

**Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired
(AERBVI)**

Division 18 - International Services & Global Issues

Newsletter - Winter 2024

Happy New Year, and welcome to the Winter edition of the AER International Services and Global Issues Division newsletter! I'm excited for all the new year brings, especially for our division.

We're looking forward to meeting many of you in person at this summer's AER International Conference in Charlotte, NC, USA. In particular, I'm excited to share that our Scholarship Committee has selected our first conference travel scholarship recipient, Ms. Diyana Ahmad of Malaysia. You can read more about her impressive accomplishments below. I hope you will join me in congratulating her!

We always welcome suggestions for improving the division. Please email us with your thoughts, comments, and questions at aer.global.division@gmail.com. I look forward to working with you and learning from you this year.

Cheers,

Katie Ericson, Chair, TVI/COMS

Conference Travel Scholarship

The Division would like to congratulate the winner of our first conference travel scholarship! With the help of AER, the Division is presenting one scholarship, covering AER Conference registration, travel, and hotel, to a vision professional from outside the mainland U.S. and Canada. We had many accomplished applicants, representing eight countries.

Diyana Ahmad is a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) from Malaysia. She currently teaches the Expanded Core Curriculum (including orientation and mobility) to students with visual impairments, including those with CVI and multiple disabilities. She has worked with the Malaysian Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to improve

instruction for students with visual impairments, and she worked to start the first preschool program for young children with visual impairments. She looks forward to learning more about CVI and assistive technology at this summer's AER Conference, and upon her return, she will provide training and assistance to teachers at her school and others across the country. We are so pleased to spotlight Diyana's efforts and achievements through this scholarship, and we look forward to connecting with her in person this summer!

Thank you to our panel of dedicated judges who reviewed our many submissions.

Upcoming Division Events

Please join us for our next working group meeting! Meet division officers, learn more about upcoming opportunities, and help shape our newest scholarship opportunity. We'll be meeting via Zoom on Friday, 12 April, at 1pm EST. Join us at this link: <https://unl.zoom.us/j/6834933513>

If you're unable to join us but would like more information on getting involved in division activities, please email aer.global.division@gmail.com OR Katie Ericson, Chair, at katherine.e.ericson@gmail.com.

We do not currently have any webinars scheduled. If you have suggestions for topics or speakers, please email either Kevin McCormack or Katie Ericson at aer.global.division@gmail.com.

Other Important Dates

- The Change Foundation (UK) will be holding a visually impaired (VI) rugby "taster session" at Stockport Rugby Club (Stockport, UK) on 24 February from 12-2pm. This will be a great opportunity to try out VI rugby, as well as meet one of the England coaches, Daniel Lineker, and the England team skipper, Jack Pearce. If you have any questions, contact Daniel at daniellineker@change4dn.org.uk.
- Also on 24 February at 11am, the Worcester Warriors Foundation will be hosting a VI rugby launch event at the Diglis Playing Fields (Worcester, UK). If you have any

questions or would like to attend, please contact Matthew Cowdrey at matthew.cowdrey@warriorsfoundation.co.uk.

- The Council for Exceptional Children's Division of International Special Education and Services (DISES) will be holding their International Conference 26-28 June, 2024 in Panama City, Panama. Learn more at the DISES [website](#).
- AER's International Conference will be held 24-28 July, 2024 at the Le Meridien/Sheraton Hotel in Charlotte, NC, USA. Registration is now open. Updates can be found at the conference [website](#).
- The International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) will hold the next ICEVI World Conference and General Assembly in Ahmedabad, India on 14-17 November, 2024. For more information, please visit the ICEVI Conference [website](#).
- The third International Symposium on Physical Activity and Individuals with Visual Impairments or Deafblindness is tentatively scheduled for June 2025. It will be held in conjunction with the International Symposium on Adapted Physical Activity ([ISAPA](#)) at Munster Technological University in Kerry, Ireland. More information to come.

Job Postings

Guide Dogs SA/NT is currently seeking applications for an Orientation & Mobility Specialist based in Darwin, servicing remote locations across the Northern Territory. Find out more [here](#).

Vision Australia is currently seeking expressions of interest with Orientation & Mobility positions available in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia. Please see [this link](#) for more details.

Other Opportunities

Applications are now open for Fulbright Teacher Exchanges taking place in 2024-2025. Learn more at the Fulbright Teacher Exchanges [website](#).

We'll install new division leadership at the AER International Conference! The Division is taking nominations for Chair-Elect and Secretary until 1 March 2024. The Secretary serves a two-year term; the Chair-Elect serves a two-year term, then assumes the role of Chair for the next two years, and finally serves two years as Past Chair (for a total of six years). If you have questions, would like to nominate yourself or a colleague, or if you'd like to serve on the Division Elections Committee, please email aer.global.division@gmail.com.

The National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision at Mississippi State University offers a [White Cane Awareness Day Planning Guide](#). The Guide provides a history of White Cane Awareness Day, ideas for activities to celebrate, and general tips for planning an event.

Articles of Note

- Anderson, M. J., Chinn, D. J., & Styles, C. J. (2023). Long-term trends in incidence and prevalence of severe sight impairment due to diabetes in South East Scotland before and after implementation of diabetic retinopathy screening. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 41(4), 737-748. <https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1177/02646196221099147>
- Bilal Salih, H. E., & Kakizawa, T. (2023). Assessing the impact of auditory media on Braille reading and writing skills: The case of elementary school students who are blind in Sudan. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 41(4), 726-736. <https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1177/02646196221099156>
- Nagar, R., & Kisi, M. (2023). External factors and their effect on the learning of English as a foreign language among students with visual impairments. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 41(4), 819-830. <https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1177/02646196221104899>
- Sohail, A., Du, J., Nawaz Abbasi, B., & Taiwo, A. K. (2023). Prevalence, causes, and impact of self-reported vision impairment among older people in China: Findings from the China health and retirement longitudinal study. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 41(4), 761-781. <https://doi-org.libproxy.unl.edu/10.1177/02646196221099160>

Next newsletter deadline: March 31, 2024 – submissions are welcome at any time!