**Dots and Dashes**

**December 18, 2023**

# **ACB National Office to Move Upstairs**

The ACB National Office will be moving up to the sixth floor the first week of the new year. Staff may not be reachable by phone or Internet for a few days while we’re moving. Please leave us a message, and we’ll get back to you as soon as our phones and Internet are re-connected.

# **Save the Date!**

December 31 is New Year’s Eve! It’s also the fourth annual ACB Community-athon, and event you won’t want to miss! Make your plans to be there for part or all of the 12-hour celebration as we enjoy entertainment, highlight the varying events held, and there will even be prizes! Watch the acb-community-events daily schedule for Zoom information, listen on ACB Media 5 or join in Clubhouse. You can help us reach our goal of raising $15,000 to support this amazing ACB Community. For every $25 donated, your name will be placed in a drawing held throughout the event! Please share this link with your family and friends and let them know why you care so much about the Community!

[**www.tinyurl.com/communityathon2023**](http://www.tinyurl.com/communityathon2023)

# **Welcome Back, Claire!**

Claire Stanley is joining ACB as the new Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs. Claire has been involved in the field of disability advocacy for over a decade. In her last role as a Public Policy Analyst at the National Disability Rights Network, she advocated for policies that impacted people with disabilities, and also collaborated with other disability organizations including ACB.

In fact, this is not Claire’s first time at ACB. She held the role of Advocacy and Outreach Specialist at ACB from 2018 to 2020. She has also been on the transportation committee since 2021.

We are very glad to welcome Claire back in a full-time capacity as the new Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs! She will be located in ACB’s Alexandria location. Her first day in the office will be January 16th.

# **Take Part in the ACB Leadership Conference!**

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

To register, visit [members.acb.org](https://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. Registration will open the second week of January 2024.

The room rate for the Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel is $149 per night, plus tax. This rate applies to any night starting on Sunday, February 25th, through Friday, March 8th. The Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel is located at 900 S. Orme St., Arlington, VA 22204. To make a reservation at the Sheraton, visit [**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), or call 1-800-325-3535 and inform 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**. If you experience any issues booking a room, please email Kaitlyn Herrera at kherrera@acb.org.

The schedule of events is as follows:

* Friday, March 1: Afternoon Tour (TBD) and Evening Open House at the new ACB Office in Alexandria, VA
* Saturday, March 2: Board Meeting (9:00 AM – 5:00 PM ET) & Evening Welcome Reception
* Sunday, March 3: Presidents’ Meeting (including luncheon) & Evening Dine Around in Pentagon City
* Monday, March 4: Legislative Seminar (including luncheon)
* Tuesday, March 5: Attendees may visit Capitol Hill to meet with their representatives.

Stay tuned for more details as they become available.

# **Calling on Braille Forum Readers…**

# For over 60 years, “The ACB Braille Forum” has been the official publication of ACB. For many members, access to information in the Forum has made a profound difference in their lives. We’d love to hear your stories about the importance the Braille Forum holds for you, especially if an issue or article has impacted your life in a particular way. Did an article help you find a solution to a problem? Did you find a new way to connect with ACB? Please send your testimonial or story to Jo Lynn Bailey-Page, Associate Director of Development, at **jbailey-page@acb.org**, or reach out by phone at (202) 467-5081.

# **Generous Scholarships Available!**

The American Council of the Blind (ACB) offers educational scholarships ranging from $2,000 to $7,500 for entering freshmen, undergraduate and graduate students, and students attending technical college. This program awards students with scholarships to help with educational financial needs such as tuition, fees, room and board and assistive technology. To be eligible for a scholarship, applicants need to be legally blind, maintain a 3.0 GPA to be eligible for most scholarships, be a full-time student or a part-time student who works at least 32 hours per week and attends college part-time, and be involved in their school and local community. Students must submit their application by 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==).

# **Help Choose the 2024 Convention Theme**

Now is the time to put on your thinking caps and help determine the theme for our upcoming convention in Jacksonville, Florida! Below is a list of past themes.

2021 (Virtual): ACB, Better Together Wherever We Are

2022 (Omaha) ACB: Here, There and Everywhere!

2023: ACB Winds of Change!

Send your ideas to **Janet.dickelman@gmail.com**, with “theme” in the subject line. The winner will receive a $25 Amazon gift card. The submission deadline is **December 31st.**

# **Broaden Your Connection to ACB**

Stay informed and broaden your connection to the American Council of the Blind. In addition to publishing “The ACB Braille Forum” magazine, ACB shares information about our organization, blindness and low vision, and the issues that are important to the blindness community, in many other ways.

* Visit our web site for comprehensive information about the American Council of the Blind: [**https://www.acb.org/**](https://www.acb.org/)
* ACB Media shares audio programming on 10 Internet radio channels. Visit this link to access ACB Media programming via computer and smartphone: [**https://www.acbmedia.org/**](https://www.acbmedia.org/)
* Or, use your smartphone to access the ACB Link app:

Apple Store: [**https://apps.apple.com/us/app/acb-link/id1023962546**](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/acb-link/id1023962546)

Android: coming soon

# **Seeking Nominations for Member on the Mic**

The ACB Board of Publications invites you to nominate someone to “Member on the Mic.” Check out “Member on the Mic” at [**ACBVoices.org**](http://ACBVoices.org). To nominate someone, send an email to **slovering@acb.org**, and be sure to include the person’s full name, state or special-interest affiliate, email address and/or phone number.

# **Notice of Digital Accessibility Settlement Concerning**[**www.ifit.com**](http://www.ifit.com/)

A proposed settlement has been reached that would resolve the class action lawsuit **Douglass v. iFIT Inc.,** No. 2:23-cv-917-MJH (W.D. Pa.). The lawsuit alleges that iFIT Inc. violated the Americans with Disabilities Act by failing to ensure its websites and its mobile app do not discriminate against blind or visually impaired consumers who use screen readers to access digital content. Under the settlement, iFIT Inc. agrees to take additional steps to make these and other websites and mobile apps, including any new website or mobile app it develops or acquires, accessible to blind or visually impaired consumers. For a more complete summary of the terms of the proposed settlement, visit [**https://ifitadasettlement.com/**](https://ifitadasettlement.com/).

# **Touch of Genius Prize for Innovation**

The Touch of Genius Prize for Innovation is accepting applications for the 2024 year. Applications are due **January 12, 2024**.

The Touch of Genius Prize was developed to inspire entrepreneurs, educators, or inventors to continue the promotion of braille and tactile literacy for blind and deafblind people worldwide. This prize can be granted for innovative and accessible computer software applications, tactile hardware, or curriculum that promotes braille and/or tactile literacy.

Full application details and more information can be found at [**www.touchofgeniusprize.org**](http://www.touchofgeniusprize.org). If you have questions, send email to abrady@nbp.org.

# **National Coding Symposium Student Award Opportunity**

The National Coding Symposium is excited to partner with Humanware, Vispero, and the American Printing House for the Blind to offer student awards as part of this year's Symposium! Vispero will be giving two credits of $3,000 each toward a purchase of technology from any of their brands. Humanware will be giving a BrailleNote Touch+ and a Robotics Kit, and APH will be giving either an available braille device or low vision device, depending on the student.

Eligibility is limited to middle to high school and college-aged students who are visually impaired and interested in a career related to coding. Each applicant must complete the scholarship application form below and submit a typewritten Word .doc/.docx essay of 500 words or less. The deadline is **February 1, 2024.** For more information, visit [**https://aphconnectcenter.org/coding-symposium-3-0/**](https://aphconnectcenter.org/coding-symposium-3-0/).

# **European Blind Union Survey about Braille Displays**

The European Blind Union (EBU) invites you to take part in a survey to enhance the use of braille displays. We will ask you about your experiences, needs and suggestions in the use of braille displays with computer, smartphone and braille display as a stand-alone device. The survey will take about 10 minutes. To take the survey, visit [**https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdTwXqIiE018k3wMOeTqALmMaggvd1sGqOm3VCkbrDUIzHu7A/viewform?usp=sf\_link**](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdTwXqIiE018k3wMOeTqALmMaggvd1sGqOm3VCkbrDUIzHu7A/viewform?usp=sf_link)by **February 29, 2024.**

# **ScripTalk Mobile App Now Available on Blindshell Classic 2 Phones**

The popular ScripTalk Mobile App is now available inside the BlindShell Classic 2 and all future versions of the phone. This addition will allow the BlindShell phone to read ScripTalk Talking Labels available at no cost at thousands of participating pharmacies throughout the U.S. and Canada. For more information, visit [**https://www.envisionamerica.com/post/the-scriptalk-mobile-app-is-now-available-on-blindshell-classic-2-phones**](https://www.envisionamerica.com/post/the-scriptalk-mobile-app-is-now-available-on-blindshell-classic-2-phones).