



Fall 2021

OHIO CONNECTION

American Council of the Blind of Ohio

ACBO/ACBI CONVENTION: STIRRING THE CAULDRON OF KNOWLEDGE

By Brant Adams

Join us for the ACB-Ohio / ACB-Indiana joint convention October 29 to 31. Our theme this year is “Stirring the Cauldron of Knowledge.” There will be plenty to learn and it will be nice to meet in person. We will be taking all safety precautions so that everyone can enjoy the event and return home healthy. If you cannot attend in person, streaming options will be available. We will let you know when the details are finalized.

Here are some of the things we have planned. Our keynote speaker is Ron Brooks, a transportation industry veteran who assists private companies and public agencies with the creation and management of accessible transportation. He will also be doing a transportation session on Saturday. Our program covers many healthcare issues, including presentations on the Accessible Pharmacy for the Blind, accessible medical equipment, and an update from an eye professional.

We have a few other things up our sleeves, such as our banquet speaker, Kathy Zolo. Read about Kathy elsewhere in this issue. Saturday night activities will include the banquet, award presentations, and, of course, the auction. If you wish to donate items, October 1 is the deadline to notify the ACBO office so the information can be added to the auction list.

The site is the Crowne Plaza Columbus North – Worthington, 6500 Doubletree Ave, Columbus, 43229. The rate is \$122 per night (taxes included). To reserve a room, call the hotel at 614-885-1885, select option #2, and use the code AC8. Register for the conference online at acbohio.org or call the main office at 614-261-3561. The convention planning committee hopes to see you there!



INTRODUCING THE 2021 ACB-OHIO SLATE

By Katie Frederick

One of the core responsibilities of ACBO members is electing officers and board of director candidates during the annual business meeting, a part of the annual conference and convention. Saturday, October 30 marks the date of this year's business meeting. Members must be present to vote and have been a member for at least 30 days prior to the start of the conference. This year, all offices up for election are two-year terms. Let's meet the fine individuals who are running.

BRANT ADAMS is seeking election for his first term as 1st vice-president. Brant is an active ACB-Ohio member, participating in Appleseed chapter activities, serving on the board of directors, and co-chairing the convention program and technology committees, to name a few.

The office of secretary is vacant. Nominations for this position will need to be made from the floor during the business meeting. The successful nominee will begin his or her term. We would like to thank Ann Pimley for serving as secretary for the past four years.

A new name and a new member of the affiliate, **MALAINA VANDERWAL**, is seeking election to the board of directors. A member of the Michigan Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired (MCBVI), Malaina is no stranger to the work of ACB. Participating in local chapter activities, serving as assistant editor of the MCBVI newsletter, chairing the resolutions committee, and currently serving as assistant secretary, Malaina keeps busy with the Michigan affiliate. Malaina joined Ohio following the 2020 virtual conference and convention and is eager to roll up her sleeves and join ACB-Ohio's board. This will be her first term.

MELODY BANKS is seeking her third and final term as a director. A Cincinnati chapter member, chair of the ACBO awards committee, and member of the convention program committee, Melody is active on the board. She has enjoyed organizing Friday night trivia during convention for the past few years.

Leaving Cincinnati, traveling up I-71, we arrive at the Cleveland chapter, where **MOLLY MARCINICK** participates at chapter meetings and activities. Molly joined ACB-Ohio's board in 2019, is completing her first two-year term, and is seeking election for a second term. Serving on the convention program, legislative, and organization committees, Molly brings good ideas and new perspectives for consideration.

If you have attended an Ohio or national ACB conference and convention over the past several years, chances are high you have been greeted by or walked with sighted guide **KAREN SPRY**. Always in motion, Karen is a huge help to the organization. When not assisting people at conferences, she serves on the exhibits, legislative, personnel, and scholarship committees. Karen is seeking election to her final term as a director.

KATHY GERHARDT may be a new name to some, but she is no stranger to the affiliate activities and work within ACB. A member of the Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss (AAVL, an ACB special-interest affiliate) and a member of the Mountain State Council of the Blind (West Virginia affiliate), Kathy is running for her first two-year term on our board. Since joining ACB-Ohio, Kathy has participated in the monthly membership calls and is a member of the legislative committee. During the virtual 2021 legislative seminar, she demonstrated the low vision technology that she uses daily to remain independent. Kathy looks forward to serving on the board.

The name **RACHEL DENSMORE** is likely familiar to many in the Cleveland chapter, as she and her husband, Alex (a current ACB-Ohio board member), regularly participate in chapter meetings. President Vicky Prahin appointed Rachel to complete the term vacated by Shelley Duffy, who resigned for personal reasons. Serving on the recreation, convention program, and organizational documents committees, Rachel offers new ideas and is always willing to help accomplish the work of the committee. She is running for her first two-year term on the board and is excited to continue the great work of ACB-Ohio.

I hope you have enjoyed learning about the 2021 slate as much as I enjoyed introducing them. My thanks to the members of the nominating committee: Alex Densmore, Don Kalman, Dana Metcalf, and Shawn Thiel. It was a pleasure working together with you to compile this year's slate. I also want to thank Kelsey Nicolay for her service on the board. Kelsey has chosen not to seek reelection, and while we will miss her board contributions, we know she will remain an involved member. As a reminder, nominations will be accepted from the floor for all open positions. Nominees do not need to be physically present, but they do need to be available to accept the nomination virtually. Elections allow the voice of ACB-Ohio members to be heard, so participate and help move the organization forward.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO ACBO BYLAWS

Submitted by the Organizational Documents Committee

In order to adapt to changing times, better define committee responsibilities, and keep the organization running efficiently, the organizational documents committee, in conjunction with the board, proposes the following. Members will vote on these changes at the business meeting at the annual convention.

3.3. Awards: The committee shall have responsibility for soliciting nominations, selecting winners to receive the various awards presented at the annual ACBO convention, work with the ACBO executive director to arrange lodging accommodations, transportation, and purchase of plaques. The committee shall consist of a chair and at least two others.

3.4. Budget: The committee shall prepare and present an annual budget to the Board of Directors for adoption for the ensuing calendar year. Once adopted by the board of directors, a budget cannot be altered except by a two-thirds vote of the board. The committee

shall consist of the treasurer as chair and at least two others appointed by the president in consultation with the treasurer.

3.5. Convention Program: The committee consists of the program committee and includes the site and exhibits subcommittees.

3.5.1. Program: The committee has responsibility for organizing the convention program, including events and speakers, arranges for speakers' transportation and lodging as needed, and for any other materials and arrangements necessary for the convention program. The committee shall make arrangements for printing and embossing of the program prior to the convention. The committee shall consist of two co-chairs and as many members as deemed necessary to do the work of the committee.

3.5.2. Site: The committee has the responsibility of identifying a suitable location for holding the convention; assessing the location for accessibility, including signage, dog relief areas, and overall safety; arranging for convention facilities such as meeting rooms, serving of meals, sleeping accommodations, exhibit space, and such other of the usual considerations for a successful convention. The committee shall work with the executive director to review and approve the contract with the hotel. The program committee co-chairs shall appoint a chair for this committee and shall choose two others to work with the chair.

3.5.3. Exhibits: The committee shall develop a list of possible exhibitors and vendors and invite them to participate. It shall determine the needs of specific exhibitors, such as the number of tables needed, the need for electricity, and the number of days each can be present. The committee shall also seek out sponsors for the convention, for both the entire convention and specific parts, such as transportation of speakers and award or scholarship winners, the Friday evening activity, the banquet, and the auction. The program committee co-chairs shall appoint a chair for this committee and shall choose two others to work with the chair.

3.6. Fundraising: The committee shall explore and implement ways to bring in donations to support the organization. With the support of the board, it will plan and carry out any resulting fundraising activities. The treasurer shall serve as chair of this committee, which shall be comprised of the executive director and at least two other members.

3.7. Legislative: The committee is responsible for keeping the ACBO board and membership abreast of state and federal legislative issues of concern. The committee shall promote and/or coordinate involvement of the board and membership with legislators and the public for greater understanding and appreciation of the needs and concerns of the ACBO membership. It shall also be responsible for coordinating the ACBO participation in the annual Washington, D.C. legislative conference. The committee shall consist of at least three members.

3.8. Matching Grants: The committee receives and considers requests for grants from ACBO chapters and Ohio residents who need funds to expand membership, develop

projects, or purchase adaptive equipment. All requests must fall in line with our mission. The committee shall consist of at least three members with the first vice-president as chair.

3.9. Membership: The committee shall have the responsibility for developing and implementing programs to promote ACBO membership. It will prepare a special program for scholarship winners, scheduling that program to follow the presentation of scholarship awards at the annual convention. The committee shall consist of a chair and at least three others, including the ACBO executive director.

3.10. Newsletter: The committee solicits and gathers items for the *Ohio Connection* each quarter. Working with the editor, the committee organizes and edits the articles and offers suggestions for the layout and presentation of the newsletter. It is the responsibility of the editor, with the assistance of the executive director, to ensure that the finished document is printed and mailed by the 15th of March, June, September, and December. The editor functions as chair and works with at least three members, one of whom is the executive director.

3.11. Nominating: The committee shall solicit candidates for incumbent and open officer and board positions prior to the annual convention. It shall prepare the slate for publication in the fall newsletter and to the ACBO list at least 30 days before the annual business meeting. The committee chair shall conduct elections during the annual business meeting. The committee shall consist of a chair appointed by the president and at least two other persons appointed by the chair, the committee having no more than one person from any given chapter. The committee shall not place any of its members on its proposed slate of nominees. However, members of the nominating committee are still eligible to be nominated from the convention floor.

3.12. Organizational Documents: The committee is responsible for regularly reviewing the constitution, bylaws, and policy document. The committee shall be available to any ACBO member who wishes to propose amendments and may draft amendments of its own. It shall be responsible for seeing that notices of proposed amendments reach the membership at least four weeks prior to the annual meeting at which these amendments are to be voted upon. To publish amendments in the newsletter may suffice if the information is in the hands of the membership at least four weeks prior to the annual meeting. When submitting amendments for a vote at the annual meeting, this committee may attach a recommendation of “recommend” or “do not recommend.” The committee shall consist of a chair and at least two other members.

3.13. Personnel: The committee offers support to the executive director as needed to assist with operations, staff, or other matters. It prepares an annual evaluation of the executive director and reports results to the board. When hiring a new executive director, the committee seeks, vets, and interviews potential candidates, and makes suggestions to the board for hiring. The committee consists of a chair and at least two other members of the board of directors.

3.14. Scholarship: The committee is responsible for disseminating information about the ACBO scholarships. After the deadline for receiving applications, the committee shall select winners, based on the guidelines set forth in the scholarship documentation. The chairman shall contact each chosen recipient to make arrangements for attending the convention. The committee arranges accommodations and transportation for each winner, ensures registration, and presents the checks at the time set in the program. The committee consists of a chair and at least three others.

3.15. Sports and Recreation: The committee promotes and plans the summer and winter sports retreats and other activities in which members may participate. The committee consists of a chair and at least two members.

3.16. Technology: The committee keeps the ACBO website up to date, makes recommendations for updates to equipment and software as necessary, and assists in choosing and setting up of equipment as needed. The committee shall consist of a chair and at least two others.

MEET OUR BANQUET SPEAKER, KATHY ZOLO

By Kathy Zolo

I began my life in northeastern Ohio where I was born two and a half months early, weighing just two pounds. By age three, I had my first eye removed, and, a year after that, the second one. At age four I went to the Ohio State School for the Blind. I learned a lot there, but I was not happy being so far from home. I thoroughly enjoyed my summers! At the end of my sophomore year, I changed schools and finished my education at my hometown public high school in Andover, Ohio, in the top fourth of my class.

While at public school, I learned much valuable information, like learning to take notes from recorded books and how to work with readers. I also took part in a poetry reading contest, two choir contests, and a solo contest, as well as singing in the university chorus for a few years where I sang "Ash Grove."

After graduation, I was on my way to Pilot Dogs, where I got my first dog, a black Lab. That following September I went to Bowling Green State University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Childhood Education in the summer of 1975. I was not able to land a job with that knowledge, but I did babysit many children and cared for my husband, Brian, and my two girls.

In 1994, I went to Goodwill in Columbus, Ohio. In order to be accepted at Goodwill, I had to learn JAWS, something that I am very thankful for. At Goodwill, I learned medical transcription, plus refreshed some other subjects. I got a job working for Mount Carmel Hospital in Columbus, not too far from our home, and worked until after my first knee replacement in 2012. After I healed from that, I babysat my youngest granddaughter and grandson and thoroughly enjoyed it. Now, Brian is retired and so I find many things to do here at home, such as email, reading books, and following Cleveland Indians baseball games.

Backtracking a bit to 2006, I realized I wasn't hearing very well, and so I started using hearing aids. I enjoyed hearing once again, but, unfortunately, this was short lived. By 2014, my right ear had deteriorated to the point that I received my first cochlear implant. For a time, it was a difficult adjustment, but it works well today. In 2018, I had to have a cochlear implant done for my left ear. Again, there was an adjustment period and I still feel more comfortable with my right ear than my left one. The difficulties I experienced with two implants were balance issues and being unable to fully distinguish the direction that sounds come from. It is something that I continue to work on.



FALL MEMBERSHIP CALLS

By Ann Pimley

ACBO's monthly membership calls are a great way to meet new people, learn about topics relevant to the visually impaired, learn about ACBO, and exchange information and ideas with others. We meet the second Sunday of the month at 7:30 p.m. and are done by 9 p.m. For some of these meetings we have a speaker and at other meetings we have a group discussion and share information. We always have a few minutes for people to ask the speakers questions, or to ask for information from other members.

On our August call we had a lively discussion about what we liked and what could be improved upon for this year's ACB National Convention. Upcoming membership calls are scheduled for September 12, October 10, November 14, and December 12. Brant Adams will give us a preview of the state convention on the September call, and in November, Tammy Freitag will talk about crafting as a person with blindness. Guests and topics for the October and December calls have not yet been scheduled. Let us know if you have topics that you would like covered.

To join us, use the link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6142613561>, which will launch Zoom if you have it installed on your computer or mobile device.

Call in on your landline or cell phone using 646-558-8656 or 669-900-9128. Whether you use a computer or a phone, enter the meeting ID 614 261 3561. If calling in, you have plenty of time to enter the meeting ID followed by the pound sign. When asked for a participant ID, press pound again. If you join before the host starts the meeting, you will hear that the meeting has not yet started and hear music.

We hope you will join us and invite others who you think might be interested. If you have questions or suggestions, please contact me (apomerai548@gmail.com or 440-226-9141) or Shawn Thiel (acbo.director@gmail.com or 614-261-3561).

ACBO Community Shares Campaign Codes

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



SO LONG SUMMER, WHAT'S NEXT FOR WINTER?

By Katie Frederick

The 2021 summer sports retreat did not take place in person, but via Zoom, giving participants the opportunity to catch up and socialize. Members of the recreation committee are brainstorming ideas about 2022 dates and location for the event. Stay tuned to future issues of the *Ohio Connection* for details on next year's summer retreat.

As for the winter retreat, at the time of this writing, we are hoping and planning for an in-person gathering over the Martin Luther King holiday weekend (January 14 to 17, 2022) at Punderson. If you are interested in attending the upcoming retreat or would like additional information, contact Katie Frederick via email (katiefred@gmail.com) or call or text 419-306-3721.

Remember, the recreation committee organizes events for ACB-Ohio friends and members. We want to continue planning activities, but we need your participation. If you have ideas for new activities or improvements for those currently offered, we want to hear from you. Reach out to Katie Frederick or contact Shawn Thiel in the ACB-Ohio office (614-261-3561).

JASON BROUGHTON TAKES THE HELM AT NLS

Jason Broughton has been selected as the new director of the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) at the Library of Congress.

Prior to joining the Library of Congress, Mr. Broughton was the first African American to serve as Vermont State Librarian. In this role, he engaged in strategic planning for the Department of Libraries and establishing a long-term vision for the State Library. Previously, Mr. Broughton held numerous positions at libraries in South Carolina and Georgia. Mr. Broughton earned his M.S. in Library and Information Science from the University of South Carolina, an M.S. in Public Administration from the University of South Florida, and a bachelor's degree in Biology from Florida A&M University.

Please join us in welcoming Jason Broughton to NLS.

BELOVED TALKING BOOK NARRATOR MITZI FRIEDLANDER PASSES AWAY

A voice familiar to many has fallen silent with the passing of acclaimed narrator Mitzi Friedlander, age 91, in August. A Louisville resident and longtime member of the Kentucky Council of the Blind, Mitzi was an actress and singer who friends describe as a social activist, teacher, mentor and friend to many. Having voiced over 2,200 books, Friedlander

recorded more titles for the National Library Service than any other Talking Book narrator in history. Her complete obituary can be found at <https://www.courier-journal.com/obituaries/lcj229823>.

HELP AGENCIES SERVE SENIORS WITH VISION LOSS

By Carolyn Burley

The Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss (AAVL), an ACB special interest affiliate, is trying to learn more about the area agencies on aging (AAAs) across the country and how these agencies can help seniors with vision problems. Since few of us know what AAAs are and what they do, it is quite possible that they know very little about us. Therefore, seniors who are blind or have low vision are not benefiting from the services and programs these agencies administer or fund.

Other goals of this program are:

- Create more awareness of the specific needs of seniors who are blind or have low vision,
- Create more outreach and communication between AAAs and seniors with vision loss,
- Create or adjust AAA programs and services to ensure inclusion of seniors with vision loss,
- Lessen institutionalization of low vision/blind seniors
- Give blind/low vision seniors more opportunity to influence AAA service provision
- Give people like you around the country the opportunity to advocate for the vision loss community
- And maybe even have some new folks join AAVL/ACB.

The alliance has developed a questionnaire to be given to the AAA centers across the country. I contacted my local agency, called Direction Home, and the director had it filled out. They didn't have anyone with a visual impairment on their caseload, but I told her about currency identifiers, talking books, accessible prescription labels which can be obtained at most pharmacies, and other devices that help people with vision loss. She was very glad to have this information.

The questionnaire is on the following page, and I have the list of all the AAAs in the state. If anyone would like to participate in the project, call me at 330-484-3807. It is a great way to help your local agency serve the needs of seniors with blindness or vision loss.

Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss (AAVL) Area Agencies on Aging Questionnaire

1. What is the geographical/jurisdictional service area for your AAA?
2. What services and programs does your AAA offer or fund in its service area?
3. What services do you provide or fund that are specifically targeted to people who have low vision or who are blind?
4. Does your AAA actively outreach to older people with recent vision loss, and if so, how?
5. How many people with vision loss currently participate in any of your programs as staff members, volunteers or consumers?
Staff members _____ Volunteers _____ Consumers _____
6. Does your AAA Citizens Advisory council include members who are blind or have low vision, or professionals in the blindness field?
7. How does someone get selected to serve on your AAA advisory council?
8. Do you provide or instruct your funded entities to provide materials in alternate formats, including braille, large print electronic or audio?
9. Additional comments: _____

EXERCISE AND FITNESS FOR ALL!

On July 28, Sens. Duckworth (D-IL), Casey (D-PA), Feinstein (D-CA), and Blumenthal (D-CT) introduced the Exercise and Fitness for All Act (S-2504) in the 117th Congress. This bill aims to make exercise equipment and fitness instruction fully accessible to people with disabilities. The bill would require the US Access Board to establish guidelines relating to the number and types of accessible fitness equipment gyms and other fitness facilities are required to have. After the Access Board provides guidelines, the DOJ will need to publish regulations relating to the guidelines requiring fitness facilities to provide accessible equipment and classes and ensure that there is at least one staff member trained in providing assistance and in operating the equipment. A companion bill was introduced in the House of Representatives, H.R. 4756, by Reps. DeSaulnier (D-CA-11) and Young (R-AK-AL).

The Exercise and Fitness for All Act promotes the provision of exercise or fitness equipment, and exercise or fitness classes and instruction, that are accessible to individuals with disabilities. Social isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored what ACB and our members already knew – that the lack of access to accessible exercise and fitness equipment and instruction are a persistent barrier to equal access and results in deteriorating physical and mental health.

Physical activity plays an important role in maintaining health, well-being, and quality of life. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in four U.S. adults is living with a disability, including 93 million Americans who are at high risk for severe vision loss. Adults with disabilities are more likely to have obesity, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, or cancer than adults without disabilities. Physical activity can reduce the risk and help manage these chronic conditions while improving daily living activities and independence. Physical activity can also reduce the risk of increased functional limitations.

Call to Action

ACB commends Sens. Duckworth, Casey, Feinstein and Blumenthal, and Reps. DeSaulnier and Young for reintroducing the Exercise and Fitness for All Act. We encourage all of our members and friends to contact your elected officials and urge them to support the Exercise and Fitness for All Act in the Senate (S. 2504) & in the House (H.R. 4756).

To contact your members of Congress, you may visit www.house.gov and search by your five digit ZIP code, or www.senate.gov and search by your state, to find their member website and specific contact information. You may dial the U.S. Capitol Switch Board and request your member's office as well: 202-224-3121.

When emailing your members of Congress and their staff, please urge your Representatives to cosponsor and support H.R. 4756 in the House, and urge your Senators to cosponsor and support S. 2504 in the Senate. If calling your Representative via their office phone numbers or by connecting through the Capitol Switch Board (202-224-3121), please let them know that you are a constituent and that you would like them to cosponsor the Exercise and Fitness for All Act (S. 2504/H.R. 4756).

When communicating with your members of Congress and their staff, be sure to share your personal experiences when attempting to use fitness or exercise equipment at public facilities. Share with them what it would mean to you to have equal and independent access to the tools and resources to take charge of your health. And ask them to cosponsor the Exercise and Fitness for All Act. Please let the ACB Advocacy Team know the Senators and Representatives you contacted by replying to this message or by emailing: advocacy@acb.org. Thank you, and keep advocating!

—*The ACB Advocacy Team*

Michelle Spillan, Editor / Newsletter Committee: Alex Densmore, Katie Frederick, Irwin Hott, Jenna McCartney, Jill Noble, Vicky Prahin

As always, thanks to the contributors: **Brant Adams, Carolyn Burley, Katie Frederick, Ann Pimley, and Kathy Zolo**. 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. E-mail items to acbo.newsletter@gmail.com or send them to the address below. The winter issue deadline is **November 15. ACB-Ohio, 3805 N. High St., Suite 305, Columbus, Ohio 43214, Phone: 614-261-3561**



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

FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND

ACB-OHIO DATEBOOK

SEPTEMBER 12, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M., VIA ZOOM
OCTOBER 1, AUCTION ITEM DEADLINE
OCTOBER 4, ACBO ON THE RADIO, 11 A.M., VOICECORPS.ORG
OCTOBER 10, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M., VIA ZOOM
OCTOBER 15, WHITE CANE AWARENESS DAY
OCTOBER 29, ACBO BOARD MEETING, 9 A.M.
OCTOBER 29–31, ACBO/ACBI CONVENTION, COLUMBUS, OH
NOVEMBER 1, ACBO ON THE RADIO, 11 A.M., VOICECORPS.ORG
NOVEMBER 14, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M., VIA ZOOM
NOVEMBER 15, NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
DECEMBER 12, MEMBERSHIP CALL, 7:30 P.M., VIA ZOOM
JANUARY 14–17, WINTER SPORTS RETREAT, PUNDERSON

