ANNUAL IMPACT STATEMENT 2023

Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired

AER Accreditation Council



*“Whatever you want to do, if you want to be great at it, you have to love it and be able to make sacrifices for it.”*  *~~ Maya Angelou*

March 2024

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF AER ACCREDITATION COUNCIL – Lee Sonnenberg

**AER Accreditation Council, completing its sixth year in December 2023,** proudly shares the following accomplishments achieved in 2023.

First and foremost, just a few weeks after the end of 2023, AERAC was awarded recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). This achievement, in process over a period of almost 4 years, solidified an intensive overhaul of all standards, policies and procedures used in the Higher Education Accreditation of university personnel preparation programs: Assistive Technology, Low Vision Therapy, Orientation and Mobility, Vision Rehabilitation Therapy and Teachers of the Visually Impaired.

* Many of those changes also took immediate effect for the Organizations and Schools Accreditations.
* The Accreditation Program webpages were updated with new revisions of:
	+ HEAC and OSAC Handbooks and Annual Report Forms (in response to comments from programs going through their accreditation processes).
	+ OSAC standards.
	+ AERAC Policy and Procedures Manual.
	+ Reviewer Profile form and Reviewer Training materials.
	+ AER Website Accreditation page listings of accredited University personnel preparation programs and addition of public-facing decisions and annual reports, per CHEA requirements.
	+ AER Website Accreditation page listings of accredited organizations and schools.

AERAC rendered decisions on 10 Organizations and Schools (OSAC) accreditations and 8 Higher Education (HEAC) accreditations. A full list can be found here:

* OSAC: <https://www.aerbvi.org/organizations-agencies-and-schools-for-the-blind->
* HEAC: <https://www.aerbvi.org/personnel-preparation>

LOOKING AHEAD to 2024: AERAC anticipates additional modifications and review of OSAC standards. The management standards will be reviewed with input from colleagues in leadership positions throughout the US and Canada as well as in the organizations and schools already accredited or considering accreditation. Many program standards will be receiving their first review since AER accepted the full portfolio of the former National Accreditation Council for Blindness and Low Vision Services. Again, input will be sought from AER Divisions and colleagues throughout the US and Canada.

Please read below the names of the individuals who dedicated themselves to excellence in the provision of services to people who are blind or visually impaired.

**Lee Sonnenberg**

**CHAIR, AER Accreditation Council**

**WE WISH TO CONVEY OUR HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO:**

**AERAC Members:**  Chair Lee Sonnenberg, John McAllister, Kathy Mullen, Tim Hornick, Natalie Martiniello, Paul Olson, Kathy Beveridge, Kaleb Stunkard, David Presley, Ian Shadrick, and Kassandra Maloney.

**HEAC Members:**  Chair John McAllister, Sean Tikkun, Dorinda Rife, Brooke Kruemmling, Dawn Anderson, Dan Norris, and Richard Oliver.

**OSAC Members:**  Chair Kathy Mullen, Sylvia Perez, Ronee David, Dr. Alan Chase, Paul Furthmyre, Angelina Hollingsworth, and Jerry Miller.

**HONORING REVIEWERS IN 2023**

Cori Andrews Shiree Arrian Beverly Bennett Audra Bishop Jen Brooks Raychel Callary Nick Casias Paula Conroy Sue Dalton Diane Fazzi Tamara Greenwood Rachel Hage

Stephanie Hardwick Judy Jackson Stacy Kelly Scott Kies Patti Koch Jamie Maffit Nicole Militello Jerry Miller

Okono Okono Rene Paquin Leisa Pegues David Presley Nancy Prussing Rhonda Rhodes Lashell Robertson Belinda Rudinger Carin Sanders Mackenzie Savaiano Katie Scheuring Scott Smith Brendan Tedrick Amanda Thompson Heather Tuck Toni Walls

We could not do it without you!

Do you want to join your peers on a review team?

 🖰   <https://aerbvi.org/become-a-reviewer>

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