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## Opportunities and Practice: Creating Outliers

By Tanni L. Anthony



I am a fan of Malcolm Gladwell and his books. I like the way he puts things together that might not come together without his thinking. In the book *Outliers*, Mr. Gladwell talks about people with exceptional talent or who are outliers in a particular aspect of their lives. He tells the stories of real-life athletes, musicians, computer programmers, tailors, and other individuals representing a host of professions. The common denominator is that they are exceptionally good at what they do.

Gladwell presents a case that a combination of raw talent, opportunity, and practice is what propelled these individuals into their status of excellence. Sometimes the story was about the importance of timing—birthdays early in the calendar year that gave kids playing hockey more time on the practice rink than their younger peers. Or Bill Gates having a gigabyte of time on computers during teen years because of a then rare-bird computer club at his school.

This got me thinking. As a fan of early development, I know that the teamwork of nature and nurture help shape the outcomes of our lives. Gladwell takes this thinking to a new level. What we expose a child to makes a difference in the long run. When children have opportunities to practice, they get better. Those who persist with practice, get even better. A raw talent without opportunity to practice can wilt and a seed of a talent can germinate with opportunity and practice.

So how does this turn into a summer message? Parents, look around and see what might be available for your child. You want your child to be a swimmer – go for the Phelps gold and really spend time in the pool (throw in a few lessons to really get things off to a good start) Want your child to be a reader – books and reading time should be a serious theme of the summer docket. A computer whiz... well, you get the picture. We have an opportunity to build what our children and students are good at whether it is within the academic or recreational arena.

Best wishes for an outlier kind of summer! And thanks for another brilliant school year of lots of accomplishments, learning, fun, and moving forward toward positive post-school outcomes.

**WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE!**

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

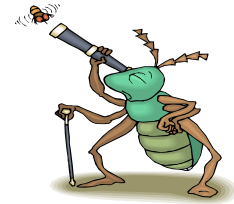
**May 2009**

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# LOW VISION NEWS



## The CDE Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Schedule

Proposed Clinic Schedule for School Year 2009-2010

Region	Dates	Location	Site Coordinator's
Southern	September 18-19, 2009 March 5, 2010	CSDB in Colorado Springs	Melissa Shular
Western	September 25-26, 2009	Grand Junction	Sarah Sonnier
Metro	November 12-14, 2009	To be Determined	Nancy Knight
Northern	February 19-20, 2009	To be Determined	Wendy Stoltman and Danielle Hildenbrand

### LOW VISION SEMINAR

**By Vicki Pearson**

On February 13, 2009, the Enight Skills Center hosted four low vision students and their parents for a Low Vision Seminar. The CSDB Role Model team comprised of Kyle Thomas, Asya Miller, and Gabe Gates really sparked a wonderful discussion about issues related to school, driving, and low vision. Donna Keale was wonderful in setting up the Role Model Team and assisting with transportation. Marce Donovan, resource teacher from Fort Collins High School, also took time out of her day to attend the seminar.

In addition to the Role Model Team, Vocational Rehabilitation, the Adaptive Driving Program through the Center for Neurorehabilitation, and Dr. Marc DeJorg from Enight spent time discussing their programs and low vision issues with the students and parents. Since that time, two of the students have been able to proceed with the process of getting a driver's permit. The discussion on the need and on the use of low vision devices was also very beneficial to the students (and teachers).

I am hopeful that this is an activity that we will be able to offer again in the future. The involved agencies and parents have expressed an interest in working together to find ways to support and fund continuing programs that might enable students to pursue efforts in obtaining a driver's license.

CDE, thanks for supporting the Role Model Team!

# A National Tele-Support Network for Parents of Children with Visual Impairment

**As a parent of a child do you ever feel isolated?**

**Do you have questions about your child's progress?**

**Would you like to share your experiences with parents of children with the same eye condition?**

The National Tele-Support Network hosts weekly Telephone Support Groups for parents of children with similar visual impairments.

All groups are organized and facilitated by a psychologist or social worker. Expert advice is often available from speech therapists, optometrists, ophthalmologists and teachers or the visually impaired.

Groups are limited in size to allow each parent to participate. Meetings are held during day-time and evening hours.



**To register, please call 800-915-0306**



## Braille Transcriber Transcribers Program Update

By Jim Olson

The braille mentoring program, sponsored by the Colorado Department of Education, provides reimbursement for Library of Congress certified braille transcribers to mentor Colorado participants working towards their Library of Congress certification. This program has been funded again for 2009-10.

If someone is interested at working on their Library of Congress braille over the summer months, please be in touch with contact Jim Olson, CIMC Coordinator at [jolson@cldb.org](mailto:jolson@cldb.org) or (719) 578-2195.



# Bits From Bonnie

By Bonnie Snyder

[BonnieLS21@gmail.com](mailto:BonnieLS21@gmail.com)

For several years I have been touting the merits of the program TextAloud from NextUp.com. While I still think it is an excellent piece of software, I have discovered a freeware alternative called Balabolka (balabolka is Russian for "chatterer.")

Balabolka does everything that TextAloud does including reading with speech, text files, Word files, PDF files, webpages and email and it can convert these files to MP3 format so that the users can carry them around in their MP3 players and not have to be tied to their computers in order to read the documents.

In addition, Balabolka has a couple of features not present in TextAloud. First of all, it highlights the text as it is being read which should be a help for readers with difficulties. When you leave Balabolka and come back into it later, it will start reading where it left off during its previous run. Balabolka can also be used as a text editor, and with the addition of the freeware Allspell, can have its own spell checker.

To find Balabolka, just Google it and you'll get to a site from which you can download it.

I wish a happy summer to all and I look forward to seeing you next school year!

## **National Conference on Physical Education and Children with Visual Impairments, Blindness, Deafblindness, or Multiple Disabilities**

**What:** A national conference related to physical activity barriers, teaching strategies, and sports for children with visual impairments, blindness, deafblindness or multiple disabilities. The forum will be panel discussions, guest speakers and round table discussions pertaining to issues faced by physical education teachers from schools for the blind in the US.

**When:** October 18-20th, 2009

**Where:** Perkins School for the Blind

**Who:** Any teacher, parent, or specialist interested in improving the lives of children with visual impairments

**How:** Registration will begin in August through the Perkins School for the Blind web site

# First Annual AbleGames 2009

Assistive Technology Partners proudly announces the first annual AbleGames! Children with disabilities from across Colorado will be competing for fabulous prizes and the chance to say they are the gaming champion! Observers will have the opportunity to see and personally experience a number of different technologies designed to promote participation in gaming. The Games will be held at Jefferson County Fairgrounds on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009.



The purpose of the event is to provide a fun environment for children with disabilities to compete in computer and other kid-friendly games. Games will be adapted for disabilities such as poor vision or physical challenges. For example, a nerf gun will be switch adapted so children who are unable to pull the trigger can participate. A Wii controller will be adapted to allow an individual who is paralyzed to control the game with just head movement. There will be numerous computer games available that can be controlled with virtually any switch. The purpose of the event is to level the playing field in competitive children's games while sharing the possibilities of what adaptations and assistive technology can do to enhance the quality of life for children with disabilities.

Assistive Technology Partners invites children ages 3 – 18 with disabilities and their families to this first annual event. Children with significant physical disabilities and who have fun playing video games are good candidates to participant. Participants will be given access to computer games, switches, and numerous adaptations to allow for a fair and fun competition. The cost will be \$25 per participant, lunch will be provided and the number of participants is limited to 20. Call (303) 315-1278 for a participant application or visit [http://www.uchsc.edu/atp/events\\_AbleGames.html](http://www.uchsc.edu/atp/events_AbleGames.html). The deadline to register is June 30, 2009.



Assistive Technology Partners is actively recruiting volunteers for this event. For more information and to get involved call Shelly Elfner at (303) 315-0602. Computer donations are also needed for the event. Please call (303) 315-1280 if you would like to make a donation. All donations are tax deductible and benefactors will be named at the event.

See you there!

## INVITATION

**To: Nancy Wood's Retirement Party!!!**

**When: May 31st 2:00-4:00**

**Where: First Congregational Church**

**2101 16th St. Greeley CO 80631**

**Wishing you all the best in your retirement, Nancy!!**



## Aniridia

*This information was taken from <http://www.aniridia.net/index.html> and <http://www.aniridia.org/conditions/index.html>*

Aniridia involves an absence or partial absence of the iris, which is the colored portion of the front of the eye. The iris is the part of the eye we refer to when we say a person has, green, blue, brown or grey eyes. It is a small circular muscle with a hole in the middle, called the pupil. The iris controls the amount of light that enters the eye by contracting in bright light making the pupil small and dilating in dark conditions making the pupil large. An eye with little or no iris allows in more light than a normal eye. This causes photophobia or light sensitivity which is a difficulty to see due to glare and discomfort in bright light conditions.

Aniridia can be present in one or both eyes. A person can have total aniridia or no visible iris in one or both eyes. A person with totally absent irises appears to have very dark eyes this is because they only have a large pupil. However, the iris is never completely absent; the root of the iris is still present but the muscle which creates the visible iris is missing. A person may have a partial Aniridia or part of one or both irises is missing. A person with partially absent irises appear to have very large and/or misshapen pupils with a small ring of color around the edge of the pupil. In these cases the iris will not contract and dilate when appropriate. Finally a person may have atypical aniridia or the iris may appear normal but it may be thinner than normal or have connective tissue defects. Ectopia pupillae may be a form of atypical aniridia.

Aniridia is rare. Its incidence is between 1/50,000 and 1/100,000. The genetic condition has been found to be a deletion on chromosome 11. It is an autosomal dominant condition, in which one parent also has aniridia, in 2/3 of the cases.

Aniridia may be more than just being born without an Iris. Many people with aniridia have other eye conditions that will affect their vision. Other visual conditions may include: cataract, lens dislocation, foveal dysplasia, optic nerve hypoplasia, corneal pannus, glaucoma and nystagmus. All of these aforementioned conditions will contribute to the reduction in visual acuity.

A person is born with **aniridia** and possibly other eye or medical conditions. Most children born with aniridia have visual acuities around 20/200 and are considered usually to be legally blind. This is because the gene responsible for aniridia (PAX 6) is responsible for the development of the eye, kidneys, pancreas and forebrain. The inner structures of the eye such as the retina, optic nerve and iris are not fully developed.

Other possible medical conditions that coexist with a diagnosis of aniridia include glucose intolerance, diabetes, obesity, and WAGR syndrome. One third of those with aniridia will have WAGR Syndrome which means they will have one or more of these aspects in addition to having aniridia: Wilms tumor (tumor of the kidney usually before age eight), genitourinary abnormalities, gonadblastoma and various levels of developmental delay or learning disabilities.

This condition will require ongoing eye care and consultation with low vision specialists for needed magnification and sun protection devices.

### **Resources:**

**Aniridia Foundation International** is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization dedicated to assisting those with low vision or blindness due to aniridia. Our members consist of those with aniridia, their families, physicians, researchers, and teachers. Aniridia Foundation International headquarters are located at the Hamilton Eye Institute at the University of Tennessee in Memphis, TN.

**Aniridia Network** is a support website for individuals with Aniridia and their families. The web link is <http://www.aniridia.org/conditions/aniridia.html>



# ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

## **ORIENTATION & MOBILITY**

### 2009 O&M Conference

Congratulations to the CO O&M Planning Committee for creating and hosting a marvelous conference. The training, entitled ***Where in the World Are You? GPS for Students who are Blind/Visually Impaired***, was held at the Anchor Center on May 7-9, 2009. **Melissa Shular** was the lead of the planning committee and was wonderful at keeping the planning going throughout the school year. Other committee members and conference hosts were: **Rita Albright, Tanni Anthony, Deb Carlisle, Michelle Chacon, Elaine Karns, Donna Keale, Ann Marie Jansen, Trina Boyd-Pratt, and Mike Plansker.** The training was co-sponsored by the Colorado Department of Education and the CO AER Chapter.



# Resources and Materials

## TEACHING JUMP ROPE TO CHILDREN WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

The March 2009 Journal of Blindness and Visual Impairment had an article by Dr. Lauren Lieberman and Haley Schedlin on how children with visual impairments have lagged behind their same-age peers in physical activity and motor skills. It further states that jumping rope is one way to improve these skills and to promote socialization. Giving choices related to the types of rope and use of mats is important. In addition, using appropriate instructional strategies and modifications will make jumping rope a skill that the children enjoy and will lead to involvement in other physical activities.

This research led to the development of a popular new product now available from APH. Here is a link to information on APH's Jump Rope to Fitness Kit: [www.aph.org/advisory/2009adv01.html#P2](http://www.aph.org/advisory/2009adv01.html#P2)

## NEW LOW VISION AIDS

Optelec has recently unveiled three new products for people with low vision: The FarView, ClearView+G@, and ClearNote Portable. For Product descriptions and pricing, visit [www.optelec.com](http://www.optelec.com)

**DO IT YOURSELF:** This resource comes from Australia called *Do It Yourself: Encouraging Independence to Children who are Blind*. For more information, go to: <http://www.icevi.org/publications/ICEVI-WC2002/papers/10-topic/10-lunn1.htm>

## SPANISH MATERIALS FROM APH

APH has a Spanish translation of the Parent Early Childhood series, a collection of one-to-two-page sheets that briefly present techniques for promoting communication, cognition, mobility, play, emotional, and sensory development, self help, eating etc. These were originally developed at Overbrook School. It is \$15 for an unbound, loose-leaf Spanish edition (They're 3-hole punched if you want to preserve them as a set in a binder rather than pass out individually. They're meant to be consumable.) The materials are also available on quota. For more information, go to [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org).

## APH TACTILE GRAPHIC IMAGE LIBRARY

Fifty-five new graphics were added to the Tactile Graphic Image Library during the month of March. Additional graphics are added every month, so keep checking back for additional useful depictions! The free images in the database are templates for you to use to create your own custom tactile graphics.



*New Graphics Added Monthly!*

Registered Users: <http://imagelibrary.aph.org/>  
New Users: <http://www.aph.org/tgil/>  
For more details contact Chris Graham at [tgfeedback@aph.org](mailto:tgfeedback@aph.org) or call 800/223-1839, ext. 289.





## TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

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### **The GuildScholar Program**

#### **A Scholarship for Visually Impaired High School Students**

Open to all legally blind high school students entering college in September 2010. Application to be made at the end of the junior year of high school.

Must be a US Citizen or a legal resident, have excellent academic record and have demonstrated school and community leadership.

Scholarships of up to \$15,000 will be competitively awarded to qualified students. The deadline for the 2010 scholarships is **July 1st, 2009**. The GuildScholar application is online.

**Please log on to: [www.jgb.org/guildscholar.asp](http://www.jgb.org/guildscholar.asp)**

**For more information, contact Gordon Rovins at [rovinsg@jgb.org](mailto:rovinsg@jgb.org)**

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## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

**Insight Resources for Self-Empowerment** offers scholarships to individuals who are full-time students with documented disabilities.

Applications are available online at [www.incight.org](http://www.incight.org); or contact the company by phone, 971 244-0305 or e-mail, [scholarship@incight.org](mailto:scholarship@incight.org)



# Online Transition Intervention Opportunity for Youth who are Blind or Visually Impaired

## Recruiting Participants



**The Rehabilitation Research & Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision at Mississippi State University (RRTC)** would like to announce a special opportunity for youth who are blind or visually impaired. The RRTC will be conducting two online interventions: one for youth approaching graduation from high school and one for youth approaching graduation from college. The purpose of the interventions is to help prepare these youth to seek and obtain employment; therefore we are looking for participants who plan to seek full-time employment after completing their education. The interventions, which will be approximately 8 weeks in length, will take place in Fall 2009 and Winter 2010. Please note that these interventions will be FREE to all participants and will be completely online – therefore participants can be located anywhere in the U.S. and can participate from home.

Requirements for participation will include the following:

- Legal blindness or more severe visual impairment
- Blindness as the primary disability, without additional significant disabilities
- Senior in high school (or recent graduate) who does not plan to attend college, OR Senior in college (or recent graduate), under the age of 25, who expects to seek (or is seeking) employment after graduation
- Basic computer literacy and knowledge of accessibility software/hardware that would allow participation in an intervention provided on the Internet

We currently want to identify professionals who can help us recruit participants in the coming months. Individuals who are interested in participating may also contact us for additional information. Please contact Lynda Goleman at the RRTC: 1-800-675-7782 or [lgoleman@colled.msstate.edu](mailto:lgoleman@colled.msstate.edu)



SAVE THE DATE



**Getting In Touch With Literacy Conference**  
**The Hilton Orange County/Costa Mesa**  
**Located in Southern California**

**November 12–15, 2009**

Look for more information soon on our web site!

[www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.com](http://www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.com)

COSTA MESA, CA



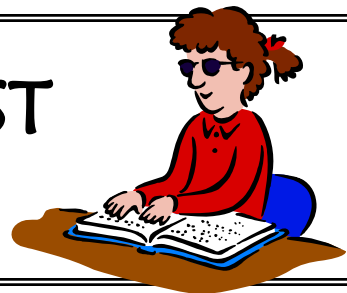
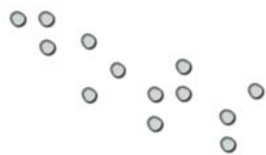
## **NAPVI's Families Connecting with Families 2009 International Conference**

*July 17, 18, 19, 2009 at the Hilton Orange County/Costa Mesa 3050 Briston Street, Costa Mesa, CA 92626 (Within 15 miles from Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm Amusement Parks, 5 miles from Newport, Laguna, and Huntington Beaches! To register, go to:  
<http://www.afb.org/FCRegistration1.asp>*

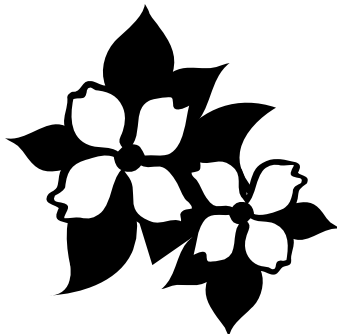
### **OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE YOUR INPUT TO THE CSAP!**

The Unit of Student Assessment is very interested in having TVIs participate in their yearly Content Validity and Alignment Review. During this review, content experts and teacher specialists examine every new item for alignment and bias issues before it becomes a part of the next test. This year's review will take place **June 1-4, 2009** for the different content areas – please be in touch with Tanni if you are interested in participating.

# DOTS OF INTEREST



## BANA NEWS



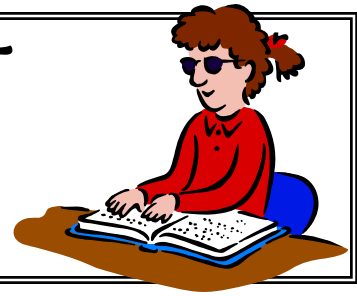
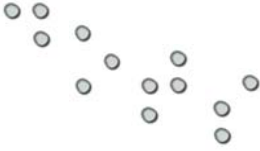
In honor of the 200th birthday of Louis Braille, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) has created the Braille Excellence Award. This award will be given to people or organizations that have developed or contributed to a code, have developed code materials, or software that supports codes, and/or who represent the highest standards of braille production. The first award is being given to Dr. Abraham Nemeth for his contributions to making math and science accessible for blind people around the world. He has recently completed work on the Nemeth Uniform Braille System (NUBS), which can render both literary and technical braille. BANA is currently making plans to evaluate this new code. The evaluation time line and consumer input details will be available soon. To view the completed code, or to read documents explaining the code, visit [www.braille2000.com/brl2000/nubs.htm](http://www.braille2000.com/brl2000/nubs.htm).

## LOUIS BRAILLE TRAVELING EXHIBIT

National Braille Press is sponsoring the Louis Braille Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit. It takes a viewer through the highlights of Louis' life, the braille production process, and why braille remains important today. C. Michael Mellor, author of "Louis Braille: A Touch of Genius," is also speaking at some of the tour locations. Requests for the exhibit were so plentiful that two identical exhibits are traveling at the same time throughout 2009. To find out if it's coming to your area, view the tour schedule at:

[www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/louis/louis\\_tour.html](http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/louis/louis_tour.html)

# DOTS OF INTEREST



## UNITED STATES MINT

### 2009 LOUIS BRAILLE BICENTENNIAL DOLLAR

For the first time in history, a United States coin will feature readable Braille and commemorate the 200th birthday, life and legacy of Louis Braille, inventor of the Braille system of reading and writing used by the blind today.

Authorized by Public Law 109-247, the obverse of the coin bears a likeness of Louis Braille and the reverse portrays a child reading a book in Braille. On the reverse is the word “Braille,” “BRL” in Braille code, across the top of the coin. The word *INDEPENDENCE* is featured on a bookshelf behind the child, in addition to the inscriptions *UNITED STATES OF AMERICA*, *ONE DOLLAR* and *E PLURIBUS UNUM*.



In addition to readable Braille, the 2009 Louis Braille Bicentennial Silver Dollar has other distinguishing features apparent to the blind community, including its size and reeded edge.

The 2009 Louis Braille bicentennial Silver Dollar commemorates the pioneering contributions of a man whose efforts have led to independence and increased quality of life for millions.

This unique coin is available in both proof and uncirculated editions.

	<u>Product</u>	<u>Price</u>
BR1	Proof Silver Dollar	\$41.95
BR2	Uncirculated Silver Dollar	\$33.95
BR3	Uncirculated Silver Dollar in easy-open capsule	\$33.95
BR4	US Mint Braille Education Set (check <a href="http://www.usmint.gov">www.usmint.gov</a> for availability)	TBD

A surcharge of \$10 per coin is authorized to be paid to The National Federation of the Blind to support its programs to promote Braille literacy.



#### HOW TO ORDER:

- ONLINE: [www.usmint.gov](http://www.usmint.gov)
- PHONE: 1-800-USA-MINT (872-6468)  
8:30 AM to 5:00 PM ET, Monday through Friday
- TTY: 1-800-321-MINT (6468)  
8:30 AM to 5:00 PM ET, Monday through Friday

# DOTS OF INTEREST



2233 West Shepperd Avenue, Littleton, Colorado 80120  
Phone (303) 778-1130 (800) 401-4632 Fax (303) 778-1598  
Email: [ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) Website: [www.cocenter.org](http://www.cocenter.org)

## SAVE THE DATE!

### LOUIS BRAILLE BICENTENNIAL—A COLORADO CELEBRATION

- WHEN:** June 9, 2009
- WHERE:** The Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB)
- TIME:** Program starts at 9:00 a.m. followed by Braille Carnival games, Braille cookies, and sale of Louis Braille Bicentennial Silver Dollar issued by the U.S. Mint
- WHAT:** CCB and the National Federation of the Blind of CO invite you to join them as they celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Louis Braille, creator of the primary system of reading and writing used by people who are blind.
- WHY:** To announce CCB's new year-round Youth Education Program with a focus on improving literacy for blind children in Colorado and to recognize the critical role Braille plays in the independence, freedom, and success of the blind.

For more information, contact Brent Batron, Youth Services Coordinator at (303) 778-1130 extension 222 or email [bbatron@cocenter.org](mailto:bbatron@cocenter.org) or Lorinda Riddle at extension 236 or [lriddle@cocenter.org](mailto:lriddle@cocenter.org).



# IMPORTANT!

## We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for the next school year. Please keep in touch with Tanni about your job openings. We have THREE metro-area TVIs looking for employment for this next school year, so we have a chance to really ensure that anticipated vacancies are filled. If you know of an anticipated opening in your part of the state, please begin working to recruit someone into our field by ensuring he or she has an opportunity to learn about being a TVI and/or an Orientation and Mobility Specialist. This may be a paraeducator, a brailist, and/or a colleague already in the teaching profession. Please work with Dr. Paula Conroy to learn more about the UNC distance education / graduate program to prepare TVIs and O&M Specialists in Colorado!

### Jobs for School Year 2009-2010

TVI = teacher certified in the area of visual impairment.

COMS = certified orientation and mobility specialist

#### Metro Region

- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1 FTE): Contact Ann Marie Jansen of Adams 12 District in Northglenn at (720) 972-4789 or [annmarie.jansen@adams12.org](mailto:annmarie.jansen@adams12.org) for more information.
- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1 FTE): Contact Dixie Periman of Cherry Creek School District at (720) 554-4250 or [dperiman@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:dperiman@cherrycreekschools.org) for more information

#### Southern Region

- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1. FTE): Contact Leah Bitat at [bitatlm@d11.org](mailto:bitatlm@d11.org) in El Paso 11 District in Colorado Springs for more information.
- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (.6 FTE): Contact Julie Holiday at Academy District 20 in Colorado Springs at 719 234-1328 or [julie.holiday@asd20.org](mailto:julie.holiday@asd20.org) for more information.
- ✓ **TVI / Elementary / Special Needs** (1 FTE) for the CSDB School for the Blind in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at [clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org) for more information
- ✓ **TVI / Transition Program / Outreach Services** (1 FTE) for the CSDB School for the Blind in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at [clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org) for more information
- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (.1FTE or five hours a week for 2010-2011): Contact Debi Blackwell of Canon City Schools at [BLACKWD@canoncityschools.org](mailto:BLACKWD@canoncityschools.org) for more information.
- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (3 FTE): Contact Dr Carolena Steen of Cheyenne Mountain Schools at [csteen@cmsd12.org](mailto:csteen@cmsd12.org) or (719) 457-6100 for more information



# Calendar of Events

2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009

- June 5 - 7**      **Annual Family Learning Retreat** - CSDB in Colorado Springs  
Contact: Stefanie Morgan at (719) 570-0793.
- June 9**      **Louis Braille Bicentennial** - Colorado Center for the Blind — Littleton  
Contact: Brent Batron - [bbatron@cocenter.org](mailto:bbatron@cocenter.org) or 303 778-1130 x222
- June 8 - 12**      **Confidence Camp for Kids—Elementary Program**  
Contact: CO Center for the Blind - [ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) or 303 778-1130
- June 15 - 19**      **Confidence Camp for Kids—Elementary Program (ages 5 –10)**  
Contact: CO Center for the Bind - [ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) or 303 778-1130
- June 20**      **2009 Vision Resource Exposition** - CSDB in Colorado Springs  
Contact: 719-635-3585, - Patty Wagner, Michelle McGowan or Tim Richard
- June 29 - July 1**      **2009 Summer Institute on Deafblindness**  
Contact: Tanni Anthony— [Anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us)
- July 20 - August 8**      **Initiation to Independence Middle School Program**  
Contact: CO Center for the Bind —[ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) or 303 778-1130
- June 13 - August**      **Earn and Learn — High School Program**  
Contact: CO Center for the Bind —[ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) or 303 778-1130
- June 13 - August 8**      **Summer for Success—College Prep Program**  
Contact: CO Center for the Bind - [ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) or 303 778-1130
- July 17 - 19**      **Families Connecting with Families Conference** - Costa Mesa, CA  
Visit: [www.napvi.org](http://www.napvi.org)
- August 29**      **2009 AbleGames** - Jefferson County Fairgrounds, Golden  
Contact: Assistive Technology Partners (303) 315-1278
- October 15 - 17**      **APH Annual Meeting** - Louisville, KY  
Contact: American Print House for the Blind—[www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)
- November 12 - 15**      **Getting In Touch with Literacy Conference** - Costa Mesa, CA  
Visit: [www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.com](http://www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.com)



## More Calendar of Events

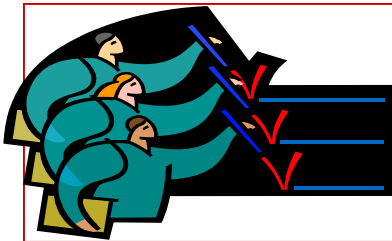
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- November 13 - 15**                      **AER Regional Conference** - Cleveland, OH  
Visit: [www.aerbvi.com](http://www.aerbvi.com)
- November 25**                        **Last day to order a Large Print or Braille CSAP**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- December 14**                        **Early Assessment Window for CELApro**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)

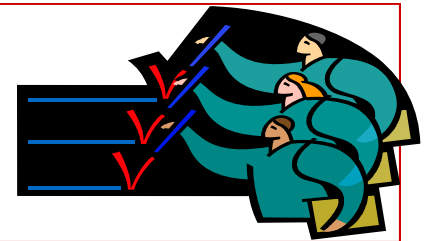
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- January 4 - February 2**            **Assessment Window for CELApro**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- February 1 - 12**                    **Early Assessment Window for CSAP Grade 3 Reading and Lectura**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- February 3 - March 26**            **Assessment Window for CSAPA (All grades)**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- February 5**                         **Braille Challenge** - CSDB in Colorado Springs, CO  
Contact: Randy Witte at [rwitte@csdb.org](mailto:rwitte@csdb.org)
- February 16 - 26**                  **Assessment Window for CSAP Grade 3 Reading and Lectura**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- March 1 - April 2**                  **Early Assessment Window for CSAP Grade 3 Writing and Grades 4-10**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- March 8 - April 9**                 **Assessment Window for CSAP Grade 3 Writing and Grades 4-10**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- April 22 - 24**                        **Council for Exceptional Children's Convention and Expo** - Nashville, TN  
Visit: CEC at [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)
- April 28**                              **Assessment Window for COACT State Test Date**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- May 12**                                **Assessment Window for COACT Makeup**  
Contact: Your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- July 20 - 25**                         **AER International Conference** - Little Rock, AR  
Visit: [www.aer.bvi.org](http://www.aer.bvi.org)
- August 8 - 13**                        **World ICEVI Conference**— Jomtein, Thailand  
Visit: [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org)





# CHECK IT OUT!



## CHILDREN'S LITERATURE COURSE

Julie Goldbeck, a teacher with low vision, is offering an on-line course called ***Introduction to Children's Literature*** for 10 clock hours. It is a self-paced course that can be completed from home with an Internet connection. The course will cover all areas of children's literature, including: special events in children's literature, U.S. and international children's literature awards, authors, illustrators, children's book publishers, picture books, chapter books, middle grade, young adult, etc. To register, e-mail [goldbeckjm@comcast.net](mailto:goldbeckjm@comcast.net) and Julie will send you the course materials. A \$50 instructor fee is due upon completion.

## REGISTRATION OPENS FOR WOODCOCK-JOHNSON III WORKSHOP

Registration is now open for the workshop on "Administering and Scoring the Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement for Braille Readers." There is a \$25 registration fee for this 2-day workshop which will be held at the Desert Valleys Regional Cooperative in Phoenix on August 28-29, 2009. For registration information and to access the registration form, go to:

[www.aph.org/edresearch/WJIIIworkshopAugust2009RegistrationForm.doc](http://www.aph.org/edresearch/WJIIIworkshopAugust2009RegistrationForm.doc)

For hard copies of the registration form, contact Rachel Goodman at [rgoodman@aph.org](mailto:rgoodman@aph.org) or call 502-899-2389.

## JVIB SUBSCRIPTIONS

Effective immediately, AFB Press will offer all professionals a new \$25 individual subscription fee for online access to the *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness (JVIB)* and \$65 for a combined print and online subscription. To allow for a new subscription process to be put in place following the AER decision to terminate *JVIB* as a member benefit, AFB Press will provide continuous access to *JVIB* during the months of April and May to our readership. Readers can log on using the generic "AER, AER" user name and password.

During the month of May, *JVIB's* readership will be invited to join the *JVIB* community by contacting AFB Press directly and taking advantage of the new, reduced subscription rates for individual subscribers. At that time, AFB Press will provide additional information about how readers can formally sign up for their new subscriptions. In the meantime, please contact [afbpress@afb.net](mailto:afbpress@afb.net) with any questions you might have.

AER members who have print add-on subscriptions to the journal will be receiving their April print issue in the mail. Questions about your AER membership or the *JVIB* add-on print subscription arranged by AER should be addressed to the AER office directly.

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## From APH Executive in Residence Dr. Phil Hatlen



Dr. Phil Hatlen is working on a project concerning the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). With the help of Ralph and others, he wants to find the answers to: What is the current status of the ECC? How many blind and visually impaired students are receiving instruction in the ECC? If warranted, how can the instruction be improved? Are there products that APH could produce that would enhance the teaching of the ECC? APH received completed surveys from teachers, parents, consumers, and other professionals. An analysis of these will help Dr. Hatlen answer the first question, and lead him closer to answers for the other two. If any of you would like to know more about the ECC, Dr. Hatlen would be happy to discuss it with you. If any of you would like to visit with him about any topic, he shares that he would enjoy it very much. Please call Tina Livingston at 800/223-1839, ext. 310.



AFB ' s Professional Development Department wants to share information about their new web-based audio resources for families. Five new Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) audio interviews with professionals have been added to the ECC Audio Library section of Family Connect.

These messages, from June Downing, Jim Durkel, David Brown, Millie Smith, and Linda Mamer, are for parents and families and highlight the following ECC areas: Sensory Efficiency, Self-Determination, and Compensatory Skills/Communication. Dr. Downing discusses sensory efficiency and tactile communication skills for deafblind children, Mr. Durkel discusses sensory efficiency and effective listening skills for children who are blind or have low vision, Mr. Brown discusses self-determination skills for deafblind children, Ms. Smith discusses communication skills for children with visual and multiple impairments, and Dr. Mamer discusses compensatory skills and communication skills for deafblind children. We are pleased to have these new presenters available online. Their messages include what they think parents need to know and how parents can support their children's acquisition of these important disability-specific skills.

Please visit [www.familyconnect.org](http://www.familyconnect.org) frequently to find interesting new content. The ECC audio interviews are in the featured topic area "Education."

To get updated information about AFB projects, we hope you are receiving AFB's newsletters. For e-News contact Sara Hogan at [shogan@afb.net](mailto:shogan@afb.net) and for the Professional Development Department's biannual newsletter, Connections, contact Jill Alo at [jalo@afb.net](mailto:jalo@afb.net).



## **SPRING FEVER SALE!**

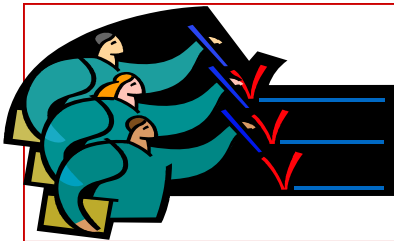
**Explore savings on selected American Printing House for the Blind products with APH's Spring Fever Sale 2009, April 1 - June 30. As always, first come, first served.**  
**[www.aph.org/products/springfever.html](http://www.aph.org/products/springfever.html)**

## **VIDEO VIEW OF THE EYE**

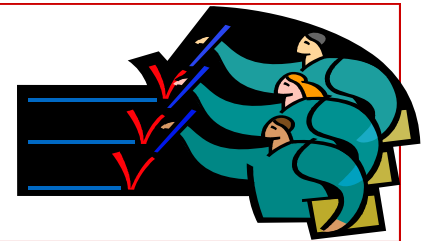
Thanks to Wendy Stoltman who sent in this website link, which is an excerpt from *Fly Through the Eye*.

[http://www.iknow.net/player\\_window.html?url=media/fly\\_to\\_retina\\_auto.swf&width=360&height=317](http://www.iknow.net/player_window.html?url=media/fly_to_retina_auto.swf&width=360&height=317)





# CHECK IT OUT!



## ***New Academic Standards in Four Subjects Available for Review***

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has released the first public drafts from phase one of the K-12 Colorado Model Content Standards review process.

The drafts offer significant adjustments to the standards originally adopted in 1994. Only math and science have been revised since then. The proposed overhaul of state academic standards:

- Organizes standards grade-by-grade instead of by groups of grades
- Incorporates 21st-century skills
- Spells out fewer, but clearer and higher standards
- Adds early childhood, higher education, and post-secondary and workforce readiness expectations
- Calls for students to master concepts rather than facts

The new draft academic standards in four subjects – math; music; reading, writing and communicating; and science – now are available online at: [http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/stand\\_rev\\_DRAFTS.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/OSA/stand_rev_DRAFTS.html)

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## **Assessment Guide in Spanish**

The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) has published a Spanish translation of its guide for parents on assessments. For more information, please go to the NCEO website, [www.nceo.info](http://www.nceo.info).

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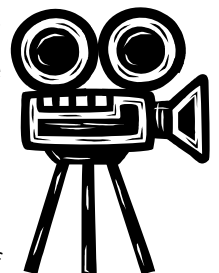
## ***Division 9 Newsletter is Now Online***

The Association of the Education and Rehabilitation of Blind/Visually (AER) Division 9 represents certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists. To learn more about being a member of AER and Division 9, please go to [www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org). Members of Division 9 can access the Division 9 newsletter online with the national AER website.

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## **THE MIRACLE WORKER 30th Anniversary Edition 1st Time on DVD!**

With closed captioning and audio description produced by the American Council of the Blind's Audio Description Project. Starring Melissa Gilbert and Emmy-winning actress Patty Duke as "Annie Sullivan". Based on the 1962 classic starring Patty Duke as Helen Keller, this 1979 television remake stars Melissa Gilbert as Helen Keller and Patty Duke as her tutor, Annie Sullivan. Go to [www.adinternational.org](http://www.adinternational.org) or [www.acb.org](http://www.acb.org) and click on "The Miracle Worker" links to purchase your copy today—a significant portion of each purchase made via this link benefits the American Council of the Blind!





# 2009 Sports Education Camp

For Students Who Are Blind Or Visually Impaired

<u>Date</u>	<u>Program</u>
June 14—June 19	Sports Education Camp—ages 10-16
June 14-16	Junior Camp—ages 10-12
June 14-19	Senior Camp—ages 13-16

**Experience track and field events,  
wrestling, goalball and more!**

**Register by May 8, 2009**

**Enrollment is limited to 20 students**

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

**Cost: \$50.00 per student**

**(includes all food, lodging and activities)**



CSDB does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, religion, marital status, disability or handicap on admissions, access to, treatment, or employment in educational programs or activities in which it operates.

**33 North Institute  
Street  
Colorado Springs,**

# What's up with Summer Programs?

—Donna Keale

To be or not to be has been the latest question at Outreach Departments in State Schools across the United States concerning summer programs. Tennessee, Georgia and Indiana have all announced that they either are not having summer programs or will significantly reduce the number of camps given the current economic concerns. Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind is also reducing the number of programs this summer. We will be offering one camp in the area of blindness and one in the area of deafness.

This year CSDB will be offering the Sports Education Camp for the blind/visually impaired. We will be hosting the junior camp for ages 10-12 on June 14-16 and the senior camp for ages 12-16 during June 14-19. These camps are an opportunity for students to learn about sports and how to adapt sports so they can participate in their local youth organizations and PE classes.

Every year we bring in the US Women's Goalball Team to help run the camp. They won Gold in Beijing last September and will be excited to share their experiences in sports at the elite level. Other sporting events will include Track and Field, Judo, Wrestling, Swimming, and Tandem Cycling. If you have a student or child who is interested in Sports Camp please contact Donna Keale ([dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org)) for more information.



# COLORADO CENTER FOR THE BLIND

Email: [ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) Website: [www.cocenter.org](http://www.cocenter.org)

## 2009 YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAMS

**“Confidence Camp for Kids” Elementary Program : June 8-12 and June 15-19:** An interactive, two week program for blind and visually impaired children ages 5 to 10.

**“Initiation to Independence” Middle School Program—Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>:** The Middle School Program is a three week residential program for young teens, ages 12 to 14. These students will participate in job shadows where they will meet competent blind role models. Students work on basic skills such as Braille, daily living and travel.

**“Earn and Learn” High School Program: Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>**

For eight weeks high school teens live in apartments with summer counselors. The students work part time at local businesses. They participate in a wide variety of classes and build confidence through challenge recreation activities.

**“Summer for Success” College Prep Program: Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>**

The College Prep Program is an eight week residential program where students learn all aspects of higher education as well as skills to be fully independent. Topics covered include using technology effectively to master classes in math and science, orientation around college campuses, and being a full part of college life.

## The Colorado Braille Competency Documents Have Been Updated

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>

**CDE Guidelines/Support Documents, ECEA Regulations,  
and National-Level Documents Related to Blindness/Low Vision**



**To locate the documents, please go to the CDE Blindness / Low Vision webpage**

### **Colorado Braille Mastery Test Documents**

[Braille Competency Testing Guidelines](#)

[Braille Mastery Test Accommodation Procedures](#)

[Prep for the Colorado Braille Mastery Test](#)

[Braille Competency Renewal Testing Guidelines](#)



## Family Learning Retreat 2009

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind  
33 North Institute Street  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903  
June 5-7, 2009

The Family Learning Retreat will be returning to the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind June 5-7, 2009. The weekend retreat is for any family with a child who is deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired or deafblind. This is an opportunity for families to meet other families while networking, learning and having fun together.

Parents /adults will attend training during the day, while children participate in supervised recreational activities within the youth program. Check-in and dinner begins Friday June 5<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 PM-7:00 PM followed by an opening session. The retreat ends by noon on Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. Lodging will be available Friday and Saturday nights in the CSDB dormitories. Meals provided include Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch, and Sunday breakfast.

The cost of the Family Learning Retreat is only \$25 per adult and \$20.00 per child under the age of 18. Spanish and sign language interpreters will be provided upon request.

Parents will be responsible for providing any assisted feeding or medical procedure their child requires. A nurse will not be available during the Family Learning Retreat weekend.

Come and relax. Make new friends. Experience a valuable learning opportunity. Youth programming will be provided Saturday evening for parents to have time to relax!

Interested or know of someone who is? Contact Diane Covington at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind at **(719) 578-2225** to register. For Spanish speaking participants, contact Gloria Romero **(719)-578-2288**.







## **El Retiro de Aprendizaje de Familia 2009**

**Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind  
33 North Institute Street  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903  
5-7 de junio del 2009**

El Retiro de Aprendizaje de Familia regresará a la Escuela de Colorado para los Sordos y los Ciegos el 5-7 de junio del 2009. El retiro de fin de semana es para cualquier familia que tiene un hijo/hija sordo/duro de oír, ciego/discapacidad visual o sordo ceguera. Esto es una oportunidad para familias a conocer a otras familias mientras establecen contactos, aprenden y se divierten juntos.

Padres /adultos asistirán una variedad de entrenamientos durante el día mientras que los niños participan en actividades recreativas supervisados por medio de un programa juventud. La facturación y la cena empiezan la tarde de viernes, el 5 de junio a las 5:00 PM hasta las 7:00 PM, una sesión de Bienvenida seguirá. El retiro concluye al mediodía en domingo, el 7 de junio. Habrá habitaciones disponibles en los dormitorios de CSDB para ambos viernes y sábado. Las comidas proveídas serán la cena el viernes, el desayuno y almuerzo en sábado y el desayuno en domingo.

El costo para el Retiro de Aprendizaje es solo \$25 por cada adulto y \$20.00 por cada niño bajo la edad de 18 años. Interpretes de Español y de señas serán disponible por solicitud.

Será la responsabilidad de los padres administrar los alimentos o medicamentos requerido por el niño. Una enfermera no estará disponible durante el horario del Retiro de Aprendizaje de Familia.

Vengan para relajarse. Conocer nuevas amistades. Tener una experiencia de aprendizaje inolvidable. Durante la tarde en sábado, un programa de la juventud estará disponible para que los padres puedan ir a pasarlo bien.

Si le interesa o conoces a alguien con el interés de asistir, por favor llame a Diane Covington en la Escuela de Colorado para los Sordos y los Ciegos al **(719) 578-2225** para inscribir. Los participantes de habla español pueden llamar a Gloria Romero al **(719)-578-2288**.

**La cuota es debida antes el 8 de mayo del 2009**



# Vision Resource Expo

Co-sponsored by CSDB and DVR

The Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind are excited to announce the 2009 Vision Resource Exposition on Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at CSDB. The Expo will take place from 9 am to 4 pm and is open to the public.

## *Presentations on a variety of topics including:*

- Macular degeneration overview presented by Dr. James Luu, MD, Retinal Specialist
- Optical and electronic devices to enhance vision by Dr. Thomas Thuene, OD, Low Vision Specialist
- Services available through education and rehabilitation
- Use of a dog guide
- New developments in assistive technology

*Many vendors on site to show and demonstrate their products and services.*

Have questions or need more specifics? Please call DVR at 719-635-3585 and ask for Patty Wagner, Michelle McGowan, or Tim Richard.

# VISION COALITION NOTES

April 8, 2009

**Persons in Attendance:** Barbara Adams, Tanni Anthony, Nancy Cozart, Stephanie Isbell, Jim Olson, Trina Boyd Pratt, Cathy Smyth, Wendy Stoltman, and Julia Zanon

**Persons Absent:** Kay Ferrell, Rene Harrell, Donna Keale, Lou Tutt

**Special Guest:** Laura Douglas

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### Northern Region (Wendy Stoltman)

Jill Gallegos ([gallegosji@laramie1.k12.wy.us](mailto:gallegosji@laramie1.k12.wy.us)) shared that Wyoming is having a camp specific to children who are blind/visually impaired at Casper Mountain this summer July 12-18<sup>th</sup>. The focus is on the expanded core curriculum. There is no cost, except transportation to and from. Elevation is 8,000 feet, and will best meet the needs of kids without additional disabilities. The camp is about 2 ½ hours from Cheyenne.

Topics for vision coalition

- a. CSDB: how is it decided that a child resides at CSDB?
- b. Are there certain entrance requirements or levels of independence?

*Discussion: All of CSDB's policies are on their website ([www.csdb.org](http://www.csdb.org)) – look under Administration to find a particular policy. When CSDB policies are updated, they must be reviewed by the State Attorney General. There is a guideline around residential placement. The student has to live more than 30 miles away from the school to be eligible for a residential placement. There are students who are bussed in each day from Douglas County and Pueblo. A placement must be based on educational need. Very rarely, there may be a court appointed placement. Entrance requirements have three criteria components that address cognitive, behavior, and age. The CSDB may recommend a diagnostic placement for a 30 day enrollment period. Parents can opt into CSDB without the approval of the administrative unit. Parents may elect to send their children to CSDB without there being an IEP decision. In these situations, the AU may elect to not support transportation costs. The Special Education Director of the local AU is the primary contact person with CSDB when a student is placed at CSDB.*

*Jon Vigne is the CSDB Special Education Director who can answer enrollment or eligibility questions. His email is [jvigne@csdb.org](mailto:jvigne@csdb.org).*

C. Anchor: how does Anchor Center for Blind Children decide who gets service?

Some school districts are having difficulties because as some Anchor Center children enter the districts, they do not qualify as having a visual disability but were served at the Anchor Center as a child with a visual impairment. What may qualify a child in the first two years of life may not qualify them as having a visual disability by school standards.

*Discussion: There are have been several instances over the course of the school year where a child enters the school district with the expectations that he or she will receive services from a TVI. Anchor Center has a philosophy that all learners are exposed to print and braille. There was discussion on how to build bridges between early intervention and school districts so that families feel supported and have a realistic understanding of eligibility and expectations of services. Paula, Wendy, and Cathy will work together to determine what next steps and written documents may be helpful to build this bridge.*

Topics for NE Vision Teachers meetings next year:

- a. Group work on CSAPA item analysis and brainstorming on how to adapt the test. RTI . *Discussion: Wendy will keep us posted on when this occurs as several people are interested.*
- b. Sharing tests that are used for triennials and initials.
- c. Rita and Vicki sharing accessible Global Positioning Systems. What they have learned

### **Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)**

The Metro TVIs have been unsuccessful in meeting in recent months due to unforeseen circumstances, including bad weather. We hope to quickly reschedule a meeting in early May. The focus will be to plan an evening for TVIs and parents with local eye doctors to discuss specific eye conditions as well as network about how to communicate with families between medical offices and schools. There is a lot of interest in doing this activity. The other focus was to get the Braille instruction for parents up and running. This stemmed from a Braille class offered last summer. It had to be put on hold but we know there is a lot of interest in having ongoing opportunities for families and other community members to learn Braille. So, this next meeting would also generate ways to implement the class in the metro area.

A schedule of meeting dates for the 2009-10 school year and possible topics of interest will be established at the meeting as well. Decisions will be made on who is coordinating the TVI meetings for the new year and who will be the rep to Vision Coalition.

### **Southern Region (Stephanie Isbell)**

The Southern Region met in January and February. Dr. Jessteene Clifford from CSDB attended our January meeting and shared her valuable knowledge on computerized testing and CSAPA. At our February meeting transition goals, questions and assessments were discussed. We have had a very small group meeting regularly this year at Tesla. In January, Mr. Lou Tutt suggested that we have a paraprofessional appreciation luncheon for our region. We ran with the idea, however faced a challenge when choosing a date for the luncheon. We have decided to hold off on the luncheon until next year. We will be discussing dates at upcoming meetings.

Our upcoming meeting dates and topics are as follows:

April 15	12:30 - 3:00 Bonnie Snyder and technology
May 13	12:30 - 3:00 APH @ CIMC

On a more personal note, Loel Decker passed his ACVREP certification exam. Congratulations Loel! Academy district 20 has posted a .6 position. There are also positions posted in El Paso 11, Canon City, CSDB, Pikes Peak BOCES, and Cheyenne Mountain. Stephanie Isbell has accepted a position back home and will be returning to Texas over the summer.

### **Western Region (Barbara Adams)**

*Mtn BOCES: 2 students went to the Braille Challenge at CSDB in February and had so much fun competing,*

running into old friends, and making new friends.

Julie King reports that Joslyn Quintana, a 10th grade student at Salida High School, was awarded "Student of the Week" in February on Channel 7 news. To check out the interview go to <http://www.thedenverchannel.com/video/18677504/index.html>

Barbara Adams is finishing up as Vision Coalition Western Slope representative and hoping someone from the Western Slope will volunteer to take on the position.

*Montrose / Delta:* Kevin O'Brien reports that the 0-3 numbers are growing with many new severe needs referrals so the prospect of larger caseloads for Delta and Montrose appear to be the case. As far as Math topics for the fall conference, Kevin suggests an overview of recent developments/updates with Nemeth as well as any new software out there. What software are TVIs using (in conjunction with MD and Dux) to emboss math. Progress Monitoring Academic level:

### **CAER (Deb Carlisle)**

Don't forget to send in your registration for the O&M conference and CAER Banquet dinner. This is a green conference, so bring a coffee mug and money to purchase a CAER logo water bottle at the conference. Mini-grants are awarded twice a year in April and November. Recent awards were given to an Adams 12 student for technology; a Ft. Collins student for sports camp, and a TVI for professional development. Applications can be found on the CAER website. All CAER board meetings are open to all members. The details can be found on the CAER website.

The winners of this year's CAER awards are: Lifetime Achievement Award: Ginny Coursey; Gary Schmidt Award: Carol Inglis. Congratulations ladies!!!

### **Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Julia Zanon)**

The Rehabilitation Counselors for the Blind (RCB) met on February 26, 2009 to learn about low vision evaluations. The guest speaker was Dr. Thomas Politzer. We learned what types of assessments are done during a low vision evaluation and how the specialist determines what types of recommendations to make to enhance function. We also had guest speakers from the Veterans Administration who updated us about the new residential training center for blind Vets in Aurora. Currently the DVR is still placing newly eligible applicants on a wait list for services and we are looking forward to opening the wait list as soon as funding is available. Julia will be traveling to Bethesda MD attend the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind annual conference. This is an opportunity to share best practices and network with other blindness agencies.

### **Anchor Center and CSDB Early Intervention News (Cathy Smyth)**

Anchor Center is a busy place as we wind up for Spring! Horticulture volunteers and professionals can be seen with and without the children buzzing around the gardens like little fairies and leprechauns; we are expecting flowers and buds of all kinds if the snow ever stops!

We are <sup>looking</sup> forward to attending the WREIC at the end of this month in Colorado Springs. Flyers and e-mails have been set up throughout the State to Part C providers, so hopefully there will be a large turnout.

Now well into our second year of the Gerber Foundation Research Project, we are excited about other options for presenting (working out possible details now for the NAPVI conference this July?) and collecting data in a meaningful document this summer. Trends are emerging with families, and we are looking forward to sharing

them.

Anchor Center’s TVIs are working on developing a new Functional Vision Evaluation review form directly related to the areas of the State IFSP for Part C. It is currently “in process” but we hope to share this evaluation with Louise at CSDB. The goal is to integrate visual strategies and goals more effortlessly into the state form. Transitioning Toddlers will continue to receive our “long form” and Transdisciplinary Play-based Assessments as appropriate.

EI Colorado has had a task force working on developing a “Developmental Intervention Assistant” career that would be a supervised paraeducator in the home for underserved areas of the state. There is a complex educational track but the final process includes individuals that have shown an interest in students with sensory loss. (Hopefully these individuals will work towards TSVI positions eventually). Cathy sits on this committee monthly and is looking forward to contributing to the training process when we get there. Anchor Center hopes to continue its history of supporting early learning for young children who are blind/visually impaired by being part of this educational process. It will match up nicely with the VIISA Infant/ Toddler course that will be scheduled for next year.

Karen Roberts, the Anchor Center Family Specialist, will be working .5 FTE. She is the person to contact for new referrals. Anchor will be hiring another Family Specialist for 20 hours a week.

An issue in the field with Child Find practices is the delay, for some families, to have next step sensory assessment. There may be a backlog of families seeking eye exams.

### **Colorado Instructional Material Center (Jim Olson)**

#### ***2009 Count Data Finalized***

1,122 Colorado students with visual impairments (0-21) registered with the CIMC on  
169 infants (ages 0-3) and 953 school age (ages 3-21)

830 meet the federal definition guidelines as legally blind

Forty children and youth remain unaccounted for after withdrawing from early education programs (20) or administrative units (20). Jim and Tanni will work to locate these student’s in the CDE December 1 Count data.

#### ***Top 4 Documented Diagnoses of Vision Loss:***

CVI	271	ONH/SOD	219
ROP	85	Albinism	69

***Book Orders for Next Year:*** 230 orders for next year received as of 3/31/09: 94 shipped complete (41.6%); 1 shipped partial; 4 being brailled at CIMC; 38 will be transferred between administrative units The CIMC is waiting on 10 ink (print) copies to correspond with orders received. An announcement went out to all Special Educators through the CDE SCOOP (an electronic weekly bulletin) about the importance of early orders of books.

***New Procedure:*** E-mail reminders will be sent out at the beginning of every month to district contact personnel requesting new “VI Registration” forms or “Exit” forms for students entering/leaving administrative units.

***Returning Books at End of the School Year:*** ALL textbooks are to be returned at the end of this school year

unless you have filled out a new order form requesting to keep the book for next year. This is important since 38 of the textbooks currently checked out have been requested by a different school district for use next year.

- ◆ Over 100 textbooks were not returned last year and Debbie spent over a month tracking down missing books that weren't returned.
- ◆ Do NOT insert order forms or ink (print) copies of texts inside boxes of returned books. Many boxes are not opened upon receipt.
- ◆ Attach legible CIMC shipping LABEL to the side of box so it can be read when boxes are stacked vertically in storage areas
- ◆ Securely tape boxes before shipping. Two complete textbooks were lost last year due to boxes busting open during shipment. We received empty, shredded boxes from the post office.

### **CSDB – BVI Outreach (Donna Keale)**

Sports Camp registration has been sent out via the cotvi listserv and can be found on the CSDB website. Go to [www.csdb.org](http://www.csdb.org) and click the program button. Go to the outreach button for the Sports Camp flyer.

### **CSDB – School for the Blind (Lou Tutt)**

CSAP testing was successfully administered through grades 3 – 10. During CSAP week, 11<sup>th</sup> grade students took the ACT preparatory exam.

Students and staff enjoyed a much deserved spring break. Everyone returned relaxed, refreshed and ready to tackle the challenges of 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.

K-12 staff actively participated in an analysis of the MAP data. In addition, the Academic Core and Additional Disabilities strategic teams presented an update to staff from the School for the Blind, School for the Deaf and Student Services on the progress of the respective teams. The previous day, the same teams presented the information to Student Life staff members.

Middle and high school students completed a Career Interest Inventory in preparation for the upcoming Career Day on campus, sponsored by the On-the-Job (OJT) training program. Students listed their top career field choices, either from a prepared list or on their own. The OJT staff will attempt to have representatives from as many listed fields as possible attend the Career Day.

The school celebrated Music in Our Schools month with a contest. Each morning, a song, which had been a high school favorite of a staff member, was played over the intercom and students guessed which staff member had chosen the song. All students with correct answers had their names entered in a drawing for a gift certificate to Borders Bookstore. Casey Schueler, fifth grade, was chosen as the winner. Additionally, Ms. Julie Novak, music teacher, invited KCME-FM 88.7 (classical music radio) to present their program, "Classics for Kids". Four classical musicians came to the school on March 11 and played a selection of pieces for students. The program was well received. The Music In Our Schools activities concluded on March 30 with a concert of folk, country, jazz and bluegrass music performed by Randy Witte and some of his friends.

The Learning Media Assessment and Functional Vision Assessment (LMA/FVA) team has met several times to ensure that all students have a current Learning Media Plan and Functional Vision Report in place. This team is composed of staff members from both schools, and works collaboratively to assess all students, especially those with dual sensory loss.

A student from the school was flown to Baltimore by the NFB to participate in the activities surrounding the launch of the Louis Braille commemorative coin. The student brought one of the coins back to Colorado and presented it to Superintendent Hilty at an assembly.

A student from the School for the Blind had an art submission selected from the APH Art Contest. This item will be featured in the 2010 calendar!

### **UNC – (Paula Conroy)**

Not much new at UNC except for the concern of university wide budget cuts. These will not affect our VI and O&M programs or faculty in special education. Course and student fees will increase significantly as will tuition costs for the upcoming year. This means that not as many students will be included on the new grant. This grant is almost full at this point. This is unfortunate but Colorado is not in as bad a shape as some other states.

The TVI program at Portland State has just been suspended and we are picking up a few of their students. Several other personnel preparation programs are at risk.

Kay Ferrell and Silvia Correa-Torres represented UNC at CEC in Seattle. Paula Conroy presented at the Acres (Rural Special Education) recently in Denver.

### **Colorado Department of Education (Tanni Anthony)**

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Annual Census of Learners who Are Deafblind. The final numbers are being tallied, but preliminary information indicates 151 children ages birth through 21 who have combined vision and hearing loss. A final report is being created for the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness.

The 2009 Summer Institute on Deafblindness will feature Jane Korsten, author of *Every Move Counts*. The dates are June 29, 30 – July 1. It is anticipated that the training will be offered in the Denver area to accommodate more people.

The *Teaching Reading and Writing: An Introduction for Teachers of Students who are Blind/Visually Impaired* has been completed. Thanks to the participants and Dr. Cay Holbrook!! This pilot course has received a lot of positive attention within CDE and across the country.

The CSAP and CSAPA administration period is just about finalized. TVIs have been sending in their item review sheets on these tests. The data will be reviewed in early summer to provide input to CTB, National Braille Press, and the CDE Unit of Student Assessment. It is not too late to send in your item analysis forms. If there were no concerns with the tests, this is great data and a form should be sent in with this information too. *Discussion: It is a challenge to figure out how to administer the tests across the population of learners. There is a considerable time commitment to adapt the CSAPA, especially if the test needs to be individually brailled for students.*

Tanni has contacted Special Education Directors in late March about the status of their TVI's braille competency certificate. Thanks to all the TVIs who are being proactive with their initial or renewal braille competency status. The revised procedures / guidance documents about braille testing are posted on the CDE web-



page on blindness/low vision.

The Western Region Early Intervention Conference will be held April 24-26, 2009 in Colorado Springs. It is anticipated that close to 20 CO TVIs will attend the training. Thanks to CAER for offering stipend assistance to most of these attendees.

The Annual O&M Conference is scheduled for May 7-9, 2009 at the Anchor Center for Blind Children. The training will have sessions specific to the Response to Intervention Model, using global positioning system technology with students who are blind/visually impaired, using QuickTac, and writing goals and objectives specific of RtI and GPS technology.

The focus of the state conference for next year, the hope is to feature math instruction. Vision Coalition members indicated that they would like more instructional strategies specific to older learners.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

### Assessment Practices for Learners

At our last meeting, we discussed some of the assessment units that we experience with our students who are blind/visually impaired. Laura Douglas has drafted a document that addresses the common questions associated with cognitive and social emotional assessments. She asked for input on whether the proposed questions. One suggestion was to add a question specific to autism identification. This is an area that some TVIs are getting more questions per the autism checklists that highlight some of the behaviors that children with sensory and other disabilities may exhibit. Another question is about eligibility for adult services that require IQ scores. Another point was made about the need to clarify that blindness may be a separate issue to another social-emotional challenge. This is important to ensure there is appropriate services that address separate issues that are not tied to blindness. Laura will continue to work on the document over the summer months. Once completed it can be disseminated to both the TVI and the school psychologist communities.

### Progress Monitoring Tools

The CDE Exceptional Student Leadership Unit is working on a RtI module that will be specific to progress monitoring. This is an opportune time to provide information about any unique progress monitoring needs of students who are blind/visually impaired.

*Discussion: At the school building level, there needs to be some sort of a structure for the people doing the progress monitoring so that the TVI needs to be involved. The problem is that they may test all students at one time and the learner with VI is included without any special accommodations. Must look at students and their educational labels and who should be involved.*

*The DIBELS can be adapted: available in large print and braille, but it could be brailled by a local district. If it is laminated, there may be glare issues. Need to understand the child's focal distance needs.*

*The computer based assessments and programs all require the expertise of a TVI to determine accommodations. Sometimes can change screen resolution, some times not. Screen enlargement programs may or may not work. The screen enlargement may not be a great option for some students who are not proficient with their screen reader programs. It may not be the preferred medium of the student and may not be the preferable*

option for the student. A hard copy version may not track to the computer version. Some programs allow you to purchase a braille version. Costs may be an issue for getting a hard copy of the computerized version to Braille. Extended time may be a viable accommodation. Commonly used progress monitoring tools include: the DIBELS, MAPS, NWEA and Scantron. There are questions about the appropriateness of off-grade level testing. Further, is it allowable? Wendy will work with Tanni to draft more content in this area. It was suggested that once we have a document to share on progress monitoring tools, that we ensure that it goes to the District Assessment Coordinators.

**School Year 2009-10 Budgets (CDE and CSDB)**

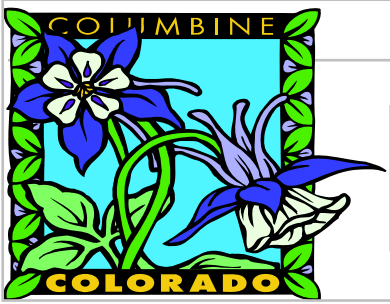
Tanni will present the proposed budgets specific to blindness/visual impairment internally to CDE within the next month. In addition to the standard budgets that were funded for school year 2008-09, it was suggested that she prepare and defend budgets for a Blackboard course in technology. Other possible black board courses to develop could be done on: vision conditions, the Communication Matrix, Low Vision, and Feeding.

**Vision Coalition for 2009-2010**


Returning members will include Cathy Smyth (Anchor Center), Julia Zanon (DVR), Deb Carlisle (CAER), Lou Tutt (School for the Blind), Jim Olson (CIMC), Paula Conroy (UNC), Wendy Stoltman (northern region), Nancy Cozart (metro region), and Tanni Anthony (CDE). The western region rep will be Angela Sims. The southern region rep is yet to be determined. We will need to confirm if Rene Harrell can continue as the parent representative of Parents of Blind Children and who the rep for CSDB Outreach / Blind Visually Impaired will be. The next meeting will be September 17, 2009 at the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation office at 2211 West Evans in Denver.

**Assignments**

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
All	Send their program update to Tanni	September 10, 2009
TVI reps	Discuss priorities for math training with TVIs.	immediately
Paula Conroy, Cathy Smith; Wendy	Discuss and prepare documents for 0-3 transition from Anchor Program to AUs	Over the summer months
Tanni Anthony, Wendy	Prepare draft documents on assessment and progress monitoring of learners who are blind/visually impaired	Over the summer months
Stephanie Isbell	Work with Tanni to secure a southern TVI regional rep	June 2009



# COLORADO CONNECTIONS

- 🔊 Congratulations to **Lisa Brocard**, a brailist in Littleton School District, for earning a CDE Certificate of Braille Competency! Congrats to **Marsha Roberson**, a TVI in Greeley, for earning her renewal certificate.
- 🔊 We are busting our buttons – our very own **Dr. Dean Tuttle** will be inducted into APH’s Hall of Fame – Leaders and Legends of the Blindness Field at the Annual Meeting in October! It is a great honor to have our own national treasure right here in the State of Colorado. Thanks to Dean for all of his contributions to CO and across the globe on behalf of persons who are blind/visually impaired, their families, and their service providers.
- 🔊 The recent Western Region Early Intervention Conference was well attended by CO TVIs: **Barbara Adams, Tanni Anthony, Suzan Barlow, Sarah Bickford, Sally Eldridge, Louise Gettman, JC Greeley, Carol Jordan, Donna Keale, Shelley Moats, Nancy Knight, Mary Labeck, Valerie Melbrod, Marci Reid, Melissa Shular, Edie Smith, Cathy Smyth, Paula Stallman, Chloann Woolley**. Thank you once again to CAER for assisting with registration stipends to 15 CO TVIs!! CO VI-based presenters included: **Cathy Smyth, Carol Spicer, and Zoe Morgese** from the Anchor Center; and **Julie Novak** from CSDB. The conference received rave reviews. It was co-sponsored by a host of agencies in CO, WY, UT, AZ, and NM. Colorado specific sponsors included: the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, the Colorado Department of Education, Hands and Voices, and the Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project. There are multiple people to acknowledge. On the CO planning committee were **Jennie Germano, Diane Covington, JC Greeley, Gina Quintana, Ruth Mathers, Alice Applebaum, Tanni Anthony, Janet DesGeorge, and Sarah Kennedy**. Also on the CO team doing so much behind the scenes work were **Michelle Brady, Dale Wolf, Mary Cuccaro, Laura Meyer, and Anna Langerger**. Thank you to all the people who worked tirelessly before and during the conference. Onsite worker bees included: **Diane Covington, Jennie Germano, Michelle Brady, Donna Keale, Dale Wolf, Donice Fennimore, Kevyn Brown, Bonnie Ottmar, Helen Freeman, Jeff Dowd, Mary Hattick, Mary Cuccaro, Bruce Bock, Forrest Oates, Nancy Oates, Stacy Aevum, and Mimi McGinty**.
- 🔊 **Gerry Leary**, who is blind, has developed a method of roasting that doesn't rely on visual cues. With the help of things such a talking thermometer, he has developed something he calls "blind roasted coffee". His Unseen Bean brand is getting lots of buzz from cyclist Lance Armstrong. The Tour de France champ recently sent his fans a message on Twitter about the Unseen Bean. Gerry Leary has a small cafe just off the Pearl Street Mall on Broadway in Boulder and a mail-order component to his business. For more info contact [www.theunseenbean.com](http://www.theunseenbean.com)
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- 🔊 The revised edition of *Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics* (Saunders Publishing , 2009) has a chapter on *Blindness and Visual Impairment*, which was co-authored by **Dr. Stu Teplin** of the UNC School of Medicine – Chapel Hill, **JC Greeley**, and **Tanni Anthony**. The book is designed for physicians who provide pediatric care to young children.
- 🔊 We say farewell and best wishes to **Stephanie Isbell** from Cheyenne Mountain School District. Stephanie and family are returning to TX. All the best to you! We also wish **Nancy Wood** a VERY HAPPY RETIREMENT! Nancy has been a long time dedicated TVI in the northern region and has served our CO learners well. Enjoy!

**HAPPY SUMMER EVERYONE! TAKE GOOD CARE!**

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