



# AERizona View

FEBRUARY 2005

ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION & REHABILITATION OF THE BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED—ARIZONA CHAPTER

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## INSERTS

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## President's Message

Welcome to a new year with AZ-AER! I look forward to getting to know the membership of this organization through participation in conferences, meetings, phone calls and written correspondence.

Here's some brief autobiographical information: I started in the education field by teaching high school language arts in Oregon in the early 80's; then received my Master's degree at the University of Northern Colorado in 1986. I have been an Itinerant Teacher for Students with Visual Impairment and an O&M Specialist for most of my career. Recently, I pursued administrative work, first as a supervising teacher with ASDB, and now as interim principal at ASB. I hold ACVREP certification in O&M and Low Vision. I love what I do and the incredible people (big and small) with whom I work!

My membership with AER goes back to the mid-eighties, shortly after AER became a merged organization of service providers and consumers of all ages. I was completing my coursework in O&M, TVI and Multiple Disabilities w/blindness at the University of Northern Colorado. Randy Witte, a talented and funny English teacher at CSDB, became Colorado's first AER president, and he single-handedly produced a newsletter that was simultaneously side-splittingly funny and informative to its members.

I am, unfortunately, not a particularly funny person, but I am very interested in being informed about our organization, and in turn, keeping you informed. It is my hope that communication lines will run in both directions. Please do not hesitate to contact me or any other board member via e-mail or phone. You can find contact information on AZ AER's website: <http://www.ed.arizona.edu/azaer/>.

Cheers!

Dorinda Rife  
President ~ Arizona AER



LOOKING  
AHEAD!

AZOOM II  
O&M Conference  
February 4, 2005  
DVRC ~ Phoenix

CTEVH ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE  
San Francisco  
March 4-6, 2005  
[www.ctevh.org](http://www.ctevh.org)

VISION 2005  
London  
April 4-7, 2005  
[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

CEC ANNUAL  
CONVENTION  
Baltimore, MD  
April 6-9, 2005  
[www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)

AZ AER SPRING  
CONFERENCE  
April 22, 2005  
Foundation for  
Blind Children

CANADIAN  
VISION  
TEACHERS  
CONFERENCE  
Halifax, NS  
May 12-15, 2005  
[www.apsea.ca](http://www.apsea.ca)

GETTING IN  
TOUCH WITH  
LITERACY  
Denver, CO  
December 1-3, 2005  
[www.gettingintouc  
hwithliteracy.org](http://www.gettingintouc<br/>hwithliteracy.org)

## FBC Gets SMART!

Kim Glenn ~ FBC Transition Coordinator

The Skill Mastery and Adjustment in Rehabilitation and Transition (SMART) Program began April 1, 2004. The FBC was fortunate to enter into an establishment grant with Vocational Rehabilitation allowing this Program to be developed. The Program is designed for adults as well as for high school students who are at least 14-years-old. Since April, we have been able to develop and expand many exciting opportunities to meet individuals' needs!

The summer Independent Living Program was expanded from five days per week to seven! Technology training was added, and the career exploration component was enhanced. Ten students successfully participated in this program.

Career exploration workshops have been developed and will be held this spring on four Saturdays. The dates for the workshops are February 26th, March 19th, April 16th and May 14th. The workshops will include strategies on how to interview, fill out employment applications, understand employer expectations, self-advocate and other areas related to the workforce. In addition, some college preparation activities will occur such as how to seek out scholarship information and discover one's aptitudes and interests.

A college preparation component was developed, and two students completed the first pilot "freshman experience" at Arizona State University. The students took Sociology 101, lived on campus, received Orientation & Mobility training, Technology training and prepared themselves for continued participation in college classes.

For adults, we have developed a 12-week comprehensive, center-based, non-residential program. Clients are referred to the SMART team by their Vocational Rehabilitation counselor for an assessment and recommendations of services needed. A flexible schedule has been developed to allow clients to receive services in the areas of Orientation & Mobility, adjustment to disability, rehabilitation teaching, technology and career exploration.

Application packets for next summer's Independent Living Program, College Preparation Program and the Spring Career Exploration Workshops have been sent out. The deadline to apply for all of these programs is December 17th. We are also recruiting adults who are interested in working in next summer's Independent Living Program.

Adults who are interested in the 12-week comprehensive program should contact their Vocational Rehabilitation counselor or contact the FBC directly for more information. If you have any questions about the services that the SMART team can offer, please contact FBC Transition Coordinator Kim Glenn at 602.331.1470 x 192.

AZ AER  
OFFICERS &  
Board of  
Directors:

President  
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Vice President  
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Secretary  
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Treasurer  
Karen Aron  
Past President  
Jacki Daniels

Directors  
Kartar Khalsa  
Elaine Baldrige  
Fernando Terazon  
Rob Schulenberg  
Kerry Duncan  
Amy Murillo

Welcome New  
AER Members:

Connie Ellis  
Pamela Gottard  
Gail Irons  
Robert Munoz  
Amy Murillo  
Jane Piazza

# The University of Arizona:

## The Future Looks Bright!

*Dr. Jane Erin—University of Arizona*

**Spring** ~ The TVI program at UofA is busy as the Spring 2005 semester gets underway. We are currently offering the Methods, O&M for Teachers and Braille 2 classes on campus in Tucson. We have a large Braille 2 class in Phoenix. For most of these individuals, this is their last class in a 3-year series. Many already have jobs as TVIs, but there are several who are seeking employment for Fall 2005. Please send any job announcements you wish to share with the group to Penny Rosenblum at [rosenblu@u.arizona.edu](mailto:rosenblu@u.arizona.edu).

**Summer** ~ During Summer 2005, we will be offering two courses in Tucson. "Methods for Teachers of Visually Impaired Students" will meet June 6 - 24 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM daily. Dr. Irene Topor ([ilt@u.arizona.edu](mailto:ilt@u.arizona.edu)) is the instructor. "Orientation and Mobility for Classroom Teachers" will meet June 6 - 24 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM daily.

Dr. Topor is also offering SERP 519c, "Advanced Low Vision Assessment and Instruction," over three weekends in May, June, and July. The course will be taught from 5:00 – 8:00 PM on Fridays and 8:00 AM – 2:30 PM on Saturdays. Dates are May 20/21, June 24/25, and July 1/2. Course location is Dobson Academy, 2207 N. Dobson Road, in Chandler. Students will receive 2 units of credit, and the cost will be about \$500 for tuition plus \$60 for the text. Learn about the newest research on how to determine print size for low vision learners, work with a low vision optometrist to understand the clinical low vision evaluation, learn strategies and tips for teaching the use of optical devices to low vision learners. Contact Dr. Topor ([ilt@u.arizona.edu](mailto:ilt@u.arizona.edu)) for more information.

**Camp Abilities** will partner with Arizona Association of Athletes who are Visually Impaired or Blind (AAABVI) to offer a sports camp for athletes 16-25 years of age. Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind will host the camp, and the dates are May 28 - June 4. Send inquiries or requests for applications to Megan O'Connell at [campabilitiestucson@cox.net](mailto:campabilitiestucson@cox.net) or [MOConnell@asdb.state.az.us](mailto:MOConnell@asdb.state.az.us). Volunteer and UofA internship (2 credit hours) opportunities are available. Contact Dr. Irene Topor ([ilt@u.arizona.edu](mailto:ilt@u.arizona.edu)) for more information.

**Technology** ~ There will also be two courses related to technology and visual impairment. One of these is a 3-credit course entitled "Assistive Technology for People with Disabilities" that will include a generic technology component and also a specialized component for teachers of visually impaired students. It will be offered July 13-16, July 22 and July 29 on campus. Additionally, we will be offering a 2-credit course on "Assistive Technology for People with Visual Impairment" on June 20-24. Anyone who is interested in summer courses should contact Jane Erin at

## DO YOU BLOG?

Michael May, Sendaro Group CEO, invites you to share in "Roads Gone Wild" by visiting his company website at [www.SendaroGroup.com](http://www.SendaroGroup.com). Sign onto the Adventure Blog link. There you will find entries and photographs describing Mike's travels in Ireland, Costa Rica and beyond!

Mike is a pioneer in the use of GPS as a navigation tool for individuals with visual impairment. He says, "I don't know how a blind person would get around in Costa Rica, but the truth is, unless a blind person has GPS, he or she navigates without signs anyway. It is interesting that we discuss how sighted people get along without road signs, something blind folks do as a matter of course."

[jerin@u.arizona.edu](mailto:jerin@u.arizona.edu). Information on the courses will also be posted on our website at <http://www.ed.arizona.edu/vi/> in January.

**Fall 2005** ~ Beginning in Fall 2005, we will offer one Saturday course each semester to accommodate students who live a few hours from Tucson. The schedule is as follows: "Introduction to Visual Impairment and Deafblindness," Fall 2005; "Orientation and Mobility for Classroom Teachers," Spring 2006; "Low Vision and Visual Functioning," Fall 2006; "Methods for Teaching Visually Impaired Students," Spring 2007; "Braille 1," Fall 2007, and "Braille 2," Spring 2008. These courses will meet in Tucson for five Saturdays during the semester from 10:00 AM. to 4:30 PM. The dates for the Fall 2005 Intro class are August 27, September 17, October 1, October 22 and November 19. Dr. Penny Rosenblum ([rosenblu@u.arizona.edu](mailto:rosenblu@u.arizona.edu)) is the course instructor. There are a limited number of stipends to cover tuition for those who are working toward a Master's or post-Master's degree with certification in teaching visually impaired students. Those interested in financial support should contact Dr. Jane Erin ([jerin@u.arizona.edu](mailto:jerin@u.arizona.edu)).

**Orientation & Mobility** ~ The Southwest Orientation and Mobility Program is pleased to announce the award of both State and Federal grants that will support training of O&M professionals during the next five years. This is welcome news not only for the University of Arizona but for agencies across Arizona that had difficulty filling positions during the two years that the Southwest Orientation and Mobility Program was not operating because of a lack of funding.

Recruiting efforts are underway for students to participate in either of two tracks leading to eligibility to be a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS). One program is full-time enrollment on the U of A campus whereby the student can receive a Master's Degree in Special Education or an endorsement in O&M to a student's already earned Master's degree. Here, students begin their studies with the fall semester and complete their studies the following summer.

The second program is designed for those individuals who are already teachers of students with visual impairment and cannot or do not want to leave employment to study for the O&M endorsement. Training takes place over three summers with five weeks in Flagstaff the first year. Financial support and tuition waivers are available to students enrolled in either program. More information is available at [www.ed.arizona.edu/vi/](http://www.ed.arizona.edu/vi/), then click on Southwest Orientation and Mobility. You can also contact Dr. Ian Stewart at (520) 621-3887 or [istewart@u.arizona.edu](mailto:istewart@u.arizona.edu).

**Fees** ~ Cost of a three-credit graduate level course for in-state students for the Spring 2005 semester at the University of Arizona is \$681.13. See <http://www.bursar.arizona.edu/fees/rates.asp> and click "Continue" for more information.

### RTC = CVRT!

At the March 2004 ACVREP Board meeting, it was decided that the RTC designation had to be renamed due to copyright violations.

ACVREP's Rehabilitation Teaching (RT) Committee reviewed suggestions, and a selection has been made. The title

"Rehabilitation Teacher Certified" and acronym "RTC" have been eliminated.

Individuals certified in this area are now called "Certified Vision

Rehabilitation Therapists" or "CVRTs".

Certification marks COMS, CLVT and CRVT are now registered with the US Patent and Trademark Office. Registering certification marks with the USPTO prevents other entities from using these marks.

## Good Vibe!

Members of the Arizona Itinerant Teachers of the Visually Impaired (AITVI) were treated to a demonstration of the Victor Reader Vibe on September 14, 2004, at the Foundation for Blind Children. Donna Brown, Educational Outreach Director of Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D), talked about this wonderful new technology for playing recorded materials. A line of portable CD-ROM players replaces the old classic 4-track cassette player, and digitally recorded textbooks now fit on a single CD! The new technology allows for instantaneous navigation by page, bookmarking capability and rapid referencing.

Several Teachers of Students with Visual Impairment in the Phoenix area applied and qualified for a free 1-year RFB&D membership. Each received a "Victor Vibe" through RFB&D's "Learning Through Listening" program. These users and their students now have access to RFB&D's library of over 10,000 digitally recorded books! To obtain "Learning Through Listening" membership applications and a "Tools for Success" catalog of players and accessories, go to [www.rfb.org](http://www.rfb.org) or call Donna Brown at 602-443-0155.

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## Professional Development:

### Have You Gone Online Lately?

**AER Low Vision Rehabilitation Division #7** is sponsoring two online courses. The first is an ongoing online opportunity entitled "Prematurity, ROP and Cortical Visual Impairment". This course is offered in honor of the work of Dr. Arnall Patz and his pioneering work in identifying and treating Retrolental Fibroplasia. The course is \$25.00 and carries 1 CEU of credit. The second course is entitled "Medicare Policy: Low Vision Rehabilitation—What Today's Service Providers Should Know". Professionals working in low vision will have a better understanding of current Medicare policy, procedures and reimbursement as it related to low vision rehabilitation. Tuition for this 3-credit hour course is \$65.00. Everything you need to register and participate is available at [www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org).

**Lighthouse International** now has listings for face-to-face and online course offerings for the coming year at [www.lighthouse.org/ce](http://www.lighthouse.org/ce). Coursework covers a broad spectrum of low vision topics. Target audiences include ophthalmologist, optometrists, CLVTs, COMSs, CVRTs and OTs.

**ACVREP-approved** continuing education opportunities abound and can be found at [www.acvrep.org](http://www.acvrep.org). Stay current on recertification requirements at this same site!

ACCESSIBLE  
CELLULAR  
PHONE!

*In September, CINGULAR/AT&T Wireless announced the release of software that addresses the needs of blind & low vision consumers. The package includes the Nokia 6620 phone and TALKS software.*

*TALKS is housed on a multi-media card that provides screen-reading capabilities. The software translates screens, keystrokes and menu selections into audible output. Call the National Center for Customers with Disabilities (NCC D) at 1-866-241-6568 for information on purchase of the handset, software, service plans. Rebates are available for customers with qualifying visual disabilities.*

## AZ AER Classified Ads

- **SAAVI:** The SOUTHERN ARIZONA ASSOCIATION FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED (SAAVI) in Tucson is actively recruiting for an Executive Director. Go to [www.saavi.us](http://www.saavi.us) for qualifications, compensation and benefits. Send cover letter, résumé and references to the Executive Search Committee in care of [rosenblu@u.arizona.edu](mailto:rosenblu@u.arizona.edu).
- **SAAVI:** SAAVI is also searching for a Technology Director to perform assistive technology assessments and instruct blind and visually impaired individuals and groups in the use of multiple assistive technologies. Go to [www.saavi.us](http://www.saavi.us) for complete job summary and qualifications. Submit résumé to Maureen Shea at [mshea@saavi.us](mailto:mshea@saavi.us).
- **FBC:** THE FOUNDATION FOR BLIND CHILDREN in Phoenix has an opening for a Rehabilitation Teacher in the Skill Mastery & Adjustment in Rehabilitation & Transition program (SMART). It is a 12-month position. Applicants must be eligible for and obtain, within 12 months, a provisional or permanent certificate as a Rehabilitation Teacher as provided by ACVREP. To apply for this opportunity, email résumé to Kim Glenn or Mark Nelson at [kglenn@the-fbc.org](mailto:kglenn@the-fbc.org) or [mnelson@the-fbc.org](mailto:mnelson@the-fbc.org).



## Set Your Sites

- Dr. John Gill, Chief Scientist of the Scientific Research Unit of the Royal National Institute of the Blind in London, UK, oversees [www.tiresias.org](http://www.tiresias.org). This web site discusses ongoing research and development world wide. The site lists researchers that are currently or have recently been involved in non-medical research into assistive technology for individuals with visual disabilities. If you are conducting research, you may enter a description of your work by supplying the researcher's name, postal address, telephone and fax numbers, email address, research subject area, a brief description of the project and proposed start and completion dates. *Dr. L. Penny Rosenblum—University of Arizona*
- "Low Vision: The Reference" is an interdisciplinary database of publications about low vision. It is now available on the web, courtesy of [www.visionconnection.org](http://www.visionconnection.org), a new web portal about vision impairment. With it, you can search for publications about low vision by author, year, title, and keyword. *Dr. L. Penny Rosenblum—University of Arizona*

AERizona View is the triennial newsletter of the Arizona Chapter of the Association for Education & Rehabilitation of the Blind & Visually Impaired.

AZ AER warmly thanks Inge Durre, Director of the Arizona Instructional Resource Center, and The Foundation for Blind Children for assistance and generosity in producing the hard copy of AERizona View. We also extend sincere appreciation to Rich Cook, AIRC Large Type Production Manager, for his contribution to this effort. In October, Rich received a gift and a framed certificate of recognition. AZ AER donated a print/braille book formatted in uncontracted braille to the AIRC in thanks for continued and unwavering support!

## Free Money! (Hardly any paperwork...)

Sorry state of the economy keeping you from pursuing a professional development opportunity? AZ AER offers Professional Grants (formerly mini-grants) of up to \$100 for conference registration or course tuition. Members repay our organization by writing an article for AERizona View and presenting at one of our two annual conferences. Interest groups may apply for grants to fund speakers/materials for discipline-specific program activities with the stipulation that the group does not charge registration. Members and interest groups are limited to one grant per calendar year.

Members may also request Consumer Grants to assist visually impaired consumers in paying for educational activities and extracurricular or after school programs. This might include agency or school sanctioned field trips, recreation leagues, dance or gymnastics classes, etc.

AZ AER offers a \$500 Student Merit Scholarship, but no scholarship was awarded in 2004! Apply now to assist a visually impaired college-bound high school senior or university-enrolled student! The Student Merit Scholarship can also be utilized for vocational school training.

The grant program is yet another benefit of membership! All AZ AER scholarship & grant applications are available at <http://www.ed.arizona.edu/azaer/>.

"This conference was very beneficial to me professionally. The Keynote Speaker, Susan Ponchilla, was impressive, and the information was very relevant. The workshops that I attended were very informative and gave me many ideas on how I could use that information to better serve my clients."

*Leanne Taylor ~ AZ AER Conference 1<sup>st</sup> time attendee by Professional Grant*

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**Congratulations to Sandra Stirweis COMS, CLVT and Jacki Daniels TVI**, both of The Foundation for Blind Children. Jacki and Sandra have been accepted to present their program "Dynamics of Healthy Integration" at Vision 2005 in London, UK in April 2005!

☆☆☆

**DOUBLE CONGRATULATIONS to Patty Arnold** of Arizona Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired and **Kartar Khalsa** of Washington Elementary School District. Patty and Kartar are the co-recipients of the Margaret Bluhm Worker of the Year Award! AZ AER appreciates your contributions and achievements!



Thanks Penny Rosenblum, Jane Erin, Kim Glenn and Leanne Taylor for your timely contributions to AERizona View!

Do you have an original idea, startling revelation or exciting discovery to share? AERizona View is published in February, May and September. The deadline for the May newsletter is March 31, 2005. I look forward to hearing from you! Send your submissions to:

Kartar Kaur Khalsa  
Editor  
AERizona View  
KartarK@cox.net

### TO DO:

- ☛ Register for AZ AER Spring Conference!
- ☛ Nominate a deserving student for a Student Merit Scholarship!



In 1824, 15-year-old Louis Braille introduced a new alphabet. He had found 63 ways to use a 6-dot cell. In 1829, at age 20, he published Method of Writing Words, Music and Plain Songs by Means of Dots for Use by the Blind and Arranged for Them. That same year, Louis Braille was drafted. His father accompanied him to the recruiting board, where he was rejected by the French army, because he was blind, and therefore, judged unable to read or write! How ironic for one who largely solved the obstacle of literacy for individuals with visual impairment before he was out of his teens! Louis Braille was born on January 4, 1809. He died on January 6, 1852.

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