NIMAC. Each public agency has the option of participating in NIMAC. Whether a public agency does or does not participate in NIMAC, the public agency will be responsible for ensuring that each child who requires instructional materials in an alternate.

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For public agencies that choose to participate in NIMAC, **contracts with publishers executed on and after December 3, 2006** for textbooks and other printed core materials *must* include a provision that requires the publisher to produce NIMAS files and send them to the NIMAC (this will not add any cost to the contract). Curriculum publishers have been involved in discussions relating to NIMAS and are well aware of its requirements.

State Listserv: Per the request of CO TVIs across the state, there is a CDE-based listserv for Colorado school district TVIs and O&M Specialists. Tanni has worked to populate the listserv with all TVIs email address unless they have asked not to be included. If you are not on the listserv and want to be, please send an email to Tanni.

New State IEP Forms: A state work group has been revising the State IEP Forms. Tanni met with the group on one occasion to review the wording specific to students who are blind/visually impaired and the requirements for Learning Media Plans. It is anticipated that the new form will be finalized after the November 2007 State Board of Education meeting. Tanni will let everyone know when they are posted on the CDE website in final format. Administrative units may adopt the state form or develop their own IEP forms.

Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project: This is the last year of the grant's five-year cycle. Gina and Tanni will be working with others to complete the activities of the project and to prepare, funding allowed, a new grant proposal. Please be in touch with either Tanni or Gina if you have ideas for the new grant proposal. Parents and teachers of children ages birth through 21 years who have a combined vision and hearing loss are eligible for free technical assistance from the project. The project's website has many resource documents, including some in Spanish. The project also has a free lending library that is chockfull of VI-specific books, videos, and DVD. For more information about the project, please go to <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Deafblind.asp>

BUDGET

The following budget items were approved for CDE Set Aside funds for school year 2007-2008.

- CSAP, CSAPA, and CELA Test Review
- *What's Happening Out There* newsletter
- VIISA Preschool course for the front range
- Paraeducator Module Development
- Vision Coalition
- CIMC
- Family Learning Seminar (VI strand)
- Braille Competency (proctors / proofreader)
- Mentor Program
- O&M Annual Conference
- State Conference on Visual Impairment
- Braille Transcriber Mentoring
- Technology Consultation
- Adult Role Model
- Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

A contract for \$320,779 was completed with CSDB for the following activities: CIMC, Adult Role Model Team, Braille Transcriber Mentor program, and the Family Learning Seminar. The August-September edition of WHOT detailed key contact people for these projects and many others sponsored by CSDB and others in Colorado.

TECHNOLOGY

A budget was submitted and approved for technology consultation by Bonnie Snyder during the 2007-08 school year for 28 days of consultation time (see Tanni's CDE notes for more detail). In addition to the tech support from Bonnie, TVIs and O&MSs are encouraged to use the CDE listserv to communicate about tech strengths and needs so we can continue to learn from one another.

Vicki provided an update on the Technology Committee. The committee will meet at the state conference during one of the lunches. Interested people should be in touch with Vicki or Rita. They would like to find models from other states that we can learn from specific to training and resources. It was recommended that Vicki talk to Jim Salstrum from the Colorado AT Project.

PARAEDUCATOR MODULES

On July 10th, the following people got together to begin work on a series of modules to training administrative unit paraeducators: Barbara Adams, Tanni Anthony, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, Ann Hicks, Judy Mumford, and Vicki Pearson. Four modules are in draft format; an overview module of visual impairment and the role of the paraeducator working with students with visual impairments, one specific to working with students who are blind, one specific to students with low vision, and one specific to students with vision loss and additional disabilities.

The VC reviewed the current draft modules and offered feedback. Tanni will make the recommended changes and send it out for one more peer review. We are hopeful these modules will be ready to go by the State Conference. The goal is to prepare a training disk for each administrative unit that will be supplemented by a book on paraeducators working with students who are visually impaired published by the Texas School for the Blind.

Next Meeting Dates:

January 8, 2008 - We will meet at the new Anchor Center Building

April 15th, 2008 – We will meet at the DVR Office

Agenda Items for the Next Meeting

2008-09 Budget specific to VI-activities
Response to Intervention

2008 State Conference Needs (? Vendor night!)
Results Matter

Assignments for the January 8, 2008 meeting

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
All	Electronically submit program updates to Tanni	January 5, 2008
Tanni	Send out a listserv request specific to options to pay for eye exams	September 2007
Tanni and Ann	Prepare a letter to the SpEd Director packet	October 2007
Ann	Confirm the administrative unit contact person for the CIMC. Send out an electronic monthly data report to each contact person.	October 2007 Ongoing
Donna	Converse with other state outreach programs to find out what is happening in other states specific to technology training and support to TVIs	January 2008
All	Bring calendars to the next meeting with any dates to avoid for the scheduling of the Fall 2008 Conference – we will do the best we can given our October constraints!	January 8, 2008

AN ESSAY CONTEST FOR ALL!!

The American Printing House for the Blind is celebrating 150 years of services this next year. In recognition of APH employees, past and present, they are inviting blind and visually impaired children, adults, and the professional who work with them to tell us how APH products have impacted the creation of an independent lifestyle.

The contest is open to:

- Students with a visual impairment enrolled in grades 3 through 12 for the 2007-08 school year.
- Adult consumers of APH products.
- TVIs, rehabilitation counselors, and other professionals in the field of blindness.

Contestants must compose an original essay based on their own thoughts and in their own words with limited guidance from others. The topic for student is “How APH has helped me to be independent” and for professionals, “How APH has helped me promote the independence of my clients or students.”

Prizes will include the latest APH technology and gift certificates for APH products. A “meet the author and autograph session” will be held the night of the banquet of the 2008 Annual APH meeting.

All entries must be received by **April 11th, 2008**. For more information about this contest, and to download the rules, please go to the website: www.APH.org/essay.html or call 1-800-223-1839.

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**Blindness Awareness Day
Monday, October 29
9 AM - 4 PM**

**Low Vision Awareness Day
Tuesday, October 30
9 AM - 4 PM**

**Learn about vision loss and what you can do about it.
For anyone with vision loss, instructors and trainers,
parents and families of those with vision loss, seniors
and senior center staff, and support groups.**

**Featured Speaker:
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Complimentary lunch! Come solo or bring friends and co-workers

BLINDESS AWARENESS DAY

**Learn about technology solutions for the
blind: JAWS® screen reading software,
the PAC Mate™ accessible Pocket PC, ac-
cessible GPS, braille study aids and braille
displays, scanning and reading - and more!**

LOW VISION AWARENESS DAY

**Discover the benefits of video magnifiers,
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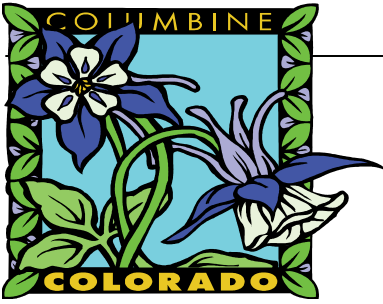
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COLORADO CONNECTIONS

🌀 Congrats to **Michael Plansker** and **Robin Theryoung** for their new ACVREP certification as COMS! So proud of you both!

🌀 Congrats to **Jadwiga Brown** and **Wendy Stoltman** for their renewal of ACVREP COMS certification.

🌀 Thanks for CSDB Board of Trustee's member **Dick Hartman** who visited the Western Slope Low Vision Evaluation Clinic in Grand Junction in late September. Mr. Hartman had the opportunity to observe a low vision evaluation session.

🌀 Good for **Donice Fennimore**, our Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Coordinator and an administrator at the CIMC, for tailoring some of her university coursework to the low vision needs of Colorado students.

🌀 The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado presented **Kay Ferrell** with the 2007 Ray McGeorge Award in recognition for her service and work in the field of education for the blind. Dr. Ferrell, a professor of Special Education and executive director of the National Center on Severe and Sensory Disabilities (formerly the National Center on Low-Incidence Disabilities), was honored at the Colorado Federation's 53rd annual convention in Denver.

🌀 Colorado was well represented at the 2007 Annual Printing House for the Blind meeting in Louisville, KY in mid-October. In attendance were **Tanni Anthony, Laura Douglas, Ann Hicks, Jim Olson,** and **Louis Tutt**. Jim Olson was one of the APH scholars who attended the meeting.

🌀 Many, many, many thanks to **Janet Anderson** and **Nancy Cozart** for their recent contribution of time and expertise to the review of the current version of the CELA test for English Language learners. Janet and Nancy reviewed the materials for the large print and braille versions of these tests. Nancy participated with Tanni on a teleconference with the test publishers and the CDE Unit of Assessment.

🌀 Welcome intern **Kim Tofflel** who is doing a low vision internship with Jim Olson at CSDB. Kim is enrolled at the Pennsylvania School of Optometry's low vision program.

🌀 Thanks to the staff of the CIMC: **Ann Hicks, Burt Haas, Tammy McCullough, Debbie Haberkorn,** and **Donice Fennimore** for meeting with Tanni and Laura Douglas in September on how to continue and improve the important work of the CIMC. These ladies are dedicated to providing timely and quality large print and braille books to Colorado learners who are blind/visually impaired. Thanks, gals for all of your hard work!



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