

**Orientation & Mobility Division**

***Donald Blasch Scholarship Application***

**The Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Division of AER**

**2024 DONALD BLASCH SCHOLARSHIP**

**Application opens February 1, 2024**

AER’s O&M Division presents an annual scholarship competition for students enrolled in AER accredited O&M programs. The scholarship recognizes the vital contributions of the late Donald Blasch to the profession of O&M during his long tenure at Western Michigan University.

Individuals selected for the scholarship receive an unrestricted award of $1,000.   
Two scholarships are awarded each year (*depending on availability of funds*).

**THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIVING APPLICATIONS FOR THE BLASCH SCHOLARSHIP IS**

**March 10, 2024**

*All O&M students enrolled in AER-accredited programs are encouraged to apply.*

**AER ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY DIVISION**

**DONALD BLASCH SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

**AMOUNT OF AWARD**

The Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Division of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) will award two Donald Blasch scholarships each year in the amount of $1,000 each, provided that at least two qualified individuals apply for this award.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Applicants for the Donald Blasch Scholarship must have completed at least one semester (*part-time or full-time*) in an AER-accredited orientation and mobility program on the date the scholarship application is signed. Applications for the scholarship must be received by the chair of the committee (Eric Shaw, TVI/COMS) with an email date no later than **March 10, 2024**.

**HOW TO APPLY**

An application form must be completed in full and signed by each applicant. Application submission is as follows:

* ***Electronic submissions are required***. These should be emailed to the committee chair at (BlaschScholarship@gmail.com), with the subject heading of, “**Donald Blasch Scholarship Application**” and must be in Word or PDF format. Applications sent in other formats will be rejected.
* Applications mustbe received with an email date no later than ***March 10, 2024.*** *Incomplete applications or applications that are not received with an email dated on or before March 10, 2024 will not be considered.*

**SELECTION**

Applications for the Donald Blasch scholarship(s) will be judged by members of the Scholarship Committee. Individuals will be evaluated for the scholarship based only on the information included in the application packet. Following completion of judging, the scholarship committee chair will submit the committee’s recommendation to the division chair by **April 15, 2024**.

Selection will be primarily based on applicants’ variety and extent of experience (paid or unpaid) in human services endeavors, leadership work and leadership potential, and commitment/passion for the field of O&M as reflected in the **200-word essay** and in the letters of reference.

Financial need is not a criterion for selection.

All eligible students are encouraged to apply for the scholarship. Award checks payable to the student will be issued by AER for the O&M Division.

**OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP**

An announcement of the availability of the scholarship will be published on the O&M Division website and, upon awarding the scholarship, a brief bio of the recipient(s) will be announced in a Division e-blast and posted to the website. *The Blasch scholarship winner must be willing to have his or her name and/or photograph published in AER publications in association with the award.*

The Scholarship Committee chairperson will notify the award winners by phone on or before **May 1, 2024**. Individuals who apply and are not selected will be notified by the Scholarship committee chairperson via email.

The award will be presented to the winner upon verification that the proposed awardee meets the eligibility requirement described above.

**AERBVI O&M Division**

**DONALD BLASCH SCHOLARSHIP**

**Application Form**

2024 Revision

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email Address:

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Are you a member of AER? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Are you currently enrolled in an AER accredited college or university program in orientation and mobility?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Which AER O&M program are you enrolled in?

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Describe briefly your undergraduate and graduate academic achievements, particularly those that reflect your leadership abilities and potential (include awards, citations, scholarships, etc.)

Describe briefly your paid and volunteer experiences related to health, human services, education and related fields (include clubs, organizations, offices held in blindness or other organizations, creative projects, etc.) Emphasize positions that reflect your leadership abilities and potential.

All materials received by the scholarship chairperson will become the property of the committee and will not be returned to the applicant.

In addition to my signed application form, I have attached the following items to complete the application process:

* ESSAY – answering the question, “Why I have chosen to enter the field of orientation and mobility.” The essay should be **no longer than 200 words** and should provide evidence of your leadership potential and your commitment to the field of orientation and mobility.
* TWO LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION – that includes **at least one from a current college or university professor that documents your enrollment in the O&M program**. Letters of recommendation should mention the applicant’s leadership potential and commitment to the field and **be emailed directly to the Chair of the Blasch Scholarship Committee: BlaschScholarship@gmail.com.**Letters sent along with the application will not be considered.

I hereby apply for an AER Orientation and Mobility Division Scholarship. I agree to abide by the decision of the scholarship committee.

The Blasch scholarship winner must be willing to have his or her name and/or photograph published in AER publications in association with the award.

Signature of Applicant:

Printed Name of Applicant:

Date Signed:

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