Howe’s Now is a quarterly publication of the Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB) that recognizes Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe. Samuel Howe was the first Director of the Perkins School for the Blind in 1833. His ongoing efforts, as an advocate for public school programs for the blind, were instrumental in establishing a full-continuum of placements options and services for the blind and visually impaired.

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On the Front Cover: “Circles and Prisms”, watercolor and paste, by Maria Scroggins, a senior at the Tennessee School for the Blind.

On the Back Cover: Sarah Hawke and Timothy Tanner, Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB) Marching Band members, were photographed with a Digital Talking Book reader for a poster that will promote reading throughout Ohio and the nation.
A Message from the President
By Jim Durst, President, Indiana School for the Blind

The COSB board has been busy since my last President’s message, moving initiatives forward from last year’s annual meeting and planning for this year’s meeting. The COSB membership voted to hire a part-time Executive Director last October during our 2010 annual Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB) business meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. The purpose of this action was to bring an experienced person on board to assist our organization as we to move to higher levels and to help us accomplish goals and objectives that pose a challenge to an organization of volunteers.

This past spring we sought candidates for the executive director through various list serves and publications and were pleased to have several highly qualified candidates apply. After the interview process, which included both COSB Board Members as well as several organization members, the COSB Board made the decision to hire Dr. Eugene McMahon as COSB’s Executive Director.

Dr. McMahon brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the newly created position. He has over thirty years of experience as an educator and administrator of programs serving students who are blind, students who have low vision, and students who are blind or have low vision with additional handicapping conditions. He received his Ed.D. from Teachers College, Columbia University, holds numerous certifications and licensures, is well published, and has made significant contributions to the field of blindness and low vision.

Gene realizes the importance of collaborating and working with other groups, organizations and individuals to make a difference for the students we serve. As the president and on behalf of the COSB Board, I am excited to have Gene on board. We look forward to benefiting from his experience and expertise as he assists our national organization in moving to the next level as we improve and enhance opportunities for our students.

This summer, the COSB Board met in Indianapolis, Indiana. It was an intensive two-day meeting as we discussed: legislation; collaborations; mentoring programs; executive director initiatives; strategic planning and our annual institute. Thanks to all of the board members and Gene McMahon for all of the time, experience and expertise that they provided this summer and on a regular basis.

Frank Simpson, from the Lavelle School for the Blind, recently tendered his resignation to the COSB board. Frank was a contributing member and provided leadership, direction, ideas and humor to the organization. The COSB Board would like to thank Frank for his time and hard work on behalf of COSB.
The Expanded Core Curriculum Explained  
By Phil Hatlen, Superintendent Emeritus and COSB Friend

Three parents have written letters wondering about the value and acceptance of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). These were thoughtful, well-written letters. While not addressed specifically to me, other parents and professionals felt that, because of my involvement with the ECC, I should be aware of their concerns. What follows is my response to their concerns. I hope this is only the beginning of a dialog among us.

As you may know, I was instrumental in putting the ECC together. The areas of curriculum were developed by both parents and educators. I understand the reluctance you might have over the importance of the ECC, and at a later date I'll provide more information. But, for now, I'd like to respond to a few of your concerns.

I want to stress to you that the National Agenda involves a parent/educator partnership. The co-chairs are two parents and two professionals. Each state has been encouraged to have co-chairs, one parent and one professional. True, the National Agenda hasn't swept the nation, but neither is it dead. It has its "fits and starts", but it is inching forward a little at a time, as most movements do.

The ECC has become better known, and is strongly supported by parents with whom I have talked over the past 10 years. I suppose it depends on the part of the country, but I know areas where the ECC is not only known, but taught by overworked VI teachers and parents. Since this concept was first introduced, I have modified my position on who should teach it. While I will agree that, in some areas, parents should take a leadership role, I would never, ever, leave the TVI or the O&M specialist out entirely.

Now I'll take each area of the ECC and provide some brief information from my point of view.

1. **Compensatory Skills, Including Communication Modes.** While this would certainly concentrate on braille, optical aids, and large print for many students, compensatory skills in communication must also include the use of tactile symbols, calendar boxes, ASL, and other means available for other populations whom we serve. Number 1 is in the ECC primarily to emphasize that the regular curriculum will often need to be adapted for blind and visually impaired students.

2. **Orientation and Mobility.** The ECC believes that O&M needs to be made available to all students, from preschool through high school. It is probably the best-known area of the ECC. If students are not receiving instruction while in school, should we consider that acceptable?

3. **Social Interaction Skills.** The primary purpose of inclusive education in the early days was to provide blind and visually impaired students with opportunities to socially interact with sighted peers. All too often, this doesn't happen because the congenitally blind child does not have basic skills in social interaction. I consider this a shared area between parents and educators.

4. **Independent Living Skills.** I know of IEP forms that specifically list Independent Living Skills as an area that needs to have goals. Many itinerant teachers, with caseloads as high as 50 students, will not have time to address this area of the ECC. Some solutions to this are to use summer programs at schools for the blind, to involve rehabilitation agencies, and to enlist adult blind role models. But the best solution is to have the TVI and the parent form a partnership, and work together on this. My early writings on the ECC did not emphasize the importance of parents as partners, and I was wrong.
5. **Recreation and Leisure Skills.** Certainly the parents have the major responsibility for teaching recreation and leisure skills. And I hope that recognition of this is growing among parents. I have been involved in education for too many years to assume that every parent will do this. Also, the opportunities for recreation and leisure activities with fellow sighted students might best occur at school. Finally, I wonder how parents would form a goal ball team (the most rapidly growing sport for blind persons) or beep baseball.

6. **Career Education.** Most educators (and perhaps many parents) now realize that career education begins at the preschool level, and takes many forms that eventually lead to successful and productive employment. There is excellent curriculum in this area, available to TVIs. Yes, parents need to be involved—they need to tell their child what the grocery checker is doing, and maybe even ask the checker to explain their job. Again, this is a shared responsibility between parent and educator. Career education has been taught in schools since I was in elementary school, although not in a way that a blind child would benefit.

7. **Assistive Technology.** This is an area that definitely belongs in school, but should be reinforced by parents. It's not enough to enroll the blind student in a regular technology class--there are too many choices and too many peripherals that need to be taught by a TVI well-trained in assistive technology.

8. **Sensory Efficiency Skills.** This is an area that was recently expanded. It now includes visual efficiency, auditory skills, and tactile skills. With regard to visual efficiency, it is well-documented that better use of remaining vision can happen with appropriate instruction (with parent's reinforcement). Auditory skills also need to be taught, as the student moves toward higher grades, and may need to add auditory books to his reading of braille. But perhaps the most critical area is tactile skills. In this era of high stakes testing, it is becoming very clear that most blind students do not have enough instruction in interpreting tactile materials. The failure rate for the sub-test in mathematics is not acceptable. Perhaps if the TVI (and the parent) began helping children read tactile graphics as a small child, this could be solved.

9. **Self-Determination.** Again, self-determination should be the shared responsibility between parent and teacher. It begins with choice-making and decision-making, then learning to live with the good choices and those not so good. The Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired recently published a book on self-determination entitled "Empowerment". I would encourage both parents and teachers to purchase this book.
Expanded Core Curriculum in Action at CSDB
By Julie Novak, Colorado School for Deaf and Blind

In an educational and residential environment, the staff at the Colorado School for Deaf and Blind (CSDB) has unique advantages and opportunities in Expanded Core Curriculum instruction. In the spring of 2009, the CSDB Strategic Plan-Academic team created a school-wide goal with the intent to increase communication on Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) strategies and to keep a shared record of individual Expanded Core Curriculum skills that could be accessed by residential staff, teachers, parents and the students from year to year. While everyone was already committed to teaching Expanded Core Curriculum concepts to our students, we needed a system to ensure accountability and consistency campus-wide.

In the fall of 2010, we formed an ECC team to oversee ECC programs and ensure accountability. The ECC team was made up of Teachers of the Visually Impaired, a Music Educator, an Occupational Therapist, Orientation and Mobility Specialists, a School Psychologist and a Residential supervisor. Our first priority was to develop or adopt an ECC inventory and checklist to be used by residential and educational staff. In the past, both departments have utilized many ECC checklists, but we have never shared a consistent campus-wide resource. Initially, the team decided to focus on Social Skills, Independent Living Skills, and Recreational/Leisure Skills due to the frequency these areas are addressed in both school and residential environments. Our team reviewed lists from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and other lists utilized before at CSDB. We discussed item by item to ensure that the skills we assessed were priorities in ECC instruction. We edited and tailored the final checklists for baseline data collection in the three areas (Social Skills, Independent Living Skills and Recreational/Leisure skills).

In March of 2011, our staff in the School for the Blind was fortunate enough to receive a visit from Dr. Karen Wolfe, as an ECC consultant. She attended our ECC team meeting and listened to a summary of our present work and proposed future goals. Dr. Wolfe advised us to narrow our focus and concentrate on one of the ECC areas each semester so that we systematically gain baseline data, review instructional strategies and set up practices with a greater focus on each area. Our team decided to exclusively focus on Independent Living Skills.

In April of 2011, our team presented the checklists to the residential program and asked the staff to indicate any item on the checklist that seemed difficult to assess or teach to their students in the residential program. With this information, our team sent a Rehabilitation Specialist to train the staff on these specific Independent Living skills. She also worked with the staff to ensure consistent practices were used throughout the various residential halls.

Our next challenge was to find a common place for this baseline information to be stored and shared. The team realized that a folder sitting in a file drawer or on someone’s desk would not be an effective way to share the information. We worked closely with our technology support staff to create excel spreadsheets that could be stored in our CSDB SharePoint, a collaborative website that is accessible campus-wide.

By May of 2011, our residential staff completed the Independent Living Skills checklists for baseline data on all of our residential students in the School for the Blind. This information was shared with all of the teachers and related services staff. We have since documented increased communication about Independent Living skills among our educational, residential and related service staff. Our team plans to continue to monitor progress and instructional strategies for Independent Living skills as well as the other areas of the ECC. We also expect an increased number of independent living skill goals on IEPs due to this data collection process. While our focus has been on residential students, the team would also like to utilize these checklists with students that are non-residential so that teachers have an idea of present levels in the home environment versus the school environment. If you have any further questions or comments about our process, please contact Julie Novak at jnovak@csdb.org or 719-578-2201.
Hear Ye, Hear Ye!
By Jane Parr, Kansas State School for the Blind

Once upon a time, in the Kingdom of KSSB, there were five preschool/kindergartners who were the best in all the land! Their names were King Daniel, Princess Keilei, Prince Valente, King Patrick and King Ethan. They wore their paper crowns adorned with jewels proudly, for all to see. Or if they felt threatened by the enemy, they would don their fire breathing dragon hats!

They took their time in building their stately castle which was surrounded by a moat, complete with an alligator. The draw bridge was very popular with the royal class. The castle was complete with a ‘dungeon’, and tunnels to crawl through. Stick horses were in a stable adjacent to the castle. The king’s round table was set with metal dishes, and food. Gowns, shields, swords and hats were fun to dress up in.

Once in a while a treasure box would be discovered, overflowing with gold coins which they had to count!

Their coat of arms was just that; a red banner with yellow outlines of each of their arms. One day they traveled afar to Caenen Castle in Shawnee, Kansas, to see a REAL castle! Princess Nancy took them on a tour, where they experienced a dark, cool dungeon, a beautiful patio and a balcony that overlooked the grounds. The dining rooms were filled with big tables and chairs that were as large as a king’s throne!

The Chef of the castle surprised the Royal Class with fresh baked chocolate chip cookies. They got to feel the large stones that were used to build the castle, the stone fireplaces, and the great big carved wooden door. It was a wonderful experience for the noble students, and they felt very special the rest of the day! This Royal class was made up of very good actors, and for entertainment, they would act out Humpty Dumpty and Old King Cole. They enjoyed listening to many fairy tales. After listening to The Princess and the Pea, they each took turns at feeling the ‘pea’ under the ‘mattress.’

On the morning of the Royal Wedding in London, this royal class made a Castle Cake to celebrate the event. It was made from scratch, and poured into a Castle mold. It was indeed, fit for a king! One morning we prepared 'smothered bread', or what we call French toast, for breakfast. Instead of going on a bear hunt, these regal children went on a 'dragon' hunt!

As you can see, this integrated curriculum cuts across subject-matter lines, and brings various aspects of the curriculum together in a meaningful way. It's a fun way to teach concepts and skills that are important for our students, in a very natural way, and because of this, the royal class will live happily ever after!!!
Help Wanted: Teacher of the Visually Impaired: Inquire Online.
By Craig Meador, Director of Outreach, Washington State School for the Blind and
Sherry Hahn, Digital/Distance Education Coordinator

Perhaps the sign is a bit dramatic but this is the reality impacting the state of Washington and many other states in the country. We are short on quality trained teachers of the visually impaired. To be honest, we are short on under-trained or poorly trained teachers of the visually impaired as well. Given the aging demographics of teachers and the small number of teacher training programs it is imperative that we begin to look at all possibilities to meet the needs of students in districts. We need to explore alternative delivery models for instruction.

The delivery of education through alternative models is not new. Many of your states have experimented with different forms of instruction; in fact Hadley has been widely successful in their distance learning approach. At WSSB we have decided to push existing technology as far as we can to provide on-going instruction for students. Our teacher training, development of interactive student programs and video clips are examples of past and current practices. This past summer we piloted two programs. The first was a live interactive approach using Microsoft Link to conduct on-going Braille lessons with a second year Braille student.

Our pilot student was located in a remote part of the state, two and half hours from the nearest airport. Due to the vastness of the territory, serving the student on a weekly basis is difficult in good weather and many days impossible when winter arrives. Alternative methods need to be employed if the student will continue to progress in their Braille. Our Distance Education Coordinator, Sherry Hahn, worked with a classroom teacher, Pat Wilber, in Vancouver to establish an online learning site for the student. The two of them met twice a week. Pat was able to connect using Microsoft Lynch right into the student’s home. With the aid of a camera Pat could observe the student, and by using desktop sharing she could observe the student writing in Braille and make corrections immediately as necessary. The student increased his fluency in reading by recording himself on a BookPort and that file could be emailed to the teacher. There are always some occasional glitches when using technology, but overall everyone felt that this was a successful venture. If you consider the possibilities, an itinerant might be able to double visits with a student if they were not on the road all the time. This would not eliminate the need for face to face intervention completely but in the case of our pilot student, in such a remote location, they may actually receive three to four lessons compared to the bi-monthly lessons they currently receive.

The second distance education pilot was in the area of Orientation and Mobility. Two O&M instructors, Doug Trimble and Joe Dlugo worked with a student in several settings. One instructor was directly involved with a student while the other was at a remote location. The onsite instructor took the student on a previously taught route and using the I-Pod touch and Face Time software, followed the student. The instructor at the remote location was able to view the student and make notes of student travel. When both instructors reviewed notes they were able to arrive at the same conclusions regarding areas to address with the student. Further experimentation worked with the remote instructor providing real time feedback to the instructor working with the student.

A real life application of this technology could be a reinforcement lesson within the safety of a school environment. A student traveling through a school campus could be followed by a para-support holding the iPod Touch. The instructor in a remote location would be able to touch base and view how the student was progressing between lessons, perhaps giving real time feedback to the student or para to correct an issue before the issue became a habit. Our summer testing of using iTouches and iPads for an O&M lesson worked out and Joe Dlugo (WSSB Outreach) has selected a couple of students in his area to continue our research as to how well this technology supports our student’s needs.
In Joe’s words:

The distance O&M test program involving iPad/iPod Touch and FaceTime software was very encouraging. The intent of this instructional approach is to see if available technology can assist in efforts to provide services to students in underserved areas and to provide O&M instructors with another avenue of service delivery.

Tested in simulated situations, this concept is showing promise. Working with another certified O&M specialist and WSSB IT staff, we were able to confirm the technology is indeed capable of bringing satisfactory performance to provide what we need to connect with a remote site student, stream real time video of sufficient quality to see the student’s performance, and communicate through voice. Challenges included fluctuating levels of Wi-Fi signal, and how to best structure communication between the instructor, student, and assistant to optimize the experience.

Technology will never replace the need for quality trained teachers of the visually impaired. It can, however, become a tool that will help teachers use time more efficiently and in a best case scenario, students may receive additional training. Our reality in the Northwest is that we have an increased need for services and teachers are not available. While we can not predict the future we can be sure of a few facts.

1. There is a growing shortage of teachers
2. There is an increasing number of students receiving minimal service
3. Technology is rapidly advancing

Our goal is to reach these students by any means possible to help them get the quality education they deserve. It is our hope that technology will help in that delivery process.

Congratulations to Dr. Stuart Wittenstein
2011 COSB William H. English Leadership Award Recipient

COSB President Jim Durst (left) presents William English Award to Dr. Stuart Wittenstein, California School for the Blind
A few years ago we started a course for our middle school students called “unique skills”. This course is designed to give our visually impaired students opportunities to discover the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) through as many real life opportunities as possible. Our students (who have additional exceptionalities) play an important role in that they help steer the course based on their individual needs; which provides ownership and a desire for independence.

Each day, with the help of my colleague Brittany Helwig, we explore various themes related to the ECC. Mondays are our cooking day. We cover kitchen orientation, food/utensil safety and try our hand at many different recipes (not all have been a success). We have plans to incorporate some of the vegetables from the student garden into our cooking. The best part of this day is eating the final product.

Tuesday is our day to work on our service project. The hardest part of this project was thinking of an idea that everyone wanted to get involved in. Our students had difficulty understanding what it truly means to help. After much discussion, we decided to make tactile “get well cards” and send them to a local hospital for patients and let them know someone is thinking about them. It is amazing how many different ways you can say “get well”.

Wednesdays cover Orientation and Mobility. We examine many O&M concepts related to compass directions, environmental clues, campus exploration, and local traffic patterns. This also gives our students an opportunity to meet new people and develop their social interaction skills.

Thursdays are the day to have some fun in the sun here in Florida; Recreation and Leisure is our day to play. On these days we gear our activities toward team sports such as beeper-ball, goalball and audible kickball. On rainy days our group finds cards, board games and brain teasers more appealing.

Friday is our day to discuss careers. We read stories about individuals with visual impairments who have successful careers. One of our students expressed a desire to be an aide to a teacher; we read them a story about a teacher who is visually impaired just like them. Our discussions center around what it means to be a responsible adult and model good job skills. The benefit of discussing careers is we are able to also highlight the various uses of technologies these successful adults use in the work place.

The Expanded Core Curriculum in my view is an opportunity in conjunction with the academic day, for the educator and the student to engage in discussions, so that the student has an opportunity to enhance their own independence and become a contributing member of society.
ALABAMA
The Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) campaign for a new Health Center to serve deaf and blind children and adults at Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind has received a lead commitment of $500,000 from the Alabama Power Foundation. “Many AIDB students come from rural areas of the state where specialized medical services and communication supports are often limited, making on campus coordination of health care a critical factor in our overall education program for children and adults with hearing and vision loss,” said AIDB President Dr. Terry Graham. “In order to address a number of medical needs and accessibility issues in our Health Center we plan to construct a single story complex as an extension of the Dowling Building that will connect the two facilities with a covered drive-through access and will incorporate an improved design in nursing care for our students. The estimated cost for this project is $2 million.”

Mrs. Christy Atkinson assumed the role of Principal at the Helen Keller School in July. Atkinson earned her administration certification and Ed.S. in counseling and guidance from the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB); a Master of Education in counseling from the University of Montevallo and a Bachelor of Science in elementary education from UAB. She earned National Board Certification in Early Childhood through Young Adult School Counseling and served as a mentor for other candidates since 2006. — Lisa Sams [sams.lisa@aidb.state.al.us]

ARKANSAS
The Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ASBVI) library experienced a complete upgrade of materials, equipment, and technology thanks to a service partnership between students from Southern Arkansas University and Follett Software Company. During the 2010-11 school year, Fincher Hall dormitory students raised $32,126 for the upgrade, and SAU graduate students in the Library and Media Information Specialist Program spent 10 weeks evaluating and updating the school's library. Follett donated library management software, and the Magnolia Lion's Club presented ASBVI a check for $2,000. Follett's Destiny Library Manager software helps manage library resources, makes discovery easy, and empowers districts to use their resources efficiently. ASBVI librarian Maranda Cole reports that the project will go a long way to bring the children's library up to the 21st century and provide digital technology greatly expanding the library's collection of books not currently available in Braille format.

"What started as a simple idea last summer has turned into the most amazing project," said Peggy Walters, library media and information specialist program director at SAU. Walters previously volunteered at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to get familiar with the learning needs of students with blindness and impaired vision.

ASBVI Superintendent Jim Hill was pleased with the upgrades, and the hard work of the SAU students. “Fincher Hall is the learning and living hall, and I’m impressed with the living example they exhibited. It shows a lot of heart and renews my faith in young people.” — Chris N. Wilks [cwilks@asb.k12.ar.us]

ARIZONA
Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) has started the year off with a bang. We have ticked off a list of accomplishments and exciting events at the school. We were extremely lucky to begin the year with a two-day Braille Literacy workshop by the incomparable Dr. Diane Wormsley. To improve the teaching of braille at all levels, Diane will be following up with our teachers and related service staff throughout the year through our new video conferencing/distance learning system. In other professional development news, we were also lucky to have Jeff Killebrew travel over from New Mexico School for the Blind to train our teachers on his System for Conceptualizing Spatial Concepts (SC)² and his Touch Grids System (we need someone out there to manufacture those tools!). We have amazing resources and staff at our schools and it is a gift to be able to share them.
In the midst of students working on a rigorous curriculum this fall, we have had two firsts here at ASB. The first annual Cactus Classic Goalball Tournament took place at the beginning of September. ASB hosted teams from Utah, Georgia and Alabama for a two-day blowout. The Alabama boys and the Georgia girls came in first — and all of the teams had a wonderful time. Goalball talent is growing exponentially at our schools and in our states. Also this year, through a grant from the Arizona Blind and Deaf Children’s Foundation, our Middle School students are participating in an Outdoor Education program. They just completed their first 3-day camping trip — an adventure that combined science, O&M and independent living skills, and many, many ghost stories. — Samuel Ace [samuel.ace@asdb.az.gov]

**CALIFORNIA**

Braille Institute is expanding the scope of its two-year-old Cinema Without Sight (CWS) film festival program for 2012, based on the positive response from other agencies, students and educators. Our goal is to provide a broader educational experience that is in line with the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC).

The Cinema Without Sight Film Festival challenges all visually impaired students in junior high and high school to apply their creativity and shepherd a film concept from script to screen. It enables them to develop essential social, literacy and leadership skills and contribute their own unique perspective to society. For the past two years, a panel of Hollywood film industry experts has judged the entries and the winner has accepted their award at BIA's annual Braille Challenge Award ceremony.

This year, BIA will be offering support to teachers who want to encourage their students to participate by offering a film making workshop that teaches adaptive production techniques for visually impaired students. Plus this year, the winner of the festival will receive a full scholarship to attend the New York Film Academy's prestigious one-week film making summer program at Universal Studios in Hollywood, CA. To learn more about the workshop and festival rules go to [www.brailleinstitute.org/cinemawithoutsight](http://www.brailleinstitute.org/cinemawithoutsight). Eligible entries must be submitted by May 1, 2012. You can view all of the 2011 entries on our Braille Institute YouTube channel, [http://www.youtube.com/user/BrailleInstitute](http://www.youtube.com/user/BrailleInstitute).

— Nancy Niebrugge [NNNiebrugge@brailleinstitute.org]

California School for the Blind (CSB) offers a “secondary prep” program designed to assist students to develop academic independence skills, remediate areas of weakness, and explore high school alternatives including distance ed through the Hadley School for the Blind, other online learning resources and GED preparation. Based on individual student progress, they may attend our local high school program, or select an alternative program through the secondary prep class, or enter our transition program. The program has been successful in assisting student to pass the California High School Exit Exam, to prepare for high school attendance, and to prepare for transition classes in support of an alternative high school diploma or community college attendance. Contact Maureen Reardon at mreardon@csb-cde.ca.gov for more information.

— Stuart Wittenstein [swittenstein@csb-cde.ca.gov]

Junior Blind of America was in full swing this summer! The After School Enrichment Program, which integrates children who are blind or visually impaired with children who are sighted, became a full-day program and hosted a feast of enriching activities for forty-five participants each day.

Through a rich curriculum, students explored the world around them and became empowered to try new activities. They learned about life sciences by planting and caring for a garden. With fresh zucchinis from their garden, they learned how to make muffins and healthier food choices. The warm weather made way for many outdoor physical activities, like swimming in Junior Blind’s pool and day trips to our Camp Bloomfield in Malibu, where they rode horses, practiced archery, went hiking and rode tandem bikes.
The summer culminated with a parent night featuring skits performed by the children, baked goods made with the fruits of the garden and a speaker who talked to parents about supporting their children in a healthy lifestyle.

The After School Enrichment Program is provided free of charge and focused on wellness and healthy living. We encourage participants to find their individual strengths and realize their potential by providing them with a safe haven from judgment and stereotypes. The children learn to accept others for who they are as people and not define them by the characteristics that make them different.

— Donald Ouimet [douimet@juniorblind.org]

COLORADO

*Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind* (CSDB) opened its doors to students a little later than normal this school year. One of the larger buildings on campus, the Gottlieb School Building, has been under renovation since January. The project was funded by a grant from the BEST grant program. BEST provides an annual amount of funding, in the form of competitive grants, to schools in Colorado. Now that the renovation is in its final stages, all of the students are back on campus and the school year is well under way.

We have new staff members on our team this year. Nicole Lewis comes to our team from Pennsylvania. Nicole is our preschool teacher. Evangelina Gonzalez has joined our team as a special education teacher after completing her student teaching in our elementary school last semester. Glenn Yeary moved here from Florida to be our middle school and high school Social Studies and English teacher. Amanda Stine is working as a transition teacher with our students who are blind and/or low vision in the Employability Center. We are still looking for a School for the Blind Program Coordinator and a highly qualified Math teacher. Barbara Meese continues to serve in an interim leadership role and Mathematics teacher, Jan Drewry, is serving as a long-term substitute.

The School for the Blind has been blessed with new technology in the Adams Building this year. All of the teachers came back to mimeo interactive display boards with laptop computers. Teachers have begun using the display boards on a daily basis. We are very appreciative to be able to utilize and apply this new technology to the instruction of our students who are blind/low vision. In addition, we are receiving weekly technology training and support on the display boards and other new devices. — Susan Pfaffenhauser [spfaffenhauser@csdb.org]

FLORIDA

*Florida School for the Deaf and Blind* (FSDB) Braille Specialist, Ms. Kathy Michaelson, is both proud and excited to announce that out of the 17 tactile art entries submitted to the American Printing House (APH) Art Competition/Exhibit, three pieces were chosen to be displayed at this year’s exhibit in Louisville, Kentucky in October: 3rd grader - Lance Gardenhire’s “Picking Apples”, 5th grader - Victoria Parson’s “Geometry”, and 6th grader - Nick Robert’s “Ancient Chinese Ninja”.

This year, in order to provide the opportunity for more students to participate in the Tactile Art/Braille Club and the chance to produce a tactile art project to enter in this year’s APH Art Competition/Exhibit, and each grade level (Pre-K thru 8th grade) will be given a designated month to participate as an after-school, extra-curricular activity. — Mary Lou Hofmann-Sitten [hofmannm@fsdb.k12.fl.us]
**GEORGIA**  
*Georgia Academy for the Blind (GAB)* teacher Michelle Maloney describes gathering her small class of five 5th and 6th grade students to the table to go over the menu just before lunchtime: “I tell the students what the food items are on the menu and pass around a bowl with samples of the food. Each student takes a turn smelling, touching, and sometimes tasting the food samples - after saying what that food item is. After I have finished going over the lunch menu, the students are asked to repeat what they will be eating for lunch. If the student is struggling to remember and needs to be prompted, I give the student the food sample again. Often the repeated sensory stimuli will help them recall what that food item is.

This lunch menu routine has worked out great for my classroom because it incorporates so many areas in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). Students are in the multiple disability range from Autism to MOID to Deaf/Blind. When I first met the students, they didn’t talk much. I kept thinking of different opportunities to incorporate areas of the ECC to get them to talk more. This routine turned out to be a huge success. They want to know what they are going to be eating for lunch, so I have their attention and interest, as well as the opportunity to increase their language skills. One student in particular will generally repeat the things that he hears. After doing this lunch routine with him every day, he now initiates the start of the lunch routine by asking me “What is for lunch today?” He also responds with the correct names of the food items that he will be eating.

The supervisor of the food service staff, Melba Smith, has also seen a positive outcome as well from this lunch routine. She says “I have seen the students eating a wider variety of foods. They are increasing their understanding of the world as they experience authentic foods versus processed variations of the foods and getting a variety of textures.” This coincides with the ECC area of choice making. The students are now more inclined to try new foods and decide if they like it or not. I think my favorite part about this lunch menu routine is that there are so many ECC areas this can cover. It just takes the time to put it in place! — Dorothy Arensman [DArensman@doe.k12.ga.us]

**ILLINOIS**  
*The Hadley School for the Blind* launches a new course: “Braille Teaching Methods for Children”. Learning to read can be fun and exciting. Literate children tend to have richer imaginations, larger vocabularies, and wider interests than those who cannot read and write. For children who are blind, literacy in braille is a significant indicator for their success later in life. This course provides students with the tools and information they need to help prepare children become literate in braille. This course includes seven lessons. Lessons 1 and 2 explain the need for braille literacy and discuss various essential prereading experiences. Lesson 3 explores methods of teaching children to read. Lesson 4 discusses the importance of the speed of reading. Lesson 5 presents methods to teach braille writing. Lesson 6 deals with tactile illustrations, and Lesson 7 discusses literacy and children with multiple disabilities. For more information or to register, please visit [www.hadley.edu](http://www.hadley.edu) or call 800-323-4238. This course is offered free of charge to students in Hadley’s Family Education and Professional Studies programs. — Kate Streit [kate@hadley.edu]

Eleven-year-old Devin Hunter, who is a student at the *Illinois School for the Visually Impaired*, was awarded his first bike on Wednesday, August 17, 2011 at the Illinois State Fair. Because of visual impairment, Devin had not been able to ride a bike. This bike, designed especially for him, has a bell, three sturdy wheels, a basket, and hand brakes. It will give Devin a sense of independence, help with motor skills and allow him to go on bike rides with his family. Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White led the presentation of the bike which was donated by Amtryke and the American Business Club of Springfield, Illinois. — Marsha Schoth [Marsha.Schoth@illinois.gov]
INDIANA
Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ISBVI) started the school year with positive changes. We were able to create multiple schools within our school by separating our elementary, middle school and high school students in different buildings. While there is some overlap with teachers in subjects such as physical education and band at the middle school and high school level, there are a primary group of teachers for each of the three areas. The goal is to empower teachers, assistants and students to maximize each student's potential while focusing on the skills to prepare our students for the ever changing rigors of the common core standards and the much needed expanded core curriculum. The teachers meet regularly to: discuss student issues; develop instructional strategies; develop thematic lessons while ensuring consistent implementation across the student’s various classes. For the remembrance of 9/11, students wrote about and discussed various issues associated with 9/11 as they related to math, language arts, science, and social studies.

The high school learning community has developed Rocket Nation to teach our students about the democratic process. They also had a retreat to work on service learning projects and had sessions on developing leadership skills. By creating professional learning communities we are working to empower our staff to continue preparing our students to be successful young adults. (Written by Jay Wilson, Secondary Principal) — Toni Hughes [thughes@isb.state.in.us]

IOWA
Iowa Braille School (IBS) offers extended learning opportunities to families of children who are blind or visually impaired. Extended Learning Opportunities are coordinated activities that support learning communities for students, professionals and families. These programs are designed to address the unique learning needs that are included in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for children and youth who are eligible for vision services in Iowa. Learning opportunities are scheduled throughout the calendar year with emphasis on summer programs.

Splish Splash and My 5 Senses is a program for children birth to 7 years of age and their families that targets literacy and ECC. Jumpstart is a regional program to support learning and pairs ECC areas with identified student needs. Science Weekends are held one weekend a month for three consecutive months emphasizing science curriculum topics cultivating creative thinking and problem-solving. Students throughout the state grades 7-12 are encouraged to attend North Central Association of Schools for the Blind competitive sporting events and activities in track & field, goal ball, forensics, and swimming.

Despite experiencing a severe storm in July, which caused extensive damage to the campus grounds and buildings and forced the cancellation of two programs, Iowa was able to offer several summer opportunities. The summer collaboration with Easter Seals Camp Sunnyside offered a residential camp experience for students and an Orientation & Mobility camp for intensive travel and community living skills. Residential camps were offered for student ages 6-13 in Vinton to address ECC. A residential camp for students in 6th-11th grade interested in the medical field, CPR/First Aid certification as well as health and wellness was available to students in Council Bluffs. There were two day camp programs in Des Moines that addressed ECC areas and a weekend “Girl’s Night Out” focusing on personal hygiene/grooming, socialization and travel skills.

— Carla Morrow [cmorrow@iowa-braille.k12.ia.us]
**KANSAS**

*The Kansas State School for the Blind* (KSSB) continues to use the RTI (Response to Instruction) model called Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS). This consists of three tiers of instruction. In Tier I all students receive general instruction in a curricular area while in Tier II supplemental instructional support is given to those who need it, and finally, in Tier III intense instructional support is provided to those students who have the greatest difficulties. Most commonly MTSS is used to increase skills and understanding in the subject areas of reading and math. Currently, we have a number of students who are benefiting from this process. Most students follow the general education curriculum guidelines set forth by the state of Kansas.

If a student is displaying some difficulties with a subject, he/she is given individualized instruction within the classroom. If it is determined that a student is really struggling with a subject; then an additional time slot is given to that student to improve skill level and understanding. Extra instructional time can also be given in an after school study hall. Teachers have even expanded on this service by allowing students extra time with secondary subject area teachers who individually instruct the students in their area of need. It has proven to be a highly successful program and has benefited the students and school immensely. According to the 2011 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Report, the reading target was 86% and the math target was 82.3%. Students at KSSB scored 93.9% in reading and 86.7% in math on the state assessments. Needless to say we are quite proud of our students and their progress. — Cheryl Love [clove@kssdb.org](mailto:clove@kssdb.org)

**KENTUCKY**

*Kentucky School for the Blind* (KSB) ranked 2nd in Kentucky as a DISTRICT! The top scoring school district was Beechwood Independent with an overall average composite of 24.3. The KSB overall average composite was a 23.6. The top ranked high school was Manual HS with an overall average composite of 26. The 2nd highest ranked school was Beechwood HS with a 24.3. KSB was third with a 23.6!

KSB hosted the 34th Annual Bill Roby Track and Field Games for students with visual impairments ages 3-14 in October. Approximately 200 students from the Ohio, Indiana, Tennessee and Kentucky schools for the blind, Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools and Visually Impaired Preschool Services (VIPS) competed on the field and enjoyed the antics of the Kosair Shrine Clowns. Louisville Metro Police and Firemen were on hand to give the children tours of safety and emergency vehicles.

KSB students in grades 6-12 will participate in Career/College Day in October. Representatives from colleges (University of Louisville, Bellarmine University, Georgetown College, Jefferson Community and Technical College), Office for the Blind, vocational programs, local businesses, disabilities counselors, KY Higher Education Authority were on hand to speak with students. Local business professionals interviewed and provided feedback to the students. Students were required to fill out a job application and write a resume prior to the Career/College Day.

KSB Charitable Foundation Executive Director Rick Ricks and President Gary Mudd made a $153,409 grant presentation to KSB as teachers and staff gathered for opening activities of school. The grant will be used to provide and enhance many educational opportunities that include: summer enrichment programs; motivational reading programs; talking science lab probes and other assistive technology; physical, occupational and speech therapy equipment; educationally relevant clinical low vision services; and a collaborative college preparatory program.

Paula Penrod has been named the Program Coordinator of the Kentucky Instructional Materials Resource Center (KIMRC). She has been at KSB for fifteen years where she has served as an administrative secretary and as the public relations liaison. Her experience also includes eleven years of service at the American Printing House for the Blind.
Ninety-six Kentucky teachers of the visually impaired and O&M instructors gained valuable training for the new school year during the 18th Annual Gateways to Independence Professional Development featuring Texas School for the Blind Curriculum Director Debra Sewell in July. This PD event is a project of KSB Outreach for Regional Services and Programs. —— Paula Penrod [paula.penrod@ksb.kyschools.us]

LOUISIANA
Louisiana School for the Visually Impaired (LSVI) students returned from summer break to not only a new school year, but to newly enhanced environments. The pavilion on the grounds between the dorms, complete with ceiling fans and jam box, has become a favorite gathering place after lunch or in the evenings. The Living Skills room has four different floorings and contains areas found in the average home. Invertebrates and bony fish exist in a watery ecosystem within the science lab, a tandem biking program, and large inflatable gym ‘toys’ have led to hours of enjoyment. A wild event called “Reading Rocks” with the school’s own Rockettes throwing ‘rocks’ (paper) began the Accelerated Reading Program. Students are excited about reading and there are already positive results. As football season has begun, four of LSVI’s students participate with the LSDVI football team. Two are managers: D. Huey and R. Barnes; three are players: J. Young, V. Lee, and E. Gordon. Education and excitement is the name-of-the-game at LSVI! —— A.C. Gayle [agayle@lsvi.org]

MARYLAND
The Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) students had an exciting start to the school year with an earthquake and two hurricanes, all within the first couple weeks of school! Our new Director of Education, Carol Bogue, helped us weather the earthshaking experience and serious storms.

The school continues to make progress on MSB’s “School of the Future” campus master plan. In May 2010 the board approved a ten year $140,000,000 plan. A vast majority of our facilities need to be replaced as they are programatically unsuitable for our current population and lack full accessibility. Many of the buildings have ‘aged out’ and cannot be renovated cost effectively. Construction is near completion on our new second Independent Living House. Design is being completed on a classroom building for students with multiple disabilities. We will break ground on this new facility in July and plan to have it available at the start of the 2013 school year.

We submitted a $14,000,000 request in August for inclusion in the Governors 2013 capital budget for construction of two new cottages for students with multiple disabilities and a new classroom building for students in our autism-blind program. We are seeking state, federal, and private funding and also are using the school’s endowment to fund the campus master plan.

The state legislature has shown great interest and support for improving our facilities. We were successful in having the 24 members of the Maryland House of Delegates Appropriation Committee and eight other delegates and senators visit campus at different times this summer. These visits have been invaluable in showing them firsthand the need for new facilities.

We are proud that two of our staff, Lacy Kidwell, music therapist, and Kay Kirsch, houseparent, will be honored in Louisville at the COSB Institute receiving the Outstanding Related Service Provider and Outstanding Residential Services Professional, respectively.

We recently honored Linda Rosendall, former Director of Education, and most recently, Director of Statewide and School Services on the occasion of her retirement. Linda and her husband, Dana, will be moving into their new retirement home near Winter Haven, Florida. We all plan to visit them in February. Best wishes, Linda, and thanks for your profound influence on so many students, parents, and colleagues.

—— Michael J. Bina [michaelb@mdschblind.org]
Massachusetts

Perkins School for the Blind (PSB) Outreach Short Courses continue to offer exciting and enriching weekend, school vacation, and summer programs that address all areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). This fall programs include a Caring for Animals weekend for young students which will involve an overnight adventure at the Franklin Park Zoo, a Cooking for Life Weekend, a Transportation Weekend, and a Technology Weekend that will include activities at the New Grousbeck Center for Students & Technology on Perkins’ campus. — Beth Caruso [beth.caruso@perkins.org]

Michigan

Michigan Department of Education-Low Incidence Outreach (MDE-LIO) is moving from Flint to the Michigan Library and Historical Center in Lansing in October. MDE-LIO had three Regional Braille Classes start this fall and requests for more classes are coming in. The Cortical Visual Impairment Workshop with Dr. Christine Roman-Lantzy held in August was well attended. MDE-LIO is planning an Apple iPad workshop in October for students who are blind and visually impaired. — Susan Bradley [bradleys1@michigan.gov]

Minnesota

It is going to be a busy fall at Minnesota State Academy for the Blind (MSAB) this school year. The home track will be September 23rd and 24th. The track team will be going to the Conference Championships in Tennessee the weekend of September 30 to October 2nd. On October 14th, we will be hosting what we hope will become an annual event: White Cane Awareness Day. We have been working closely with our Site Council, the MSAB Foundation Board, Lions’ Clubs statewide, and the State Vision Specialist, Kristin Oein, to plan this event. We are hoping for a good turnout to help raise awareness of the White Cane Law and White Cane Safety. Construction on the new A+ House is complete. We are looking forward to having students living in the new facilities and experiencing all that it has to offer. The house provides a wonderful opportunity for our students to work on further developing their independent living skills. The Grand Opening for the A+ House will be Thursday, September 29, 2011. — John Davis and Linda Needham [LNeedham@msab.state.mn.us]

Mississippi

Mississippi School for the Blind (MSB) has a buzz word this school year, change! A re-configuration of our secondary department has brought about an “intermediate” set of classes and teachers for our sixth through eighth graders, and it is going well. Changes have occurred, as well, in our braille curriculum with a spectrum of braille skill levels now identified and a larger group of low vision students now beginning braille instruction. MSB has also experienced a number of new students enrolling in all departments. Of course, all of this follows an outstanding Summer Enrichment Program during which visually impaired/blind students from both MSB and public schools came together for almost two weeks of fun and learning. A trip to a nearby water park, minor league baseball game, museums, game day, and all the interesting classes and closing program made this camp the best one ever! — Margie Owens [mowens@mde.k12.ms.us]

Missouri

The Missouri School for the Blind (MSB) fulfilled a goal to renovate our computer lab and upgrade our “vision specific” technology over the summer. We were able to upgrade all student computers in the lab, move older computers out to classrooms for student use and purchase state-of-the-art software and equipment for our blind/visually impaired students. The Office of Administration Information Technology Service Division (OAITSD)-State of Missouri) also enabled MSB to establish a separate student network and domain. All these improvements are designed to increase students’ ability to read, write and access data and to give teachers more options to differentiate based on individual students’ needs. The project was made possible by benevolent contributions to the Blind Trust Fund. — Barbara Beal [Barbara.Beal@msb.dese.mo.gov]
The Missouri Deafblind Technical Assistance Project, based at MSB, has initiated a new program for school districts and service providers. Supporting Educational Teams of Students with Deafblindness (SETS-DB) combines general information about the educational implications of combined vision and hearing losses with direct technical assistance regarding individual student supports to the educational teams. SETS-DB combines lecture and action planning with onsite observation and coaching, over two full days, with staff from the Missouri Deafblind Technical Assistance Project. An action plan is developed. Follow up consultation is provided to the school district. The course and all training materials are offered free of charge. — Susan Bonner [sbonner@msb.k12.mo.us]

MSB’s Outreach Services provides a variety of supports for families. Families of children, birth through five years old, may access parent training through MoSPIN (Missouri Statewide Parent Involvement Network). Parent Advisors provide parent training lessons from the INSITE curriculum during home visits. Families of children who are deafblind are invited to participate in Project SPARKLE (Supporting Parent Access to Resources, Knowledge, Linkages and Education).

Earlier this year, MSB hosted a two day conference (one day for professionals, one day for families) on Facilitating Friendships and Promoting Social Skills. Families may also access financial support for their participation in other state or national conferences. — Ginny Williams [ginwilliams@aol.com]

MSB will host a free, one-day workshop in November on “Tools for the Assessment & Development of Visual Skills” through the National Instructional Partnership with the American Printing House for the Blind. The workshop will focus on APH products, the ToAD and TADPOLE kits for developmental ages birth to 5, and IS-AVE. — Yvonne Ali [Yvonne.Ali@msb.dese.mo.gov]

NEBRASKA
The Nebraska Center for the Education of Children Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired (NCECBVI) was selected as one of the innovative programs recognized by the Sherwood Foundation. “We want everyone to know about the good work taking place throughout Nebraska in our schools,” says Susan Nellson Baird of the Sherwood Foundation. Susie Buffett, daughter of Warren Buffett, and her foundation tell the stories of how Nebraska’s schools are using innovative programs and practices to effect change. This organization filmed the activities that surrounded the annual prom and overnight event. These activities included arriving at the school, settling into dorm rooms, a social skills workshop, a formal dinner, limo rides, the dance, and the crowning of a king and queen. NCECBVI hosts this event each spring and invites students from the area ESU 4 special education programs.

All of the staff involved do a remarkable job in preparing their students with all of the lessons involved in social etiquette, how to dress, hygiene/grooming, dinner manners, dating etiquette, dance lessons, etc. The “teachable moments” are endless. The NElovesPS project coordinators asked many questions related to how you teach these concepts to students who are blind. NCECBVI staff quickly demonstrated how much is verbalized, explained, touched and described when teaching.

The result of this endeavor is a touching video that shows the magic of prom, the instruction of students with special needs, and the impressions of many who contribute to the success of our students. Take a moment now to watch this video! It can be found at www.ne lovesps.org or at www.ncecbvi.org, the home page of the new NCECBVI website. Sally Gittinger shared, “We want to thank the Sherwood Foundation for selecting NCECBVI to be highlighted. It was an honor to work with the Foundation representatives on such an awesome effort. Many of us learned just as much about video production as they learned about the education of students with disabilities. It was a partnership that formed friendships. The camera crew even danced the night away with the students!” — Sally Gittinger [sgiittin@esu4.org]
NEW JERSEY

St. Joseph’s School for the Blind students of the Concordia Learning Center were selected to showcase their talents throughout the year. The school’s student choir closed out 2010 with a holiday concert at the Hudson County Tree Lighting Ceremony at the Brennan Courthouse in Jersey City. The annual public event draws more than 200 visitors from across the local region. In the new year, The Hudson County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs/Tourism Development presented Beyond the Light...Painting with Feeling, a group exhibition of works from Concordia students who are blind/visually impaired and multiply disabled. Under the guidance of Concordia’s teacher and professional artist, Bojana Coklyat, the students presented a vibrant array of paintings and sculptures designed and created from feelings of love, hope and the desire of self-expression.

Students were also granted funding for a second series of instruction with the Actors Shakespeare Company at New Jersey City University. Building on last year’s instruction, students had the unique opportunity to study and perform scenes from the classic “Romeo and Juliet.” In June, before staff, family and community friends, students extended themselves far from the barriers of their disabilities and lit the stage with an emotionally charged performance. — Ellen Felicetta [efelicetta@sjsnj.org]

NEW MEXICO

The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMSBVI) is off to a great start in developing the Post Secondary Preparation Program. This program is designed to provide experiences and instruction to increase transition skills for individuals whose high school course of study focused on functional academic skills, functional activities of daily living, and communication skills. Our goal is to provide support, guidance and instruction, so that all individuals will become as independent as possible and be successfully integrated into life after high school, whatever that may be for each individual.

Entry into the program is a collaborative, team decision based on what the individual, the family, and the school personnel deem most relevant to develop an individualized plan. Upon entry the student and their family have identified what life will look like after graduation. Based on that vision, an identified focus area of skill development emerges. Goals and objectives are established that focus on those skills they most need to be successful in their post-high school placement. Focus areas include employability, community access, and activities of daily living.

A significant portion of the student’s day will then be devoted to building specific skills in the identified focus area. It is expected that most students will achieve their goals in that focus area within a one year placement and be ready to transition to their post school placement and begin their adult life. Some of the skills that are incorporated into the learning day include personal hygiene care, personal health care, self-directed leisure and recreation activities, clothing management, housekeeping, budgeting awareness, grocery shopping which includes planning meals, preparing a list and completing the shopping trip, culinary skills which include choosing and preparing breakfast and lunch, social etiquette, job awareness, and communication skills.

The Post Secondary Preparation Program adheres to our mission to ensure that all students who are blind or visually impaired will become independent productive members of their communities. The Program will enhance the transition process by preparing students to successfully transition into their life after high school and be as successfully independent as possible. — Carolyn Delone [CDealone@nmsbvi.k12.nm.us]
NEW YORK

_New York Institute for Special Education_ (NYISE) has a 180 year history of professional partnerships and collaboration. One example which has been extremely beneficial to our students is with Dr. Charles Hollander, O.D., F.A.A.O., from the Sight Improvement Center in New York City. Through the joint efforts of Dr. Hollander and Mrs. Shelley Homsy, a TVI at the Institute, a unique model of providing low vision services to our students has proven to be quite successful.

Dr. Hollander evaluates each student’s eye condition, prescribes corrective lenses, and suggests classroom modifications and accommodations. Mrs. Homsy arranges and attends all appointments, and acts as a liaison linking the doctor’s office, the classroom and the home environment. As a result, the students come to understand their own individual needs and learn to advocate for themselves. Both the teachers and parents come to recognize the most effective ways to present lessons, materials and daily living experiences.

Dr. Hollander and Mrs. Homsy will be offering a workshop entitled, "The Low Vision Specialist in an Educational Multidisciplinary Approach," at the NYS Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (NYSAER) Conference in November. The participants will benefit from the guidelines of the low vision services model developed and used at the Institute. They will learn how to observe and interpret a student’s visual functioning, and how to make proper recommendations based on the student’s visual diagnosis as well as the influence of any additional disabilities. The goal of the multidisciplinary approach is to build a team of doctors, teachers and families working together to provide the best academic and personal growth outcomes for our students. — Albina Gaudino [agaudino@nyise.org]

NORTH CAROLINA

_Governor Morehead School_ (GMS) offers classes in personal finance. I teach high school social studies students and one area that I can combine state-mandated curriculum standards and Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) components is personal finance. In personal finance I cover the state-mandated objectives and use assistive technology to discuss financial management, an independent living skill. I enjoy using technology with my students and in the last two years I have set-up a wireless classroom. Students use laptop computers equipped with JAWS and ZoomText with the capability to connect to the SmartBoard and wireless printer in my classroom.

Recently the high school math teacher, William Fulton, and I collaborated to conduct a personal finance and assistive technology lesson. We discussed the importance of creating a budget, necessary expenses, discretionary expenses, and how people use their personal values to determine needs and wants. Mr. Fulton helped the students create budget forms using Excel on the laptops; one student used his PacMate to create a budget form. The students then used their budget forms to through a real-life financial scenario that included paying rent, buying groceries, using transportation, and paying utilities. Students debated if cable and Internet were needs or wants. The students concluded that cable was not necessary but Internet could be a need, but they could go to the library or a business offering free wireless Internet. The students enjoy personal finance because it has real-life implications and they look forward to these lessons. — Kelly Davis [Kelly.Davis@dhhs.nc.gov]

GMS is partnering once again with the Touchable Art Gallery at Duke Eye Center to celebrate Art Beyond Sight Month in October. The two entities will share a collection of handmade, mounted quilts crafted especially for the visually impaired. Using the Barker Code of Color/Fabric Representation, Sally Barker has created homage of famous works of art using different textures of fabric. Some areas also have tactile elements under the fabric to depict the visual texture in the original artwork.
In September, students visited the Alamance Arts Council for a touch exhibit by J. Seward Johnson. The students learned about the Impressionist time period of art while touching very detailed life sized sculptures depicting the artist’s interpretation of famous Impressionist paintings. A talent show is scheduled for October and a production of “Aladdin” for November. The band is gearing up for our Winter Concert in December.

— Alice Zincone [alice.zincone@dhhs.nc.gov]

NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind (NDVS/SB) student, Dietrich Schlichtmann from Hillsboro, ND, is the recipient of second place in the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Grades category of the InSights Art Competition, APH. The title of his artwork is “The Shoe.” He was recognized at the banquet at the APH Annual Meeting in October. Congratulations, Dietrich!

In addition, Paul Olson, Director of Education and Orientation and Mobility Specialist at NDVS/SB introduced a game of compass directions called TREKS. In September its availability on APH quota funds was announced. Congratulations, Paul! Bob Brasher, APH, wrote, “It is a GREAT GAME. Fred Otto played it with me.”

Deb Johnsen and Cindy Williams, NDVS/SB teachers, spoke on our short term programs at the recent Outreach Forum in Great Falls. Thank you, Montana, for your phenomenal hospitality!

The Dual Sensory Projects from North Dakota and South Dakota plus the National Consortium for Deaf Blindness recent sponsored a workshop in Fargo entitled “Intervention Strategies for Children Who are Deaf-Blind and/or have Significant Disabilities.” The primary presenter was Linda Alsop from the SKI-Hi Institute at Utah State University. This was a great example of partnership with participants from South Dakota, North Dakota, and Minnesota. —- Carmen Grove Suminski [csuminsk@nd.us]

OHIO

Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB) collaborated with the State Library of Ohio and the Ohio Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to create a poster that features several OSSB students using the school’s Digital Talking Book readers. The posters are part of the Ohio READ series of posters the State Library makes available to promote reading. The Digital Talking Book readers are assistive technology devices provided to Ohioans by the National Library Service through the State Library. During the past year, students at OSSB and others who are blind or visually impaired have used the readers to hear digitized books and materials read aloud. Ohio is receiving many out-of-state requests for copies of the OSSB poster. The National Library Service has presented Ohio with a Best Practices citation for its efforts in promoting use of the readers. Please see the State Library of Ohio website, www.library.ohio.gov, for more information on the talking books. —- Shannon D. Cuniak [scuniak@ossb.oh.gov]

PENNSYLVANIA

Overbrook School for the Blind (OSB) summer school, now simply called OSP (Overbrook Summer Program), was astonishingly, but not surprisingly, successful. All on-campus programs—Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle School, High School, and School to Work—were up and running in a mood both serious and joyous, following the students’ needs according to their individual IEPs in a happy and playful atmosphere.

We additionally, and importantly for the students who qualified, launched the Transition Vocational Initiative (TVI) with eight OSB students living in the White Hall transition apartments for two weeks while practicing independent living skills, independent travel, socialization skills, and learning about careers, assistive technology and workplace performance. Too much, of course, for a mere two weeks! This is why this initiative will be continued, in various ways, for two years. The initiative is a joint venture between OSB and the Pennsylvania Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services.
Fifteen Villanova University students, supported by three Villanova faculty members are filming the Overbrook experience this fall. They are tapping into the music program as a way of beginning to capture the essence of our school. Filming will culminate with the Winter Concert; and the 30-40 minute movie, sponsored by Villanova’s social justice program, will have its first showing early next year. The Villanova faculty, who are film professionals, the Villanova students, who are eager and interested, and OSB staff and students, always cooperative and engaged, are learning from each other and enjoying this mutually broadening experience.

In September we began the 18-month Middle States Accreditation self-evaluation process. As a community of students, parents, educators, administrators, board members and friends of the school, we are all gearing up for full involvement to ensure and promote student success. — Dennis Brookshire [dennis@obs.org]

The Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children (WPSBC) commemorates its 125th anniversary this year with the theme of “Envisioning New Paths to Success”. Events throughout 2011 and 2012 include (but are not limited to): a kickoff event for families and students scheduled for the fall, construction of an Urban Trail on our campus, a CVI conference scheduled for June 2012, a vision symposium scheduled for October 2012 and various student activities throughout the school year. Stay tuned and visit our website...more to come!

In October, WPSBC will again host the Babies from the NICU Preemie Conference. In addition to many speakers from the Pittsburgh medical community, Christine Roman, Ph.D. and Beth Ramella will present two sessions on Cortical Visual Impairment. Educators, medical personnel, families and legislators from across PA will gather on our campus for this event. The School is proud to work in collaboration with the Parent Resource Network on their meaningful efforts to promote awareness of this cause while supporting families of premature infants. In November, WPSBC will be honored with the 10th Annual John H. Harris award. Every year at its annual anniversary gala, Variety the Children’s Charity of Pittsburgh presents this award to agencies or organizations supporting children with disabilities.

Over the past two years, a remarkable group of 16 educators and service providers from WPSBC completed over 140 hours in training and guided practice to learn more about Cortical Visual Impairment. CVI Mentors included teachers of the visually impaired, related service providers (speech-language pathologists, behavior specialists, and occupational therapists), a school psychologist, a nurse practitioner and early intervention providers. Participants learned how to administer the CVI Range (Roman-Lantzy, 2007), develop intervention recommendations and strategies based on the CVI Range results, and collect data. The group presented a 2 hour training on CVI to members the community. Last school year, 95 enrolled students with CVI were evaluated by the WPSBC CVI Mentor group and more than 25 students with CVI were assessed through the Outreach Program. Initially, we are pleased to announce that Christine Roman, Ph.D. has accepted a part-time role on our administrative team. We are looking forward to a memorable year!! — Beth Ramella [ramellab@wpsbc.org]

SOUTH CAROLINA

The South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB) students from the School for the Blind give yearly Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) presentations to their parents, grandparents, and guardians in their classrooms and dorms. Presentations are given for a variety of activities and skills the students have learned throughout the year, including technology skills and extra curricular activities. ECC courses are specifically designed for students with visual disabilities to master the “core curriculum” subjects.

This year, parents and grandparents were treated to walking on the Braille Trail, located on SCSDB’s 160-acre campus, and seeing first-hand their student’s white cane travel and navigation skills. Classes also demonstrated the sign language they learned to enable them to communicate with their friends in the School for the Deaf and the School for the Multihandicapped. — Crystal Chirico [cchirico@scsdb.org]
SOUTH DAKOTA

_South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired_ (SDSBVI) had another successful summer with our Extended School Year / Summer Program. We had the opportunity to extend our on campus program opportunities to 40+ students over a six-week period of time, featuring the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). SDSBVI begins the 2011-2012 school in welcoming four new students, ranging from 1st grade to sophomores. Due to a like number of students successfully transitioning back to their local school districts as well, we start with a total enrollment of 26 in our on campus program. It is really interesting how the dynamics of groups, classes, individual students, and the school environment change with new participants! We are also pleased to have on board to support our statewide outreach program, which serves up to 200 hundred students in a year’s time, a full complement of outreach vision consultants as a result of ongoing efforts throughout the summer.

We begin Fall with our students resuming a variety of activities from indoor swimming, SPURS (Special People Using Riding Skills) therapeutic riding program, track/field squad traveling to MN in mid-September for their 1st meet, and our annual “Pioneer Day”, an afternoon of very interesting games and events for staff and students to collaborate on for “bragging rights” (hey, not everyone can do well with a wheelbarrow of cargo under blindfold!).

Our school, at the administrative level, continues to be very much the catalyst for continued collaborative efforts at the statewide level in providing services and opportunities for students who are deaf. As this additional responsibility offers growth opportunities, our commitment to serving and working with the population of children who are blind and visually impaired and all of their team members, remains very strong thanks to our faculty/staff members who continue with us in challenging times.

May each of you be a part of a positive, memorable and enjoyable school year, keeping the main thing, the main thing. — Mark Krogstrand [krogstrn@sdsbvi.northern.edu]

TENNESSEE

_The Tennessee School for the Blind_ (TSB) welcome new administrators: Superintendent, Dr. Martin Monson, Principal Ms. Kim Walker and Assistant Principal, Ms. Marta Whittington. We have had a great start to the new school year with 151 students, 80 of whom are residential.

Media Center Update: Currently, 120 adaptive technology devices are being used by 85 TSB students. These devices include: Braille+, BookPort+, Victor Stream, Apex, BrailleNote, NoteCorder, Braille+ Docking Station, Pebble, & NLS downloadable cartridge. Students independently renew these devices using our new omnidirectional scanner.

Outreach Technology Services Update: We are addressing all of the digital download organizations (NLS/ BARD, Learning Ally and Bookshare). This is being met by conducting one large workshop for TVIs in West Tennessee, a technology strand at AER focusing on digital downloads and 6 individual workshops with TVIs from across the state.

The James A. Oldham Life Skills and Recreation Center was completed and ready for use by children attending the summer camps in June and July of this year. State funding was made available to renovate the building and the TSB Alumni Association donated funds to equip the Center with athletic equipment, entertainment and educational material. The Center is divided into designated areas including a media center, craft room, lounge, canteen, music room, exercise room, kitchen, playroom, meeting room, radio and scout room. We are happy to have a new venue to continue teaching and learning in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). — Victoria DeSalvatore [victoria.desalvatore@tnschoolfortheblind.org]
WASHINGTON

Washington State School for the Blind (WSB) collaborated with CANnect, Perdue University, and GH LLC which has resulted in the acceptance and funding of a U.S. Department of Education, Stepping Stones Grant. The MathSpeak: Hearing Math Projects focuses on refining and validating the use of digital readers and specifically the MathSpeak language to provide access to digital mathematics textbooks to secondary students with visual impairments. — Sherry Hahn [Sherry.Hahn@wssb.wa.gov]

A group of people that work with WSSB as volunteers with our tandem biking program are key folks in organizing the "Vancouver Courthouse Criterium - Bike Races" each year. This bike race brings in top notch racers from throughout the Northwest. This year we had approximately 12 tandems with blind/students and blind/adults as laps to the Criterium. This event helps fund our tandem program and has helped provide funds for the purchase of bikes over the years.

WISCONSIN

Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI) utilizes iDevices. How can it be that a device that has 4 buttons, 1 switch and a flat screen is one of the most accessible devices for the blind? Many thought that touch screens were inaccessible to the blind and that they were going to shut blind people out from accessing everyday electronics. Now we have a touch screen that may give us more access to electronic information.

The cool thing about the iDevices is that you do not need to buy anything extra to use them. They come with VoiceOver already installed, offering the blind instant access to information via screen reading software. The iDevices also have built-in screen magnification for our low-vision users. You can use a Bluetooth Braille display to access all aspects of an iDevice. A complete list of devices can be found at http://www.apple.com/accessibility/iphone/braille-display.html. You can also access the iDevices using a Bluetooth keyboard if you would like.

We have purchased a number of iDevices for use in to our classrooms. This technology will support our students’ learning goals in the classroom as well as help them gain independence as a life-long learner. This will help to level the playing field for our students. Our students will have access to information in a new and exciting way just like their sighted peers! (Written by Jeremiah Beasley, Webmaster) —— Dan Wenzel [dan.wenzel@wcbvi.k12.wi.us]
Congratulations 2011 POSB Award Recipients!!

- Outstanding Principal/Director of Programs
  Craig Meador (Washington)

- Outstanding Related Services Provider
  Mary DeLacy (Lacy) Kidwell (Maryland)

- Outstanding Residential Life Staff Member
  Katherine (Kay) Kirch (Maryland)

- Outstanding Paraprofessional
  Willie Mullins (Idaho)

- Outstanding Provider of Outreach Services
  Edgenie Bellah (Texas)

- Outstanding Teacher of Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired
  Kristy Sikes (Texas)

- Outstanding Teachers of Students who are Blind/Multiply Impaired
  and John Stanley (Texas) and Meagan Gerdes (Nebraska)
Daily Living Skills for the Visually Impaired
Mai Nguyen, Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind

Living an independent life is essential to an individual’s freedom. And, when that individual is a visually impaired person who relies heavily on parents and others to care for their needs, they never can achieve true independence. Being blind since infancy, I depended on my family to do everything for me. I came to America at age 17 and was forced to learn to care for my own needs. Having gone through the independence process myself, my goal in teaching the Daily Living Skills class at the Idaho State School for the Blind is to share my experiences and inspire my students to learn the skills necessary to live an independent and productive life.

The Daily Living Skills class focuses on three critical skills that promote independence and self-advocacy among students. These skills are planning and preparing simple healthy meals, balancing a limited budget, going to the store, and asking for assistance when shopping. For most students, this project is challenging because many of them have never been exposed to planning or cooking at home. I start with the planning process. Here I discuss and show students different ways to find recipes such as Internet websites or reading a cookbook. For students who are non print readers, Internet websites seem to be the best option. Once students select a specific recipe, they review the recipe and make a list of ingredients they need to purchase.

Students walk to the store in groups of three, with one being the group leader. This assignment rotates from week to week. A specific amount of money is given to each group leader. Students are taught to compare and estimate the cost of each item, including sales tax. Their responsibility is to keep track of what items they purchase, how much they spend and how much they have left. Individual tasks are given to each student depending on their learning level. Every two weeks, students must turn in the receipts and recalculate the amount spent and the remaining budget balance. For the last five weeks, students only went over budget one time!

Most visually impaired students are hesitant to ask for assistance when they are not able to locate certain items in the store. Role-playing and discussing various scenarios on how to ask for assistance when shopping is very helpful. I model and encourage students to politely ask for help when needed. Whenever students go to the store, my paraprofessional observes them from a distance as they ask for help in locating specific items. Complimenting students on their successes and offering suggestions for further improvements are essential in these kinds of new experiences. Because of different learning levels, some students experience more difficulty than others and hesitate to ask for help when necessary.

Students carry the groceries back to the school, and put them in the refrigerator or cupboard. Before having students begin any cooking activities, I thoroughly go over the basic safety rules with them. I also teach them how to efficiently use various kitchen appliances such as an oven, stovetop, microwave and toaster. As part of the preparation process, students must think and determine what tools they need to use before the actual cooking process begins.

Students are assigned to work in small cooking groups. For example, one student’s task may be to boil water on the stove while another student’s task would be to wash and cut up meat or other ingredients. While students are working, my paraprofessional and I provide close supervision and give specific instructions to ensure that each student is safe and comfortable using the different tools for cooking. This year students have made excellent progress following a simple recipe and using different appliances to prepare food. One 16 year-old blind student had never used a toaster independently before and now is able to make a piece of toast independently at home. Another example is that one low vision student is able to make waffles for herself and her parents.
In addition to preparing food in class, each student is also given an assignment to complete at home each week based upon specific skills learned that week. I send a syllabus to parents asking them to give us feedback on their child’s strengths and weaknesses. This feedback is used to assist the individual students to learn the specific skills needed. I have received great feedback from parents regarding their student’s progress and performance.

After just five weeks of teaching the Daily Living Skills class, I find that students not only learn to become more independent but also enjoy becoming so. My goal during this academic year is to continue working with and encouraging these students to help them experience the joy of becoming independent.

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**Flower of the Sun – A Look Inside a Life Skills Work Enclave Program**  
Written by the Journalism Class at the Arizona School for the Blind

Work Enclaves are a big part of adult post-education here at ASDB. These work opportunities provide our students with multi-sensory experiences designed to enhance their viability as workers as well as their confidence in the real world. This is no more evident than for the students in Rada Schaff’s Life Skills Community-Based Instruction Class. Their work at Sunflower Market is just the latest job site in a myriad of work opportunities they have experienced at ASB.

“I've worked at St. Mary’s Hospital, Peter Piper Pizza, and now Sunflower Market,” says a jubilant Ralph. The class works at the Sunflower Market from Monday through Thursday.

“Before we go to work we get our work shirts, outfits and badges together” says another student. “Then we get a chance to choose what music we want to have in the van – I prefer rap.”

Once the class gets to work, it’s all business. "I'm cleaning the outside of the refrigerator windows,” says the strapping Jacob. "I get a spray bottle and go left to right and top to bottom.”

Not all the students work independently. Two students work with Schaff and instructional aide Donna Yazzie on different tasks. "I dust off shelves,” says a proud worker. "I also do the flyers for advertisements and items that are on sale.”

For this Work Enclave, the motivations to work are many. Some look at the job as a chance to increase their skills to make them more attractive for future employment. Others know that they receive compensation in the form of a paycheck. The young Trevor says succinctly, "I've been looking forward to this for years on end. I will get paid a little more money and my parents and grandparents will be proud of me.”
Braille Institute receives two prestigious national awards this summer in recognition of its National Braille Challenge® program, which is designed to encourage blind children of all ages to fine-tune the braille skills so essential to their success in the sighted world. This groundbreaking program is in its 11th year and is the only national academic competition for blind students in the country.

BIA was honored by both the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) and Perkins School for the Blind. NFB honored Braille Institute at its July national convention with its 2011 Dr. Jacob Bolotin Award. The Bolotin Award was created to honor the memory of Dr. Jacob W. Bolotin (1888-1924), a blind physician who lived and practiced in Chicago in the early part of the twentieth century. The Bolotin Award is presented annually by NFB, with the support of the Santa Barbara Foundation, to recognize outstanding individual and organizational achievements in the blindness field. The four awards, ranging from $10,000 to $20,000, support the best efforts to promote opportunity for blind Americans and to increase the acceptance of blind people as equal participants in society. Braille Institute received a $10,000 award. Perkins School for the Blind in Massachusetts honored Braille Institute in June with its 2011 President’s Award, which is presented annually in recognition of leadership in the field of braille literacy.

"This competition is unique in that it tests a very specific skill. The great thing about The Braille Challenge®, is that it gives us the opportunity to celebrate braille literacy and bring this issue to the attention of the public," said Nancy Niebrugge, director of The Braille Challenge. "Most of the participants who make it to the national competition are the only blind students in their school. They go through their entire lives being the exception. This competition gives them the opportunity to build camaraderie among kids who have shared similar life experiences."

[The sixty top-scoring students out of more than 850 contestants from throughout the U.S. and Canada meet up for a final round in June at The Braille Challenge. The program has just been recognized with two national awards for its positive impact on braille literacy. ]
In the spring of 2011, the COSB Board approved a history project designed to memorialize our beginnings. I was given the opportunity to interview several of our founders including Tuck Tinsley, Hugh Pace, Dennis Thurman, Burt Boyer, and Dick Hyer. In addition, I asked each of our past presidents to provide some insight into any special issues or accomplishments which were critical during their administration, so that we could have a snapshot of those times. Naturally, there is some overlap since often initiatives begun by one president were completed during the next administration – or even the one after.

It is my hope that we will use this foundation to continue to record the progress of our organization and always remember the individuals whose vision and creativity helped us to come together to establish this professional organization.

During the mid to late 1970s, superintendents of residential schools serving blind children met each October in Louisville in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Printing House for the Blind. Although these meetings were informal and social, the superintendents designated a leader for each of the meetings and issues of real importance were discussed, such as how the change in federal law (P.L. 94-142) was impacting service delivery in their states, and the increase they were observing in students with multiple disabilities within the blindness student population.

In January 1981, at a wrestling tournament hosted by the Kansas State School for the Blind, Hugh Pace (superintendent, KS) met with superintendents Jerry Regler (NE) and Max Casey (OK) discussing issues of concern among residential schools for blind children and the need for a formal organizational structure to advocate positions regarding these issues. The three superintendents telephoned Max Wooly, superintendent of the Arkansas School, and received his "blessing" on this idea.

In October 1981, Tuck Tinsley, principal of the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, attended the superintendents’ meeting in Louisville in order to ask for support to counter a Florida state study which would set student to staff ratios at his school resulting in staff reductions for the program serving blind children.

The superintendents were supportive of this position; and since they had already begun planning to create a more formal structure were motivated to move forward. Bill McClure, president of the Florida School, stated that he had recently assisted the administrators of schools for the deaf to formalize their organization (CEASD) and he'd be glad to adapt their bylaws for the administrators serving blind children. The superintendents then met formally as the Council of Executives of American Residential Schools for the Visually Handicapped, adopted their bylaws, and J. Max Woolly (AR) helped build the first slate of officers. The new organization selected Hugh Pace as the first president of the organization.
Chronology of Presidents of Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB, formerly Council of Executives of American Residential Schools for the Visually Handicapped -- CEARSVH)

1981-83 **Hugh Pace** (KS/AR)
- Organization focus, purpose, and positions
- A seat at the table -- planning committee of AFB’s Leadership Institute

1983-85 **Dick Hyer** (GA)
- Partnered with CEASD for a position paper on least restrictive environment and the role of residential schools
- Added “second-in-command” as Associate Members

1985-87 **Charles “Burt” Boyer** (CA)
- Facilitated meeting of the president of TASH meeting with leaders of schools for the blind at APH Annual Meeting
- Led discussion of Manual 10 (Will’s regular education initiative for full inclusion) and its impact

1987-89 **Jerry Watkins** (NM)

1989-91 **Dennis Thurman** (IA)
- William English Leadership Award begins
- Development of COSB Code of Ethics begins
- Summer Board meetings begin hosted at the Kentucky School for the Blind with Will Evans coordinating
- First advocacy trip to DC

1991-94 **Lou Tutt** (MD)
- Term extended to three years to enable president elect Bina to complete AER’s presidency.
- CEARSVH changes name to COSB
- POSB begins

1994-96 **Michael J. Bina** (IN)
- President’s newsletter transitions to Howe’s Now
- COSB and POSB awards
- COSB Leadership Institute
- Advocated for change in IDEA including O&M as a related service

1996-98 **Herb Miller** (NJ)
- Choices for Children
- Reauthorization of IDEA (1997) included special language about braille in the IEP, and O&M as a related service
1998-2000  **Phil Hatlen** (TX)
- National Agenda
- Choices for Children
- Expanded Core Curriculum and COSB
- Support of short-term courses and outreach programs

2000-2002  **Bernadette M. Kappen** (PA)
- NASDE training project on IDEA issues related to students with visual impairments
- Professionalized COSB Institutes
- COSB’s participation with other national organizations in the field

2002-2004  **Marje Kaiser** (SD)
- Continued NASDSE training
- Updated Bill English award criteria and included bio
- COSB representation on the NAC Board
- Wall of Tribute stone for Herb Miller

2004-2006  **William Daugherty** (TX)
- Collaboration with AFB on Public Messaging
- NASDE/COSB Training
- Representation with the National Agenda
- Development of the COSB Website by the Kansas State School for the Blind
- Development of the first version of the New Administrator Toolkit

2006-2008  **Carmen Grove-Suminski** (ND)
- Updated COSB Brochure available on website
- Mentoring New Superintendents
- Revision of COSB Code of Ethics
- Formation of Howe’s Now Publications Committee
- Initiated COSB Longitudinal Study
- Updated Board Display, exhibited at AER International Conference

2008-2010  **Stuart Wittenstein** (CA)
- Position paper with CEASD
- JVIB collaboration
- ACB Schools for the Blind Task Force
- COSB Champion and Principal/Director awards
- Revised and expanded toolbox for superintendents

2010-2012  **Jim Durst** (IN)
- Hired the first COSB Executive Director
A former Principal and Director of Overbrook School for the Blind (OSB) was inducted into the Hall of Fame for the Blindness Field on October 14, 2011. Dr. Edward Ellis Allen, who led Overbrook School for the Blind from 1890 to 1907, will be posthumously honored for his outstanding service to the blindness community.

Dr. Edward Allen oversaw the design and construction of two schools for the blind – Overbrook School for the Blind in Philadelphia and Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts. He was instrumental in professionalizing the field of education for students who are blind and visually impaired. In 1920, Dr. Allen created the first teacher training program for students who were blind and visually impaired in partnership with Harvard College. Now housed at UMass Boston, this program’s successor is still training Teachers of the Visually Impaired. He also championed the Braille code as the universal writing system for readers who are blind. In addition, Dr. Allen introduced the first interpoint and interlinear Braille embossing equipment in the United States in 1898.

"Dr. Allen’s contribution to Overbrook School for the Blind was extraordinary,” says Gerald Kitzhoffer, Director of Overbrook School for the Blind. “He pioneered educational innovations in the education of students with blindness, such as student centered individualized teaching methods, speech and physical therapy, and the use of staff psychologists and social workers who collaborated with parents and introduced early intervention activities for infants. He also built the first pool at a school for the blind here at Overbrook.”

The Hall of Fame for the Blindness Field is housed at the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) in Louisville, Kentucky. The ceremony to induct Dr. Edward Allen will take place in conjunction with APH’s Annual Meeting of Ex Officio Trustees and Special Guests. To date, 46 outstanding professionals have been inducted into the Hall of Fame since it was established in 2001.

For more information about Dr. Edward Allen and Overbrook School for the Blind, visit the Overbrook School for the Blind website at www.obs.org. For information about the Hall of Fame for the Blindness Field, visit www.aph.org.
The New Mexico School for the Visually Impaired (NMSBVI) O&M Inventory

The NMSBVI O&M Inventory was developed as a means of quantifying student progress across the many domains that make up Orientation & Mobility. The goal was to create a user friendly assessment tool that quickly allowed an O&M to identify areas of need for individual students. There was a need to structure it in such a way as to allow paperwork averse O&Ms to easily track student progress over time. There was a simultaneous need to ensure that the O&M Inventory was readily understandable by those not in the field, such as parents. The Inventory aspires to meet these needs.

Development of the Inventory began with consideration of the issues that have arisen with some of the commonly used tools:

While the breadth of the available options can be expansive, the depth typically is not. For example, a tool may lump different sorts of street crossings together as a single item.

Many assessment tools are essentially pass-fail. Progress can't be shown incrementally. For example, a student can demonstrate a discrete street crossing skill in every possible instance at every sort of intersection (plus/check/smiley face) or not (minus/x/blank). There is often no middle ground where the student shows some grasp of the skill without yet owning it.

Few tools show possible student regression. Once a skill has been entered as a plus the temptation is to assume the skill is and always will be mastered.

Many O&Ms who draw goals from the available tools focus on discrete skills instead of measuring progress across the entire curriculum. For example, an IEP goal may relate to crossing streets at a plus intersection controlled by a traffic light. While the O&M certainly works on other skills during the year, progress in those areas goes underreported.

While most of the available tools allow an O&M to keep data on a student, they don't compile the data for the O&M. For example, a student may have few check marks in one section of an assessment tool. It may be difficult for the O&M to put a percentage to how much of that section the student has mastered and what represents adequate progress. Also, few of the available options highlight areas in which the student is underperforming.

The available tools often don't show student progress over time. While looking at the assessment and reassessment dates can give an O&M an idea as to the period of time it took a student to master an area, it is difficult to extract how much progress has been made overall in a quarter or semester.

Most of the available tools are paper based. Transferring the information to an O&M in a district receiving the student can be problematic.

Most of the available tools are static in that they weren't designed to change as the environments students encounter become more complex. Some, for example, don't include roundabouts.

The New Mexico School for the Visually Impaired (NMSBVI) O&M Inventory was created with these issues in mind. Meanwhile, the Inventory had to include the strengths of some of the available tools (breadth of skills, straightforward, easy to grasp) without being a more cumbersome instrument.
The NMSBVI O&M Inventory (Inventory) is highly detailed while retaining breadth in the form of 15 different O&M domains: concepts, movement, single room O&M, indoor O&M, self protection, guided travel, cane skills, sidewalk travel, street crossings, orientation skills & GPS, public transportation, atypical O&M, rural travel, vision specific O&M skills, community. Each domain includes a number of discrete skills. The Street Crossings domain, for example, includes over 150 individual skills. The level of specificity was tempered only by the need to keep the Inventory an easy to use tool.

Each skill in the inventory is rated 0-5. 0 means the student doesn’t have a skill and never will. For example, a student with no vision will not access a standard city map. One (1) means the student can learn the skill, but it hasn’t been taught. For example, an 8-year old is going to score 1s in the intercity bus travel section. Two (2) means the student can demonstrate a skill, but only with direct instruction by the O&M.

For example, a student just learning left-right may need help every time the direction to turn is given. Three (3) means the student can demonstrate a skill without prompting some of the time. For example, a student who is just learning the address system might occasionally predict the upcoming address. Four (4) means the student generally has a skill, but sometimes still needs help. For example, a student at an intersection may occasionally confuse parallel traffic in the far lane with parallel traffic in the near lane. Five (5) means the student owns the skill and can be relied upon to demonstrate it independently. For example, a student may learn how to ascend/descend stairs with a cane and do it every time whether the O&M is there or not. This range of ratings allows the student to show progress within individual skills as well as the domain and Inventory as a whole.

Extended School Year eligibility is contingent on regression being shown. A student who is assessed quarterly with the Inventory will show regression if skills have deteriorated. For example, a student who was rated on diagonal trail at a four (4) at the end of a school year may be rated a two (2) when the O&M reassesses the student in the first quarter of the following school year. Multiple grading periods allows for quick comparison for the O&M.

IEP goals drawn from the Inventory can be discrete. For example, the goal may be for the student to demonstrate prevention and recovery methods for veering during a street crossing. The goal could be more general. For example, the goal may be for the student to attain a particular percentage in the Cane Skills domain of the Inventory. The goal could also be global. For example, the goal may be for the student to attain a particular percentage in the Inventory as a whole. IEP goals are very quick to write and absolutely measurable.

Data compilation is one of the defining features of the Inventory. Individual skills are rated 0-5. Those scores are compiled to give the O&M a score for each domain. Further, all domain scores are transferred automatically to a printer friendly Front Page. On the Front Page the domain scores are themselves combined to give an overall percentage. Low scores in domains stand out on the Front Page, which serves to highlight them. Each domain of the Inventory includes 12 assessment periods, which can be annual, semester, quarter or any time period the O&M chooses. The Front Page includes data from each assessment period, giving the O&M a handy reporting tool. The 12 assessment periods allows the O&M to see progress (or lack of it) over time in each domain. Parents, as well as the students themselves, can see the data in an easy to understand format.

The Inventory is computer based. It is easy to e-mail the Inventory to an O&M who is receiving a student. As noted above, a quick glance at the Front Page can help the new O&M determine areas of focus. The Inventory is designed to change as O&Ms offer input. For example, Dona Sauerburger suggested the inclusion of her concept of Situations of Uncertainty. Because the Inventory is computer based it can be changed as O&Ms develop new techniques or meet new challenges.
It takes roughly 30 minutes to fill in the Inventory given familiarity with the student in question, which compares favorably to other assessment tools. Reassessment times are generally faster, taking about 15 minutes. The greater depth of the Inventory didn’t result in a more cumbersome instrument.

There are some unique aspects of the Inventory that O&Ms will find helpful:

IEP goals, as noted above, are very quick and easy to pull from the Inventory. The O&M can focus on a discrete skill, work on a particular domain, or write a goal that encompasses the entire curriculum. The layout of the Inventory helps limit the time expended writing evaluations. The O&M can transfer the percentages in the various domains to the evaluation document and note which parts of the domain still need attention.

Progress notes are also quick and easy to pull from the Inventory. The table on the Front Page can be copied and pasted into the progress report document. The addition of a quick note provides a highly detailed account of the previous quarter, semester or year.

IEP paperwork likewise is quick and easy to pull from the Inventory. Strengths and concerns flow naturally from the Front Page and then from the individual domains.

The Inventory allows O&Ms to average student progress to get an overall view of the progress the students in the program are making as a whole. An additional attractive feature is the price. The Inventory is available as a FREE download on the NMSBVI website (www.nmsbvi.k12.nm.us) for O&Ms. Input regarding ways to improve the Inventory is appreciated and the Inventory will be updated as it is shaped by new ideas.
**Transition Vocational Initiative (TVI) Summer Program 2011**
**Overbrook School for the Blind**

Summer 2011 was a hard working summer at Overbrook School for the Blind. Overbrook School for the Blind and the Pennsylvania State Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) worked together to launch the new Transition Vocational Initiative (TVI). The two weeks provided an opportunity for students to develop their career and independent living skills to prepare them for a successful transition into the world of work and independent living. The program's objectives included development and instruction in the areas of Career Awareness, Work Exploration, Independent Living Skills, Assistive Technology, Social Skills, and Orientation and Mobility.

Students lived in the White Hall Apartments located on the Overbrook campus. Coordinators and staff worked hard to provide two weeks of action packed learning. Work site visits included a hospital, nursing home, government call center, grocery stores and the maintenance, shipping and receiving and housekeeping departments on campus. Staff and students utilized public transportation for most of their work and community based visits. In the evening the students did not stop, the schedules consisted of knowledgeable guest speakers including alumni, and service agencies. The weekend and some weeknights consisted of back, to back community outings to exciting new places like farmer's markets, Philly Rock Gym, North Bowl, restaurants, and even rollerblading. The nine student participants all worked extremely hard throughout the two-week period and seemed to have an enjoyable, beneficial experience along the way. When asked what the student’s gained from the experience a few replied as follows:

“At some of the job sites we visited such as GSA, Lighthouse Café, and Career link, I learned that 70 percent of blind people do not have jobs or have a hard time finding them. So once you get a job you need to work hard to keep it, and because you are blind you have to work harder to prove that you are just as or more valuable than other employees”– Nafhis (Currently working at the Lighthouse Café, September 2011) Ebony also quotes one of our keynote guest speakers “It's respectable to be blind” she explains “it made me feel that there's nothing wrong with being blind.” Overall, the TVI program provided great experiences for all involved.

**SCSDB Expanded Core Curriculum**

Each year, students from the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind’s (SCSDB) School for the Blind give Expanded Core Curriculum presentations to their parents, grandparents, and guardians in their classrooms and dorms. Presentations are given for a variety of activities and skills the students have learned throughout the year, including technology skills, and extra curricular activities. ECC courses are specifically designed for students with visual disabilities to master the “core curriculum” subjects.

This year, parents and grandparents of were treated to walking on the Braille Trail, located on SCSDB’s 160-acre campus, and seeing first-hand their student’s white cane travel and navigation skills. Classes also demonstrated the sign language they learned to enable them to communicate with their friends in the School for the Deaf and School for the Multihandicapped.

Stacey Etheredge’s family view her activity book from this past school year while Teacher Joanna Price looks on.
IESDB Hosts Summer Enrichment Camp
By Nancy Luthy, Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind

The Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind held Summer Enrichment Camp for our students (ages 7-13 years) who are blind or visually impaired on June 19-25, 2011. The camp was held on our beautiful campus in Gooding, Idaho. We had a great staff of 11 teachers/counselors. We had 28 campers attend this summer, some experienced campers and a few new ones.

The campers had a very busy day with first attending five mini classes every morning after their 7:30 a.m. breakfast. The mini classes offered daily were: Assistive Technology, O&M training, Adapted P.E., ADL Skills, and Crafts.

After lunch the campers went on a variety of activities. On Monday afternoon, the campers went to Sun Valley, Idaho to ride horses. The campers love this activity! Afterward the Wood River Lions’ Club fed us a wonderful barbecue with all the fixins’. It was a fun and delicious day!

On Tuesday afternoon, the campers and staff went roller skating in Twin Falls, Idaho. We all survived without too many scrapes or bruises, and no broken bones!

On Wednesday afternoon, the campers went on a boat ride down the Snake River and then tried their skill at canoeing. We then were treated to an all-you-can-eat pizza by the Twin Falls Lions’ Club.

On Thursday, the campers went to Roaring Springs Water Park in Meridian, Idaho. It was a really hot day, which was perfect for playing in the water and getting a few sunburns! We then were fed by the Boise Lions’ Club.

On Friday afternoon, we held a track meet. The campers ran distances of 50, 100, & 200, and also did the running long jump, and shot put throw. All the campers received gold medals. That night, we had a talent show for all our campers’ families. Each camper performed a talent of their choice. We enjoyed singing, piano, and comedian routines. After the talent show was done we had an ice cream social and then a dance. We would like to thank the Idaho Lions’ Clubs for their fundraising each year and for feeding us dinners! We love the Lions’ Club. We also would like to thank IESDB and staff for hosting the camp.
Personnel Preparation Updates
Submitted by James (Blue) Bickford, Ed.D., Portland State University

Do you or your state need teachers? What a question! During the summer of 2011 I polled teacher preparation programs to discover what they may have to offer, especially in terms of student funding and support. Here’s what we found out in alphabetical order of the respondents:

**Florida State University**
FSU currently is preparing teachers of students with visual impairments and orientation and mobility specialists. We are recruiting graduate and undergraduate students to start in the 2012 academic year and have two OSEP grants to support those students whose long term goals are to work with children with visual impairments, either as a TVI or as an O&M specialist. We can support students who are attending classes at our main campus in Tallahassee or at one of our two satellite sites, in the Tampa/St. Petersburg and in the Broward/Dade areas.

Most classes are offered using face-to-face instruction. Students receive half the cost of their in state tuition and a stipend of up to $2500, if attending full time. Most students without previous preparation as a TVI require two years to complete their program; students who are adding a master's degree and specialization in O&M at the graduate level typically can finish in 15 months. Other news from here: Amy Guerette was promoted to Associate Professor and awarded tenure.

**George Mason University (Virginia)**
The Virginia Consortium for Teacher Preparation in Vision Impairment is a personnel preparation program among five state universities in Virginia--George Mason University, Norfolk State University, Radford University, Old Dominion University, and James Madison University.

Approximately 60% of tuition is covered for graduate students seeking licensure under a state DOE grant; and awaiting word about funding from the USDOE. The program currently licenses TVIs, but does not have an Orientation and Mobility program. The program includes distance education with some hybrid courses. Students living within approximately 1.5 hours of one of the participating universities attend class on-campus and most courses are delivered using video conferencing. Those who do not live near one of the participating universities, take the courses from home. Out of state students are accepted in to the program. For more information: [http://kihd.gmu.edu/teacher_prep_program/](http://kihd.gmu.edu/teacher_prep_program/) or Holly Lawson at hlawson2@gmu.edu

**Peabody College, Vanderbilt University (Tennessee)**
Thanks to an OSEP grant, we have tuition and a stipend for full time master's level students who are enrolled in our face to face, on campus program in visual disabilities here at Peabody College, Vanderbilt.

**Portland State University (Oregon)**
The program to prepare TVIs at Portland State University is part of the Pacific Northwest Consortium for Vision Education. Applicants from member states receive priority admissions and tuition supports. One summer session is required on campus in Portland with the remainder of the classes and field experiences delivered on-line with on-site faculty support in local communities. Current OSEP expires in June 2012, but have applied for a new award. Students in the 15 member states of the Western Regional Graduate Program are eligible to receive Oregon resident tuition regardless of other funding avenues, and Portland State accepts students from any state. The program is a two-year graduate level only, resulting in licensure, endorsement and a Masters degree. For more information: [www.pdx.edu/sped/vil](http://www.pdx.edu/sped/vil) or Blue Bickford at bickford@pdx.edu
University of Arkansas at Little Rock
The University of Arkansas at Little Rock is pleased to report that we offer RSA-funded scholarships to attend our O&M Program. We do not currently have a TVI program. UALR has a limited number of scholarships that pay tuition for up to two courses per term, in-state or out-of-state, and a modest stipend per course. We are beginning the second year of a five-year award. In addition, UALR is a part of the Academic Common Market, which means that individuals living in the following states may apply for Arkansas’ in-state tuition rate if they are pursuing a master’s degree from UALR: Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. One criterion is that the state in which they are living does not have a comparable program or that program is too far to commute to and from.

The UALR O&M Program is a hybrid program in which students take most of their courses online but must come to Little Rock two consecutive summers for three weeks each summer. During that time free room and some board are offered through our school for the blind or Lions World Services for the Blind. Since our online program inception in 2002, we have enrolled students from 26 states and Guam and Puerto Rico. All of our 55 current students are part-time students who work in their respective home areas.

University of Massachusetts (Boston)
The University of Massachusetts currently has funding available in TVI through the OSEP award that finishes in December, 2011, although we have written for a new award and are awaiting notification. Additionally we have O&M through an OSEP award and a VRT through Rehabilitation Services. The program is online, but some courses and specializations have face to face meetings in Boston. The program at U Mass is a regional program primarily serving New England and a special program for Micronesia.

University of Northern Illinois
Bill Penrod is now with us here at Northern Illinois University. He has replaced Kim Zebehazy who moved to Vancouver, BC to join forces with Cay Holbrook. Northern Illinois University has considerable financial assistance available for graduate students starting in August, 2012. The program is totally on campus.....We do not offer online or distance courses. Students may receive the following financial assistance in both our VRT and TVI Programs. Each has an accompanying O&M program for either adults or children. Students can major in one or two of the specialties.

The financial aid consists of the following: all tuition and fees (instate and out-of-state) health insurance and a yearly stipend of $5,300. We do not pay for books. Both instate and out-of-state students are welcome! The application deadline for fall, 2012 is June 1, 2012, but the money is given out on a first come, first served basis. Therefore, interested individuals should not delay. We accept applications any time throughout the year. For more information, we would invite interested individuals to visit www.vision.niu.edu or contact Gaylen Kapperman at gkapperman@niu.edu 815-753-8453

OSEP UPDATE
During the last round of RFP’s in low incidence personnel preparation, twelve vision programs submitted projects; however none were funded. The competition drew over 200 applications from programs in vision, hearing, deaf-blindness, significant cognitive impairments and autism. Only 9 awards were made nationally. However, CAL State, Los Angeles did receive funding for their vision program under Minority Institutions. Congratulations to CAL State!
ANNOUNCEMENT: It's time to recognize our best!
Nominations are now open for the 2012 William H. English Leadership Award

In recognition of his many outstanding contributions, leadership, and service to the field and to students who are blind and visually impaired, the Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB) will present the William H. English Leadership Award at the annual COSB Banquet to a deserving superintendent or chief administrator from a school for the blind. The honoree exemplifies the characteristics Mr. English demonstrated throughout his 40 year career and who, likewise, has made significant contributions to the field and to students who are blind and visually impaired.

Nominees for this award must be:
1. A current or former COSB member in good standing for at least 10 years as a superintendent/chief administrator and may include experience as a principal, assistant superintendent, etc.
2. Nominated by a current, voting COSB member;
Recognized as having made significant contributions to the field such as evidenced by at least one of the following:
   - Service in state, national, and/or international professional organizations by being selected or appointed to offices, committees, task forces, etc.
   - Leadership in state or national legislative initiatives which has promoted improved services to students who are blind and visually impaired
   - Contributions in research, professional publications, or development of new, innovative, and improved programming
   - Demonstrated creativity, imagination, and innovation skills by developing, implementing, and sharing programs and services to more effectively address needs of students who are blind and visually impaired, including those served in local schools
   - Recognized by their peers as someone who exemplifies a positive student centered attitude and someone who serves as a role model for other professionals and students such as Mr. English did throughout his career.

Finally, the nominee must demonstrate the personal and professional characteristics typical of Mr. English. Such characteristics include honesty, integrity, compassion, maturity, tact, ability to listen, graciousness, sense of humor, and friendly persuasiveness. These qualifications were demonstrated daily by Mr. English throughout his career. He believed in and lived up to the COSB Code of Ethics. His professional example allowed him to gain the highest respect from his colleagues. A perpetual plaque with all award winners inscribed shall be housed at The American Printing House for the Blind. Recipients will also receive an individual plaque.

Application Process:
If you wish to nominate a COSB superintendent or chief administrator, you must be a current, voting COSB member. The application requirements include:
   - Completed application form
   - Letter of Nomination – to be completed by the nominator which must include evidence of the above-listed criteria
   - 3 letters of recommendation/support

Completed application packets must be sent by June 1, 2012 to
Stuart Wittenstein
California School for the Blind
500 Walnut Avenue
Fremont, CA 94536
swittenstein@csb-cde.ca.gov
COSB Champion Award

To recognize and express appreciation to key external stakeholders who provides exemplary strategic assistance, substantive financial or programmatic support, legislative or policy advocacy, or other unique efforts which directly impact the success of COSB or any of its member schools fulfill their mission on behalf of students and their families, the Council of Schools for the Blind has established an annual award.

An individual, group, agency, foundation, corporation, government entity, or non-profit organization may be nominated for this award presented at the COSB Awards Banquet held concurrently with the American Printing House for the Blind Annual Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky.

Nominees for this award must:

- Be nominated by the current voting chief executive (i.e. Superintendent, President, Director, etc.) of a COSB member school.
- Have provided exemplary strategic and substantive assistance to COSB or any member school in any one or more areas which have had a transformative impact improving or expanding on or off-campus programs and services to students and their families:
  - Legislative and/or policy advocacy at the local, state, or national level
  - Service on a governing or formal advisory board of directors
  - Pro bono consultations or assistance in providing staff and/or parent training, curriculum development, research, or other program enhancing initiatives.
  - Providing career education training work experiences and/or actual career opportunities for students or graduates of COSB programs.
  - Financial support
  - Or other efforts not specifically delineated above, but which meet the spirit and intent of this award to further the mission of COSB related to promoting literacy, independence, employment, self-sufficiency, responsible citizenship, and community integration.

A letter of nomination will be submitted to the COSB Awards Committee Chairperson, the Immediate Past COSB President: Stuart Wittenstein, California School for the Blind, 500 Walnut Avenue, Fremont, CA 94536, swittenstein@csb-cde.ca.gov, (510) 794-3816

The COSB Awards Committee, appointed by the COSB President, will consist of at least two chief executives of COSB member schools. The Awards Committee will submit a recommendation to the COSB Board for consideration.
Principals/Director of Programs Leadership Award

In recognition of the importance of having quality leadership directing educational programs at schools for the blind, the Council of Schools for the Blind will present the Principal’s/Director of Programs Leadership Award at the annual COSB Banquet. The award winner exemplifies all of the characteristics one would expect from an individual leading quality programs impacting students in a positive and productive manner.

Nominees for this award must be:

- A current principal/director of programs of a COSB school with a minimum of 5 years as a principal or director of programs at the COSB school.
- Nominated by the current voting COSB Superintendent of the school in which the principal or program director is currently working.
- Be licensed in the area of administration/leadership as well as education of students who are blind or visually impaired in the state in which they are working.
- Recognized as having made significant contributions to the COSB school as evidenced by at least two of the following:
  - Service in state and/or national professional organizations by being selected or appointed to offices, committees, task forces, etc.;
  - Leadership in state or local initiatives which has promoted improved services to blind and visually impaired students;
  - Contributions in research, professional publications, or in the development of new, innovative, and improved programming;
  - Demonstrated creativity, imagination, and innovation skills by developing, implementing, and sharing programs and services to more effectively address the needs of blind and visually impaired students, including those served in local schools; and
  - Recognized by individuals they supervise, students and parents as someone who exemplifies a positive student centered attitude and someone who serves as a role model for other professionals and students.

Finally, the nominee must demonstrate the personal and professional characteristics one would expect from a quality leader. Such characteristics include honesty, integrity, compassion, maturity, tact, ability to listen, graciousness, sense of humor, and friendly persuasiveness. The award winner will be recommended by the awards committee comprised of the COSB Past President and two other COSB members at large, appointed by the COSB Board President. The COSB Board will approve the recommendation of the Awards Committee by a majority vote.

Application Process:

If you wish to nominate a COSB principal/director of programs, you must be a current, voting COSB member and the nominee must be currently working at your school in the capacity as a principal/program director. The application requirements include:

- Completed application form;
- Letter of Nomination – must include evidence of the above-listed criteria;
- Three letters of recommendation/support from individuals the principal/director of programs supervises;
- Three letters of recommendation/support from parents of current or former COSB students

Completed application packets must be sent by June 1, 2012 to:

Stuart Wittenstein  
California School for the Blind  
500 Walnut Avenue  
Fremont, CA 94536  
swittenstein@csb-cde.ca.gov
Braille Plus Second Generation Notetakers are almost here!

Soon APH will offer TWO new Braille Plus (Second Generation) notetakers: Braille Plus and Braille Plus 18™.

The first product being introduced is the Braille Plus 18, a powerful, flexible, easy-to-use notetaker. Use this handheld device to read books, write class assignments, scan documents, search the web, keep track of appointments, find directions, record lectures, listen to podcasts, run Android™ apps, and much more!

A few of the many features:

**New!**
- 18-cell refreshable braille display
- 5MP camera, scan printed material for braille or speech output
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- Take full advantage of the internet with HTML5, Flash, and plugins
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- Full-size SD card slot and USB port
- Run thousands of Android apps
- GSM 3G wireless capability

**Upgraded!**
- Improved natural speech
- Bluetooth 2.1: listen to speech or music
- Wi-Fi is now 802.11n

The Braille Plus Second Generation Notetakers are made possible by a partnership between APH and LevelStar, LLC.

To learn about availability, visit [http://shop.aph.org](http://shop.aph.org) and read the APH News.

American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.
800.223.1839 • info@aph.org • www.aph.org
Broadening Our Horizons,  
COSB and AER working together

Louis M. Tutt, the fifth executive director of AER arrived at his new job on Friday, April 1, 2011. Since 1984, Lou's predecessors are Kathy McGivern, Denise Rozelle, Mark Richert, and Jim Gandorf. Lou works with four other AER office staff: Ginger, Bette Anne, Barb, and Marisa. They all have been on staff within the last four years. The president of AER is Patricia Leader, an itinerant TVI and O&M teacher from San Jose, CA. President Leader is the leader of a 17 member AER Board of Directors, who collectively, govern AER.

AER’s membership is 4,400 members from the US and Canada. The Board meets at least four times per year and they meet telephonically. There are 13 Divisions of AER and 43 Chapters. All board members and chairs of Divisions and Chapters serve voluntarily. This year, two AER Chapters host two Regional Conferences, one in Boston (August) and the other in Cleveland (October). The next AER International Conference is scheduled for Bellevue, Washington, on the east side of Seattle, July, 2012.

Lou’s motto in his first year at AER is: Recruit, Retain, Regain. Lou wants help in recruiting new members, retaining current members, and regaining members who have not renewed their membership. By doing this, it will help AER carry out its Mission: AER will provide support and assistance to the professionals who work in all phases of education and rehabilitation of blind and visually impaired children and adults.

As COSB has hired Dr. Eugene McMahon, as executive director to work more closely with its membership, Lou and AER are looking forward to forming a partnership with COSB, especially since Lou is a past president of COSB and a member of COSB over 30 years. Together we stand, divided we’re stuck. AER wants to stand a long side other organizations and associations who’s missions are dedicated to working with and for persons who are blind and visually impaired.

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Students, Matt Lawson and Bria Franks, represented ISVI at a May Round Table meeting in Chicago with Kareem Dale, Special Assistant to President Obama on Disability Policy. Also in attendance were ISVI Superintendent Marybeth Lauderdale, ISVI Vocational Principal Serena Preston, and Jeff Schulte of the ISVI Advisory Council. Kareem Dale, who is partially blind, coordinates the Administration’s efforts to see that people with disabilities are on a level playing field with all Americans. He is originally from Chicago. Mr. Dale spoke to the group about disability issues and policies and then answered questions. Matt and Bria both had the opportunity to ask questions and give Mr. Dale a sense of the needs of ISVI students. They were proud to represent ISVI and enjoyed the opportunity to meet Mr. Dale.
HOWE’S NOW SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Howe’s Now is a tri-annual newsletter of the Council of Schools for the Blind circulated to educators and vision professionals around North America. Issues are published during the Fall, Winter, and Spring. The deadline for receipt of articles and advertisements for the issues are:

- **Fall Issue** — October 1st
- **Winter Issue** — January 1st
- **Spring Issue** — March 1st

**HOWE’S NOW ARTICLES**

- Faculty, staff, students, and parents are encouraged to submit articles for publication in Howe’s Now.
- Some issues have specific themes, but articles for submission do not necessarily need to follow the current issue’s theme.
- Articles can run from one to five pages in length.
- Articles can include photos and graphs. (PHOTOS AND ARTICLES HAVE TO HAVE A UNIQUE NAME AND IDENTIFYING FILE NAME! DO NOT NAME AND SUBMIT FILES [ARTICLES AND PICTURES] WITH THE FILE NAME HOWES NOW!!!)
- Articles will be edited for length, content, and formatting.
- Articles need to be submitted electronically in MS Word Format to: bob.beadles@charter.net
- Authors will be notified by email that their article has been received. If the submitter does not receive electronic confirmation, please send a follow-up email to the editor.
- The Editor has the final authority to edit the content and length of articles, as well as paragraph and page formatting.

**COSB CLIPS GUIDELINES**

- **COSB CLIPS** should be no more than 300 words, which is about a third of a page.
- **CLIPS** can be sent in the body of an email or attached as “Word” or plain text documents.
- **CLIPS** content should focus on new and innovative programming at the school, recent recognition of special staff and students, recent events/training and unique issues regarding the school (such as new construction and special occasions).
- Please limit only one **COSB CLIPS** submission per school.
- **CLIPS** need to be submitted to: Beth.Caruso@Perkins.org.
- When the **CLIPS** Editor receives a **CLIP**, she will email back saying it has “arrived”. If you submit a **CLIP** and do not hear from her within a few days, please resubmit it. It has probably been scanned out for some reason.
- The **CLIPS** Editor has the final authority to edit the content and length of articles, as well as paragraph and page formatting.

**ART WORK AND STUDENT PHOTOS**

- Art work for the issue cover or photos should be in a high resolution jpeg or picture quality format.
- Not all artwork submitted to Howe’s Now is usable because of poor picture quality or it is submitted in a format that doesn’t work well when enlarged.
- The Editor will select artwork deemed most appropriate for the each issue.

To submit articles or for questions contact:

Robert J. Beadles, Jr., PhD, CRC  
VI RehaB Consulting  
PO Box 1909  
Auburn, Alabama 36831-1909  
334.826.0701 (Telephone)  
Bob.beadles@charter.net (Email)
Howe’s Now

to highlight new features

Future issues of Howe’s Now will include special sections for technology, outreach, assessment, transition, higher education, and specialized teaching. Please look for more information forthcoming from the COSB Board and Howe’s Now in the near future. The Publications Committee and both the Editors (Bob Beadles and Beth Caruso) look forward to receiving articles, artwork, and photo submissions for forthcoming issues.
Sarah Hawke and Timothy Tanner, Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB) Marching Band members, were photographed with a Digital Talking Book reader for a poster that will promote reading throughout Ohio and the nation. This is not the first time that the two students have enjoyed the limelight – they both marched with the OSSB Marching Band during the 2010 Tournament of Roses® Parade.