

IPVI INSIGHTS

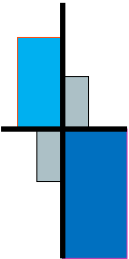


Connecting & Supporting Families Whose Children are Visually Impaired, Including Those with Additional Disabilities

JANUARY 2018

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Filiberto Almendarez III



Happy New Year! I wish for your wishes to come true this year. Get your Braille writer, pen or any tool you need to record a beautiful story for yourself this year. Live a life to be proud of. Do not be afraid of failure. "Failure is a stepping stone to success". Parents stay strong during challenges and focus on living life. I am thankful for being blessed with my family and the serious/not so serious challenges that come with raising a family. The journey does not make you love less. It make you love more and constantly reminds you how little challenges in life are really just that. There are plenty of obstacles in the path of life. Do not allow yourself to become one of them.

Also, I would like to add a big thank you to the Educators who teach our children that seems impossible. They are transformed into I AM POSSIBLE. It's hard to believe that recent reports relate there may be a shortage of educators in the near future for Blind/Visually Impaired students. I say, if you or someone you know is interested in Early Childhood Education or would like to study Special Education and the requirements for teaching exceptional children, there are Universities in Illinois offering the opportunity to obtain certification and even provide financial assistance. If you are interested, please reach out and I would be happy to relate further.

Final note for 2017, a big thank you to the Chicago Lighthouse, their Administrators, Educators, Medical Professional, Staff, Volunteers and the wonderful families that participated in the Christmas party. Another beautiful celebration, which I express continued success. Great job!

Take Care and a Happy and Healthy 2018!

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Birth to Three Children and Families Enjoy Festive Holiday Party

*Pictures by Dominic Calabrese
Chicago Lighthouse*

Children enrolled in The Lighthouse's Birth to Three program along with their families enjoyed a festive holiday celebration recently.

Highlights included a visit from Santa (aka Kevin Sullivan) who presented gifts to all the good little boys and girls!

Guests were also treated to a delicious lunch featuring turkey with all the trimmings plus an assortment of tasty cakes, cookies and other items.

In addition, the children and their families had an opportunity to create holiday decorations.

Special thanks to the Chicago Central Lions Club, Chicago Azteca Lions, Illinois Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (IPVI), and Chicago Lighthouse staff members for donating the gifts.

IPVI Members were also involved in helping with the holiday party and IPVI children were also invited to attend.



A beautifully decorated Christmas tree is one of the visual highlights of holiday party.



Santa (Kevin Sullivan) prepares to greet the children at the Birth to Three Holiday Party.



One of the children shows off the gingerbread cookie ornament she made during the arts and crafts portion of the holiday party.



A group of children pose with Santa during the holiday party.



One of the children enrolled in the Birth to Three program shares a special moment with Santa (Kevin Sullivan).

IPVI would like to say

Thank You 

to the Chicago Lighthouse for letting us participate in the festivities at the Lighthouse/IPVI Holiday Party. We have joined the Lighthouse for many years as the



To help make the Holiday Party Merry and Bright.



PLAY FOR ALL

CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE *and* IPVI FAMILIES

A morning of fun for everyone

The Chicago Children's Museum at Navy Pier

700 E. Grand Avenue, Suite 127

Chicago, IL 60611

Saturday, February 10, 2018

Pre-registered families 9:00 – 1:00

General public 10:00 – 1:00+

To register or for more information, please contact:

Gail Patterson at the Chicago Lighthouse (312) 997-3695

Pre-registration includes:

Free admission for Chicago Lighthouse & IPVI Families

Free shuttle from the Chicago Lighthouse to Navy Pier

First 50 people only!!!

If leaving from Chicago Lighthouse, please arrive at 8:30am.



25 Things Only a Mother of a Child Who is Visually Impaired Would Understand

By Amber Bobnar

Here's something I've learned in the last 10 years: Raising a special needs child is hard, but raising a special needs child who is medically complex is much harder. READ MORE at: WonderBaby.org



Why It's OK to Ask Me About My Special Needs Child

By Nicole Feeney

When you see my daughter, please ask questions! I believe it is my role to educate others about being deafblind and how this shapes (but doesn't define) my child. READ MORE at: WonderBaby.org



My Special Needs Child Is Getting Older and It's Scaring the Crap Out of Me

By Amber Bobnar

I recently asked this question to a group of special needs moms: "If you had a magic wand that could 'cure' your child's disability, would you use it? Why or why not?" What they said might surprise you! READ MORE at: WonderBaby.org



Growing Up With a Special Needs Sister

By Shannon Gardner

Shannon Gardner writes about her son, Kekoa, and his relationship with his younger sister Oliana, who is blind. She writes about how it can be difficult to have a disabled sibling, but also points out how hard her son works to connect with his sister. READ MORE at: WonderBaby.org

Find all of these articles in the topic called **PAR-ENTING**.



***Early Childhood Today Conference
March 7, 2018***

STAR NET Region VI, Lewis University College of Education and the Illinois Early Intervention Training Program will hold their eleventh annual Early Childhood Today Conference at the Lewis University Romeoville Campus on March 7, 2018. This conference is for parents, caregivers and professionals who shape the lives of children ages birth to 5 years old.

Registration fee only \$35

Includes Continental Breakfast

**Six Hours of Professional Development
Credit Provided**

If you have any questions please contact our office at starnet@swccase.org or at 708-342-5370.

Registration available in January of 2018.

Thank You!

STAR NET Region VI
6020 West 151st Street
Oak Forest, Illinois
60452708-342-5370

STAR NET | (708) 342-5370 |
starnet@swccase.org |

MAKING SENSE

AFB Scholarships: The American Council of the Blind (ACB) awards over \$45,000 in scholarships each year to students attending technical college or entering as a college freshman, undergraduate or graduate student. Students must be legally blind in both eyes, carry a 3.0 GPA and be active in their schools or communities. Deadline for applications is February 15, 2018. To learn more and access the online application, visit www.acb.org/scholarship or call Dee Theien at the national office at 800-866-3242.

New Audio Description App: Audio description makes a movie or television program come alive for someone with vision loss. Actiview is a new app for an iPhone or iPad that syncs the audio description to a movie no matter where you are, on your living room sofa or movie theatre. Also available on the app are other accessibility tools like closed captioning, American Sign Language Interpretation and amplified audio. While the movie selection is somewhat limited at this time, movie titles are coming shortly. When people download the app, this shows the Hollywood movie studios there is demand for these services. Try out the app on these new releases: *Coco*, *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, *Breath, Wonderstruck*, and *Dealt*. To download the app, search for Actiview in the App Store. The Actiview app developers are interested in your feedback, too — you can contact them with your comments and suggestions by emailing team@activiewapp.com.

Reprinted from MAKING SENSE, January 2018, *Second Sense, Beyond vision loss*, 65 East Wacker Place, Suite 1010, Chicago, IL 60601, 312-236-8569, www.second-sense.org.



APH NEWS

NEW! Large Magnetic/Dry-Erase Board

1-03557-00 — \$41.00

Related Product



All Aboard Magnetic/Dry-Erase Board: 1-03559-00 — \$26.00

A magnetic/dry-erase board that's useful for a myriad of learning activities.

The Large Magnetic/Dry-Erase Board can be used as a standalone product to accommodate activities involving magnetic-backed pieces or activities requiring dry-erase markers. The working surface of the board measures 21 3/8 x 13 1/2 inches and is affixed to a blue, rigid vinyl that provides a visual border. This board is intended to be used on a flat, stable working surface. Visit APH's shopping site to locate products and components that work on the magnetic/dry-erase surface, or use the board in combination with commercially-acquired or handcrafted items.

Includes

- Large Magnetic/Dry-Erase Board
- Cleaning/Care Instructions, in print and in braille

Recommended ages: All ages.

NEW! DeafBlind Pocket Communicator

1-06999-00 — \$57.00



A no-tech, on-the-go communication solution for people who are deafblind!

APH's DeafBlind Pocket Communicator (DBPC) is durable, washable, and easily fits in your pocket or bag. The smooth side for numbers and the matte side for letters lets you know "at first touch" which side you need to chat with someone. The breakaway lanyard option gives you some freedom to carry other items and to access the DBPC with ease.

Communication cards can be helpful when using the DBPC with people at a coffee shop or in a store. Sample messages might include: "How much does this cost?" or "Use my finger to show me the answers on this device." Feel free to design your own communication cards to meet your unique needs.

For more information and examples on developing communication cards with people who are deafblind, please contact these agencies:

Helen Keller National Center, <https://www.helenkeller.org/hknc/communication-training>
Teaching Deaf-Blind People to Communicate and Interact with the Public: Critical Issues for
Travelers who are Deaf-Blind by Eugene Bourquin and Dona Sauerburger,
www.sauerburger.org/dona/REviewdbcomm.html

DeafBlind Services Minnesota, visionlossresources.org/programs/dbsm

Seattle Lighthouse for the Blind, Deaf-Blind Program, www.deafblindlh.org/service.html

National Federation of the Blind, Deaf-Blind Communication Technology, <https://nfb.org/images/nfb/publications/bm/bm14/bm1409/bm140906.htm>

3-D Print Your Own DeafBlind Communicator for Free!

The APH Tactile Graphic Image Library (TGIL) has a file which allows you to print the DBPC on your own 3-D printer, according to its ability. Sign in or register for a free account today!

NEW! Braille Datebook, 2018

1-07899-18 — \$81.00

Replacement Items

Braille Datebook, 2018 Calendar Pages only: 1-07898-18 — \$30.00

Braille Datebook, 2-Ring Binder: 25-070-001 — \$23.25

Braille Datebook, Filler Paper and Tabs: 1-07897-00 — \$13.00



The Braille DateBook is an attractive planner-organizer designed specifically for braille users! Keep track of appointments, addresses, family schedules, class assignments, and more. Use it at your desk or on the go — it is sturdy, compact, and fits in a backpack or brief case.

The Braille DateBook is housed in a small, rugged binder. The binder holds one hundred pages, including the calendar and other tabbed pages. Its hook/loop fastener keeps all materials together. The binder includes a slate pocket that is on the inside of the front cover. Note: A slate is not included with the Braille DateBook. The pocket on the inside spine of the binder includes an APH Saddle-Shaped Stylus.

The tabbed calendar pages are made of durable plastic. Note that you will need to buy a new calendar for each year.

The included filler paper pack contains 250 sheets of punched, 4×6 inch braille paper. Blank tabs are packaged with the filler paper. Use tabs to create sections such as addresses, family schedules, financial transactions, emergency contacts, medical information, travel itineraries, shopping lists, or to do lists.

Includes

- Binder

- Calendar pages
- Blank filler pages and blank tabs
- A Saddle-Shaped Stylus

Print and braille tips pamphlet

Recommended ages: 11 years and up.

Make Your SMART Braille Even Smarter – Free Upgrade for UEB!



As of September 5, 2017, APH began shipping SMART Braille with updated software that makes Unified English Braille (UEB) available in the Language Settings! To change to UEB, choose "English-U.E.B."

Any SMART Braille you already have can be updated with this latest free software. Download the instructions and latest software to update your SMART Braille.

The **APH SMART Braille by Perkins** is an updated **Perkins Braille** that displays, vocalizes, and produces embossed braille based on what a student types. With the built-in app "Building on Patterns: Kindergarten," early braille students can have continual access and opportunity to practice braille outside of traditional braille lesson plans with TVIs.

NEW! Color-by-Texture CIRCUS Coloring Pages

1-03333-00 — \$27.00

Related Product

Color-by-Texture Marking Mats Kit: 1-03332-00 — \$119.00



Color-by-Texture CIRCUS Coloring Pages offers theme-based coloring pages to complement APH's Color-by-Texture Marking Mats. This packet includes 25 print/tactile coloring pages of a circus tent, juggler, cotton candy, tightrope walker, unicycle, popcorn, clowns, and much more. Each illustration is identified with a braille/print label.

CIRCUS Coloring Pages is ideal for promoting shared art experiences within a variety of instructional settings with sighted peers. For additional coloring page packets and coloring materials from APH, visit: www.aph.org

Free downloadable coloring pages can be located on APH's Tactile Graphic Image Library (TGIL): www.aph.org/tgil

Recommended ages: 3 years and up.

BrailleBlaster™

The American Printing House for the Blind has been making educational materials more accessible for almost as long as braille has existed. And now we're transforming access as dramatically as braille did back in the 1850s, with the introduction of BrailleBlaster™.

This revolutionary new software tool translates text into braille more quickly, easily, and accurately. This breakthrough means that students can have braille learning materials on the first day of class along with their sighted peers, rather than waiting weeks or months for their textbooks.

Instead of a painstaking manual transcription process that can take weeks or months, BrailleBlaster efficiently converts print into braille. **BrailleBlaster gives students who are blind or visually impaired the power to learn at the same pace as their sighted peers.** In the past, these students were at a disadvantage because they couldn't learn alongside their classmates until they received braille versions of their textbooks.

What's more, BrailleBlaster is available to download at no cost. We think that's the right thing to do, and it reflects APH's commitment to making sure people who are blind or visually impaired have the same educational and entertainment opportunities as anyone else. BrailleBlaster's innovative technology puts students who are blind or visually impaired on equal footing with their sighted peers—letting them show everyone that they can achieve just as much as anyone else, if they're given equal access to information.

BrailleBlaster can be used by braille transcribers, teachers, students, and parents—anyone who needs to produce braille material. The software provides all the tools to efficiently produce a high-quality embossed braille textbook from an original publisher file using Liblouis (liblouis.org/), an open-source braille translator. Early testers of BrailleBlaster told us they saw a substantial increase in the number of pages a braille transcriber could produce compared to current methods.

I invite you to learn more about the technology behind BrailleBlaster and download the software at brailleblaster.org so you can experience it for yourself. When you do, I know you'll be as excited as all of us at APH are about this new technology and the equal access it represents for millions of students.

Dr. Craig Meador, President



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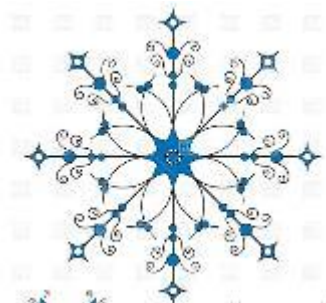
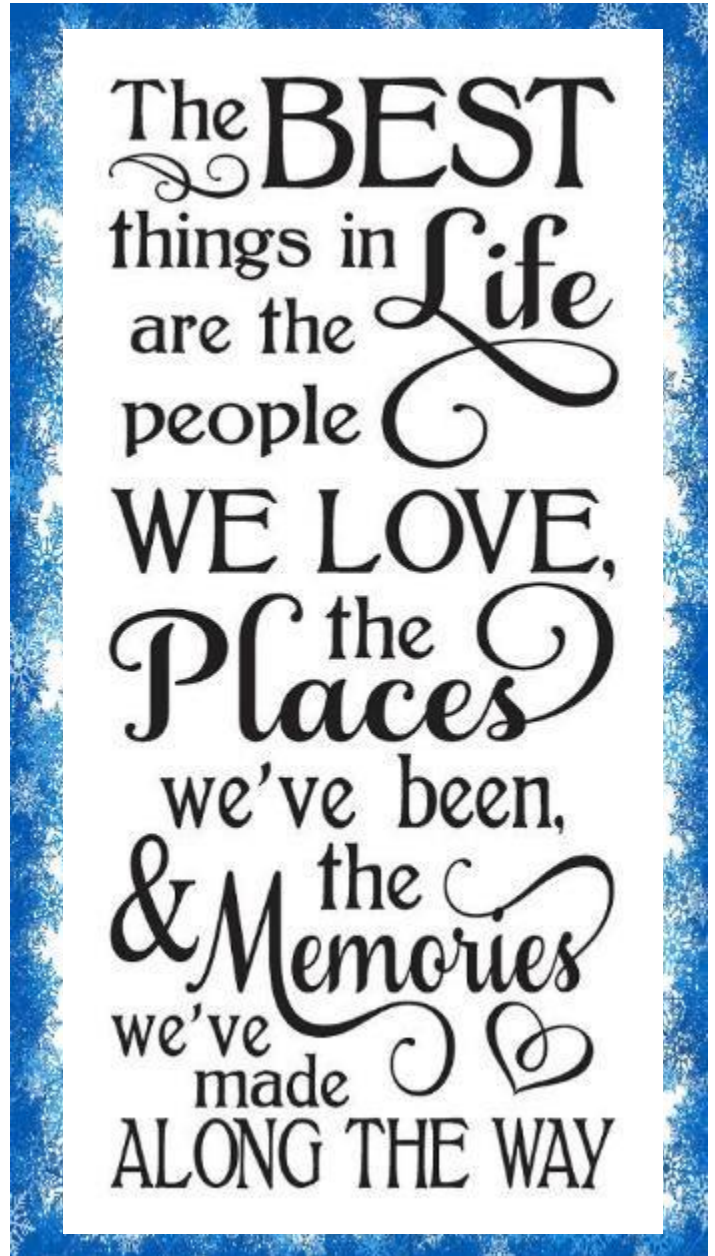
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Join **IPVI** or renew your membership today!

The *Illinois Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments* is a state-wide, non-profit organization that enables parents to find information and resources for their children who are blind or visually impaired, including those with additional disabilities.

Your IPVI membership dues or generous contributions help to support all of our ongoing efforts:

- Regular communications which include: workshops, conferences, training seminars, legislative issues, organizational announcements, products, and advice about raising a child who is visually impaired.
- Offers several \$500 college scholarships each year.
- Publishes a resource catalog which includes anything and everything to do with visual impairment.
- Conducts training and support sessions where parents share experiences and ideas.
- Holds fun outings adapted for children with visual impairments at athletic, cultural, educational, and entertainment settings.
- Represents parents of children with visual impairments at conferences, public hearings, and on committees.

What does IPVI do?

- Promotes and provides information through meetings, correspondence, publications, etc., which will help parents meet the special needs of their children with visual impairments.
- Facilitates the sharing of experiences and concerns in order to provide emotional support and relief from feelings of isolation for parents and their families.
- Creates a climate of opportunity for children who are blind in the home, school, and society.
- Fosters communication and coordination of services among federal, state, and local agencies and organizations involved with providing services to people who are visually impaired.
- Advocates on a statewide level for services to children who are visually impaired and their families.
- Keeps members informed about current proposals and actions which impact on children with visual impairments and their families.

Check one:

Parent/Guardian Membership: \$15 per year.

Child(ren)'s Names: _____

Birthdate(s) of my visually impaired child(ren): _____

My child(ren)'s eye condition: _____

I give my permission to release my name to other parents.

Group/Agency Membership \$50 per year.

Extended Family/Friend Assoc. Membership \$15/year.

Medical Specialist \$50 per year.

Scholarship Fund \$10.00

Donation: \$ _____ (tax deductible)

New Membership

Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) - _____

Email: _____

Please enclose this form along with your payment by check to:

IPVI • P.O.Box 316634 • Chicago, IL 60631

Have questions or need more information?

**Call us at
1-773-882-1331**

**Illinois Association for Parents of
Children with Visual Impairments
P. O. Box 316634
Chicago, IL 60631**

IPVI CALENDAR

- | | | |
|---------------------|--|--------------------|
| ▶ February 10, 2018 | PLAY FOR ALL | Chicago, Navy Pier |
| ▶ March 7, 2018 | STARNET Early Childhood Today Conference | Oak Forest |

Please call
1-773-882-1331
for any questions, concerns,
or comments that IPVI can
help you with.

**Newsletter Deadline for
February 2018 is January 15 2018**



**Check Out
www.ipvi.org**

Calendar of Events!
News and Updates!
Useful Links to Web Sites!
And more...