# **Dots and Dashes**

# **August 29, 2022**

# **There’s Still Time to Get Your Representative to Support Digital Accessibility!**

There’s still time to tell your representative to support digital accessibility for people with disabilities! Rep. Sarbanes (D-MD) is still circulating the below Dear Colleague letter urging the U.S. Department of Justice to promulgate website and mobile application accessibility regulations by the end of the current administration. Please reach out to your representative and tell them to co-sign this letter. The deadline for co-signers is Labor Day.

For more information, visit <https://acb.org/washington-connection#ShareDearColleagueLetter>. For questions, contact ACB’s advocacy team at advocacy@acb.org.

# **Not Too Late to Donate!**

Did you think the ACB Brenda Dillon Memorial Walk ended at the convention in Omaha? Well, that’s not the case. You’ve still got time to make those much-appreciated contributions, helping ACB and/or an affiliate of your choice. Visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/event/a2w/> and make your donation today, or call the Minneapolis office for assistance.

# **Kolby Garrison Featured in NASCAR’s VIVID Series**

ACB staff member Kolby Garrison was featured in a four-part series about how she experiences NASCAR racing, her favorite sport. Learn more about her incredible NASCAR adventure by visiting: <https://tinyurl.com/Kolby-NASCAR>. All episodes of VIVID are now available on NASCAR's YouTube page at: [www.youtube.com/c/NASCAR](https://www.youtube.com/c/NASCAR?fbclid=IwAR18KkHBQiNZJs0P-_eAPBKWHGHNXmFDrRslr_T1v-EpRz5T9NwKXKskYbI).

**Call for Questions About Webb Space Telescope Photos & Alt Text**

Have you experienced the beauty and awe of the incredible photos taken by NASA’s James Webb Space Telescope? The scientists, writers, and educators from the Space Telescope Science Institute want to make space accessible for everyone, and have created vividly detailed alt text for every photo that has been released. These image descriptions can be found in the [Webb’s First Images Gallery](https://webbtelescope.org/news/first-images/gallery) under “Download Options.” In recognition of this valuable resource, the American Council of the Blind will be hosting a community event with representatives from the Space Telescope Science Institute to discuss how their team have collaborated with one another to make the photos accessible to people who are blind or low vision. We would love to hear from you with any questions that you have for their team. If your question is selected, we will meet with you to pre-record your question, which will then be aired during the live event. If you would like to submit a question, please email kgasque@acb.org by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, September 16th. This event will be a great opportunity to learn how NASA and the Space Telescope Science Institute are bridging the gap in access and inclusion for people with disabilities. More details about the event will be coming soon, so please stay tuned.

# **A Chat with ACB’s Returning Board Members**

On this the ACB Advocacy Update, ACB Advocacy & Outreach Specialist Swatha meets with our two re-elected Board members from the 2022 National Convention, Jeff Thom and Koni Sims. She learns about their history with ACB, what they’re excited to work on in their new term as director, and advocacy issues that are important to them. Jeff and Koni also share advice for those interested in getting more involved in ACB leadership and in advocacy more broadly. Listen at: [http://ow.ly/6tVI50Kol3o](http://ow.ly/6tVI50Kol3o?fbclid=IwAR2Jeyw2XeTsbbKn2jUn66aY-wUfL_If5KuxmrOIk9dtoGp_qiakAv7nC9I).

**Congratulations to ACB Immediate Past President Kim Charlson!**

The Kennedy Center Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) Awards honor a select few arts administrators, individuals and organizations whose dedication has resulted in the advancement of inclusion of people with disabilities in the cultural arts and whose efforts serve as an example to all in the field. Kim Charlson was selected out of a diverse pool of nominees to receive an Award for Excellence in Accessibility Leadership. This award recognizes a lifetime of achievement in arts access, and was presented to Kim for her avid championing of audio description and life-long accessibility advocacy.

To read the full press release online, visit <https://acb.org/kim-charlson-lead-award-2022>.

# **New Alt Text Standards at New York Times**

The New York Times has adopted new alt text standards and would like to get feedback from screen reader users regarding their use of alt text for photos and graphics in articles. If you use a screen reader on your computer and/or phone, and would like to participate in this focus group, please fill out [this form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdNQkLUGEpVfbsdmOXyz_08vIr598qXolIfPW9yMlaTkG9bsw/viewform) by Wednesday, August 31, 2022. Selected participants will be requested to read and provide feedback for 3-4 articles and will receive a free six-month digital subscription to The New York Times.

# **Ancient Art Technique Helps Visually Impaired Chemists**

People who study chemistry use their eyes a lot, from looking at molecular structures to interpreting graphs. But researchers at Baylor University have now found a way to make chemistry more accessible to people with visual impairments, thanks to a modern twist on an ancient art form. To convert visual images like graphs into tactile aids, the researchers turned them into lithophanes. These are thin, semi-transparent etchings that depict images when backlit by a light source. Lithophanes were popular in Europe in the 1800s, but originated in China many centuries earlier, where the technique was often used to decorate porcelain products. To read the full article by Forbes, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/yr8t3sxn>.

# **M-Enabling Summit**

The [M-Enabling Summit](https://m-enabling.com/), taking place October 24-26 in Washington, D.C., is a conference dedicated to promoting digital inclusion strategies and developing assistive technologies, accessible digital products and services for persons with disabilities and older adults. Attendees will participate in a series of exciting and interactive activities and sessions designed to make their experience more meaningful and enriching. Collaborate among industry leaders, advocates, government officials, accessibility professionals, executives, and pioneers of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Visit [www.m-enabling.com](https://m-enabling.com/) to learn more.

# **NYT Video: What a Legally Blind Person Can See**

In the New York Times Opinion video available at <https://youtu.be/X04HKyW-3hc>, the filmmaker James Robinson introduces us to Yvonne Shortt, who is legally blind. Like many other people who are legally blind, she lives a nuanced existence between those who see well and those who can’t see a thing. Ms. Shortt has retinitis pigmentosa, a disease that causes progressive loss of sight. She can see some things some of the time, depending on various factors, including the amount of ambient light, her distance from the object and the object’s location in her field of vision. This is the first in a three-part video series, “Adapt-Ability,” which explores how it feels to live with a disability, and the ways in which society can adjust to be more inclusive of people with disabilities.