**Dots and Dashes**

**January 16, 2024**

# **Registration Is Now Open for the 2024 D.C. Leadership Conference!**

The 2024 ACB Leadership Conference will be a hybrid event. ACB’s Board Meeting, Presidents’ Meeting, Legislative Seminar, and Capitol Hill visits will take place March 1-5, 2024, at the Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel in Arlington, VA.

To register for the conference, visit members.acb.org. Log into your account, or create an account by clicking the "Create an Account" button. If you have an account but can't remember your username and/or password, please call our Minnesota office at (612) 332-3242 or our Virginia office at (202) 467-5081.

Once you have logged in, visit the "DC Leadership Registration" link at the top of the page, read through the instructions and hit the "Begin with Preferences" button. To register by phone, call our Minnesota office at (612) 332-3242 or our Virginia office at (202) 467-5081.

Room rates are $149 per night, plus tax. To make a reservation at the Sheraton, go to [**https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1698415960940&key=GRP&app=resvlink**](https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?id=1698415960940&key=GRP&app=resvlink).

You can also make a reservation by calling 1-800-325-3535 and informing the Marriott representative that you will be attending the “ACB Leadership Seminar” to receive the group rate. The room block cutoff date is Monday, February 12, 2024.

For more information, visit [**https://www.acb.org/2024-Leadership-Conference**](https://www.acb.org/2024-Leadership-Conference).

# **Stop and Read if You’re an Aspiring Student!**

The American Council of the Blind (ACB) offers educational scholarships ranging from $2,000 to $7,500 to eligible applicants: legally blind, maintaining a 3.0 GPA (required for most scholarships), be a full-time student or a part-time student who works at least 32 hours per week, and be involved in their school and local community. This program is intended to help students with educational financial needs such as tuition, fees, room and board and assistive technology, and is geared toward entering freshmen, undergraduate and graduate students, and students attending technical college.

The application deadline is February 14, 2024. For more information about ACB’s scholarship program, visit

[**acb.org/scholarships**](https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001AgMc9ZJMysL_kr7JSH-0XO7xuGXzt6Wstlm_9mPpJ45fOqfJ677I8x_oLS5NOetW89seLkiti7QQxzLcJfVQgdawCCZzOIVLbIkueJieIct_3oK-Zbj1SjQpJFJW_8wrq275WD3CgGbiRMuM4XzFHg==&c=A1mdOnWK3SuTiUFnn8dJ8MsWomyBnl9QyU-wq3-3qDwQla2W-Q_8tw==&ch=9jIrK90bTjgads6EyYT1U3-QeF5Rz6tIQ63qBug-esbvCsTON1RVsQ==).

**ACB Seeks Executive Director**

The Executive Director manages and oversees the day-to-day operations supporting the programs and services of the ACB in accordance with the policies, procedures, and priorities established by the ACB membership and the Board of Directors. This role is based in, and supervises, the office in Alexandria, Va., and remote employees. The Executive Director also provides supervision and oversight to the ACB financial office in Minnesota. The Executive Director must demonstrate leadership in national policy, and legislative and regulatory activities that impact the work of ACB on a national level. The Executive Director demonstrates ACB’s Five Core Values: Integrity and Honesty; Respect; Collaboration; Flexibility; and Initiative.

For the complete job description, visit [**https://www.acb.org/jobs#ExecutiveDirectorVA**](https://www.acb.org/jobs#ExecutiveDirectorVA). To apply, email your resume and cover letter to **hr@acb.org** by January 22. Writing samples are also welcome.

# **Member on the Mic Team Seeks to Expand**

For the last year the BOP has been highlighting ACB members and their stories. We take about 20 minutes to get to know the member in their own words. We recently expanded the offering to include Scholarship in Spotlight to get to know our scholarship, DKM First-Timers and JPMorgan Chase awardees. This team, led by Anthony Corona, Cheryl Cumings and Cachet Wells, curates and produces each offering monthly. We would like to expand the team.

We are looking for experienced audio editors, experienced transcriptionists and individuals who would like to learn the Associated Press style of interviewing to grow the team and potentially to help the ACB Voices blog to grow. If you are interested in joining the team and helping to produce informative content that highlights the voices of ACB members, please contact Project Coordinator Anthony Corona to schedule an interview/conversation. We look forward to sharing the skills and growing the team striving to make the blog a communication that shines a light on the great voices of our members.

Send a short note with your interest and any relevant experience to **SundayEditionAC@gmail.com**.

# **The 2024 Convention Theme Is …**

The theme for the 2024 convention is: ACB – Where the Sun Shines Bright. Thanks to Tim Stone for his winning suggestion.

# **Interested in Kids Club?**

In the past ACB has offered our Kids Club to convention attendees for children ages 5 to 13.  Before we confirm the hiring of Kids Club leaders and begin scheduling events, I’d like to determine if there is interest in our holding Kids Club.

If you are considering bringing your children to Jacksonville, please email me directly by March 15 at

**Janet.dickelman@gmail.com**, or call me at (651) 428-5059.

# **By Popular Request**

The Braille Matters podcasts are available on ACB Media. Hours 1 and 2: [**http://tinyurl.com/5e7mjm57**](http://tinyurl.com/5e7mjm57)

Hours 3 and 4: [**http://tinyurl.com/yc8jujuz**](http://tinyurl.com/yc8jujuz)

Hours 5 and 6: [**http://tinyurl.com/2wbusu8x**](http://tinyurl.com/2wbusu8x)

Hour 7: [**http://tinyurl.com/3n7fwmuc**](http://tinyurl.com/3n7fwmuc)

# **Justice Department Publishes Proposed Title II Rule to Improve Access to Medical Care for People with Disabilities**

On January 12, 2024, the Department of Justice published a [**Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM)**](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDAsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmFkYS5nb3YvYXNzZXRzL3BkZnMvbWRlLW5wcm0ucGRmIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDExMi44ODQzMzk4MSJ9.Zo1w-EuyA71y8ZceLRtrC3INaWSuWFirecSPG-x9x38/s/6579914/br/234891727896-l) proposing to update the regulations for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to improve access to medical diagnostic equipment (MDE) for people with disabilities. The Department is seeking public feedback on its proposal, which proposes to adopt technical standards that clarify how public entities that use MDE, such as hospitals and health care clinics operated by state or local governments, can meet their existing obligations under the ADA.

For a high-level summary of the [**NPRM**](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmFkYS5nb3YvYXNzZXRzL3BkZnMvbWRlLW5wcm0ucGRmIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDExMi44ODQzMzk4MSJ9.GDIjTtTNIRSRUs0FsmcsUrKgsZaBSpQLzS3lmgn1MQ4/s/6579914/br/234891727896-l) and information on how to submit comments, read the [**fact sheet**](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmFkYS5nb3Yvbm90aWNlcy8yMDI0LzAxLzEwL21kZS1ucHJtLyIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDAxMTIuODg0MzM5ODEifQ.j6R2KpmDYrvgmkjwcnVUyPTx8AHSA6f_rPDlk8yb4GI/s/6579914/br/234891727896-l). The Department has also issued a [**press release**](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3Lmp1c3RpY2UuZ292L29wYS9wci9qdXN0aWNlLWRlcGFydG1lbnQtYWR2YW5jZXMtcHJvcG9zZWQtcnVsZS1pbXByb3ZlLWFjY2Vzcy1tZWRpY2FsLWNhcmUtcGVvcGxlLWRpc2FiaWxpdGllcyIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDAxMTIuODg0MzM5ODEifQ.JA_F99po8-dVy7nT0_zskZLK4LtdkOLZ3tVHeI46PS8/s/6579914/br/234891727896-l). Members of the public can [**submit comments**](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmZlZGVyYWxyZWdpc3Rlci5nb3YvZG9jdW1lbnRzLzIwMjQvMDEvMTIvMjAyNC0wMDU1My9ub25kaXNjcmltaW5hdGlvbi1vbi10aGUtYmFzaXMtb2YtZGlzYWJpbGl0eS1hY2Nlc3NpYmlsaXR5LW9mLW1lZGljYWwtZGlhZ25vc3RpYy1lcXVpcG1lbnQtb2Ytc3RhdGUiLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjQwMTEyLjg4NDMzOTgxIn0.yV_mCCXKe_FRiv73O8eoSC3Wu9uKhiwmxMpAY9dzLy4/s/6579914/br/234891727896-l) on the NPRM online by February 12, 2024. Comments may also be submitted by overnight, courier, or hand delivery, as described in the NPRM.

# **GSA Issues Government-Wide Section 508 Assessment to Congress**

The General Services Administration (GSA) recently issued a landmark report to Congress, which highlights the need for substantial improvements to federal Section 508 compliance. This report, the FY23 Government-wide Section 508 Assessment, evaluates reporting entities’ adherence to the criteria established by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in coordination with GSA, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), and the U.S. Access Board (USAB). The report also provides a summary of key takeaways from the assessment results.

To learn more, read the assessment requirements or contact the GSA Government-wide IT Accessibility Program at **section.508@gsa.gov**.

# **GSA Needs You!**

The General Services Administration (GSA), a federal government agency, is conducting studies to better understand the needs of people with disabilities, focusing on people who use assistive technology. The purpose of this research is to empower people of the disabilities community by designing more accessible, user-friendly interactions with the government.

Participation in this research will last roughly 1 hour per participant. Sessions will be scheduled at the Carroll Center in Newton, MA and remote (using Google Meet or Zoom). During testing sessions, participants will engage in conversations about their prior experience interacting with the government, as well as complete various tasks while accessing provided websites or online tools and using preferred participant assistive technology. Participants will be expected to provide their opinions and verbalize their thoughts and processes while engaged in test activities.

You are appropriate for this study if you:

* Have access to a personal computer to use for this test with reliable Internet access
* Identify as having low or no vision, and use assistive technology such as screen readers, screen magnifiers, or voice command technology

To sign up, submit this [**recruitment form**](https://eml-pusa01.app.blackbaud.net/intv2/j/AFDDE0CC-C5DA-45A7-8636-A2AB2BD785CC/r/AFDDE0CC-C5DA-45A7-8636-A2AB2BD785CC_bfd3d18f-251a-4b6a-ba36-e3012a5b3527/l/B9E5CB1E-55C9-43BF-91A0-6C9FB5681765/c) created by the Carroll Center.

# **NLS Aspiring Leaders Program**

Applications are now being accepted for the NLS Aspiring Leaders Internship Program.

Established through the National Library for the Blind Endowment, this paid internship offers legally blind individuals the opportunity to work at NLS in areas that support services for people who are blind, including collections building, program delivery, and business oversight and management.

Currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students and those who have graduated within the past five years from an accredited two-year or four-year college or university are eligible to apply. In addition, applicants:

* Must be U.S. citizens
* Must be legally blind
* Must be able to work remotely

A complete application package includes a cover letter expressing interest, a resume, a recent official or unofficial transcript, and an application form that is completed online. For more information, or to apply, visit [**www.loc.gov/nls/about/internship-program**](https://www.loc.gov/nls/about/internship-program/). Applications are due March 1, 2024.

# **Thank You from Doctoral Candidate**

I am writing to inform you about the recent publication of our research study, titled **"Opportunities for Accessible Virtual Reality Design for Immersive Musical Performances for Blind and Low-Vision People."** This study has been published in the SUI '23: Proceedings of the 2023 ACM Symposium on Spatial User Interaction.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to you and the **American Council of the Blind** for your invaluable support in reaching out to participants for our research. This was crucial for our study.

The paper is available in various formats:

* PDF Format: [**Download PDF**](https://dl.acm.org/doi/pdf/10.1145/3607822.3614540)
* eReader Format: [**Access eReader Version**](https://dl.acm.org/doi/epdf/10.1145/3607822.3614540)
* HTML Format: [**View in HTML**](https://dl.acm.org/doi/fullHtml/10.1145/3607822.3614540)

Our team is committed to continuing this line of research, focusing on enhancing VR musical experiences for individuals who are blind or have low vision. We have already begun working on integrating audio descriptions in virtual spaces, which will be tailored based on the user's head direction. We hope that this research will pave the way for more inclusive and accessible technological advancements in the field of virtual reality.

Thank you again for your support.

Best regards,
Khang Dang, Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Informatics
New Jersey Institute of Technology

# **Omnium Circus Coming to Town**

**Omnium: A Bold New Circus** is a first of its kind: a singularly inclusive nonprofit circus that is multi-abled and representative, highlighting and celebrating that disability and diversity shine through the joy and excitement of Circus arts. Built on a tripod of entertainment, employment and education, Omnium Circus is comprehensively inclusive on stage, behind the scenes and in our audience.

Omnium will be at Capital One Hall (Tysons Corner, VA) on Feb. 24th at 2 p.m. All are welcome! The show is bilingual in both English and ASL; will include audio description, a pre-show touch tour; and the performance is sensory-friendly. For more information, visit [**www.OmniumCircus.org**](http://www.omniumcircus.org/). The discount code is EARLYBIRD.