

High Quality Teachers Make the Difference

By Tanni L. Anthony

Remember your teachers – maybe that ONE particular teacher who made the difference in your life? Maybe the one who got you through that algebra class or took a little extra time with feedback to bring you to a hard-earned place of new learning. Who paid extra attention to you during a time in need or noticed something about you that gave you a sense of pride about your accomplished work. Who enticed you to do just a little better or taught you to think and speak up for yourself. Who built your knowledge, skills, and confidence each and every day. Or who got you ready for college and the great big world out there. There are countless reasons for why we remember those great teachers.

We know that teachers matter. We also know, “The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers.” (McKinsey & Company - *How the World's Best School Systems Stay on Top*). When teachers are well trained, it matters. When they have the skills to differentiate across students, it matters. When they give of themselves, it matters.

The McKinsey & Company quote resonates with me every day as I interact with CO's teachers of students with visual impairments and orientation and mobility specialists. You exemplify quality – you are quality. This was a demanding year with the extra work to demonstrate braille competency in UEB. Yet you showed up in droves to our three refresher courses or took the test exercises without course prep. You continue to work your way through this state requirement. The level of professionalism, commitment, and high quality skill is more than impressive – it what makes the difference for our students. It is one skill, but one that deeply matters to our students.


I thank each of you for another great school year. And next time you think of that teacher that made a difference in your life, please know that you are that very person for the students you serve. Have a great summer!

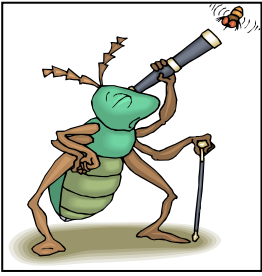
KEEPING IN TOUCH!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers
of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired
March—May 2016

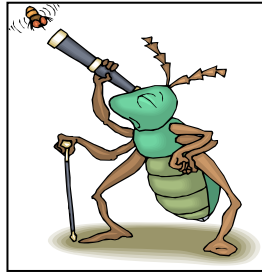
March-May 2016 KIT

Table of Contents

High Quality Teachers Make the Difference	1	Check it Out!	17
Low Vision News	2	Just for Parents	22
Resources and Materials	3	Forever in Gratitude	26
Orientation & Mobility	4	Colorado Connections	31
CDE Happenings	6		
Calendar of Events	8		
Connecting the Dots	10		
Job Openings	12		
Transition Information	13		
Technology News	15		



LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Updates

By Debbie Haberkorn

The Northern Region Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic was held March 10, 2016 at Enight Skills Center in Fort Collins, Colorado. Six students from four administrative units (Adams County District 27J, Larimer County District 1, Morgan County RE-3, and Weld County District 6) received evaluations. Twelve parents and five TVIs attended the evaluation with their students. The Clinic team would like to thank Regional Coordinators Elaine Karns and Christina Martin, the Enight Skills Center for hosting the event, and all of the TVIs who brought students.

The Southern Region Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic was held March 31 - April 1, 2016 at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB). Ten students from six administrative units (Colorado Connections Academy, CSDB, El Paso County District 11, El Paso County District 20, Pueblo County District 60, and San Luis Valley BOCES) received evaluations. Eight parents and six TVIs attended the evaluation with their students. The Clinic team would like to thank Regional Coordinator Donice Fennimore and CSDB for hosting the event and the TVIs who brought their students.



Low Vision Devices Put to Good Use

It is so important that students attending the Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics receive the devices prescribed at the clinics and are trained / encouraged to use them. These are two of the indicators we use to measure the success of these clinics. Thanks to Kaitlin Lombardi, who shared this following exchange as evidence of the value of the clinics: "My families this year bought monoculars and handheld magnifiers. Last year, one of my high school boys got the Tools for Life scholarship and was able to get one of his magnifiers for home, which has completely changed him turning in his homework. When I asked him how the CCTV was working and our conversation went something like this:

Me: How is your equipment at home working?
Student: It's great. I don't know how I did my homework without it.
Me: You didn't.
Student: Oh, yeah. That's right."

Thanks to Kaitlin for sending it this information. If you participated in a low vision clinic this year with one or more of your students, please be proactive with ensuring they are being put to good use! If you need assistance with training your student(s) on these devices, let us know.



Resources and Materials

New Resource on PreK-3rd Grade Alignment

A new resource from the Center for American Progress provides an overview of some of the key strategies that are being employed by states and school districts around the country that are on the leading edge of aligning their efforts across the PreK-3rd grade continuum. The document also provides brief case examples of alignment strategies from five states and three school districts.

The full brief can be found at:

<https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/12043721/Pre-3Alignment.pdf>

New Handheld Electronic Magnifiers

HumanWare has launched its most portable line of High Definition handheld magnifiers in 3 screen sizes: the explorē 3, 5 and 7. Designed for people with low vision, the explorē line gives the user the independence to achieve daily tasks whether at a restaurant, the library, shopping, at school or at work; reading text, viewing pictures or even signing documents!

The **explorē 3** is a portable handheld magnifier. It can be pulled out of a pocket and its 3 inch screen allows for quick reading of any item on the go. It features a built-in stand that can be raised to help the user see while writing.

The **explorē 5** is the lightest and smallest 5-inch HD electronic magnifier. It provides crisp and sharp text and images in any size or contrast with unparalleled High Definition image quality. The retractable handle with two positions can be used as a stand to read comfortably with up to 22 times magnification in 16 choices of color contrasts, for more than 3 hours on battery. The explorē 5 provides the a high quality HD image and colors in the lightest and simplest handheld in its range. It can save images, transfer them to a PC, or even connect to a large screen TV for impeccable image magnification!

The **explorē 7** is a portable CCTV that is reported to be smaller and lighter than other current 7-inch magnifiers. Its large HD screen is comfortable to read long articles or books, and its rugged aluminum stand makes it easy to manipulate over newspapers and other documents.

The all-new **explorē** line is available immediately from HumanWare (www.humanware.com)

Teaching Math to Young Children

This free practice guide provides five recommendations for teaching math to children in preschool, prekindergarten, and kindergarten. Each recommendation includes implementation steps and solutions for common roadblocks. The recommendations also summarize and rate supporting evidence. This guide is geared toward teachers, administrators, and other educators who want to build a strong foundation for later math learning. This document is available free for downloading or printing at http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practice_guides/early_math_pg_111313.pdf

Early Learning Language and Literacy Series Launched: The Preschool Development Grant Technical Assistance Program has created a free series of fourteen modules designed for professionals who are working to support the language and literacy development of young children, birth to five. Each module includes PowerPoint slides, handouts, activities, and readings. Key objectives for the series are to provide teachers with information/ research on early language and literacy and to provide evidence-based strategies to support the language and literacy development of young children. <https://pdg.grads360.org/#program/early-learning-language-and-literacy-series>

A Child's Lifelong Self-Esteem Emerges Earlier Than We Thought: By age 5 children have a sense of self-esteem that is comparable in strength to that of adults, according to a new study by University of Washington researchers. Because self-esteem tends to remain relatively stable across one's lifespan, the study suggests that this important personality trait is already in place before children begin kindergarten. Learn more at the link to the right.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/11/151102152729.htm>

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

Best O&M Apps for iPad

Recommendations by Diane Brauner on AER O&M Listserv

Check out these videos:

How to Create a Quick Low Vision Map on the iPad

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqYpFjtR98w&index=10&list=PLhXV41ZuNuOkz-A2t0KhBdlzUa0YRHtGg>

How to Create a Tactile Map Overlay for the iPad

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrREO3I21oI&index=9&list=PLhXV41ZuNuOkz-A2t0KhBdlzUa0YRHtGg>

How to Create a Talking Tactile Map on the iPad (this video demonstrates creating the Talking map; the How to Create a Tactile Map Overlay video above demonstrates the "Tactile" map that can be used in conjunction with the Talking map)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5LMG3bvjBo&index=11&list=PLhXV41ZuNuOkz-A2t0KhBdlzUa0YRHtGg>

For short video clips on how to use BlindSquare, go to the link below. Select Playlists. Select High Tech O&M to see all the O&M related videos, including a number of BlindSquare videos.

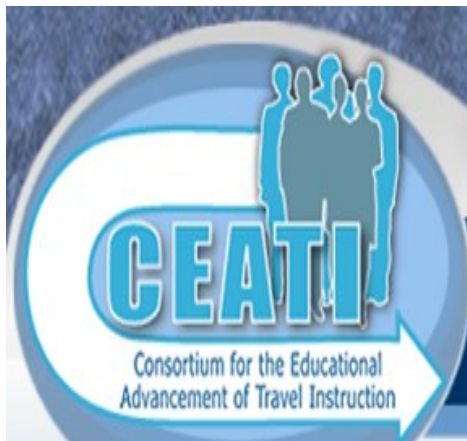
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSsHoghKRJ8VEm7U1s7KKjg>

Pete the Cat –Recommended as an O&M book for Young Children

Recommended by Diane Brauner on the AER O&M Listserv

Pete the Cat is the third book in the Great Expectations series by National Braille Press. The print/braille/illustrated book and kit can be ordered from National Braille Press. Additional activities are included on the website (see link below). Pete the Cat has a great O&M component to the story and a number of great O&M activities! Be sure to check out *Pete the Cat*, along with *The Day the Crayons Quit* and *Dragons Love Tacos!*

<http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/programs/gep/pete/pete-main>



CEATI Travel Instruction Conference

Please consider attending the CEATI Travel Instruction Conference on October 21-22, 2016 in Las Vegas, NV. Many of the speakers are leaders in the fields of O&M and Travel Instruction. CEATI is a RPPL provider, so COMSs can earn ACVREP credits.

Registration information is on the Save the Date below and on the CEATI website

<http://www.ceati-travelinstruction.org>

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

AER O&M Resources

The AER O&M webpage has a variety of resources for its members. Included on the webpage are:

Position Papers

[IDEA and Orientation and Mobility/Travel Training](#)

[Forrest T. Jones Liability Insurance Guide](#)

Accessible Pedestrian Signals

[About Accessible Pedestrian Signals](#)

[Detectable Warning Surfaces](#)

[Guidance through Construction Areas](#)

[Design Guidelines for the Visual Environment](#)

[Considerations When Requesting an Accessible Pedestrian Signal](#)

[Sample Letter Requesting an Accessible Pedestrian Signal](#)

[List of Accessible Pedestrian Signal Manufacturers](#)

[Roundabouts and Pedestrians who are Blind or who have Low Vision](#)

[Literature List for Deaf-Blind and O&M](#)

Check out these resources at:

<https://aerbvi.org/about/divisions/orientation-mobility-division/resources/>



AER's Professional Liability Guide

A guide was developed to assist people in asking the correct questions regarding their needs for professional liability insurance from Forrest T Jones. This guide can be downloaded from the O&M Division page on the new AER website.

<https://aerbvi.org/about/divisions/orientation-mobility-division/resources/>

The logo for the 16th International Mobility Conference (IMC 16) features a stylized illustration of a person with a cane walking a dog. The text 'IMC 16' is prominently displayed, with 'DUBLIN · IRELAND' underneath. The dates 'June 26th - 30th 2017' are also included.

IMC 16
DUBLIN · IRELAND

June 26th - 30th
2017

16th International Mobility Conference

'Transitions; moving on, moving out'

www.imc16.com



CDE Updates in Licensure

1) The Colorado Department of Education's Office of Professional Services and Educator Licensing embarked on a process to analyze, review, research, coordinate stakeholder engagement meeting, and solicit feedback and recommendations relating to the alignment of Colorado educator licensing rules and educator licensing content knowledge tests (currently the PLACE and PRAXIS II) with current initiatives, state statute, and best practices.

The licensing rules serve as standards for educators to gain licensure in Colorado and as a measure by which educator preparation programs across Colorado are reviewed and approved.

The goal of this project is to ensure that licensure rules and content assessments are fully aligned with educator effectiveness statutes and represent the latest knowledge from the field.

The Educator Preparation and Licensing Rules have been fully adopted and are now available on the Secretary of State's website

<http://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/GenerateRulePdf.do?ruleVersionId=6702&fileName=1.>>

Work continues on the process of implementing of the rules as well as "grandfathering" the old rules.

To find out more about the project, go to our project website.

<[<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/rulesreviewcontentassessment>](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/rulesreviewcontentassessment)>

2) Effective March 30, 2016, new Rules of Regulation for Educator Preparation and Licensing have been adopted, affecting certain licensing endorsements in Colorado. Please view our Endorsement fact sheet<[<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/endorsementfactsheet>](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/endorsementfactsheet)> for a brief summary of the major changes and schedule for implementation.

3) The 2016-2017 PLACE exam dates have been released. View them on our website

<[<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/Licensure_PLACE_info.htm>](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/Licensure_PLACE_info.htm)>



*The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched
—they must be felt with the heart.*

Helen Keller

iAdvocate

Guided Practice with the Expanded Core Curriculum

DATE: JUNE 26-30, 2016

Hiking

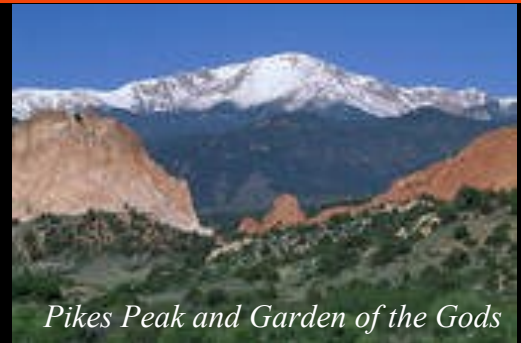
Goalball

Bus Travel

Eating out at a restaurant

**Preparing simple meals
and more!**

- Daily Living Skills
- Orientation and Mobility
- Recreation and Leisure
- Social Skills
- Technology



Pikes Peak and Garden of the Gods

Activities designed for students, currently in 6th-10th grade, who are blind or visually impaired.



Location: Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

33 North Institute Street/Colorado Springs, CO

www.csdb.org

Cost: \$50.00 (Minimum 5 students; Maximum 10 students)

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: MAY 30, 2016

RSVP to Donna Keale: 719-330-7387 ; dkeale@csdb.org




Calendar of Events

2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016
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- May 19-26** **BANA’s Elects Officers, Recognized Board Changes, Baltimore, MA**
- June 6-24** **Colorado Center for the Blind—2016 CONFIDENCE CAMP FOR KIDS**
Contact: Brent Batron—(303) 778-1130 ext. 222, bbatron@cocenter.org
- June 26-30** **iAdvocate: Guided Practices with the Expanded Core Curriculum - CSDB**
Contact: Donna Keale at (719) 330-7387 or dkeale@cldb.org
- June 20-July 1** **National Federation of the Blind of Colorado—Ring the Bell of Success, Colorado Springs, CO**
Contact: Kaitlin Lombardi (303)918-9465 or Michelle Chacon (303)507-6291
- June 25-July 2** **Leader Dogs for the Blind -2016 Summer Experience Camp**
 please visit: www.leaderdog.org/clients/programs/summer-experience-camp
- June 28-29** **Summer Institute on Deafblindness—Jefferson County Board Room**
Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- June 26-July 1** **Mountain Mobility—Outdoor Adventure Camp for Visually Impaired and Blind Youth**
 For more information, please visit: <http://www.adaptivesports.org/>
- July 1-9** **American Council of the Blind Conference & Convention, Minneapolis, MN**
Contact: <http://www.acb.org/2016convention>
- July 16-18** **National Family Association for Deaf-Blind Symposium for Family Leaders, Austin, TX**
Contact: <http://nfadb.org/2016-family-symposium/>
- July 20-24** **AER International Conference - Jacksonville, FL**
Contact: www.aerbvi.org
- July 18-29** **National Federation of the Blind of Colorado—Ring the Bell of Success, Westminster, CO**
Contact: Kaitlin Lombardi (303)918-9465 or Michelle Chacon (303)507-6291
- Sept 7-10** **Envision Conference, Denver, CO**
Contact: <http://www.envisionconference.org/>
- October 21-22** **CEATI Travel Instruction Conference, Las Vega, NV**
 For more information, please visit: <http://www.ceati-travelinstruction.org>

2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017

- March 2-4** American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conference, Washington, DC
Contact: <http://www.afb.org/info/about-us/events-and-awards/american-foundation>
- April 19-22** Council for Exceptional Children Convention & Expo, Boston, MA
Contact: : <http://www.ceconvention.org/>
- May 5-6** CDE O&M Seminar—TBD
Contact: Tanni Anthony anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- July 19-22** AER International O&M Conference—Pittsburgh, PA
Contact: <http://swoma.org/>

2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018

- July 25-29** AER International Conference 2018, Reno NV
Contact www.aerbvi.org



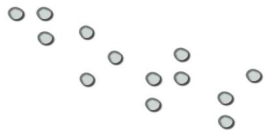
BANA Elects Officers, Recognizes Board Changes

At its November 2015 meeting, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) elected the officers who will serve during the 2016 calendar year. The officers are Chair, Jennifer Dunnam (National Federation of the Blind); Vice Chair, Sandra Ruconich (American Council of the Blind); Secretary, Ruth Rozen (The Hadley School for the Blind); Treasurer, Jackie Sheridan (National Braille Press).

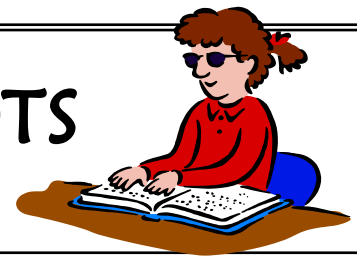
The new year has brought additional Board changes. Diane Wormsley, who has represented AER (Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired) on the BANA Board since 2004, has retired from her professorship at North Carolina Central University and is leaving the BANA Board to pursue other interests. Diane has co-chaired BANA’s research committee.

Diane’s position of AER representative will be filled by Mary Nelle McLennan, who has been the representative from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) since 2007 and just completed five years as BANA’s Vice Chair. Mary Nelle will continue to serve on the Board, now representing AER. Cathy Senft-Graves has been appointed as the new representative from APH, where she is the Braille Literacy and Technology Project Leader. The BANA Board looks forward to her service.

BANA’s spring meeting will be held May 19-21, 2016, at the Maryland School for the Blind in Baltimore. Observers are welcome. This meeting will immediately precede the quadrennial meeting on May 22-26 of the International Council on English Braille (ICEB), which will occur at the headquarters of the National Federation of the Blind, also in Baltimore.



CONNECTING THE DOTS



Contracted Braille, UEB Edition Course

Hadley School for the Blind has a new Contracted Braille, UEB Edition course. The braille code used for most written material is contracted braille. Being able to read and write in contracted Unified English Braille (UEB) will enable you to assist your family member, student, or client who is blind. After attaining this goal, you may decide to advance your braille skills by enrolling in a professional transcriber course or other advanced braille and braille teaching courses. Prerequisite: Completion of Hadley's "Introduction to Braille" within six months prior to enrollment in "Contracted Braille" with a grade of B- or higher OR adequate competency as determined by Hadley's "Uncontracted Braille Assessment"

COURSE: CBR-223, MEDIA: OL OR P, LESSONS: 25

Maximum Completion Time: 12 1/2 months

Credit: 60 CE Hours

Tuition: NO CHARGE

60 CE Hours approved by The Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Educational Professionals (ACVREP) (PENDING)

For more information, go to: <http://www.hadley.edu/ShowCourseDetail.asp?courseid=CBR-223#more>

GOT UEB?

Over 1900 students—the majority of who are blindness professionals—have already enrolled in Hadley's "Transitioning to Unified English Braille" course. They "GOT UEB." What about you?

If you looking for a structured approach to learning the differences between EBAE (English Braille American Edition) and UEB, get Hadley!

Abundant examples and exercised help you progress easily and transition to the new code.

Tuition-free enrollment for parents.

For more information click on the link below www.hadley.edu/UEBTransition.asp or call 800.323.4238.

Joe Sullivan has shared through the AER listserv mentioned several months ago on the topic of adapting UEB for languages other than English was delivered as planned at the Africa Forum last October.

For convenience, there's also a copy now on the Web at

http://www.duxburysystems.com/js-adapting_ueb.asp



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF COLORADO
NFB BRAILLE ENRICHMENT FOR LITERACY AND LEARNING (BELL) PROGRAM
RING THE BELL OF SUCCESS!!!



LARGE PRINT?? Braille Dots?? Or Some of Both??

Braille is the obvious choice for a totally blind child, but what about those "in-betweens"? Statistics show that Braille helps legally blind adults get and keep jobs! Technology is great, but the use of Braille is like having a pencil in the hand, to jot a note or label a file or a million other tasks. Braille should be a tool in the toolbox for any legally blind person. Join us in the summer BELL program and let your child fill their tool box with confidence, positive attitudes about vision loss, and the techniques successful blind and visually adults use every day. Braille...Why not?

The NFB BELL program is a one-week program designed to offer pre-kindergarten and elementary-age children an opportunity to be exposed to Braille and increase the use of nonvisual skills. In this program, children will receive *instruction* daily to develop their tactile *skills* and *confidence*. Kids come to have fun, make friends, play games, experiences that build skills among community.

A parent seminar takes place at the end of the program to help parents connect.

Program Dates: **Colorado Springs:** **June 20th - July 1st 2016 (Mon-Thurs: NO Friday)**
 Westminster: **July 18th-29th 2016**

Time: **9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

Location: **Colorado Springs (YMCA Garden Ranch) &**
 Westminster (Rocky Mountain Multiple Sclerosis Center)

For further information contact:

Michelle Chacon (CO-Coordinator Lead Teacher Westminster):

rascal.angel2@gmail.com 303-507-6291

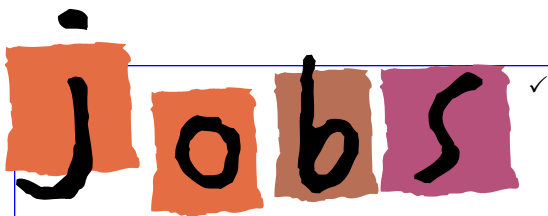
Kaitlin Lombardi (CO-Coordinator, Lead Teacher, CO Springs): kaitlinmlombardi@gmail.com 303-918-9465

BELL is sponsored by the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute, in partnership with the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado and the Colorado Parents of Blind Children.

Please note that the application process for NFB BELL Academy contains several steps:

Fill out the NFB BELL Academy application at: <https://nfb.org/bell-summer-program-form>,

1. After you submit the application, you will receive a confirmation email. That confirmation email will direct you to fill out the permission and release forms at: <https://nfb.org/bell-permission-and-release-forms>.
2. After you complete the permission and release forms, you will receive another confirmation email. This second confirmation mail will contain your answers to the permission and release forms.
3. Print out this second confirmation email, and sign and date it at the bottom of the last page.
4. Send the signed confirmation email to your NFB BELL Academy state coordinator, listed on the email.



IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for this school year or the one starting in fall 2015. Please keep in touch with Tanni about your job openings. 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 O&M 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! TVI = teacher certified in the area of visual impairment and COMS = certified orientation and mobility specialist.

Northern Region—Jobs

- ✓ **Brailist** (1 FTE) for St. Vrain Schools For more information about this position, please contact Erica Bowman at bowman_eric@svvsd.org
- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (.5FTE) for Thompson School District. For more information about this position, contact Charlie Carter at (970)-613-5092 or charlie.carter@thompsonschoools.org

Southern Region – Jobs

- ✓ **Teacher of the Visually Impaired/O&M Specialist** (.6FTE, 190 days per year) for Pikes Peak BOCES for more information, please contact Charla Durham at (719)-622-2096 or cdurham@ppbooces.org
- ✓ **CSDB** - Please be in touch with Chelle Lutz for CSDB Openings. She can be reached at (719)578-2100.

Western Region — Jobs

- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (1 FTE) for Mesa Valley School District in Grand Junction. For more information, please contact Cindy Starr at (970) 254-5136 or cindy.starr@d51schools.org

Metro Region—Jobs

- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (1 FTE) for Aurora School District. For more information about this position, please contact Gilly (Carol) Giffoyle (720)-745-2795; cgilfoyle@aps.k12.co.us or Wendy Schlageter (720-354-0592); wschlageter@aps.k12.co.us

TVIs and COMSs—If you are getting ready to retire, please do not let your CDE teaching and support services licenses expire, as you are in a great position to keep contributing in the future with part-time or substitute work. Please keep in touch with Tanni, if you are interested in this type of work after your retirement!



TRANSITION INFORMATION

Resources on Secondary Transition

National Center on Deaf-Blindness - www.nationaldb.org

While these materials were created specifically for learners with combined vision and hearing loss, many may have important information for parents of children who are blind/visually impaired with or without additional disabilities. Transition planning is important for children and youth of all ages—it is good to look ahead and build the course for life beyond the school year.

Here are some of the many resources that await your investigation!

- ✓ *CHARGE, Charged, & Charging Forward: Post Secondary Transitions for our Son with CHARGE Syndrome*
- ✓ *Creating Community for Adult Life: Planning an Effective and Exciting Transition*
- ✓ *Creating Opportunities for Tomorrow: Deaf-Blind Transition Camp*
- ✓ *Hopscotching Your Way Through Transition: Questions Parents Need to Ask as Their Child with Deafblindness Moves from School in the Adult World.*
- ✓ *Letting Go to Let Them Grow: Teaching Independence*
- ✓ *More than the Law: Some Thoughts on Transition of Individuals who are Deafblind webinar*
- ✓ *Positive Transition to Adult Life Outcomes for youth who are Deaf-Blind: Transition Assessment Tool*
- ✓ *National Transition Follow-Up Study of Youth Identified as Deafblind: parent Perspectives*
- ✓ *Thoughts on Transitioning*
- ✓ *Transition to Adult Life for Youth with Deaf-Blindness: A Parent Mini-Guide*
- ✓ *Transition Planning for Students who are Deaf-Blind: Coaching from Students, Parents and Professionals*
- ✓ *Transition Toolkit: Enhancing Self Determination for Young Adults who Are Deaf-Blind*

There are also several references to books and article on the topic of transition that can be found on this website.

If you have found important resources on the topic of transition, please share them with Tanni for future newsletter editions.



TRANSITION INFORMATION

Learning Ally Scholarships

Since 1991, **Learning Ally** has been awarding the **Mary P. Oenslager Scholastic Achievement Awards (SAA)** to outstanding college students who are blind or visually impaired. Our National Achievement Award winners are examples of and role models for the many students Learning Ally supports.

We are currently accepting **applications** for the 2016-2017 SAA awards. Eligible students will be:

- Current Learning Ally **members** who are blind or visually impaired
- A current college senior or graduate school student
- Willing to represent Learning Ally as a spokesperson and advocate

See the full list of eligibility requirements and apply at <https://go.learningally.org/bvi-naa-application/>

Career Advantage for VIPs

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment for Individuals with Blindness or Other Visual Impairments](#) has released [Career Advantage for VIPs: An Employment Preparation Primer for Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired](#). Career Advantage is designed for individuals who are making the transition from high school, college, or training program into the workforce. The self-paced modules take users step-by-step through self-assessment, career exploration, developing resumes, learning effective job-search techniques, and talking to employers about vision loss and accommodations.

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month



Each year during the month of May, The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) highlights Better Hearing & Speech Month (BHSM) to raise awareness about communication disorders. The 2016 theme “Communication Takes Care” serves to heighten awareness about the importance of face-to-face communication, and encourages the public to make time for device-free interaction when possible.

Last year, ASHA polled 1,000 parents of children ages 0-8. Sixty-eight percent of surveyed parents’ 2-year-olds use tablets, 59% use smartphones, and 44% use video game consoles. The importance of human communication- speaking, listening, interacting- is paramount to children’s overall development, including academic and social success. Human interaction is especially important in the present age of technology, where “smart” phones and other devices occupy an ever-increasing amount of time, attention, and prominence in the lives of individuals from infants to teens. For more information and resources about communication development and disorders including early detection, visit ASHA’s website at <http://www.asha.org/> and <http://identifythesigns.org/>.



Technology News

PATHS TO TECHNOLOGY ANNOUNCEMENT

Perkins School for the Blind is proud to announce the development of Paths to Technology, a website to assist educators and families in learning and staying current on ever-changing technology for students with visual impairments and blindness. Go to:

<http://www.perkinselearning.org/technology/blog/paths-technology>

Is your classroom “Going Google”? How can students with low vision view the whiteboard on his/her device? How do you introduce a preschool student to an iPad and a refreshable braille display? Should you update to iOS 9.2? What is the JAWS command for ____? What apps can be used for O&M purposes? How do you create accessible digital materials? Find the answers to these questions and more on *Paths to Technology!*

Paths to Technology is a place for TVIs and COMS to share information including teacher hints, activities, resources, favorite accessible apps, instructional videos and so much more. This new Community of Practice is a place where educators can unite to resolve accessibility issues as our classrooms are transitioning to digital learning environments. We envision a space where teachers, parents and students can come together as a strong voice to advocate for accessible educational materials to enable students to succeed not only in K-12 classrooms, but also in higher education and in the workforce.

Paths to Technology is just what I need! Finally there is a resource that deals specifically with this unique, rapidly changing subject matter. In this day of technological advancements, it has become impossible for one person to keep up with it all, and P2T provides a network for students, parents, teachers and specialists to contribute and share information." – Belinda Rudinger, VI Assistive Technology Consultant, Region 10 ESC.

The wealth of information compiled on this site coupled with the student section and blogs makes *Paths to Technology* a must go-to resource for anyone associated with visual impairment." – Dr. Penny Rosenblum, University of Arizona.

Paths to Technology has something for everyone – including students! Encourage your student to check out the *Paths to Technology* Student Page and to get involved.

The ability to write a blog for the blind community gives me an opportunity to share my knowledge of technology as well as encourage others to explore tech in a way that they can self accommodate themselves through their high school/college careers." – Elijah, student blogger.

I love the student section! It's important for kids to be their own advocates and in charge of their own accessibility. *P2T* is the perfect forum for kids to show off how independent they can be in the classroom, all thanks to creative tech use." – Yue-Ting Siu, TVI, PhD.

***Paths to Technology* has posts specifically for Orientation and Mobility!** Go to Technology Search then select [O&M](#). Please share YOUR O&M favorite app, hint or activity!

Come join the *Paths to Technology* community! Register and then jump in on the discussions, share your ideas, ask a question, write a post and be a part of this exciting community.

Technology News

Is There a Need for Tactile Overlays?

The Early Childhood Project Leader at APH would like to hear your opinion on the use of clear tactile overlays with the iPad for young children as a means of providing a fun introduction to tactile graphics and concepts. This is simply to determine if there is a need for more of these types of applications. Please consider taking this very brief survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/tactileoverlaysforipad>

If you have questions, you may contact the Early Childhood

Project Leader via email at:

dwilkinson@aph.org

Paths to Technology Website

[Paths to Technology Website](#)

There are a number of O&M related posts on the website, including several on BlindSquare, Uber, a couple of apps that can be used for O&M purposes, etc. You can search for O&M posts on the website by going to Technology Search and under subject, select O&M. There are currently 23 O&M posts.

Here is an article about Paths to Technology:

<http://www.perkins.org/stories/news/new-assistive-technology-website-launched-by-perkins>

B2G Update from National Braille Press

After many years of research and development, National Braille Press officially has launched the B2G. The B2G is a portable, Android-based refreshable braille computer and optional smart phone, designed specifically for blind people.

The website has a Main B2G Page and a Resources page that will provide specifications, FAQs, suggested apps that one can download that aren't embedded in the B2G, and they want to build a forum where customers can share their discoveries, apps they like and answer questions. They will soon have short YouTube videos on NBP's channel covering various topics about the B2G. NBP is now a developer on the Google Play Store and they have put their Editor app there for Android products and soon will add our calculator, compass and other apps.

Here is a direct link to the B2G main page: <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/technology/b2g/index.html>

SAS gloss is a free annotation app that can be used to quickly create an accessible map on-the-fly for low vision students. Annotation apps allow the student or educator to write, color, draw and type directly on top of a PDF or picture. The annotated PDF or picture can then be emailed. This post will discuss creating and marking digital maps to be used by students with low vision.

<http://www.perkinselearning.org/technology/blog/creating-low-vision-maps-sas-gloss-app>

Two high school students with multiple disabilities created this iBook about their O&M lessons. Using an iPhone, one student dictated his sentences in Pages while the other student used the Memo app. Their O&M instructor transferred the stories into iBooks Author (available only a Mac) and added the accessible questions.

<http://www.perkinselearning.org/technology/posts/codys-om-adventures-ibook>

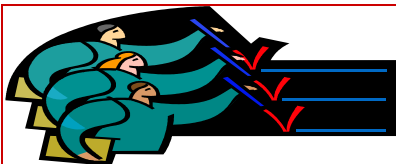
Directions on how to create iBooks are on iBook page; you can also download Cody's iBook on your Mac or iOS device!

Audio Games

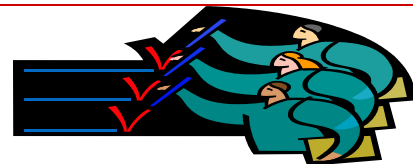
Kevin Hollinger shared this link for a listing of audio games 'for people who are blind on the AER listserv.

Check them out at

<https://blindfoldgames.org/>



CHECK IT OUT!



2016 SCRIPT-NC Webinar Series: Registration Now Open



Looking for resources, activities, & strategies to support student learning around inclusion and diversity? Join us for a series of four webinars designed specifically for early childhood community college faculty. Each of the webinars in the 2016 series will focus on cross-course issues, which is a different approach from the 2015 series where we focused on a specific course for each webinar. All webinars will take place from 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm U.S. EST unless indicated. ?

More Than Songs and Sombreros: Incorporating an Emphasis on Dual Language Learners in Your Program

March 29, 2:00 – 3:00 pm EST. *Growing numbers of children with home languages and dialects other than academic English make it imperative for programs to prepare future professionals with relevant content and practices. This webinar will highlight ways to emphasize both content and evidence-based practices.*

Presenter: Camille Catlett

Not Just Cool Apps and Games: Using Instructional Technology to Improve Teaching and Learning:

May 17, 2:00 – 3:00 pm EST. There are a growing number of online tools and activities that can help us become better teachers so that learners can maximize their learning. This webinar will share strategies and ideas on when and how to use these free or low-cost online tools and activities to engage students. Pros and cons of the online tools will also be discussed. Presenter: Chih-Ing Lim

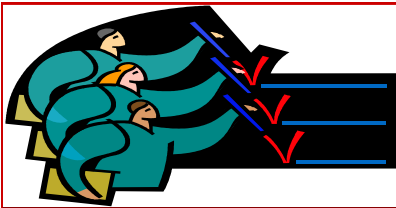
Incorporating Playful Approaches to Learning and Development:

July 26, 2:00- 3:00 pm EST. Increasing pressure to conform to standards and kindergarten readiness can dissuade early childhood professionals from incorporating play an effective tool for supporting learning and development. This webinar will highlight opportunities, through readings, activities, and assignments, to incorporate an emphasis on play across early childhood courses. Specific emphasis on learning in outdoor and natural environments will be emphasized. Presenter: Camille Catlett

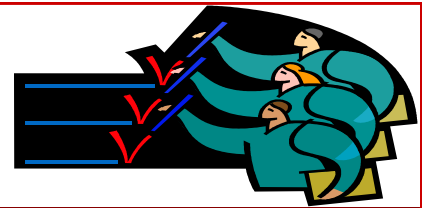
From All to Each and Every: Building an Emphasis on Inclusion into Each Course:

September 27, 2:00- 3:30 pm EST. Recent national attention to inclusion (e.g., DEC Recommended Practices, joint policy from the U.S. Departments of HHS and Education) has underscored the need to grow future professionals who can support the inclusion of each child within home, program, and community settings. This webinar will share examples of how to make this happen in each course by sharing free print, audiovisual, web and instructional resources for faculty members to use. Presenter: Camille Catlett

REGISTER HERE: https://unc.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_dgsazl2P3C5lnbT



CHECK IT OUT!



ROWING CAMP FOR THE BLIND

Do you know **an individual who is blind or visually impaired** who wants to get out on the water this summer? Join the United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) for a free 3-day rowing camp in Longmont, CO. The camp will take place on July 9th, 16th and 23rd from 10:30 am – 1:30 pm. Instructors will cover the fundamentals of rowing; technique, boat orientation and navigation on the water.

Contact USABA Membership Coordinator Kevin Brouard at kbrouard@usaba.org or (719) 866 3019 for more information.

New online and onsite summer classes!



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Summer 2016

Click on the link for more information or call 617-972-7720

www.perkinselearning.org/



Mountain Mobility:

Outdoor Adventure Camp for Visually Impaired and Blind Youth

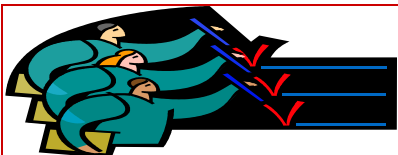
June 26th - July 1st, 2016

adaptivesports.org

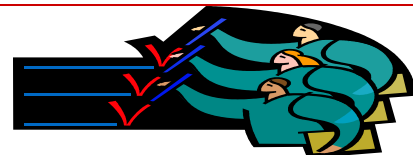
This summer, the Adaptive Sports Center in Crested Butte, will be running a camp specifically designed for blind or visually impaired middle school and high school students, June 26th through July 1st. The camp will bring young adults together for a week of outdoor adventure in the Rocky Mountains. From hiking to rock climbing, campers will be exposed to new activities, while making connections and building confidence along side other blind and visually impaired youth.

Connecting to the outdoors through a variety of activities will be a large aspect of the camp. In addition, campers will also focus on a variety of invaluable life skills throughout the week. Our youth will shop for groceries, prepare their own meals, and interact in a team setting. Campers will also advance their orientation and mobility skills as they learn to travel through the bustling town of Crested Butte, Colorado.

Reflecting and journaling will be a priority during the week. Each evening, campers will be writing as they recall and relive the most exciting and perhaps the most challenging moments from the day. At the end of the week, campers will have a narrative to bring home to share with their friends and family.



CHECK IT OUT!



Introduction to Cerebral Visual Impairment in Children: Visual Impairment Due to Damage to the Brain

Presented by Amanda Hall Lueck, Ph.D.

This is a 5 session class spread over 10 weeks. In this course, features of visual impairment due to brain damage will be discussed along with assessment of children with this condition. Methods to design appropriate interventions for these children that take into account individual differences, the learning environment, and the need for multidisciplinary teamwork will be presented. Check on when this course is available again.

For more information click on the link below:

<http://www.perkinselearning.org/earn-credits/online-class/cerebral-visual-impairment-in-children>

Vote Today for 2016 One Book 4 Colorado Book

Online voting is open to choose the book that every 4-year-old will be reading this spring, along with a little help from parents, siblings, friends and family. Cast your vote for one of the three finalists: "One Drowsy Dragon" by Ethan Long, "Giraffes Can't Dance" by Giles Andreae, and "I Love You Stinky Face" by Lisa McCourt. In its fifth year, One Book 4 Colorado is a collaboration of Colorado State Library, Denver

Preschool Program, Lt. Gov. Joe Garcia's Office, Serve Colorado, Office of Early Childhood, the non-profit and foundation community, public and military libraries and the private sector. Over the last 4 years, more than 250,000 books have been given to Colorado 4-year-olds across the state who visit public libraries and preschools in the Denver Preschool Program. This April 11-25, 2016, the program will give away another 75,000 books to encourage Colorado families to read together. Anyone can cast a vote for the winning book through the end of February.

For more information and/or to vote, go to: <http://www.onebook4colorado.org/>

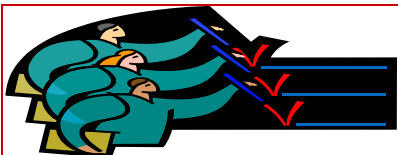
Oregon Project Update Survey

The authors and publishers of the Oregon Project for Preschool Children Who Are Blind and Visually Impaired, are seeking your input! The 6th edition of the OR Project was published in 2007 and we are now in discussion regarding creating a 7th Edition.

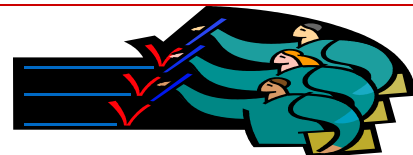
They would appreciate it if you could take this short survey <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ORProjectSurvey>.

Feedback from the field is extremely valuable as we look at potential updates and developments in both content and design.

Please feel free to forward this survey on to professionals and/or parents that you believe would be interested in providing feedback on the OR Project. Don't hesitate to call for more details at 541.245.4626 or email us (or_project@soesd.k12.or.us) if you have any questions regarding the survey.



CHECK IT OUT!



ICE Information in Your Cell Phones

By Diane Brauner

Smart phones provide many safety features, including a simple way for first responders to access your emergency contact and medical information. In your contacts, label the person you want contacted ICE, his or her name and relationship to you. ICE stands for In Case of Emergency. Example: In my case, I have my husband's mobile number listed as "ICE - Darrell husband". You can add your personal medical information (allergies, medicine you are taking, your doctor's contact information) under Notes in your ICE contact. It is recommended that you have list two ICE contacts.

Anyone can use your phone, activate SIRI (press and hold the Home button on the iPhone) and say, "Call ICE" - even when your phone is locked!

Here is a good website that explains this

<https://rnn10.wordpress.com/2010/06/21/how-to-set-up-an-ice-contact-on-your-iphone/>



PATHS TO LITERACY

Published on *Paths to Literacy* (<http://www.pathstoliteracy.org>)

[Announcing New Format for Weekly Newsletter!](#)

By Charlotte@Perkins on Apr 12, 2016

Paths to Literacy is happy to announce that they will now be sending out weekly newsletters to anyone who is registered on the site. Each week you will be able to read our latest blog post from practitioners and families around the globe, just as you have been doing. They want to be sure you also knew about their most recent activity ideas and news items, as well as upcoming events. For more information, go to:

<http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/announcing-new-format-weekly-newsletter>

Supporting Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Who Have Experienced Trauma

The [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#) has published [*The Road to Recovery: Supporting Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Who Have Experienced Trauma*](#). The toolkit consists of a *Facilitator Guide* and a *Participant Manual*. Together, they are designed to teach basic knowledge, skills, and values about working with children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) who have had traumatic experiences, and how to use this knowledge to support children's safety, well-being, happiness, and recovery through trauma-informed practice.

Established by Congress in 2000, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network ([NCTSN](#)) brings a singular and comprehensive focus to childhood trauma. NCTSN's collaboration of frontline providers, researchers, and families is committed to raising the standard of care while increasing access to services. Combining knowledge of child development, expertise in the full range of child traumatic experiences, and dedication to evidence-based practices, the NCTSN changes the course of children's lives by changing the course of their care.

The Network is funded by the [Center for Mental Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through a congressional initiative: the [Donald J. Cohen National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative](#).

**Colorado Center for the Blind's
2016 CONFIDENCE CAMP FOR KIDS**

Come join us for our Elementary Summer Program!

3 week program dates: June 6 through June 24; Monday – Friday day camp (no weekends)

Times: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

For ages 5-11

**Contact: Brent Batron, Director of Youth Programs,
303-778-1130 ext 222, bbatron@cocenter.org**

Call to reserve a spot or email/ fax your application soon. Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received.

The Colorado Center for the Blind is sponsoring an interactive, three week program for blind and visually impaired children ages five through eleven.

The highly qualified staff, including two certified TVIs, will work with students in a variety of age appropriate areas such as cane skills, daily living skills, Braille and beginning technology. Students will prepare lunch each day and focus on household activities like making beds, vacuuming, washing dishes, sweeping, etc.

Several experienced and energetic blind role models will be paired with students as we believe that positive blind role modeling teaches success.

Not only will the students work on building their skills but, even more importantly, they will gain confidence in themselves by participating in a wide range of activities. Some of these activities will include a science fair, riding the light rail to parks and recreation centers, swimming, eating lunch at a restaurant and many more.

The students will cap off this experience by participating in a unique and fun performance that friends and families can attend. The skills and confidence they gain from this experience will be exciting.

The fee for this program is \$100 which covers all 3 weeks and all activities.

As many of you know, we normally use sleepshades in our programs but we do not require them in the elementary program. However, we will require that all students use a cane

just for PARENTS

Resources for Parents of Children who Are Deaf-Blind

The National Center on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB) has a great webpage and many resources for parents of children and youth who have combined vision and hearing loss. There is a *Families Matter* page at: <https://nationaldb.org/families>

On this page, they have stories, told mostly through video that will introduce you to children and young adults who are deaf-blind and their families. As you get to know the children and families, you will also learn how individuals who are deafblind learn, develop, and live their lives.

There are also pages for the NCDB's Family Engagement Initiative, Working Together for Families, Resources for Families who Speak Spanish, and Family Discussions on this family page.

If you go to their general webpage at www.nationaldb.org and type in "family" in the search box, you will also find a wide variety of other helpful resources such as:

- ◇ *A Family's Guide to Interveners*
- ◇ *Sun-Daughter: A Blog about a Family's Journal with Retinoblastoma*
- ◇ *Communication Between Family and School: Creating a Communication Notebook that Works*
- ◇ *Family Stories about the Importance of Communication*
- ◇ *Impact of Deafblindness on the Family*
- ◇ *Home Talk: A Family Assessment of Children who are Deafblind*
- ◇ *One Dad's nuts and Bolts of Advocacy on the State Level*
- ◇ *Parents Discuss their Child's Experience of Deaf-Blindness*
- ◇ *Developing an Effective IEP for Children with Deaf-Blindness: A Parent Mini-Guide*
- ◇ *Kevin Jake with CHARGE Syndrome*

If you are a parent of a child with deaf-blindness, please contact Gina Herrera at (303) 866-6605 or email her at Herrera_g@cde.state.co.us to find out more about the free technical assistance services of the Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project.

Connecting Families

There are several organizations that can connect families to advocates in Colorado. PEAK Parent Center is Colorado's Parent Training and Information Center. PEAK has parent advisors on staff and can provide families with the names of advocacy organizations. For more information, visit:

- PEAK's website at www.peakparent.org.
- The Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older People (www.thelegalcenter.org) and
- The Arc of Colorado (www.thearcofco.org) are other resources for families looking for advocates.

If your family is looking for support groups and/or trying to connect with other families, Parent to Parent of Colorado is a useful resource - www.p2p-co.org

The Parent Information and Resources page on the CDE Exceptional Student Services Unit's website has information about conferences and training opportunities. Every year CDE offers three Parents Encouraging Parents Conferences for families and educators throughout Colorado.

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

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Parents: If you are moving out of state or your child will or has graduated, please be in touch so we can remove your name from our newsletter mailing list. If your child is still enrolled in a Colorado school district and you have a new mailing address, please be in touch with your address changes.

TVIs and COMSs: If you have any changes in program contact information, please help us out and send Tanni these changes.

Thanks to everyone for helping to keep our mailing list up-to-date! Send changes to:

anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or to Tanni Anthony, CDE ESSU, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1100, Denver, CO 80202. Or please leave a voice message at (303) 866-6681. Thank you so much!



UNIFIED ENGLISH BRAILLE (UEB): WHAT IS IT? WHY IMPORTANT?

SMALL CHANGES IN BRAILLE CODE PROVIDE BIG DIVIDENDS FOR YOUR CHILD

Audrey Schading, MA, Lighthouse for the Blind

"UEB" are buzz letters right now for parents and educators of children who are blind all across the United States. In fact, many cities are having "UEB parties" where the questions most asked are: "What is it?", "How is it different?" and "Why do we need change?"

The United States joined all other English-speaking countries around the world with the adoption of Unified English Braille (UEB) on January 4, 2016, the 207th birthday of Louis Braille. This means that any child beginning to learn Braille during the 2015-16 school year, began to use UEB in September, 2015.

PRINT EVOLVES-SO DOES BRAILLE

As print has evolved over the past fifty years, Braille must also evolve. Textbooks have become much more complicated and "busy" in print, making it much more difficult to transcribe. We have worked diligently with our literary Braille to keep up, including the addition of a special computer code. UEB resembles print as much as possible, and is much more technologically adaptable. This has been achieved by eliminating nine contractions, and making minor punctuation changes.

With the implementation of UEB, general reading, transcribing of texts, using computers and electronic notetakers, and back translating from print to Braille and Braille to print, prove to be much more straightforward. Now, smart phones and Braille electronic notetakers give the option of working with UEB.

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA), which is committed to the vibrancy and aliveness of Braille, has worked tirelessly for over twenty years to perfect the code, so that its use can be globally maximized. Their website, www.brailleauthority.org is full of various informational articles and sample materials.

Until UEB, the English Braille produced in various countries used different rules for punctuation and contractions. For example, the United Kingdom did not capitalize words in books, as it was felt that the capital sign took up too much space. Now, UEB has globally unified all of us who read English Braille, whether we are from the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand or the USA.

LESS AMBIGUITY

How is this new code easier to read? As it mirrors print, there is much less ambiguity of symbols. Currently, there are contractions for the words 'to' and 'by' which are written next to a word to save space. Those same dots mean other things when spaced, and as words such as 'to the' and 'by the' are not written together in print, they are naturally spaced accordingly in Braille. Thus, 'to' and 'by' are eliminated.

Websites often contain numbers and upper case letters in their midst; in UEB, we can easily write the e-mail address or website without changing to a computer code, naturally using the number sign, numbers, and capital letters.

just for PARENTS

As the number sign has also meant 'ble' in a word, and as 'dot 6 n' and 'dot 6 y' (capital N and capital Y) meant 'ation' and 'ally', those contractions have also been omitted. I've been using the code, and am finding it easy to make the switch.

It's never too early to start introducing your child to UEB. If your child already knows contracted Braille, please check with their teachers regarding the changeover. If they're completely new to the code, they'll have an easier time learning and using it. And while UEB can also be used for math, Nemeth is still the official math code, especially for algebra, where the writing of it proves to be much shorter and easier.

As for books in UEB to get your child started, the National Braille Press (NBP) has a number of publications, such as "The Day the Crayons Quit" by Drew Daywalt, part of NBP's Great Expectations series. This is a delightfully attractive, fun story which also includes tactile pages for coloring, as well as jokes and songs. It is one of seven books recently produced for children in the UEB code.

Besides NBP, The Hadley School for the Blind is taking big strides in its preparations, including offering an excellent, comprehensive short course for blind and sighted adults. The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) has now updated its student materials for UEB. Seedlings Books for Children is updating its site with UEB Books, starting with short, uncontracted books, as these will involve only minor punctuation changes.

Please visit all of the following websites frequently, to keep yourself up-to-date:

National Braille Press:

www.nbp.org

The Hadley School for the Blind:

www.hadley.edu


Seedlings Books for Children:

www.seedlings.org

American Printing House for the Blind:

www.aph.org


Audrey Schading, MA, who is blind, is an Academic Rehabilitation Instructor at Lighthouse Guild



*BAA, baa, black sheep, have you any books?
YES, sir, yes, sir, three bags full!*

FREE Braille Book Bags for any family with a blind child, birth to age 7
Call: 800-548-7323 ext. 520
Go to www.nbp.org and click on ReadBooks!

Brought to you by National Braille Press



just for PARENTS



LIGHTHOUSE GUILD
Vision + Health

NATIONAL TELE-SUPPORT NETWORK FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

When a child is diagnosed with a serious eye condition that can cause blindness or vision impairment, a parent may feel lost and alone, and unsure of what the child needs.

Their free **National Tele-Support Network for Parents of Children with Visual Impairment** connects parents with parents whose children have the same impairment, so they can share resources, experiences, strength and hope.

Tele-support groups meet by phone every week, and are facilitated by a Psychologist or Social Worker with input from professionals knowledgeable about children's eye conditions.

They currently have groups for parents of children with the following eye conditions:

- Cortical Visual Impairment
- Retinopathy of Prematurity
- Leber Congenital Amaurosis & Retinitis Pigmentosa
- Autism and Blindness
- Hermansky-Pudlak Syndrome (English)
- Hermansky-Pudlak Syndrome (Spanish)
- CHARGE Syndrome
- Albinism
- Chediak-Higafhi syndrome
- Glaucoma



Their free Teen Tele-support Group is for high school seniors who are visually impaired or blind and are planning to attend college. The group meets by phone to share experiences and ask questions of current college students and recent graduates who are also blind or visually impaired.

Parents may join whenever you wish. Parents are welcome, whether they want to actively participate or just listen.

For more information or to enroll in tele-support group

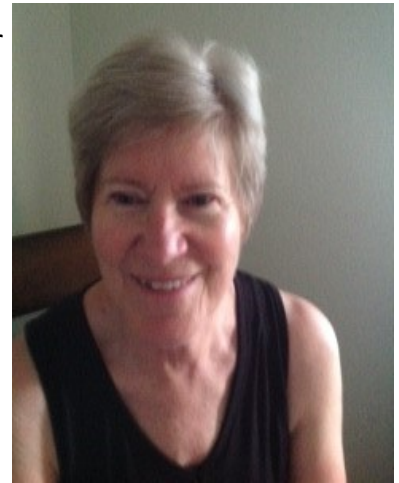
800-562-6265 * lighthouseguild.org

parentgroup@lighthouseguild.org

Forever in Gratitude, We Say Thanks and Farewell

This has become a tradition with our newsletter, to honor our retirees. It is always a pleasure and always a bit sad to say farewell to those who have served us so well. They have been friends, mentors, leaders, and dear colleagues. This year is no different as we sing the praises and count our blessings for five truly amazing teachers in our field. Each one could author a book of her own experiences and wisdom. Those who were fortunate enough to work beside any of these amazing people can tell you how much they valued and learned from their colleagues. Their students are their true legacies—the world is a much better place for them having had Rita, Elaine, Trina, Sarah, or Vicki as their teacher.

Rita Albright will retire from Boulder Public School at the end of this school year. Rita graduated from UNC in 1974 with a Master's Degree in Education for the Visually Handicapped and Peripatology! (For those not in the know – that is how many of us “mature COMS” were initially licensed!). Rita has spent all her teaching career in Colorado! We have been so fortunate to have her since her first job in the fall of 1974, which was at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind as an O & M instructor and a teacher of the Optacon. She married in 1977 and moved north to work as an itinerant TVI/O&M in the St. Vrain School District. Rita notes, “I was blessed to work with my mentor and good friend, Edith Ullmann.” In 1981, she took an 11 year leave and had the joy of greeting four children and getting them each into school before returning to the field. In 1992, Rita returned as an itinerant TVI/O&M in Longmont where she remained until 2001 when she accepted an itinerant TVI/O&M position in Boulder School District. She has been in Boulder working with Paula Conroy since 2001.



Rita received the CAER Lifetime Achievement Award in May 2015. In the nomination letter, Dr. Paula Conroy shared, Rita is known to push her students hard toward achieving independence in all they do. Her perspective is always clear. She wants students to become the best they can be. Independence is always at the forefront of her mind. She works tirelessly to meet the needs of students and families, even if this means at night and on weekends, during the summer or on spring break. Rita does all this but is very clear about the students' and families' role and responsibility in the learning process. She helps educational teams work together to reach their shared goals. Rita is a true professional and is always supportive of teachers in their beginning years. She is a team player and problem-solver and is a support to all of those around her both personally and professionally. She is honest and helps people deal with the truth, even when this truth may be difficult. Rita is a self-reflective teacher and leader. She helps all of those around her become better at what they do and who they are by her honesty and willingness to entertain tough questions that don't always have easy answers. Rita believes in the goodness of people and spreads this positive attitude to all she is with. She brings out the best in those who are lucky enough to work with her and makes them feel worthy and special. I have personally valued Rita as a colleague, peer and partner for the past 15 years as have many TVI's across the state, especially in the northern region where she is a true leader, colleague and friend. Rita was instrumental in getting our Low Vision Clinics set up in the state and has always attended annual professional development trainings. She has been a deep resource for learners with a variety of needs whether it be braille, low vision, and/or comprehensive programs for learners with additional disabilities. Rita shares, “Each chapter in my career has been an absolute joy. I have had colleagues, students, and families who have taught me so very much and I am deeply grateful to each of them.” All the best to you, Rita!

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Elaine Karns will retire from Poudre School District at the end of this school year. Elaine shares, "Colorado was a dream that kept me going while raising two daughters in Missouri. Before making that leap of faith, I was the Program Director for the Children's Center for the Visually Impaired for 15 years. Following completion of a second master's degree in Severe Needs; Vision at the University of Northern Colorado, I was offered a job in Fort Collins, as a TVI/COMS in 1999. For the last 16 years I have been fortunate enough to live my dream here in Colorado. It has been an honor and privilege to work with each of you in various ways: Snowshoe Weekends, CAER, Low Vision Clinic, Vision Coalition, State Vision Conferences and O&M Conferences.

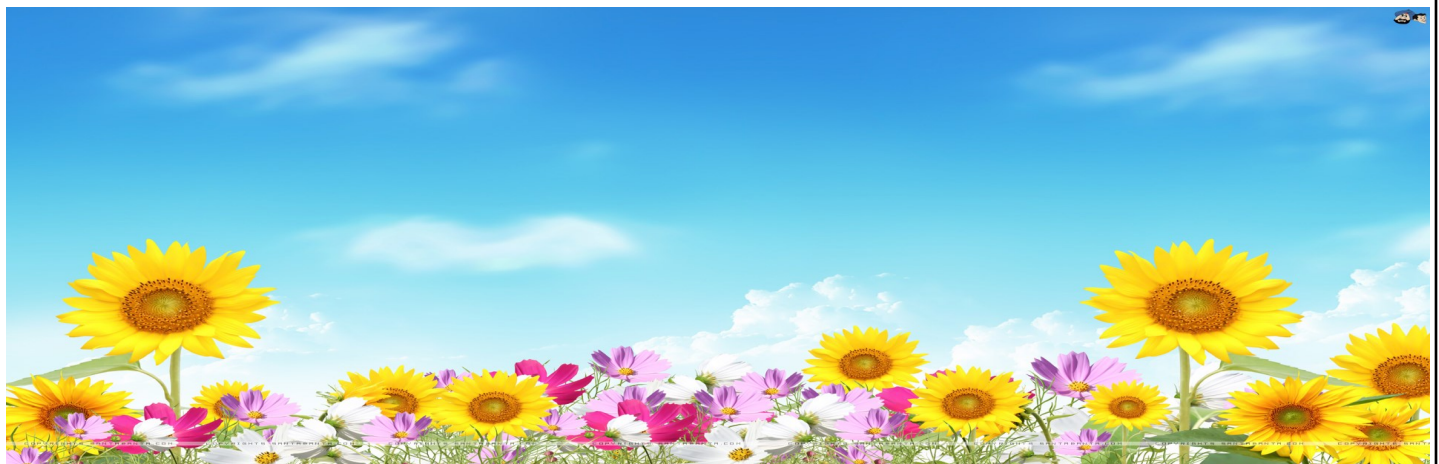
Elaine has been a role model and mentor to many, including new staff in Poudre School District, who provided the following statement about their admiration of their colleague: "Elaine has been an outstanding advocate for students with visual impairments in her school district as well as throughout the state. Elaine spends a great deal of time and energy ensuring that every student has the appropriate tools to be successful in their school environment and community.

When observing Elaine with her students, you can see the caring relationship she has for each of her students. For example, she exhibited great pride when one of her students got a scholarship to attend college. Elaine defines her own success in her students' achievements. This success is not always in the school environment. She spends additional time teaching students important independent living skills through cooking and orientation and mobility lessons. When speaking with her students, cooking is one of the areas they speak about first when describing what they work on with Elaine. Besides being an integral part in the Poudre School District in Fort Collins, Elaine is an important member of the Vision Coalition. Through the Vision Coalition, Elaine has worked with other educators and professionals from across the state of Colorado to collaborate on issues pertaining to students with visual impairments. Elaine has also served as the site coordinator for the Northern Low Vision Clinic, as long as I have been in Colorado. As site coordinator for the low vision clinic Elaine has put in additional hours to organize dates and times with educators and professionals involved.

Personally, I have benefited from working with Elaine in the Poudre School District in Fort Collins. She has mentored me in my transition from another school district and been a colleague that I easily collaborate with."

Elaine was awarded the CAER Lifetime Achievement Award in May of this year.

Elaine's humble and giving nature is best summarized in her own words, "And now it is time to look ahead to the next chapter of my life! Placing my students in such capable hands, I will lace up my hiking boots, grab my art supplies and camera, and hit the trails. You are all a blessing in the lives of the students and families you serve. Sapor Diem...Savor the Day!"



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Trina Boyd Pratt will retire from Aurora School District at the end of this school year. Her Aurora colleagues have offered a great tribute to Trina: “Trina’s expertise within her job is extensive. Over the years, she has had many opportunities to work with a variety of students ranging in ability, ages and severity of visual impairment and blindness. Regardless of her caseload, she has always made it her responsibility to do more, learn more, teach more and advocate more. Many years ago, Trina had quite a few students with Cortical Visual Impairment. At that time, she wanted more people to understand the diagnosis of CVI and also how to progress students along the continuum. She took it upon herself to write a grant. Trina was able to pay classroom staff to get trained in this area. She developed the workshop and provided many hands-on activities. And just recently she taught a refresher course to the Metro TVIs.



It’s hard to say how many teachers, assistants and students benefited Trina’s time and knowledge around this subject. Trina has a continued passion for assistive technology and is always searching for ways to incorporate this in to her student’s everyday lives. Lastly, Trina works very closely with her student’s families. She finds humor and unique ways to connect, motivate and encourage both her students and her families to be involved as much as possible. She will go out of her way to gives rides to and from events in order to help make this happen. Trina is consistently generous with her time and resources. Trina has looked outside of her job in Aurora to reach out and provide trainings in areas such as Scientific Notebook , Duxbury, Braille Music, Braille Writer Cleaning and Repair, the Braille Index D Embosser and TactileView and in many other areas. She was instrumental in starting the Orientation and Mobility conferences in Colorado. Professionally, she has served on the AER board as the Treasurer for the past 10 years. She has been actively involved in the NFB organization and often travels to conferences to continue to grow her knowledge. Trina has also received many awards over the years that are a testament to her abilities and expertise. Some of these include an award from the National Center for Low Incidence, the Gary Schmidt Award, the CAER President’s award and the APS Superintendent Award.

It should be known that Trina’s job rarely stops at the end of the school year in Aurora. In the summer time, Trina has been the director of the Confidence Camp which is sponsored by the Colorado Center for the Blind outreach program for many years. She has participated in several of the CSDB summer programs and outreach programs that were offered in years past. She can also be found driving up north to work as the O&M instructor at the Wyoming Lions School camp. More than anything, Trina is an advocate for students and individuals who are visually impaired and blind. She consistently has high expectations and challenges them to reach their individual limits. Trina enjoys finding real world experiences to give to her students. She constantly advocates for ways to include the Expanded Core Curriculum. Trina doesn’t just stop at the experiences. Students also have to learn how to plan trips, access a variety of modes of transportation, navigate new and novel terrain, manage the money that they have earned and present reports to school administration. It is important to Trina that students understand the entire process and that they are an integral part of all the many details. In addition, Trina connects her students to positive adults in our community that are blind or visually impaired.”

Trina received the CAER Lifetime Achievement Award in May. It is likely that we may still see Trina around as she moves into other work outside of APS. This is a very good thing!

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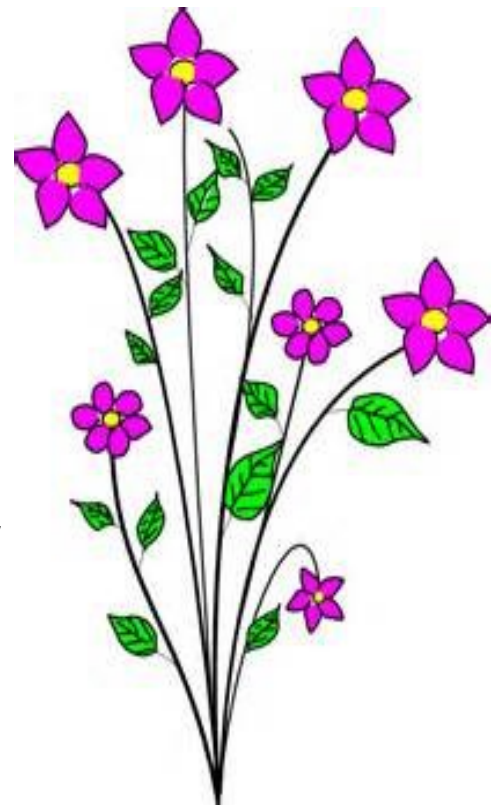
Vicki Pearson will retire after over truly decades years of service to Colorado. She has worked for more than one Colorado administrative unit, but was most recognized for her long standing contributions in Poudre School District. She received her doctorate from UNC in the early 2000s. She was an active attendee and contributor to the Northern TVI group.

Rita Albright shared, "Over the years, Vicki has highlighted needs of students with vision impairments way before others noticed them. She frequently communicated with Fred Gissoni of APH, asking about resources for students and soliciting his thoughts on best practice in the field of blindness long before "Fred's Tips" became popular. She was in contact with Gary Supalo about making science accessible for students with vision impairments years before Colorado brought him here for a conference. Vicki was persistent in researching and uncovering the great need our students have for accessible technology, introducing the Victor Stream, transformers, the iPad & iPhone, the Braille Sense, accessible microscopes, etc. years before they became common utterances in our field and in the hands of most students.

Vicki paved the way for the yearly northern low vision clinic to be held at the Insight Skills Center so that families could see equipment and devices that individuals with low vision use in daily life, in addition to the optical aid devices that come with the clinic. This has been a wonderful resource for our students and families in the northern region. When Vicki has a question, she finds the answer! Leaders in our field from years past, she has sought out. Betty Kronich, Lucia Hasty, Linda Heil, Nancy Foster---all dynamos in our field in the 1970s and beyond---Vicki has consulted so that she could provide the best instruction for her students when it came to music, tactile graphics, Braille, and abacus.

How does one measure success in our field? For Vicki, it is measured by working herself out of a job. Meaning, the students she has worked with go on to have productive, meaningful and independent lives. And, they feel they got there on their own, because their TVI held the bar high for them, and projected a sense of capability and achievement onto each of them. It is not surprising that students Vicki has taught have gone on to college, careers, marriage, for they have a teacher who is committed, hardworking, who is behind the scenes creating opportunities for each to succeed. Vicki's students have a special bond with her. They love her and come back and visit with her and tell her about their lives. In her professionalism, she has also created lifelong friends, as her students become adults. It might be easy to overlook Vicki because of her quiet and unassuming manner. However, I am deeply grateful that I didn't miss seeing her. Vicki has freely shared her knowledge and ideas with others and me. She has made me a better teacher and thus benefited the students I work with. She deserves to be recognized with the CAER Lifetime Achievement Award."

Vicki received the CAER Lifetime Achievement in May of this year. We thank her for her years of service, high professional standards, countless contributions to students, and advocacy efforts for our field. Best wishes to you, Vicki!



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Sarah Sonnier will retire from Mesa Valley School District this June. Sarah attended the University of Northern Colorado and had the pleasure of having Dean Tuttle, Grace Napier, Dave Kappan, and John Ferraro as her instructors. She notes, “Thank you Grace for being so rigorous in our braille training!” (We thank Dr. Napier too, because rigor for Sarah helped our state work in braille competency so many years later!) Sarah was assigned to Grand Junction to do her TVI practicum (1975) and has been here ever since that time. (She notes, “Do the subtraction and you can figure out why I am retiring!”)

Colleague Angela Sims shares, “Sarah has been passionate about her chosen field and strongly encouraged others to enter it. She has been a dedicated teacher, advocate, and mentor. Her students have loved her and credited her for their abilities to be as independent as possible. I have heard past students express gratitude for all she taught them as well as helping to change their families’ viewpoints about what was possible in their lives. They have felt without her help they may not have learned how to be a productive part of society but more importantly, they may not have had the courage to believe in themselves. Sarah has had the ability to instill a sense of courage and strength in each student she has supported over the years. Sarah has been is a strong advocate; working closely with teachers and administrators in her school district to ensure her students always had what they needed to access the curriculum and their educational environments. She has worked with different organizations within the community on behalf of her students. Sarah is an original member of the CDE Braille Committee and helped write the braille competency test and modules that ensure all TVIs are competent in braille. She has also worked to help ensure state tests were accessible and non-biased to braille readers. I have had the privilege of having Sarah as a mentor, colleague, and friend. She expects the best of everyone but only because that is what she expects of herself. She never wanted to hold a student back because of her inexperience with a concept or equipment, fear of learning something new, or lack of time to learn the skill. If she needed to put in 10 hour days and work on weekends to ensure she was able to help a student learn something, then that’s what she did. Sarah can be credited with helping numerous teachers’ master braille skills (both literacy and Nemeth), mobility skills, and given tips on how to work with families. She has always been available to answer questions, review reports, demonstrate how to teach a lesson, or to just offer encouragement when the job is extremely challenging. Sarah is very modest about what she has done for her students. She will say she was just doing her job. The truth is, in doing her job she has changed lives and made a difference in so many ways. Sarah has instilled courage, skills, and hope in her students, their families, and new teachers.”

Indeed Sarah’s work on our braille competency testing and the former (TCAP) braille tests is legendary for high expectations and strong products. She also served our state as a long-time Site Coordinator for the Western Region Low Vision Clinics. Sarah has been a recipient of the CAER Gary Schmidt Award and the CAER 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sarah shares, “I will miss teaching, but it’s time to move on ...I plan to stay in Grand Junction. It is a great community—just the right size for me with beautiful scenery, hiking, biking, friendly people, and wineries just to mention just a few of the amenities.” Sarah will also continue to be a CDE braille proctor!





colorado connections

- ◆ A huge thank you to Academy 20 brailist extraordinaire **Christine Maynard** who has been asked to serve as a proofreader for the *Braille Enthusiast's Dictionary*. This is an honor for our state to have someone contribute to this important text; it will be one of UEB Test References. We are also pleased to share that Christine has joined the CDE Braille Competency Committee as a southern proctor!
- ◆ Our thanks to **Lucia Hasty** for all her past work on the CDE Braille Committee—she has been invaluable! Lucia will retire from this work as of June 30, 2016. Thank you, Lucia!! Thanks so much to the others on our CDE Braille Committee, who continue to do great work to support braille competency in our state: **Nancy Cozart, Brenda Shepard, Sarah Sonnier, and Julie Wetzstein.**
- ◆ We say farewell to **Jeff Hadala**, TVI and COMS with Adams 12. He will be relocating to Chicago for a new position. We wish Jeff all the best!
- ◆ We completed the third and final CDE UEB Refresher Course training. The southern region training was held on February 12-13 on the beautiful campus of CSDB. We thank CSDB for their hosting and specifically **Kevin Brown, Jamie Lugo, and Jim Olson** for their onsite logistical hospitality. Thanks to the following participants of our third class: **Deb Andrews, Sherry Bainbridge, Kyle Berns, Linda Campbell, Loel Decker, Donice Fennimore, Diane Fitzkee, Kathy Gallina, Amy Gunning, Ann Johnson, Donna Keale, Erin Keller, Jamie Lugo, Shannon Martinez, Dian Megarry, Jan Megarry, Beth Morgan, Judy Mumford, Beth Myer, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, Marti Rahn, Melissa Shular, Wendy Stoltman, Morgan Turner, and Wendy Unwin Watson, Karen Wood, and Chloann Woolley.** Thank you to our southern course training team: **Nancy Cozart, Lucia Hasty, Christine Maynard, and Brenda Shepard.** These dedicated professionals really worked together to host another successful course.
- ◆ Wow, wow, and wow! Thanks to **Gwen Yee** for organizing and working to host a Braille Network and Review Day on March 7th that was extremely well attended by school braillists from across the state and many metro TVIs. In attendance were: **Becky Wegner, Karen Briggs, Julie Wetzstein, Gwen Yee, Becky Plooster, Berta Wiedemeyer, Erin Noe, Jessica Hank, Audra Lewthwaite, and Leslie Kelly-Watrobka** (JeffCo), **Denise Brendle and Diane Sanders** (Douglas County), **Jordan Robinson, Erin Kerr, and Val Smith** (Aurora); **Paula LaBossiere and Helle Hill** (Adams 12); **Lisa Brocard and Ingrid Mayer** (Littleton), **Christine Maynard** (Academy 20), **Ann Johnson** (Cheyenne Mountain), **Debbie Haberkorn** (CIMC at CSDB); **Carol Potashnick** (Cherry Creek), **Sylvia Lloyd** (Boulder); **Tabitha Wyatt** and **Tonya Benich** (Weld). **Tina Boddicker** (El Paso 11) came to a later session that Gwen was able to accommodate. A huge thanks to all who participated and took time to share their knowledge. Many thanks to Gwen for organizing and hosting!
- ◆ Congratulations to **Amber Rundle-Kahn** and **Gena Francoer-Anderson** who was chosen to be recipient of the NLCSF fellowship! The National Leadership Consortium in Sensory Disabilities (NLCSF) is a Collaborative Agreement awarded to Salus University and funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. NLCSF's primary purpose is to increase the number of highly skilled doctoral scholars who will become leaders in administration, higher education, policy and education in order to significantly improve the interventions, services, and outcomes for children with sensory disabilities (deafness/hard of hearing, deafblindness, blindness/visual impairment), ages birth to 21. We are so proud of you two!
- ◆ Thanks and farewell to **Dr. Laura Douglas**, who is retiring as the Outreach Director of the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. Laura has brought so many new and important dimensions to the Outreach Program and been a marvelous advocate for students. We wish her all the very best ahead!



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