# **Dots and Dashes**

# **March 7, 2022**

## **Time Is Short — Register Now for the D.C. Leadership Conference!**

We are less than one week out from the 2022 ACB Leadership Conference, and there is still time to register and receive all the conference materials in advance of this weekend’s big event.

The ACB Leadership Conference brings together ACB affiliate leaders and advocates from across the country for a four-day conference intended to strengthen our capacity and advocate on key priorities before lawmakers in Washington, D.C. The annual Presidents’ Meeting will be held March 12th - 13th, while the Legislative Seminar will take place March 14th - 15th. Information on how to attend the virtual event will be sent out March 11th for all participants who register by **March 9th.**

The 2022 Legislative Imperatives are now available on the ACB Leadership Conference page. [**Click here**](https://www.acb.org/2022-legislative-imperatives) to access the background materials for congressional visits, or go to [**https://www.acb.org/2022-legislative-imperatives**](https://www.acb.org/2022-legislative-imperatives). Stay tuned for the program agenda, which will be coming soon, and be sure to visit [**www.acbmedia.org**](http://www.acbmedia.org) to learn more about all the ways you can listen to the event live and download the event podcasts.

Registration is $20 for all ACB members, including members at large, and $30 for non-members. Registration is open now but will close on March 9th.

Please visit [**https://tinyurl.com/2022-DC-Leadership-Meetings**](https://tinyurl.com/2022-DC-Leadership-Meetings) to register today and join us for this exciting event!

## **Time Is Short, Part 2**

Many thanks to everyone who has been updating their affiliates membership information in AMMS. The deadline for adding, deleting or updating existing affiliate records on the records tab is **March 15th** - a little over a week away. Please try to provide as much member information as possible, because this will help us to communicate better with our members, and you will be able to easily access it in AMMS also.

Since the deadline for adding and updating member information is during the D.C. LeadershipConference, we’d appreciate it if you could try to have any new members added before March 11th. It will help our staff to get these updates completed in a timely manner, and you will be able to submit your certification reports sooner.

## **Reps. Maloney and Bilirakis Reintroduce Bill to Help Visually Impaired Americans**

Reps. Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY) and Gus Bilirakis (R-FL) reintroduced the Medicare Demonstration of Coverage for Low Vision Devices Act. This legislation would help vision-impaired Medicare beneficiaries live safe and independent lives by creating a five-year national demonstration project to evaluate the economic impact of allowing reimbursement for low vision devices, which are currently excluded from Medicare coverage. Read the full news release at [**https://www.acb.org/news-release-reps-maloney-and-bilirakis-reintroduce-bill-help-visually-impaired-americans-0**](https://www.acb.org/news-release-reps-maloney-and-bilirakis-reintroduce-bill-help-visually-impaired-americans-0).

## **Happy Birthday, ACB Community!**

What has impacted so many people in so many different ways over the past two years more than the creation and growth of the ACB Community. Beginning March 17, 2020 with two calls that week, and propelling to now averaging nearly 100 calls a week, the ACB Community deserves a great big birthday bash! Our birthday celebration will take place from March 17 through March 26.

At 9 p.m. Eastern on Thursday, March 17, we will kick off our celebration with an event (including a virtual cake) you won’t want to miss.

To add icing and candles to our cake, we need your help. Those who held events during those first few months are encouraged to bring back their event sometime during our birthday week. Some events that come to mind are the gaming labs and the demonstration of the features of the Victor Reader Stream. If you are interested in holding an event to commemorate the creation of the ACB Community, please email the following information to **acbcommunity.committee@gmail.com** by Friday, March 4.

Your name:

Event name:

Email address:

Phone number:

We will get back to you with the best time to hold your event, and then you will need to complete the Event Planners Form by Wednesday, March 16 for the Sunday-Saturday week of March 20-26, or by Wednesday, March 9th if you want to hold your event on the 18th or 19th. The event planners form can be found at [**https://bit.ly/2T88iI3**](https://bit.ly/2T88iI3).

## **Attention Large Print Forum Readers!**

If you receive your ACB Braille Forum in large print, you should find it in your mailbox soon. We are considering some adjustments to our ACB Large Print Guidelines, and an article has been printed with the proposed changes in the March issue. Please read it and provide your feedback to **slovering@acb.org**.

Thank you for sharing what you like and what you don’t. Your opinions are important to us!

## **ACB Urges DOJ to Promulgate Enforceable Online Accessibility Standards**

The American Council of the Blind is among 181 undersigned disability organizations who believe that there is an urgent need for digital accessibility regulations. We urge the Department of Justice to promulgate enforceable online accessibility standards by the end of the current Administration. The U.S. Department of Justice has long held that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) includes websites and other technologies that are critical to accessing a business’ or agency’s services or facilities but has failed to define when and how they should be accessible. Read more: [**https://acb.org/accessibility-standards-joint-letter-2-28-22**](https://acb.org/accessibility-standards-joint-letter-2-28-22).

## **AFB Seeks Spanish-Speaking Participants**

The American Foundation for the Blind is looking for Spanish-speaking family members of children 0 months to 21 years old, with visual impairments, for the “Access and Engagement” study. The main purpose of this project is to gather information regarding the education of children who are blind or living with visual impairments received during the first half of the pandemic. We would like to understand how students and their families have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more at [**http://www.afb.org/research**](http://www.afb.org/research). You have the opportunity to complete a short survey, participate in a focus group, or do both. Those who are selected to participate in a focus group will be given a $20 gift card, while participants who complete the survey will be entered into a raffle for the chance to win a $50 gift card. If you have any questions, contact **grodriguez@afb.org** or (304) 710-3031.

## **Introductory Coding Courses**

Thanks to a generous grant from CDW, the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) is proud to offer introductory coding courses for blind and low vision college students and adults. These courses are designed to familiarize blind and low vision students with basic coding tools, challenges navigating these tools with assistive technology such as screen readers, and techniques for navigating those challenges. [**Register at this link**](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Faph.zoom.us%2Fwebinar%2Fregister%2FWN_R70Q9TGgQcyfAf4v85-KQQ&data=04%7C01%7C%7C49713042b9cd42f6475008d9f6262974%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637811466044359402%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=r%2BbQS2JjbkH8mvuNCOrJhq%2BwwIWtjDeYSMzMtWR8ml8%3D&reserved=0), or read below for details.

Join Florian Beijers, a blind developer, as he guides students through coding basics. Content covered will include HTML, ARIA, and Python. Students will be introduced to VS Code and GitHub coding tools.

You will need a computer with Internet access; screen reader with speech output or Braille display and/or screen magnification. Other prerequisites include: at least intermediate familiarity with a screen reader with speech and/or braille, or intermediate familiarity with a screen magnification program; ability to use the Internet to accomplish tasks such as searching for and reading information, completing forms, and using keyboard shortcuts to navigate, read, and edit; ability to follow written instructions to independently download and install programs and extensions; willingness to participate in the entire course consisting of 4 weekly sessions; and willingness to spend at least two hours per week on review and homework.

This is the first in a series of four courses. This course takes place the first four Tuesdays in March, March 1, 8, 15, and 22, from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Eastern. All sessions will be recorded and available soon after the live class for those who cannot attend at the scheduled time.

## **Disability Information & Access Line**

[**The Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL)**](https://acl.gov/DIAL), a first-of-its-kind national call center, helps people with disabilities and their families schedule vaccine appointments, secure accessible transportation to and from appointments, and connect with local organizations for additional community-based support.

DIAL is a public service of the U.S. Administration for Community Living and is administered by USAging in partnership with a consortium of organizations serving people with disabilities.