



Winter 2019

OHIO CONNECTION

American Council of the Blind of Ohio

2019 CONVENTION ROUND UP

By Katie Frederick

“Breaking Down Barriers” was the theme of the 2019 ACB-Ohio and ACB-Indiana joint conference and convention. Over 100 people participated throughout the weekend and enjoyed the activities at the Crowne Plaza North Hotel in Columbus.

This year’s program did not disappoint. Friday afternoon, following a well-received, enlightening tour of the Ohio Statehouse, two workshops informed attendees about non-24 and the latest happenings at Disability Rights Ohio (DRO). Thank you Vanda and DRO for your presentations and support.

Friday evening’s keynote speaker, Linda Luedeman, representing Women at Risk, moved audience members by sharing stories of women who have lived through unspeakable tragedies but persevered and bettered their lives. Linda closed her presentation by encouraging everyone to “get MAD,” sharing we all can make a difference and we all have unique strengths to make that difference.

Saturday breakfast began bright and early. After enjoying the meal, we paid respect to Indiana and Ohio members and friends who passed away during the past year and recognized veterans in attendance. Thank you veterans for your service, and condolences to those who have lost a friend or family member this year.

After breakfast, Ohio and Indiana held separate business meetings. During the Ohio meeting, the executive director, president, and treasurer provided



The scholarship committee with this year’s winners. See page 5 for more about these students’ remarkable achievements.

annual updates to the membership. As is the case each year, elections for the ACB-Ohio board were held. Terry Olandese was elected to his first two-year term as ACB-Ohio's first vice president, Ann Pimley was elected to her second two-year term as secretary, and current board members Brant Adams, Melody Banks, Katie Frederick, and Karen Spry were reelected for their second two-year terms. Molly Marcinick was elected to the board for her first two-year term and we elected Kelsey Nicolay to the board for her first two-year term. Board member Annie Davis chose to take a break from the board this year, but she plans to remain active in her local chapter and the affiliate. Annie, we appreciate your time on the board and we look forward to you joining us again.

Representatives from the following chapters gave brief reports during the business meeting.

- Cincinnati received money for its chapter through the annual Flying Pig Marathon, is planning a holiday party in December, and plans to attend audio-described performances in the upcoming year.
- The Cleveland chapter will hold its annual Christmas party and will continue to work with changes effecting paratransit services, along with other activities.
- The Columbus chapter holds tech sessions prior to meetings, offers its People Helping People (PHP) program, and had many informative speakers in 2019. The annual holiday luncheon is coming up soon and programming is underway for the year ahead.
- The Friends 'n Focus chapter continues its amazing community outreach efforts and has placed more CCTVs around the state. There are over 50 CCTVs in the community now thanks to the work of the Friends 'n Focus chapter—keep up the great outreach!
- The Stark County chapter had speakers from the Massillon Art Museum, the wilderness center, a county board of elections representative spoke in October, the chapter had a picnic in August, and a holiday party to round out 2019.

Following the business meetings, attendees participated in workshops and learned about essential oils or the latest information about wearable glasses to assist with identification. As always, the exhibit hall was popular, and many convention goers stopped by between sessions. As has been the tra-

dition for several years, the 2019 ACB-Ohio scholarships were awarded during lunch this year (learn more about this year's winners elsewhere in this issue). A representative from the Ohio Treasurer's Office gave a brief presentation about STABLE accounts. Interested individuals can learn more about them by visiting www.stableaccount.com.

The Saturday afternoon breakout sessions addressed relevant issues affecting people who are blind or visually impaired, including healthcare options, food delivery services, accessible ways to cut the cord and kiss cable good-bye, and water aerobics. The sessions were well attended and a lot of good information sharing took place, allowing everyone to learn from each other throughout the conference.

A highlight of the conference is the banquet, and this year was no exception. Ying-Ting Chiu, a Ph.D. candidate at OSU's School of Human Education and Ecology, gave the banquet address. She spoke about barriers she faced while trying to make it to the U.S. as a student and the barriers that are present in the education field, as efforts are underway to make science more accessible to students with vision loss. Another annual tradition at the banquet is honoring deserving Ohioans with awards. See elsewhere in this issue for an introduction to two of this year's award recipients. Thanks to En-Vision America and DRO for their support of our banquet and awards this year.

Saturday wouldn't be complete without the annual auction! This year, we raised approximately \$2200 with technology leading the way. An Amazon Fire TV and Apple AirPods were popular high-value items, while many lucky bidders walked away with beautiful handmade blankets, jewelry, and tasty treats.



Members enjoying the banquet: Ken and Lori Woodall; Sandy Moeller, Julie Russell, and Mike Russell

The conference concluded Sunday morning with an interactive session facilitated by Kelsey Nicolay and Deleasa Randall-Griffins, a professor of communication at Ashland University. After all the workshops, presentations and fun, it was time to conclude the 2019 conference and convention.

There are far too many thank-yous to list, but I'll do my best. Thank you, members of the program, exhibit, and site committees for all your hard work throughout the year and at the conference. Members from Ohio and Indiana worked together well, and it was a pleasure co-chairing the program committee with Brant Adams. Thank you convention sponsors for your support throughout the weekend—we appreciate your generosity. Thank you to the volunteers who assisted all weekend; we couldn't have done it without you! Thank you, too, ACB-Ohio office staff for all your work this year. Be sure to read upcoming issues of the *Ohio Connection* to learn about 2020 plans. We hope to see you at the convention next year.

WE CANE GIVE, AND WE DID! *By Jill Noble*

The theme of this year's American Council of the Blind of Ohio and Indiana convention was "Breaking Down Barriers." By collecting old folding canes and donating them to the You Cane Give initiative we will be doing just that—helping to break down the barrier to independence. The initiative is a 501(c)(3) that collects old canes, refurbishes them, and gives them to people who are blind and visually impaired around the world, many who have never owned or used a cane.

During our convention in November we collected 10 canes, which is approximately 10 percent of the total number of registered attendees. Teresa Noble, from Dayton, brought in the most canes, but I am not sure who won the state competition. It wouldn't be fair to compare the two states; being that Ohio hosted this year, we had more in attendance than Indiana. Thanks again to everyone who donated canes. I am sure that James and Wendy, the founders of You Cane Give, appreciate the donation. For more information about the initiative visit youcanegive.org.

INTRODUCING OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

By Vicky Prahin

Kinshuk Tella

David Newmeyer Scholarship

Kinshuk Tella, recipient of this year's David Newmeyer scholarship, is a freshman at Miami University, planning to major in geology and environmental science. He would like to earn a doctorate in this field. He loves music and has performed in many bands, helped children find the instrument that meets their needs, and served as first chair euphonium player in the Miamisburg Wind Symphony for three years. We are going to see more of this young man.



Michael Molchan

Max Edelman Scholarship

Michael Molchan plans to graduate with three degrees: a bachelor's in finance, a bachelor's in economics, and a master's in economics. He is studying for the LSAT and the GMAT, preparing himself for a joint degree in law and business. He also enjoys taking part in mock trials. In his spare time, he reads children's literature on diversity topics at two elementary schools. Michael is this year's recipient of the Max Edelman scholarship.



Ying-Ting Chiu

Nola Webb-McKinney Scholarship

Ying-Ting Chiu is a Ph.D. candidate at The Ohio State University. She won our endowed scholarship from OSU as well as the Nola Webb-McKinney scholarship this year. She hopes to work as a professor to promote science education for students with disabilities, particularly for those with visual impairments.



Jeff Bowersox

JoAnn Fischer Scholarship

In May 2010 Jeff Bowersox graduated *magna cum laude* from Cleveland State University and received the university's Social Work Student of the Year award. He later returned to earn his Master of Social Work degree in December 2018. He is now ready to earn a more advanced degree in social work. Jeff is an employment specialist and case manager for Vocational Guidance Services in Cleveland. In his spare time, he plays for and coaches a beep ball baseball team. ACBO presented Jeff with the JoAnn Fischer scholarship for 2019.



Kirsten Sampson

ACBO-Wright State University Scholarship

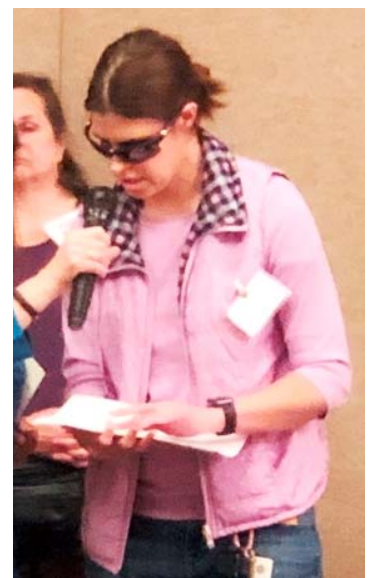
Kirsten Sampson is currently a sophomore at Wright State University pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing with a minor in psychology. She has a passion for helping people, especially babies. Outside of school, Kirsten is active in her church as a children's assistant during services and volunteers by assisting the elderly with landscaping and yard work in the community of Miamisburg. Wright State presented her with the ACBO-WSU endowed scholarship for 2019.



Jenna McCartney

Linwood Walker Scholarship

ACB-Ohio Board of Directors member Jenna McCartney received the Linwood Walker scholarship. She is nearing completion of her master's degree as a certified vision rehabilitation therapist (CVRT). Jenna will graduate from Western Michigan University in December and would love to find a job in the Veterans Administration, where she is currently an intern. "Interning at the VA, I see how the work I do impacts people who are blind or visually impaired every day," Jenna said. "Thank you, ACB-Ohio, for supporting me with this scholarship, giving me a chance to give back to others who are blind."



CONGRATULATIONS AWARD RECIPIENTS!

By Vicky Prahin



A representative from iCanConnect accepting the Community Service Award presented by Melody Banks

ty. Because of their continuing efforts to better the lives of those they touch, ACB-Ohio recognized iCanConnect with this year's Community Service award.

Michelle Spillan, ACBO's administrative assistant, received the Ruth Davidson award. In addition to everything she does in our office, Michelle helps many individuals in the Columbus area with services including transportation, housekeeping, shopping, paying bills, and running errands. She is efficient, friendly, and always cheerful. Michelle represents many of the traits of this award's namesake and is a big asset to ACBO.

ACB-Ohio gave five awards this year. Two are introduced here; the others will appear in a later edition of the *Ohio Connection*.

iCanConnect, also known as the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program, is a federal program administered throughout the United States. They work in conjunction with Perkins School for the Blind and Deaf Services Centers to provide local service to Ohioans. Representatives visit participants in their homes to provide people with significant vision and hearing loss with free equipment and training to connect through communications with friends and family.

Over the years they have provided services to our members and those in the blind-deaf community.



Ruth Davidson Award Winner Michelle Spillan (left) and Ken Morlock Award Winner Katie Frederick

FIGHT CABIN FEVER—JOIN US FOR AT-LARGE MEMBERSHIP CALLS THIS WINTER

By Ann Pimley

You are invited to join us on our ACBO phone calls. We have a speaker for some meetings and for others we have a group discussion. Some of our previous speakers have talked about ScripTalk audible prescription labels, audio description, the Great Lakes ADA Center, attracting members from the ACB Membership Coordinator, Cindy Van Winkle; and both the ACBO state and the ACB national conference/conventions.

The ACBO membership committee started these calls to connect with at-large members; however, we have found that many chapter members and visitors find our meetings engaging and informative. It is a great opportunity to meet new people, share ideas, and learn from speakers and other members.

Winter phone conferences will be on the second Sunday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Some of the dates for 2020 are January 12, February 9, March 8, April 12, and May 10.

Our conference phone number is 218-339-0402. Use passcode 2226446# (make sure to use the # sign at the end of the password). We may change the phone number at a later date, so check for announcements sent by email, call the office, or check on the web site.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Ann Pimley or Vicky Prahin.

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CARTWRIGHT, MCKINLEY REINTRODUCE COGSWELL-MACY ACT

(From Dots and Dashes 11/1/19)

In October, Reps. Matt Cartwright (PA-08) and David B. McKinley (WV-01) re-introduced bipartisan, bicameral legislation to improve educational services for students who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind. Senators Ed Markey (MA) and Shelley Moore Capito (WV) introduced companion legislation in the Senate earlier that day.



The Cogswell-Macy Act would amend the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975 (IDEA) by:

- requiring states to identify and evaluate children who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind;
- expanding knowledge about the scope and quality of special education and related services provided to students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind;
- encouraging states to conduct strategic planning that guarantees all students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind receive the specialized instruction and services they need; and
- increasing the U.S. Department of Education's responsibilities to monitor and report on states' compliance with requirements relating to specialized instruction and services for students who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind.

***This legislation is critical for today's students.
Let your congressional representatives and
senators know how important it is.***

GOVERNOR DEWINE SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER TO STRENGTHEN DRIVEOHIO

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed an [executive order](#) re-authorizing DriveOhio as the statewide center for the advancement of smart mobility solutions. DriveOhio is organized under the following five pillars: Safety, Mobility, Access, Reliability, and Talent. These SMART pillars guide DriveOhio as it works to maintain its role as a national leader in the testing and deployment of automated and connected vehicle technology. Working with industry, academic and local government partners, DriveOhio tests and deploys technology-based transportation solutions to solve real world problems with a focus on safety.



“Reauthorizing DriveOhio is another step for Ohio to continue to be a leader for implementing transportation technology,” said Ohio Governor Mike DeWine. “We are excited to see DriveOhio work with various community partners to begin implementing new technologies that will benefit all Ohioans.”

“Thanks to the leadership of Governor Mike DeWine, the state of Ohio is perfectly positioned to develop and deploy a transportation system that is safer, smarter and more accessible for all Ohioans,” said Jack Marchbanks, director of the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). “The Ohio Department of Transportation is fully committed to this initiative. The smart mobility solutions that DriveOhio are developing and deploying will make Ohio’s roadways safer.”

The executive order outlines an advisory board and working groups comprised of industry, regulatory and research organizations that will provide information, recommendations and best practices to DriveOhio. Also, the executive order highlights the work that the Unmanned Aerial Systems Center (UAS Center) has done with the Air Force Research Laboratories (AFRL) to deploy SkyVision, a radar system that allows drones to fly beyond visual line of sight.



With partners like the Transportation Research Center (TRC), JobsOhio, AFRL, Smart Columbus, local gov-

ernments and academic institutions, the ecosystem of innovation that Ohio has established is second to none in the United States. With the recent US Department of Transportation (USDOT) Automated Driving Systems grant award, Ohio has cemented its presence as a national leader in the development of automated and connected vehicle technology. As projects like the 670 Smart Lane, the 33 Smart Mobility Corridor, the I-90 Lake Effect Corridor, SkyVision and the TRC SmartCenter continue to develop and mature, the future is very bright for Ohio to leverage these assets to build the companies of tomorrow and make Ohio's roads safer for everyone. This executive order is an aggressive statement by the DeWine-Husted administration that Ohio will lead in the automated and connected vehicle technology sector as the mobility/transportation industry continues to evolve.

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

As always, thanks to the contributors: **Katie Frederick, Jill Noble, Ann Pimley, Vicky Prahin, Chris Schumacher, 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. E-mail items to **acbo.newsletter@gmail.com** or send them to the address below. The spring issue deadline is **February 15.**

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FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND



ACB-OHIO DATEBOOK



JANUARY 4

ACBO BOARD MEETING
VIA CONFERENCE CALL

JANUARY 6

ACBO ON THE RADIO
VOICECORPS.ORG

JANUARY 12

AT-LARGE MEMBERSHIP CALL
SEE PAGE 8 FOR DETAILS

JANUARY 17-20

WINTER SPORTS RETREAT
PUNDERSON STATE PARK
GEAUGA COUNTY, OH

FEBRUARY 3

ACBO ON THE RADIO
VOICECORPS.ORG

FEBRUARY 9

AT-LARGE MEMBERSHIP CALL

FEBRUARY 15

OHIO CONNECTION
NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

MEMBERSHIP DUES DEADLINE

FEBRUARY 22-25

LEGISLATIVE SEMINAR
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MARCH 2 & 8

ACBO ON THE RADIO
VOICECORPS.ORG

MARCH 8

AT-LARGE MEMBERSHIP CALL