

Vision Access

A Magazine by, for and about People with Low Vision.

**Volume 25, Number 3
winter, 2019**

**Published Tri-annually for Members in These Formats:
Large Print, Email, and Audio CD.**

**Copyright © 2019
by the
Council of Citizens with Low Vision International,
a not-for-profit organization affiliated with
the American Council of the Blind.**

**Council of Citizens with Low Vision International
Linda Allison, CCLVI Treasurer
6010 Lilywood Lane
Knoxville, TN 37921
(844) 460-0625
www.cclvi.org
cclvi@cclvi.org**

Views expressed in Vision Access by contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or of CCLVI. All rights revert to individual contributors upon publication.

Vision Access welcomes submissions from people with low vision, from professionals such as ophthalmologists, optometrists, low vision specialists, and everyone with something substantive to contribute to the ongoing discussion of low vision and all of its ramifications.

Submissions are best made as attachments to email or may also be made in clear typescript. Vision Access cannot assume responsibility for lost manuscripts. Deadlines for submissions are: April 1, August 1 and December 1.

**Submissions may be mailed to
Mike Keithley, Vision Access Editor
191 East El Camino Real #150
Mountain View, CA 94040
(650) 386-6286
editor@cclvi.org**

**Publications Committee:
Joyce Kleiber, Ken Stewart, Tom Lealos, Christine Chaikin, and Mike Keithley.**

**Join our Social Networks:
CCLVI is now on Twitter at twitter.com/CCLVI_Intl and Facebook by searching for "Council of Citizens with Low Vision International."**

**Vision Access Magazine Feedback:
You can send your vision access magazine feedback to:
vaccess@cclvi.org**

Questions? Email fb@cclvi.org.

CONTENTS

The Editor's Corner, Mike Keithley.....	4
CCLVI President's Report, Sara J. Conrad.....	4
Start A New Tradition, Kathy Farina.....	6
New President Excited to Help CCLVI, Sarah Peterson.....	7
Listen to CCLVI Vision Access and more, Robert Spangler.....	9
Smithsonian Offers Tours for Visually Impaired.....	10
You are the future of Let's Talk Low Vision, Bill Takeshita.....	12
Hear Your Medication Talk, Doug Rose.....	13
Where Are They Now?, submitted by Allen Casey.....	15
Requests for Contributions.....	17
CCLVI officers and Directors.....	17
CCLVI Local Affiliates.....	18
CCLVI Membership Application.....	19

Editor's Corner

by Mike Keithley

Happy holiday! Yes I know it's over by the time you get this, but I like to think the joyful holiday spirit doesn't end when the season's over.

Do you know about the CCLVI membership meetings on the 4th Monday of the month? Sara mentions them in her address. I attended the December event and was quite impressed by the effort low vision people put forth to continue living happy lives. It seems to me that it emphasizes the notion that once you get used to living with low vision, it doesn't hurt the spirit and you deal with it well.

Most of the discussion in this meeting revolved around crafts people like to do and techniques to keep doing it. From knitting to wood working, there are lots of low vision solutions out there. I think you should attend these meeting. There for CCLVI members, but I'm sure non-members will be welcomed.

And now for some of this issue's content. The Scholarship Committee has come up with a cool way to keep track of what past recipients are doing: write about it! This time we hear from Lindsey Tilden, Brian Petraits, and Santa Clause, who got a gift on the Ellen DeGeneres show.

Sarah Peterson is back with a profile on me, er President Conrad. "You have to forgive him folks, he's in a flighty mood." That King, my one-time guide dog.

Yet one more thing I'd like to tell you is that CCLVI has started phone mailboxes for different content. Right now there are two: Let's Talk Low Vision and the audio version of the current Vision Access. Read about this new service in this issue.

So enjoy your Vision Access, and be sure not to give that hidden See's candy to your dog, though canes don't mind!

CCLVI President's Report, December 2018

By Sara J Conrad

Dear CCLVI Friends and Colleagues:

I hope you all have had a wonderful holiday season! I hope you have a chance to reflect on another year passing, consider the new year and new changes ahead, celebrate with loved ones, eat delicious treats, and cherish the many blessings given to you. Every year I feel this way, but especially this year, I am

recognizing the gift of gratitude. I personally wrote one gratitude post on Facebook each day of November and am continuing to list the things I am thankful for each morning in reflection. There are all kinds of crazy in our world today, but I am finding it valuable to remember the good things, too. It balances perspective.

On a personal note, I am grateful in this season for my new job. I started my first legal job post law school with the Wisconsin State government on October 15. I am a Program and Policy Analyst with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. I enjoy using my legal background in administrative rulemaking, legislative briefing, and policy-making projects. Thank you to all in CCLVI who supported me throughout my undergraduate and law school years. Your encouragement and mentorship is greatly appreciated. I am proud to report that on November 13, I was sworn in as a licensed attorney in the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

When I think of additional gratitude this season, my CCLVI and ACB families comes to mind. I am grateful for the opportunity to live in a country where, even if it feels smaller some days than others, we have voice. There are a lot of people with disabilities or other diversities living in other countries who never have voice. I am grateful for our parent organization, ACB, taking stands to support access for all people to all things in both our nation and world. I am grateful for CCLVI's opportunities to advance advocacy, education, support, and community with a low vision lens. I am grateful for my fellow officers and colleagues in both ACB and CCLVI who share passion for equality, equity, and opportunity. Last but certainly not least, I am grateful for each and every one of you. I may not even know your name if our paths have not yet crossed in my presidency, although I most certainly hope we engage soon.

Regardless, you are all very special to me for who you are and for what you bring to our community. So in this season of giving thanks, I thank you and appreciate you.

Looking back on this past year, many things changed! My incredible predecessor and our current Immediate Past President, Leslie Spooone, completed her presidency. She led with kindness and zeal for our organization and modeled great commitment to serving others. I am and will always be grateful to Leslie for who she is and all the gifts and talents she brings to our organization. We further saw transition within our CCLVI leadership in July with the election of Jim Jirak and Rick Morin to the CCLVI Board. Our board is having productive, efficient, and collaborative meetings. I am proud to serve with such experienced and talented colleagues.

Let me share a few more highlights going on in CCLVI this fall that will continue into winter and spring. We held monthly membership calls this fall with great success. The calls were well attended. We will resume calls on the fourth Monday of every month beginning in January. The purpose of these calls is to have informal discussion. Although there is usually a specific topic for each call, we are always open to however the community wishes to direct the conversation. Our Let's Talk Low Vision calls are continuing in January. I want to publicly thank Dr. Bill for his support of CCLVI and the low vision community by facilitating these informative calls. You can find information about both LTLV and Membership calls on our website.

Our Convention Committee under the leadership of Jim Jirak is beginning to plan for July 2019 in Rochester, New York. This year, CCLVI celebrates its 40th Anniversary! Stay tuned for more details. You can find basic details about the entire ACB convention at acb.org. Feel free to contact Jim or me if you have additional questions or do not use a computer. Our Fundraising Committee is thriving under the direction of Kathy Farina. The committee established a fundraiser for CCLVI gear, including varied colors of polo shirts, coffee mugs, ornaments, and more. Be sure to check out the fundraiser using the link sent out on our email list or by visiting our website. The company agreed to work directly with CCLVI to assist with the ordering process as needed. Support CCLVI and sport CCLVI!

We are still looking for members to join committees. In particular, Patti Cox is looking for members for our Public Relations and Legislative Advocacy Committees. If you have skills and interests in these areas, please contact me. I will gladly

connect you to these or other committees and will work with committee chairs to get you involved in our organization. If you are looking for other ways to get involved, we sure need you! Please consider submitting articles and ideas to our editor for these Vision Access publications. We are always looking for new content about low vision. I also encourage you to attend our LTLV and membership calls to keep involved with our community. Finally, I ask you to keep communication open with me so I know how to best support CCLVI as a whole and each of you as individuals.

Thank you again for everything you bring to our great organization. In this new year, I have high hopes and strong expectations for CCLVI. Together, we can continue to support people with low vision.
Best,
Sara J. Conrad, Esq.
President, Council of Citizens with Low Vision International
Director, American Council of the Blind

Start A New Tradition!

By Kathy Farina, Fundraising Committee Chair

The Council of Citizens With Low Vision International (CCLVI) is selling some items that make great holiday gifts.

There are lovely holiday ornaments, mugs and polo shirts. They all have the CCLVI logo, and you can view them all at fundraiser.cclvi.org.

This CCLVI fundraiser is from now until January 31, 2019. To order, go to www.theteespot.com/cclvi. Not comfortable shopping online? Call The Teespot at (865) 539-8220.

Happy Shopping!

New President Excited to Help CCLVI, Members Flourish

BY Sarah Peterson

As Winter Storm Carter bore down on Lincoln, Neb., I couldn't have felt more unmotivated that dreary Saturday afternoon. I wanted nothing more than to cozy up with The Muppet Christmas Carol and a big mug of creamy eggnog, ignoring my looming to-do list and "adulting" in general.

But getting to chat with Sara Conrad changed my mood entirely. She is basically Superwoman, and hearing her story filled me with a surge of energy. Calling the vibrant, bustling little metropolis of Madison, Wisconsin her home, Sara is living the dream. Happening restaurants, coffee houses, libraries, grocery stores, theaters and other attractions surround her downtown residence. When needing access to places further out, she relies on carpooling with friends, Uber or Lyft, or Madison's reliable public transportation system. Her Seeing Eye dog, a Golden Retriever named Renee, helps her navigate while out and about.

"I really like it here," she said. "It's an up and coming city with diverse, intellectual people. I love that it's good sized without being overwhelming. It's also safe, which is nice as a young woman with a visual impairment who walks often."

Most importantly, Sara makes a living by helping others. She serves the state government as a policy analyst to advocate for families living in poverty. She is currently working on writing and revising

administrative rules, ensuring they are implemented in local agencies and positively impacting Wisconsin's families, especially children.

But Sara never forgets her roots. Hailing from Stevensville, Michigan, she appreciates the closeness the tiny farming community offered. She loved growing up in a place where everyone knew each other and viewed her as Sara the person-- not Sara with the visual impairment.

"I never felt singled out as someone with a disability," she said. "I appreciated growing up in a place where everyone didn't see me as different, but supported me for being me."

Because Sara had been diagnosed with a brain tumor in her optic nerves at one year old, she spent some of her childhood maneuvering through the challenges of fighting cancer, as well as vision loss. Completely blind in her right eye, Sara's left-eye vision is stable with a 20/200 acuity and seven-percent visual field. A portable video reader and computer magnification program assist with daily tasks. She maneuvered through her childhood with on-and-off chemotherapy treatments and encountered other health difficulties such as an epilepsy diagnosis.

"I had challenges, but my parents were very good at framing them as just another day and involving me in the conversation about my

circumstances," she said. "They helped me acquire a sense of self-advocacy and independence."

Nevertheless, she admitted to experiencing a growing frustration with not having access to public transportation. She made it a goal to eventually move to a place that offered it. But in the meantime, Sara stayed busy with her many friends and various activities such as National Honor Society, showing horses, theater, studying piano for 10 years and competing in opera competitions, which earned her recognition as the twelfth best vocalist in the state. Sara also acquired her law interest later in high school. Prior to attending law school in Madison, she ventured to study special education and prelaw at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.

"Serving children of diversity and ensuring they are taken care of in their communities is very important to me," she said. "I still hope to do something with education policies."

But it wasn't until she met American Council of the Blind members at the 2009 convention in Orlando that she decided to pursue law as a career. An ACB undergraduate scholarship brought her to the national convention where she met new mentors and friends, many of whom encouraged her to set her sights on law school.

"I was good at telling myself I wasn't smart enough or a good enough reader to become an attorney," she said. "It took

frustrations with college challenges, as well as my encounters and work with ACB members such as John McCann and Jeff Thom, for me to realize I had the potential."

Sara quickly realized she had found a treasure in the organization and desired to participate on a deeper level. Falling in love with its members and values, she jumped right in and joined the ACB student Board, serving as secretary and president. Seeking another affiliate with more age diversity after beginning law school, she received CCLVI's Fred Scheigert Scholarship and was elected to its board of directors.

"Being someone who can relate to concerns of those with visual impairments yet who also has one foot in the sighted world is what really got me hooked to CCLVI," she said, indicating she hopes to use both perspectives to bridge that gap.

And if all of that isn't impressive enough, Sara was elected as new CCLVI president in July, 2018. She will spend her two-year term organizing and facilitating Board meetings, as well as attending committee gatherings in an ex-officio status.

"I plan to avoid micromanaging, yet ensuring committee leaders feel empowered to lead and avoiding micromanaging," she said. "I just want to pop in to show support and give ideas."

Sara takes her new role very seriously and intends on using her

spare time to help CCLVI move toward the bright future she envisions for the organization. Goals include growing and retaining membership with a broader age spectrum, enhancing finances and conducting more fundraisers, and deepening the connection between its members across the nation using more conversational meetings. She also sees the organization playing a key role in some of the issues facing the low vision community in today's society.

"I want to ensure the whole visual spectrum is considered--not just those who are completely blind--in terms of technology, employment, transportation, and relationship and family concerns," she said. "I want to empower our leaders and members to participate in all of those discussions and help find solutions to the barriers."

Recent examples of projects in the works include accessible voting and campaigning for Medicare legislation changes.

"I want to keep the conversation going between our membership across the country and stay in tune

to what locations are doing," she said. "If we hear about something being successful in one state, perhaps we can apply it to another."

To anyone who feels discouraged, isolated or unsure of how to become more involved, Sara speaks motivating words of wisdom. She reminds us that everyone in the world has differences, but some of us have differences society labels as "disabilities."

"CCLVI offers a place to share differences, work together and feel empowered. "Everyone has an important role to play in the world, and if we don't realize our full potential to be a part of a community, we miss out personally and other groups miss out on what we can offer," she said.

"As president, I'm honored to help everyone voice their ideas and use their talents in our organization. If you're not sure how your abilities can be used, please reach out to me."

Well said, Sara. Time is waisting and the world is waiting!

Listen to CCLVI Vision Access and Let's Talk Low Vision and More On Your Phone

By Robert Spangler, Chair – Ecommunications Committee

Hello CCLVI friends and members.

In July the membership voted to provide another informational link to

allow members to keep up-to-date on CCLVI happenings.

We are now using the Philmore System to provide another avenue to

members to hear what is going on in CCLVI. We are just beginning and have placed two sub-boxes in operation. You can call the CCLVI line at (773) 572-6315. There you can leave a message for us with your comments and suggestions in the main box or press the number one for the November "Let's Talk Low

Vision" or the number two to hear the Fall 2018 "Vision Access."

I encourage you all to check this system out and give us your suggestions as to what you would like to have us make available on the remaining sub-boxes.

Thanks and good listening!

Smithsonian Offers Tours for Visually Impaired wjla.com/news/local/smithsonian-tours-visually-impaired

WASHINGTON (ABC7): The Smithsonian American Art Museum is offering ways for people with different abilities to explore and enjoy the artwork, history and culture in Washington D.C. Docent-led tours for the visually impaired are opening new opportunities for locals.

People from all over the world travel to the Nation's Capital. So far, more than two million visitors this year from around the world have walked the halls of the American Art Museum and got a peek in to the lives of Americans past and present. Some residents felt they were not able to enjoy the venue like everyone else.

"This collection is a reflection of who we are as Americans. It tells a history of our culture and our people and it does it visually," said Carol Wilson, Lunder Education Chair at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

One Thursday afternoon, a small group started a docent-led tour.

Some arm in arm, leisurely strolled down one of the halls.

"When we walk into that gallery, we will be surrounded by people staring at us because these are portraits," explained museum docent David Weisz.

Exhibits for sight alone can cause some visitors to feel isolated.

"I would go into a museum and I would feel lost, many times depressed. Like, this is not for me. They don't want me here. And now I leave and I have these images in my head which I can refer to many times for weeks, even years later," said Kilof Legge.

Legally Blind Legge is not alone.

"Kilof, what do you see? Because I just see a bunch of colors," said visually impaired visitor John Guzik as he looked at a painting.

"At this point I can't drive, read, recognize people," explained Legge..

"I tell people, it's like I see one piece of a 1,000-piece puzzle," said Jane Stanley.

"If your vision is a circle, I have an M&M in the middle," explained Guzik.

In the monthly tour at the museum, all the participants are visually impaired. Stereotypical canes and blacked out sunglasses are nowhere to be found. While the group does walk slower, they travel with confidence and help each other out.

"Surfaces change, so be careful. And it's a little bit, slightly downhill," Weisz said as he was leading the group out of a doorway.

"I look like I can see a lot more than I see. I guess I just want to see more so I try," said Stanley warmly.

The tours have specially trained docents that use colorful and descriptive words. They pass around touchable object like marble.

"Even though it's cold, it's not the hardest rock. It's a soft rock compared to a lot of others," said Weisz as the participants were passing the white block around.

At the next artwork, Weisz took out a painter's palette with multiple 3D painted brushstrokes and pointed out which one resembled the painting they were studying. He also played music inspired by each piece.

"All the spectacular things going on and you're going to hear in a minute the waves. The wind and the waves," Weisz said over the

orchestra music coming from his phone.

Some paintings and sculptures have foam-board cutouts for fingers to follow along as it's being described. It brings the unseen piece to life.

"In this area here, we have some trees. They are dark, very beautifully painted, very detail painted. And in the background, I'm going to move you up here, this is a combination up here of sky and mountains," Weisz described to Stanley as he helped guide her hand around the foam board.

"Having somebody describe what you're seeing, I think is an amazing service that the museum provides," said Guzik.

While many visitors spend a few moments looking at a piece, this group gets to experience more than what's on the surface.

"The beauty of a work of art is you can experience it even if you can't see it," said Wilson.

Artwork so often creates a space for discussion, learning and community. For the visually impaired, that faded away until now.

"It's stimulating and it adds an extra dimension to my life that was missing," said Stanley.

"Now I leave and I have these images in my head which I can refer to many times for weeks, even years later," said Legge.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum offers tours for the visually impaired and tours in sign language.

For more information, access americanart.si.edu/visit/family-activities.

You are the future of Let's Talk Low Vision

By Bill Takeshita, O.D., F.A.A.O., F.C.O.V.D

"Thank you for the "Let's Talk Low Vision" podcasts! These podcasts have changed my life. I did not know how to go on with my life after developing low vision. Fortunately, I was told about the Let's Talk Low Vision podcasts and so many of my problems were solved," wrote a listener with low vision from Los Angeles, California.

Let's Talk Low Vision is a podcast produced each month by the Council of Citizens with Low Vision International. Listeners can dial in from their home phone or their cell phone and listen to a variety of topics that related directly to people with low vision. Topics include treatments on the latest in eye disease, what's new in low vision aids and technology, how to cope with low vision, and many more topics. All the podcasts are presented by people who have low vision, and this makes this program uniquely beneficial for people with low vision.

"I had so many questions on how I might be able to receive assistance to purchase visual aids that would allow me to continue to work. I did not know where to search for low vision aids. I did not know if I should tell my employer of my vision problem. Fortunately, the Let's Talk Low Vision podcasts gave

me the answers that I needed," said a woman from Georgia.

The committee members of Let's Talk Low Vision would like your help. We would like to know the topics you would like to hear and we also welcome your questions that you may have related to your situation. Please feel free to write to us at letstalklowvision@cclvi.org.

LTLV conferences are held on the third Tuesday of the month from 5:30 to 7 PM, and the phone number is (712) 432-3447 with ID code 145330. The schedule for the 2019 LTLV events is below.

Lets Talk Low Vision Topics for January-July 2019

January 15, 2019: There Are No Strangers: Networking for fun, friends and funds, Leslie Spoone and Christine Chaikin

Come join us for tips and tricks on networking with others. Every time you meet someone new, there is an opportunity to make a new connection. Meeting new people is fun and can lead to long lasting friendships.

February 19: Script Talk, June Robbins

Do you have difficulty identifying your medications and reading instructions? Script talk is a small portable device that can help you.

March 19: Emergency Preparedness, Robert Spangler.

A discussion on Emergency Preparedness

April 16: Comparison of AIRA Versus Be My Eyes

AIRA is a service that one may purchase where a staff member of AIRA will tell the user information about what is in his or her surroundings as the person wears a camera in their glasses. Be My Eyes is a similar program that uses volunteers who tell the user about what is in front of him or her by using the client's cell phone camera. We will have actual users who talk

about the differences between the two systems.

May 21: Curious About Convention?

Dr. Bill and members of the CCLVI Board discuss the events planned for the upcoming CCLVI Convention in Rochester New York this July.

June 18: Tips and tricks to pursue a professional career.

Sara Conrad will discuss how to acquire assistance for completing college with success. She will describe how to become a client for the Department of Rehabilitation and to meet with counselors at your school to help you to acquire equipment and supplies you need for school.

July 16: How To Use the National Library Service Digital Talking Book Player, Christine Chaikin

Hear Your Medication Talk

By Doug Rose, Secretary Humboldt Council of the Blind

Nearly 21 million Americans, many 65 years or older, have low vision or are blind. For us, inability to clearly read a prescription label can result in unnecessary injury or death. Accessible prescription labels resolve this dangerous dilemma.

Some of you have been advocating for your pharmacy to provide this service. In Nevada, the Nevada Council of the Blind got Senate Bill 131 passed. SB131 is a prescription reader bill requiring Nevada retail pharmacies to provide accessible prescription labeling upon request.

More information can be found on the Nevada Legislature site at www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/79th2017/Reports/history.cfm?ID=358, and the language of SB131 can be found at www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/79th2017/Bills/SB/SB131_EN.pdf.

Accessible labels include talking labels, large print labels and braille labels. An accessible label increases the chance that we're taking the correct pills, and the right dosage. It also helps us know when and how to refill our prescription, and enables

us to safely and independently manage our health care needs. In the past, we used large print labels or rubber bands, and felt the shape of the pill, or relied on sighted assistance to identify the right drug. These are stop-gap measures at best.

At the recent California Council of the Blind convention, a resolution was passed to ask the legislature for a law requiring pharmacies to provide this service. Why is a law necessary? Accessible prescription labels are available across the US and Canada, but not every pharmacy participates in offering these options. Adoption of this technology is driven by demand from the consumer. If you need this service, ask your pharmacist for these labels. There is no extra charge for an accessible label.

Our council of the blind advocated that one of our local independent pharmacies start using accessible labels. We chose this pharmacy because they provide free delivery. Also they are able to make the talking labels locally. Some of the chain stores such as CVS, offer talking prescription labels, but through mail-order only. The orders are shipped to Maryland where they record the label. This means your prescription could take up to a week to be filled, whereas our independent store can provide same-day talking labels. The system we advocated for is from En-Vision America, called ScriptAbility. We chose to ask for this system because the pharmacy can be equipped to provide all three label options: talking, large print and braille labels.

The ScripTalk talking label consists of a RFID tag placed on the bottom of your medication bottle by the pharmacist. You're loaned a prescription reader device where you place the bottle, so you can hear the label read aloud. There are also mobile apps that work with ScripTalk RFID labels that turn your phone into a talking prescription reader. So no longer do we need to fret about what medication we're about to swallow! Accessible labels also give you access to the patient information sheets that come with most medications.

More of us need healthcare services, so it will be a continuing effort to ensure all of us have access to the various components of the health care system. Medication labels are only one component. For example, many health care providers handle patient care through online portals. This works well for those using an accessible device, but what about those who don't? This is only one instance of the current and changing health care system. Surely many of you readers can cite a variety of other inaccessible health care situations. Contact me if you want to discuss accessible prescription advocacy in your neighborhood at (707# 839-0588 or dougdrose@suddenlink.net.

If you would like more information about advocating for accessible prescription labels, go to www.envisionamerica.com/advocacy. You can also contact June Robbins at En-Vision America at jrobbins@envisionamerica.com or (800) 890-1180 Ext. 123.

Where Are They Now?

Submitted by Allen Casey

For several years CCLVI has sponsored the Fred Scheigert Scholarship program to encourage and enable low vision students to pursue opportunities in higher education. Three scholarships are awarded annually, one each to an incoming freshman, an undergraduate and a graduate student. The grants are generously funded by Mr. Fred Scheigert, a longtime CCLVI member. The passage of time could cause one to lose sight of these students and the career paths they chose. With this issue of Vision Access, we begin a series featuring updates from Scheigert Scholars.

Lindsey Tilden and Brian Petraits were the incoming freshman and undergraduate recipients, respectively in 2005. It is important to note that both Lindsey and Brian currently serve on the Scheigert Scholarship Committee. Enjoy their reminiscences.

Lindsey Tilden

I received my scholarship in 2005 as an entering college freshman at Biola University in Los Angeles. Scholarships were crucial to my undergraduate education because of the high costs of attending a private school. Before graduating I trained with my first guide dog Valencia, who is still working by my side ten years later. I graduated from Biola in 2009 with a B.A. in Communication Sciences and Disorders and minors in Spanish and

Biblical Studies. I then continued my education at San Diego State University and graduated in 2011 with an M.A. in Speech Language Pathology with a Bilingual Certificate in Spanish.

2011 was a busy year for me. Two months after finishing my master's degree I married my college sweetheart Paige. We welcomed our daughter Rachel in November 2017 and celebrated our seventh wedding anniversary this past July. Several weeks after getting married, I began my career with Vista Unified School District. I have worked in several schools with students in grades ranging from preschool to eighth, but currently work in an elementary school with third through fifth grade students. Most of my students are seen in small groups of three to five. The students I see are working on speech sound articulation, grammar, vocabulary, story comprehension, following directions, social skills, and/or strategies to help with stuttering. At my schools I have also had numerous opportunities to educate students (and staff) about blindness and guide dogs. I absolutely love what I do!

The Fred Scheigert Scholarship was what first introduced me to CCLVI and ACB, and I have been fortunate to have been able to stay involved with both organizations. My first position was a director on the Board from 2006 to 2012, and I later served as secretary from 2012 to 2014. My committee experience

includes the Convention Committee for the 2015 and 2016 conventions and the Scholarship Committee. I joined the Scholarship Committee in 2010 and acted as chair from 2014 to 2017. Being on the Scholarship Committee holds a special place in my heart, and I will always be thankful to Fred and the Scheigert committee for their part in my education and for bringing me into the CCLVI and ACB families.

Brian Petraits

My name is Brian Petraits. I was honored to be awarded the CCLVI Undergraduate Scholarship in 2005. I wanted to share with you how meaningful the scholarship was to me and my ability to successfully complete college. In addition, having the ability to be exposed to such an amazing network of individuals has proven to be so beneficial in my career growth.

Through the scholarship program I was able to attend the ACB/CCLVI convention in Las Vegas. This was an amazing opportunity to meet so many outstanding professionals and students who were also blind. I was able to make life-long friendships, learn various techniques, and simply meet various role models who to this day I continue to look up to for advice and guidance. The financial assistance also allowed for me to concentrate on school. College is stressful enough, and knowing that I had the support of CCLVI from a financial standpoint helped to eliminate some of that anxiety.

I finished my undergraduate degree from Purdue University in 2008. My concentrated focus was in industrial engineering technology. I also obtained a minor in communication.

A constant theme that was instilled in me during the ACB conference was that education was powerful and to never just settle for the bare minimum. I was encouraged to continue to push myself in all aspects of life. I took that to heart as I completed a master's degree program from Indiana University in 2013. My focus for this program was nonprofit management. Through my various forms of education I am able to blend together my technical background with a nonprofit focus. This serves me well in my current role as the Senior Manager of Industries at Bosma Enterprises in Indianapolis, Indiana. Bosma Enterprises has given me a great opportunity to grow as a professional. I have been employed with Bosma for just over 10 years.

For the past couple of years I have been a part of the CCLVI Scholarship Committee. This has given me a chance to give back to an organization in CCLVI that gave so much to me. I also have the opportunity to help other visually impaired individuals obtain the tools to reach personal, academic and career goals.

Outside of school and work, I have a lovely family. Jetson, my second guide dog, accompanies me most places and throughout most of life's events. My wife Laura and I have two beautiful children. Our son Neil

is four and our daughter Noel is two. We enjoy outside activities, visiting with family and friends, participating in our church, volunteering in our community, and cheering on the Purdue Boilermakers. We are truly blessed.

Thank you again for believing in me and selecting me for one of the scholarships. I will continue to strive to be a positive influence in my local and national communities. Your faith in me has allowed for me to pursue my goals and aspirations.

Request for Contributions

CCLVI gratefully accepts contributions from readers and members to help pay for the costs of publishing Vision Access.

Please send contributions to
Linda Allison, CCLVI Treasurer
6010 Lilywood Lane
Knoxville, TN 37921
Phone: (844) 460-0625.

CCLVI Officers and Directors

Officers

PRESIDENT:

Sara Conrad
Stevensville, Michigan
president@cclvi.org

TREASURER:

Linda Allison
Knoxville, Tennessee
treasurer@cclvi.org

Zelda Gebhard

Edgeley, North Dakota
Zelda.Gebhard@cclvi.org

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT:

Kathy Farina
Albany, New York
first-vp@cclvi.org

IMMEDIATE PAST

PRESIDENT:
Leslie Spooone
Orlando, Florida
immediatepastpresident@c
clvi.org

Rick Morin

rick.morin@cclvi.org

Jim Jirak

Omaha, Nebraska
jim.jirak@cclvi.org

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT:

Richard Rueda
Sacramento, California
second-vp@cclvi.org

Directors

Christine Chaikin
Keauhou, Hawaii
christine.chaikin@cclvi.org

Patti Cox

Louisville, Kentucky
patti.cox@cclvi.org

SECRETARY:

Robert Spangler
Vinton, Iowa
secretary@cclvi.org

Fred Scheigert
Saratoga Springs, New
York
fred.scheigert@cclvi.org

Other Bigwigs

NEWS LETTER EDITOR:

Mike Keithley
editor@cclvi.org

WEBMASTER:

Robert Spangler
webmaster@cclvi.org

CCLVI Local Affiliates

**California Council of Citizens with Low Vision
CCLV@cclvi.org**

**Delaware Valley Council of Citizens with Low Vision
DVCCLV@cclvi.org**

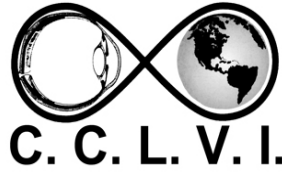
**Florida Council of Citizens with Low Vision
FCCLV@cclvi.org**

**Kentucky Council of Citizens with Low Vision International Patti Cox
kcclv@cclvi.org**

**Metropolitan Council of Low Vision Individuals, Greater New York
MCLVI@cclvi.org**

**New York State Council of Citizens with Low Vision
NYSCCLV@cclvi.org**

CCLVI Membership Application



**Council of Citizens with Low Vision International,
An Affiliate of the American Council of the Blind**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip Code** _____

Country _____

Main Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Preferred method of being contacted:

Phone **email**

Membership Status: I am ...

New member at large.

Renewing member at large.

Professional member of CCLVI

Professional life member.

Life member of CCLVI.

Life member of ACB.

Visual status: I am ...

blind or visually impaired **sighted**

Formats:

I wish to receive the CCLVI publication(s), Vision Access in:

Large print **E-mail**

Audio CD **Do not send**

Please send the American Council of the Blind ACB Braille Forum in:

Large Print **E-mail** **Computer Disk**

Braille **Do Not Send**

Payment:

\$ ____ Annual At-Large Dues \$15.00

\$ ____ Life Membership Dues \$300.00 (in full or installments) Can be paid in three (3) annual installments, plus chapter dues if applicable.

\$ ____ Professional membership: \$75.00

\$ ____ Professional life membership: \$500.00

\$ ____ Additional Donations

\$ ____ Total Amount

(Note: Please send this form enclosed with your check or money order to the address listed below. Also please make your check or money order out to CCLVI.)

CCLVI

Attention: Linda Allison Treasurer

6010 Lilywood Lane

Knoxville, TN 37921-4111

Email: info@cclvi.org

Website: www.cclvi.org

Toll-Free: (844) 460-0625