



Winter 2017

## OHIO CONNECTION

American Council of the Blind of Ohio  
3805 N. High St., Ste. 305  
Columbus, OH 43214  
1-800-835-2226

## CONFERENCE & CONVENTION WRAP-UP

*By Katie Frederick*

For a second time, ACB-Ohio partnered with ACB-Indiana for a weekend of networking, resource sharing, and learning at the Kalahari Resort in Sandusky, Ohio.

Transportation was the theme of Friday afternoon workshops. The first session gave participants an overview of the popular Lyft and Uber apps and services. The interactive session compared the two apps and demonstrated how a person could schedule a trip. Participants briefly discussed a similar service called Go Go Grandparent, an alternative for people who want to use on-demand transportation service but may not have access to or feel comfortable using a smartphone. Friday afternoon's second workshop explored driverless cars. A link to this session is available on the home page at [www.acbohio.org](http://www.acbohio.org).

Writer and theological scholar Sarah LaRose delivered the Friday evening keynote address. She spoke about the challenges and trials she faced as a person who is blind accessing materials in higher education and how she advocated for herself and overcame

obstacles placed in her path. Following Sarah's presentation some attendees chose to explore Kalahari's indoor water park and others drifted off to dreamland after a fun-filled first day of the conference.

Saturday morning John DiPaola, representing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), provided an overview of the agency and answered audience questions during his humorous, engaging presentation. After breakfast, ACB-Ohio and ACB-Indiana held their respective annual business meetings. During our meeting I announced my departure from ACBO's Executive Director position. I'm now a Digital Accessibility Specialist at The Ohio State University working to ensure websites, applications and software are accessible to people with disabilities on campus. As a result of my departure, Vicky Prahin resigned as ACBO President and has assumed the organization's Executive Director position. Following announcements and reports, officer and board elections occurred. See page 11 for information about the 2018 American Council of the Blind of Ohio Board of Directors.

Saturday morning concluded with two informative presentations. Andy Leach spoke about the latest happenings at HIMS Inc. and Linda Leuderman provided a glimpse into the world of human trafficking.

During lunch, ACB-Ohio presented the 2017-2018 scholarships; see current and future issues to learn more about this year's winners. After lunch, scholarship winners engaged in a conversation about ACB's scholarship opportunities, the benefits and events offered by ACB-Ohio, and learned more about the ACB students special-interest affiliate.

Saturday afternoon workshops focused on technology and advocacy. There were sessions discussing using iPhones from the perspectives of beginner and advanced users. Both iPhone sessions were well attended and audience members were engaged and given ample opportunity to ask questions and provide helpful feedback and help problem solve. Opposite the iPhone workshops, attendees learned about the new NLS app, BARD Express. The app provides a simple way for NLS patrons to transfer content from a Windows computer to other devices for later listening. The final Saturday afternoon workshop consisted of a panel discussing ways one can advocate. Advocacy is a part of our lives,

and the panel looked at how advocacy can occur at the local level as well as statewide.

Saturday evening's activities included the annual banquet, featuring NLS Talking Book narrator Laura Giannarelli. Hearing from NLS narrators is always a treat, and Laura's presentation did not disappoint. Lori Woodall presented awards to two individuals and one employer for their efforts to improve the lives Ohioans who are blind or visually impaired. This year's award winners will be featured in current and future issues of the *Ohio Connection*. The auction rounded out Saturday's full day of activities and was a fun evening. Bidders went home with wine, body lotion, dog toys and treats, and other goodies.

Sunday morning's activities began by remembering Indiana and Ohio members who passed away during the past year and honoring veterans for their service. Sarah LaRose then conducted a roundtable discussion for attendees, and the conference concluded with an interactive discussion about 2018 convention plans. Stay tuned to the *Ohio Connection* for details about next year's conference; it will be here before you know it! Thank you, Kalahari staff, conference exhibitors, drivers, and volunteers for your assistance this year.



## A LOOK BACK AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE



**Scholarship winners : Ying Ting Chiu, Elizabeth McCrory, Jenna McCartney, Janet Molchan (accepting on behalf of her son Michael)**



**Talking Book narrator Laura Giannarelli entertained at the banquet.**



**Taking advantage of some “down time” — Vicky Prahin, Jenna McCartney and Katie Frederick (with dogs Peace, Vena and Kenzo)**



**Kelsey Nicolay and Jeff Harsh of Concept Services Ltd., winner of the Employer of the Year Award**



**Melody Banks & Becky Schumacher**



**Anca Irimia & Krasimir Chervenkov**

# NEW LEADERSHIP FOR ACBO

*By Vicky Prahin*

As you can read elsewhere in this newsletter, convention attendees this year found many surprises at Kalahari. One of those took place on Saturday morning at the Ohio business meeting. Although some people knew earlier in the month, many had not heard that Katie Frederick has accepted a position at The Ohio State University, as a Digital Accessibility Specialist. The board of directors of ACBO accepted my offer to step into the Executive Director position. I will never fill Katie's shoes—they are several sizes too large for one thing—but I will make every effort to fulfill all of the duties involved.

Jill Noble was elected to finish my last year as president, and she has already shown that she understands the role and will continue the work you all expect.

Change is usually hard since it often requires getting used to new approaches,

altered routines, and sometimes a different way of thinking. George Bernard Shaw said, "Progress is impossible without change, and those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything." We live in a time of seemingly endless flux, unable to guess what will happen next in the political area, in the economy, or with advances in technology. It's sometimes exhilarating, sometimes scary. Note that first word in the quotation above: progress. We are moving ahead, but ACBO will not inherently change. We will continue to carry out our mission and offer resources, information, and programs to members and the community.

Any time you have questions or concerns, call the office or contact one of the board members.

**Michelle Spillan, Editor, Newsletter Committee: Katie Frederick, Irwin Hott, Jenna McCartney, Vicky Prahin**

As always, thanks to the contributors: **Mary Castor, Katie Frederick, Bob Pettipaw, Ann Pimley, Vicky Prahin, Elizabeth Sammons, and Karen Spry.**

The *Ohio Connection* is a quarterly publication of the American Council of the Blind of Ohio. Please submit your material in print or through e-mail, and include your name, address and phone number. Please send items for the next issue to [acbo.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:acbo.newsletter@gmail.com) by **February 15.**

# MEET TWO ACBO SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

*By Ann Pimley*

## **ELIZABETH MCCRORY MAX EDELMAN SCHOLARSHIP**



Elizabeth has returned to college to attain her Associates Degree in Business/Human Resource Management after years of working and then raising her two daughters. She is a sophomore at Cuyahoga Community College in the Cleveland area.

Since childhood, Elizabeth's vision has gradually worsened and varies day by day, but she has not let that affect her positive attitude and determination to achieve her academic and work goals. Besides the time needed to head a family, Elizabeth has put in a lot of effort in her studies and maintains a high grade point average. She worked in a business office and later volunteered for some nonprofits so she has business experience to put on her resume

when she graduates and starts searching for a job.

Elizabeth attends ACBO's Greater Cleveland Chapter meetings. It is very exciting that a scholarship winner is keeping a close connection with ACB-Ohio. Congratulations, Elizabeth, on winning this scholarship!

## **YING TING CHIU — NOLA WEBB- MCKINNEY SCHOLARSHIP**



Ying is a doctoral student at Ohio State University, and the title of her thesis is "*A Study of Science Learning Models and Learning Needs of Different Types of Students with Visual Impairments.*" She is very dedicated in both her academic work and her career goals. This is reflected in her win-

ning both the Nola Webb-McKinney scholarship from ACBO and the ACBO-OSU endowed scholarship, which makes it the first time someone has won two scholarships under our umbrella.

Ying is interested in science and later included science education for learners with visual challenges. This started when she taught at a science camp for students with visual challenges in Taiwan, and later taught science to sixth-grade students with visual impairments. She currently is a Graduate Research Associate in the Department of Engi-

neering. She is creating 3D print models to teach students with visual impairments and is assisting middle school students in suburban areas with hands-on engineering activities.

Ying's career goals are to be a professor conducting research in the field of science education for students with visual challenges and to start a company to make affordable science teaching and learning kits for those students. Ying certainly deserved her scholarship for her academic work and career goals.

## **RUTH DAVIDSON AWARD WINNER MARC SOLOMON**



During the conference banquet, ACBO presented awards to worthy recipients. One of those was Marc Solomon, who received the Ruth Davidson Award for his efforts improving life for Ohioans who are blind or visually impaired. Marc has held many positions in the assistive technology industry and most recently served as ACB-Ohio's webmaster. Throughout his career, Marc has ensured people who are blind or visually impaired have access to products and information. Thank you and congratulations, Marc!

***Marc Solomon and Lori Woodall***

# CHAPTER MATCHING GRANTS

Approximately ten years ago, the Columbus Chapter of ACBO started a program called People Helping People, spearheaded by MariLyn Piepho. This program raises funds to assist anyone who is blind or visually impaired and living in Central Ohio pay for adaptive equipment. People have received money to purchase VictorReader Streams, laptops, screen readers, etc. In 2015 the American Council of the Blind presented Columbus with an award, recognizing this innovative program, and a couple of other chapters around the country asked for information about starting something similar in their areas.

ACB-Ohio used People Helping People as the model to start a program called Chapter Matching Grants, offering

funding to match money raised by an ACBO chapter in support of any project that chapter wanted to set up or continue. Last year we decided to expand this program to help individuals. In 2017 we provided funding to a person buying a VictorReader Trek, an Ohio chapter wanting to expand some of its projects, and a chapter that used the money to help offset the cost of transportation and lodging for the convention in Sandusky.

If your chapter, you, or someone you know is interested in making a purchase of adaptive equipment or in support of a special project, check out the requirements and limitations at [www.acbohio.org](http://www.acbohio.org). Funds are limited, so apply soon for 2018! Applicants do not have to be members of ACBO.



## APPLESEED CHAPTER UPDATE

*By Mary Castor, Chapter President*

Our ACB-Ohio Appleseed chapter has had some busy months. In August we enjoyed spending time together at our annual Lions Club-sponsored picnic. In September we took a scenic railroad trip through the Cuyahoga Valley. Our October meeting featured a book review by Brant Adams about the history of the Talking Book program. A representative from the Mansfield Richland County public library informed us about the talking book program and updated us on upcoming changes to services.

We invited a representative from the Kroger company to inform us about the ClickList program for our November meeting. This program allows customers to shop for groceries online. The employees do the shopping and customers pick up the groceries bagged and ready to go. In December we enjoyed our chapter Christmas party and a Christmas program at the historic Renaissance Theater in Mansfield. Thank you to all our drivers and friends who help us in so many ways.

# GENETIC TESTING AND CLINICAL TRIAL FOR CHOROIDEREMIA

*By Bob Pettipaw*

My name is Bob Pettipaw and I live in West Jordan, Utah. I reached out to ACB-Ohio with the hopes of helping others. I'm 54 now, married with two kids, and I have a retinal degenerative disease called choroideremia—CHM for short. It was passed on genetically from my mom, who is a carrier. I've passed it on to my daughter, who will probably pass it on to her male children. CHM is similar to many retinal diseases in that it is progressive, meaning it only gets worse, and eventually I will go blind. At age 14, my eye doctor told me I had retinitis pigmentosa (RP), and I would be blind in my 40s. Heck of a way to start your life.

I'm sure many of you have a similar story and can relate to my frustration, fears, anger and hopelessness. I write to you in the hopes that I can shed some light on what I've learned in the last couple years that has changed my life and my outlook.

I was fortunate enough in January of 2016 to be selected for a human clinical trial in Miami, Florida in which doctors performed a subretinal injection of an engineered virus with replacement genes. The procedure is designed to replace the bad copies of the genes within the cells in the back of the retina, and then the cells start to function properly. The outcome is "advertised" as potentially stopping the progression of the disease. Some patients have im-

proved their vision, and I'm one of them.

Keep in mind, a clinical trial is not open to all. Some retinas are too far gone to treat. Some are too good to treat under current FDA guidelines, so don't be disappointed if you go through the effort and are not eligible. Your time will come. The key is to get involved, to speed the treatment to the commercial market, and your participation makes that possible.

I want to stress that unless you are genetically confirmed, you really don't know what you have. We all want to put our faith in the docs we see and, more often than not, they are right. However, if you are one of the 10 to 20 percent who may be misdiagnosed, you may be missing the opportunity to be part of something that can change your life. I am living proof. I can fill an entire newspaper with the names of my CHM brothers who were misdiagnosed. Genetic tests are the only way to truly know.

There are a few places where you can have your genetic tests done; my recommendation is to locate a reputable retinal specialist and ask the doctor to confirm your diagnosis through genetic testing. One last note: not all IRD can be confirmed with genetic testing. The Council can direct you to those retinal specialist and/or testing labs. Best of luck, and never give up.

# PROPOSED LEGISLATION TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR VISUAL/HEARING-IMPAIRED STUDENTS

Senator Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) and Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.V.) recently introduced bipartisan legislation that would strengthen the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) to ensure that visual and hearing-impaired students receive the best possible education. The *Alice Cogswell and Anne Sullivan Macy Act* will improve the effectiveness and personalization of education and services for students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind. The legislation would improve reporting and evaluation measures of special education in each state, increase training for teachers and other special education professionals, and reaffirm the Department of Education's mission and responsibility to ensure an accessible and quality education for all students. This bill is named after Alice Cogswell, the first deaf student to be formally educated in the United States, and Anne Sullivan Macy, Helen Keller's famous teacher. Congressman Matt Cartwright (PA-17) and Congressman David McKinley (WV-1) introduced companion legislation in the House of Representatives earlier this year.

"More than 100 years after Anne Sullivan Macy worked with Hellen Keller at Massachusetts's Perkins School, we are coming together to ensure that students in the 21st century receive the best education," said Senator Markey.

"I am happy to introduce this legislation with Senator Capito to help deaf, blind, and deaf-blind students across the country by improving access to quality education and offering them the chance to work with effective educators and trained professionals. Every student should have the opportunity to maximize their God-given abilities, and our bill will help thousands of students do just that."

"It is essential students in West Virginia and across the nation who are deaf, hard of hearing or have vision loss receive the specialized services they need to reach their fullest potential," said Senator Capito. "The *Cogswell-Macy Act* would help ensure the educational needs of these students are better met."

A copy of the legislation can be found [HERE](#).

Specifically, the *Cogswell-Macy Act* would:

- Require states to identify and evaluate children who are visually and hearing impaired so that appropriate services can be delivered to each student, and report instances when they fall short
- Help parents and educators stay informed and up-to-date through written policy guidance released regu-

larly from the Department of Education

- Encourage states to plan for and commit to specialized instruction for all deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind students, provided by trained personnel
- Establish the Anne Sullivan Macy Center of Vision Loss and Educational Excellence within the Department of Education to function as a national resource to better support students with visual disabilities

“Since 1975, the law has worked wonders in terms of ensuring the right of every student with a disability to be included in our public education system,” said Mark Richert, Policy Director for the American Foundation for the Blind. “But what we’ve never done is to make sure that students, particularly kiddos who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind, get what they need once they get in the schoolhouse door. With Senate introduction of the Cogswell-Macy Act, we’re signaling to everyone that we’re not prepared to wait for the needs of another generation of students with sensory disabilities to be ignored before we work with our amazing champions on the Hill to change things.”

“This bill acknowledges and supports the various ways that deaf and hard of hearing children learn. There is no ‘one size fits all’ under IDEA, and the Cogswell-Macy Act will provide guidance to states as to how to tailor individualized education to these students, particularly in the areas of language and commu-

nication,” said Sandra Edwards, President of the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD) and Superintendent of the Mississippi School for the Deaf.

“We are thrilled that the Cogswell-Macy Act will be introduced in the Senate and thank Senator Markey for his leadership and passion,” said Dave Power, President and CEO of Perkins School for the Blind. “Perkins has been a fierce advocate in ensuring that blind, visually-impaired, and deafblind students have access to the highest quality services here in Massachusetts and nationally. Their ability to fulfill their unique potential requires the strongest possible IDEA and our ongoing commitment to seeing its execution.”

“When it becomes the law of the land, the Cogswell-Macy Act will empower students who are deafblind to succeed in the 21st century American classroom,” said Mussie Gebre, President of DeafBlind Citizens in Action (DBCA). “As deafblind people speaking for ourselves, we in DBCA know from personal experience how providing interveners, qualified teachers, and the whole range of instructional services and supports today will make it possible tomorrow for society to fully benefit from the brain power and drive that our community has to offer.”

# THE 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

An ACB-Ohio conference and convention would not be complete without electing members to serve on the organization's board of directors. Profiles of new board members will be featured in upcoming issues of the *Ohio Connection*. Welcome and congratulations, new and returning board members!



(left to right) Back row: Irwin Hott, Brant Adams, Ken Woodall, Chris Schumacher, Jenna McCartney, Vicky Prahin, Katie Frederick, Jill Noble. Middle row: Rob Rogers, Terry Olandese, Melody Banks, Lori Woodall. Front row: Ann Pimley, Annie Davis, Karen Spry. Not pictured: Leah Noble, Molly Marcinick

**President: Jill Noble**  
**Vice President 1: Terry Olandese**  
**Vice President 2: Deborah Lori Woodall**  
**Secretary: Ann Pimley**  
**Treasurer: Chris Schumacher**  
**Past president: Vicky Prahin**

**Directors:**  
**Brant Adams, Ken Woodall, Melody Banks, Leah Noble, Molly Marcinick, Robert Rogers, Karen Spry, Jenna McCartney, Annie Davis, Irwin Hott, Katie Frederick**

# BITS & BYTES



## ► OODWORKS.COM

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) is celebrating a year of its job portal OODworks.com. This website allows applicants to learn more about what vocational rehabilitation is, take a self-assessment, apply for services and make updates such as contact information. Any Ohioan interested in vocational rehabilitation resources may visit [www.OODWorks.com](http://www.OODWorks.com).

## ► NEW MEDICARE CARDS ARE ON THE WAY

Now through April, 2019 the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services is sending every Medicare beneficiary a new Medicare card without social security numbers to prevent fraud, fight identity theft, and keep taxpayer dollars safe. The card has a unique, randomly-assigned Medicare number. See background and details here: <https://medicare.com/administration/new-medicare-card-not-to-contain-social-security-numbers/>

## ► AUDIO PRODUCTION HELP

Students at the Ohio State School for the Blind are creating podcasts that are helping them learn skills such as interviewing, recording, editing, and creating a final audio product. Check out the page for new and archived podcasts as new topics are covered. Listen to the most recent podcast at <https://>

[soundcloud.com/user-997236276/09-17-master-podcast](https://soundcloud.com/user-997236276/09-17-master-podcast) (<https://soundcloud.com/user-997236276/09-17-master-podcast>).

## ► THE LATEST STATISTICS ON BLINDNESS IN THE U.S.

New data on the demographics of blind people in the USA is now available on the National Federation of the Blind website. This includes data for 2015. Information provided includes estimates of the prevalence of blindness and low vision among children and adults, as well as numbers related to race and ethnicity, educational attainment, employment, and income. See more here: <https://nfb.org/blindness-statistics>

## ► VIRTUAL REALITY FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

This semi-editorial article compares and contrasts several VR apps tailored to low-vision or blind users. <http://vator.tv/news/2017-08-23-virtual-reality-targeted-to-the-visually-impaired>

## ► VIDEO SERIES FOR THOSE WITH LOW VISION

The National Eye Institute at the National Institutes of Health have posted a five-part video series featuring people with low vision and vision professionals. Videos cover how low vision is diagnosed, technologies and modifications people can make to support independence, and reaching out to the community and to family for support. Each video is less than two minutes long. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sm6d4t873oI>

## ► SOUND REQUIREMENTS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES

The Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Act making roads safer for everyone and clarifying Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and Minimum Sound Requirements for Hybrid and Electric Vehicles became effective last fall. This covers all four-wheeled hybrid-electric passenger vehicles under 10,000 pounds produced starting September, 2019. Read regulations here:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/12/14/2016-28804/federal-motor-vehicle-safety-standards-minimum-sound-requirements-for-hybrid-and-electric-vehicles>

## ► ALL ABOUT IDEA

From the Department of Education, here's more on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA.) The new website is organized into sections for law and policy, reports, grants and funding, and resources by audience and topic. The resources sections include department-funded centers, programs, and information of interest for parents and families, educators and service providers, and grantees. The site also includes information about the history of IDEA and related laws.

<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>

## ► NEW YORK TIMES ESSAYS EXPLORE PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITIES

If you enjoy thought-provoking artwork and good writing, you might want to explore this collection from *New York Times* addressing numerous disability topics. <https://www.nytimes.com/column/disability>

## ► ABLE ACCOUNTS: TAX FREE SAVING THAT DOESN'T CHANGE YOUR BENEFITS

An ABLE account allows you to save up to \$14,000 per year of your own earnings from work, or with the help of contributions from family, friends, or an employer. Savings up to \$100,000 do not affect public benefits at all. If you're interested in criteria and how to open an ABLE account, see this useful blog: <https://choosework.ssa.gov/blog/2017-10-23-mm-tips-for-opening-your-able-account>

## ► CHOOSING ACCESSIBLE APPLIANCES

[APH's Larry Skutchan has written article about accessibility considerations when purchasing an appliance.](#) He also highlights the exciting work of General Electric, FirstBuild, and a young inventor who has created a way to make digital appliances accessible.

<http://www.aph.org/research/accessible-appliances-ge-firstbuild-and-an-inventive-young-man/>

## ► PARENTING WITH A DISABILITY

The Lurie Institute for Disability Policy has launched a new website:

[www.centerforparentswithdisabilities.org](http://www.centerforparentswithdisabilities.org)

The National Research Center for Parents with Disabilities will share the results of research and provide training and technical assistance to support parents with disabilities and their families, and make available research results and helpful information about working with parents with disabilities to social workers, researchers, and legal professionals. Parents with disabilities

and their families have shaped this website and will remain pivotal.

### ► **BE PREPARED**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers emergency and disability resources. These include We Prepare Everyday videos featuring people with disabilities preparing themselves and their families for emergencies, articles on preparedness geared toward different audiences, and guides and training for providers on inclusive shelter and support services. See also a web-based, interactive course on integrating people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs in disaster operations. <https://www.fema.gov/disability>

### ► **FCC EXPANDS AUDIO DESCRIPTION**

The FCC adopted rules allowing viewers who are blind or visually impaired better access. Video description, also called audio description, adds narration of on-screen activity, providing a more complete experience for the nonvisual audience. Beginning next July, many broadcasters and pay TV providers must provide 87.5 hours of described programming per quarter, an increase of 75 percent. For broadcasters affected and other details, see <http://www.adasoutheast.org/news/articles.php?id=8508>

### ► **SCHOLARSHIP CENTRAL**

This website leads to several dozen scholarships including those for students with disabilities and children of those with disabilities.

<https://www.lookingglass.org/scholarships/51-additional-scholarship-resources>

### ► **MASTER LIST OF AUDIO DESCRIBED VIDEOS**

Many movies are now available with audio description assisting nonvisual viewers, especially from the online streaming services. But who has what movies? This list can be browsed by letter or by provider.

<http://acb.org/adp/masterad.html#pagebody>

### ► **STUDY ABROAD**

Youth For Understanding USA offers high school students the opportunity to study abroad on a summer, semester, or year-long homestay program. YFU has 100+ programs to 40+ countries. Interested students can speak with an Admissions Counselor at 1.800.TEENAGE and learn about many scholarships at: <https://online.yfuusa.org/study-abroad/scholarships.php>



### **ACBO Community Shares Campaign Codes**

State of Ohio 19003  
City of Columbus 60240  
Franklin County 60240  
Ohio State University 60240  
Columbus State 1061

# OOD TAKING ACTION WITH OPPORTUNITY FOR ADULT BRAILLE LITERACY

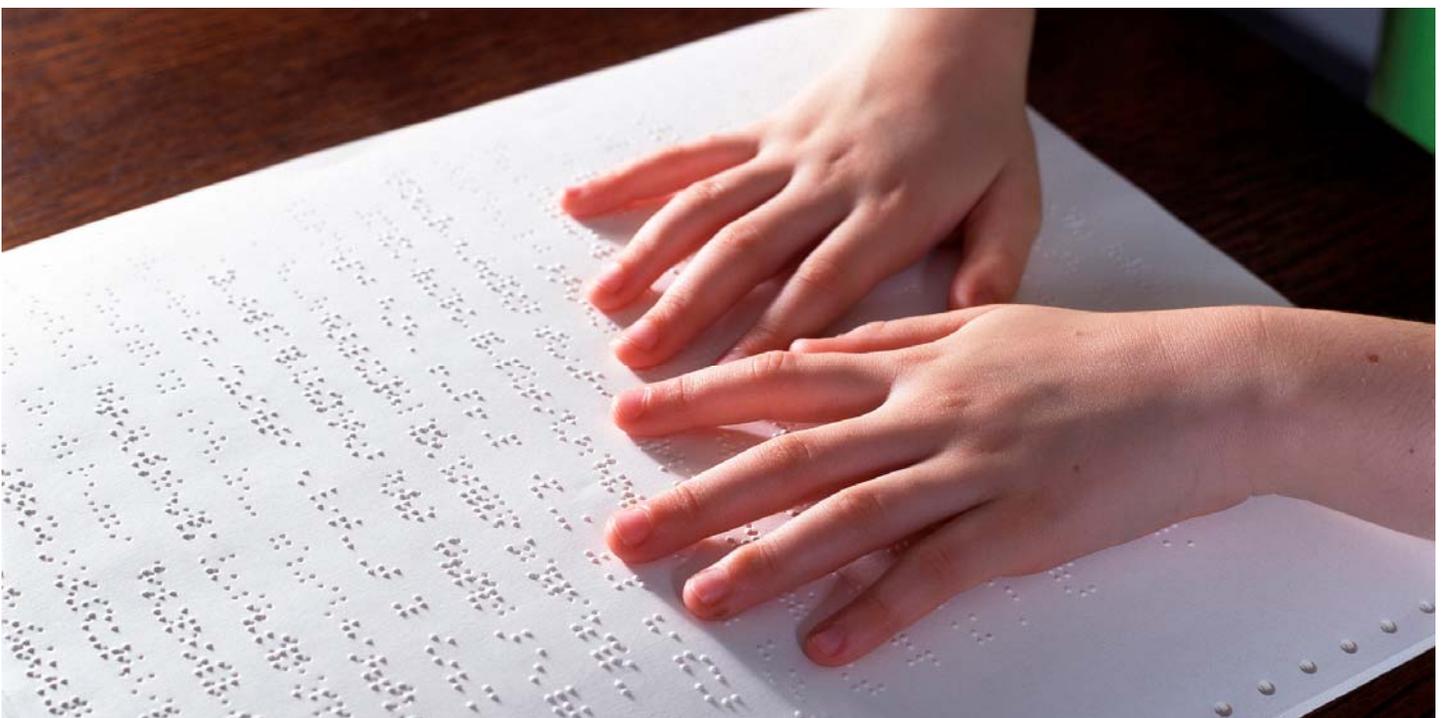
*By Elizabeth Sammons, OOD Program Coordinator*

As any adult learner can attest, it is difficult to receive braille instruction once a student is out of the public education system. This holds true throughout Ohio, but particularly in rural and other areas not historically served by vision-service providers. In September Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities put out a request for proposals from eligible entities with staff to provide basic uncontracted braille instruction to learners who are low vision or blind, at least 14 years old and out of school, particularly in underserved areas of the state.

Ohio's chapter of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) is a recipient of this award. NFB Ohio's proposal offers

instruction based in four cities around Ohio, along with wide-ranging initiatives for recruiting eligible learners. Studies will start as groups next spring, with weekly one-on-one follow-up between a certified teacher, a braille mentor and individual learners for about 14 weeks as in-home learning continues. Everyone participating in this program will be encouraged to explore the employment assistance available through the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI). If you know anyone who is visually impaired and has the desire to master braille, please contact:

[elizabeth.sammons@ood.ohio.gov](mailto:elizabeth.sammons@ood.ohio.gov).





American Council of the Blind of Ohio  
3805 N. High St., Suite 305  
Columbus, Ohio 43214

FREE MATTER  
FOR THE BLIND



## **ACB-OHIO DATEBOOK**

### **JANUARY 12-15**

WINTER SPORTS RETREAT  
PUNDERSON STATE PARK  
NEWBURY, OHIO

### **JANUARY 20**

ACBO BOARD MEETING  
CONFERENCE CALL

### **FEBRUARY 15**

ACBO NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

### **FEBRUARY 15**

ACBO MEMBERSHIP DUES DEADLINE

### **FEBRUARY 24-27**

LEGISLATIVE SEMINAR  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

### **JUNE 29-JULY 6**

ACB CONFERENCE & CONVENTION  
UNION STATION HOTEL  
ST. LOUIS, MO

