**Dots and Dashes**

**August 4, 2025**

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# **ACB’s Resolutions and Constitution for 2025 Now Available Online**

ACB thanks our members in their participation of drafting, editing, and voting for our annual resolutions and edits to the constitution and bylaws. The updated 2025 resolutions and constitution and bylaws have now been placed on the ACB website. Below are the links:

Constitution and bylaws: [**https://www.acb.org/constitution-bylaws**](https://www.acb.org/constitution-bylaws)

Resolutions: [**https://www.acb.org/2025-resolutions**](https://www.acb.org/2025-resolutions)

We encourage everyone to visit the above links to read through the work that was completed this summer.

# **Registration Now Open for September’s Audio Description Institute**

Registration is now open for the Audio Description Project’s 26th Audio Description Institute, taking place virtually September 22-26, from 1 to 5 p.m. Eastern. The fee is $575; two scholarships are available (details below). Space is limited! Registration closes September 15, 2025.

[Click to register now!](http://weblink.donorperfect.com/ACBADInstituteSeptember2025)

## **How Will I Learn?**

Sessions will be held virtually from 1 to 5 p.m. Eastern, Monday, September 22, through Friday, September 26. Materials will be delivered through a mixture of lectures, discussions, and collaborative writing sessions. Each registrant will receive a PDF of Dr. Joel Snyder's book, “The Visual Made Verbal: A Comprehensive Training Manual and Guide to the History and Applications of Audio Description.” Participants also receive a certificate of completion.

## **Registration and Scholarships**

Registration will close on Monday, September 15, 2025, and the Zoom links to attend the institute will be emailed later that week. Space is limited, so register using the link below.

[**http://weblink.donorperfect.com/ACBADInstituteSeptember2025**](http://weblink.donorperfect.com/ACBADInstituteSeptember2025)

Two full scholarships are available; priority will be given to people with disabilities. To be considered for a scholarship, please send an email outlining how and why you are a strong candidate, including your reason for requesting financial assistance and your plans for implementing what you’ve learned in the ADI. Send the email to audiodescription@acb.org by August 31, 2025. Applicants will be notified of the status of their request for assistance the week of September 8, 2025.

Questions? Contact Dr. Joel Snyder via email, jsnyder@audiodescribe.com.

# **ACB Signs onto Joint Letter Regarding Title II Website Regulations**

ACB recently signed onto a joint letter with numerous disability advocacy organizations in response to a letter put out by the American Council on Education (ACE) in May of this year. The letter advocated for a potential pause on the 2026 implementation of the new Title II website regulations. Additionally, the ACE letter to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) expressed concern in carrying out the new regulations as they are written.

The letter ACB signed onto strongly expresses the need to enforce the new regulations on the timeline set by the Department of Justice and keep the regulations as they have been written. It emphasized the multiple year process it has taken to get this regulation promulgated, and stresses that the process should not be stalled again. The letter can be found at [**https://tinyurl.com/yhpmx2nb**](https://tinyurl.com/yhpmx2nb).

# **Urge Congress to Pass the Disability Access to Transportation Act (DATA)**

People with disabilities have long faced access problems when utilizing paratransit services. For instance, paratransit users must wait significant periods of time between trips, making it difficult to carry out regular appointments and errands in one day. Additionally, most states do not provide on-demand ride requests for paratransit users. As a result, they often have to schedule rides multiple days in advance, limiting their options to carry out responsibilities and participate in their communities freely.

The Disability Access to Transportation Act (DATA) calls for the development of a pilot program to combat these issues. The pilot program will allow paratransit passengers an additional, quick stop on their way to their final destination. For instance, if a person is taking paratransit home from work, they can make a quick stop at the pharmacy to pick up their medication, or at a day care center to pick up their child(ren). The bill has bipartisan support. In addition to this important service, the bill also includes language to prioritize projects that utilize real-time tracking and on-demand scheduling technology. The pilot program will also streamline the accessibility complaint reporting process with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and collect data to identify gaps in paratransit services.

For more information, visit [**https://www.acb.org/advocacy-governmental-affairs**](https://www.acb.org/advocacy-governmental-affairs).

To ask your Congressmember to support the bill, go to [**https://speak4.app/lp/n1013sp1/?ts=1754056480**](https://speak4.app/lp/n1013sp1/?ts=1754056480).

# **Advocacy Update Podcast**

In this week’s Advocacy Update Podcast, Claire speaks with Doug Powell and Pris Rogers about the Older Americans Act and related legislation. These two experts in services for older Americans talk about the bill and needed services for people losing their vision as they age. Listen to the podcast at [**https://acb.org/advocacyupdate**](https://acb.org/advocacyupdate).

# **Explore to Achieve More**

The ACB INSPIRE Mentoring Program enters its third year of providing mentorship, access and peer support during the fall of 2025. The leadership development program designed exclusively for prospective leaders is a nine-month exploration of learning and grasping new concepts. Online applications will be accepted from July 18th through August 18th. The 2025-2026 cohort will be selected by September 1st, and the program year will begin on September 18th. Activities will conclude on June 16, 2026. The program culminates with a virtual graduation ceremony during the virtual week of the ACB Conference and Convention.

Prepare to listen to our presentation that will allow you to learn how the program works and ask questions. The presentation will be an informational Community call on Saturday, August 2, 2025 at 4 p.m. Eastern.

INSPIRE refers to “Imagine, Nurture, Support, Prepare, Influence, Reflect, and Evolve.” The ACB INSPIRE mentoring program serves as a roadmap and places an emphasis on aiding and guiding potential leaders to expand their involvement at the local, state and/or national level. Members are urged to apply to become a Guide/Mentor or Explorer/Mentee.

The INSPIRE Experience includes an introductory Guide-Explorer meet and greet; informative orientation training; personalized Guide-Explorer team meetings; interactive quarterly check point meetings; empowerment segments with leaders of the blindness community, as well as other collaborative partnerships; optional office hours feedback sessions; support meetings with the ACB INSPIRE Mentoring Team; sharing of inspirational books, articles, poems, quotes, and other material from the INSPIRE Library; participant communication on the designated ACB INSPIRE email list; and the end of program evaluation survey.

To serve as a Guide or mentor, applicants must be an ACB member for seven years or more; current on membership dues; have at least five years of confirmed leadership experience within ACB, one of its affiliates or chapters; submit name and contact information for a reference during their initial application to the program; have personal knowledge of ACB’s history, mission, purpose, and core values; agree to meet with designated Explorer/mentee at least twice a month; conduct effective goal-setting meetings with a designated Explorer/mentee; agree to keep all communication with Explorer/mentee private and confidential; agree to attend and participate in scheduled group empowerment sessions, including quarterly check point meetings and optional office hours feedback sessions; agree to submit a monthly report to the ACB Mentoring Team on Guide-Explorer progress; and agree to complete an end-of-program evaluation.

To qualify as an Explorer or mentee, applicants must be an ACB member for at least two years (membership in an ACB state or special-interest affiliate, or chapter, is applicable); current on membership dues; demonstrate an eagerness to learn and grow; faithfully attend and participate in goal-setting sessions with a designated guide/mentor; agree to meet with Guide/mentor at least twice a month; agree to attend and participate in group empowerment sessions, including quarterly check point meetings and optional office hours feedback sessions; agree to submit a monthly report to the ACB Mentoring Team on Guide-Explorer progress; and agree to complete an end of program evaluation.

Now is the time to strongly consider becoming a Guide or Explorer! To become a Guide/mentor, apply online at [**https://forms.gle/dVWybM91uzHxHGju9**](https://forms.gle/dVWybM91uzHxHGju9).

To become an Explorer/mentee, apply online at [**https://tinyurl.com/2s35kthd**](https://tinyurl.com/2s35kthd).

The application deadline is 11:59 p.m. Eastern time on August 18th.

# **Herbie Allen Is June’s Volunteer of the Month**

The Community Support Committee would like to congratulate Herbie Allen, who was voted Volunteer of the Month for June. Thank you, Herbie, for all you do for our ACB Community!

# **Introducing FIA’s Featured Artist Series!**

Come be a part of FIA’s blog highlighting new and established artists of all types, mediums and methods.

There is tons of talent in our organization and Friends in Art would like to feature an artist every month to showcase what we have in abundance. We want to share what people are creating. It’s time we share the beauty of our creations with the world. It’s time to let our allies, colleagues and fellow artists understand we deserve to be appreciated through and because of our art. Let’s show them our talent, drive, perseverance, and expertise.

We also want to acknowledge and motivate those artists out there who don’t feel seen or heard.

If you’re interested in being one of our featured artists, please contact our wonderful and innovative President, Annie Chiappetta or the sweet, smart and vivacious Nell Anthony, our Talent Team Secretary. Our contact information is below. We’ll come up with the questions, all you have to do is fill in the answers.

We look forward to sharing the inner worlds of our wonderful artists with you and the world at large. Come be a part of this new adventure with us.

To see the first featured artist, visit <https://www.friendsinart.org/featured-artful-and-talented-person-of-the-month/>.

Annie Chiappetta: president@friendsinart.org

Nell Anthony: 3inkpress@nellanthony.ink

# **Your Voice, Your Vote Webinar**

Join the U.S. Access Board and the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission (EAC) on Thursday, August 7, 2025, from 2:30 – 4:00 p.m. (ET) for a webinar on voting accessibility. The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) created the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission and the right for voters with disabilities to mark, cast and verify their ballots privately and independently. This webinar will cover data related to polling place accessibility during the 2024 election, including election-supporting technologies. Presenters will discuss standards related to polling place accessibility such as the Voluntary Voting Systems Guidelines (VVSG) and draft standards developed by the EAC’s Election Supporting Technology Evaluation Program. Additionally, presenters will demonstrate EAC accessibility web tools, research, and checklists designed to ensure polling place accessibility.

For more information, or to register, visit the [Great Lakes ADA Center’s webinar webpage](https://links-1.govdelivery.com/CL0/https%3A//www.accessibilityonline.org/ao/session%3Fid%3D111178/1/0100019860af5095-0731b32f-ba31-4a0d-a9d1-8d7a038e8491-000000/GssoQud1Upg18NIo0Wn4PFFpjIPhq8-LWKWUX3oeolE%3D416). All webinars include video remote interpreting (VRI) and real-time captioning. Questions can be submitted in advance of the session or can be posed during the live webinar. Webinar attendees can earn continuing education credits. The webinar series is hosted by the ADA National Network in cooperation with the Board. Archived copies of previous Board webinars are available on the site.

# **Help Shape the Future of Safer, More Accessible Connected Consumer Products**

ASTM International invites members of The American Council of the Blind to participate in the ASTM Subcommittee F15.75, which covers Connected Products and is developing safety standards for connected consumer products.

This committee is seeking volunteers from the disability community, including individuals who are blind or visually impaired, to offer insights on how these products can be made safer and more accessible. Your participation can help ensure that safety assessments and product standards reflect the real-world needs and experiences of people with disabilities.

Voluntary consensus standards rely on input from a broad range of users, including consumers with disabilities. Your perspectives are critical in helping standards organizations understand how people interact with products, what features are most valuable, and where potential barriers to access or safety may exist.

Committee F15.75 is exploring accessibility concerns, such as:

* User Interfaces: Ensuring usability through interaction methods that work for everyone.
* Sensory Accessibility: Providing alternative output options for individuals with visual or auditory impairments.
* Cognitive Accessibility: Simplifying user interfaces and ensuring instructions are clear and understandable or providing cognitive navigation support.
* Physical Accessibility: Designing connected products that are compatible with assistive technologies and easy to manipulate.

Volunteers will have the opportunity to provide input on the standard that manufacturers use when conducting safety assessments while developing connected products. Your voice can help ensure these products are inclusive and safe for all.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact either Travis Norton, at Content Strategy & Compliance Innovation by phone (716-752-9662) or email t.norton@complianceandrisks.com or Cleo Stamatos at the American National Standards Institute, by email cstamatos@ansi.org or phone (202-756-9204). Stamatos can also answer any questions you have about other standards opportunities.

# **Study on Attitudes Toward Vision Restoration**

My name is Catrina Coe, and I am an undergraduate researcher at UC Santa Barbara conducting an IRB-approved study titled: "Attitudes Toward Vision Restoration: A Survey of Preferences for Invasive and Noninvasive Mobility Aids."

We are exploring how blind and visually impaired adults view vision-restoring technologies like retinal implants or non-invasive wearable tools. The goal is to better understand how personal experiences — such as mobility, independence, visual memory, and living environment- shape attitudes toward these devices.

The study involves a 15- to 30-minute anonymous online survey, compatible with screen readers and assistive technology. Participants can optionally volunteer for a follow-up interview.

If you’re interested in participating, visit the study link at <https://ucsb.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0JqFXaS2D6WTYjk>.

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

A proposed settlement has been reached that would resolve the class action lawsuit Douglass v. Melnor Inc., Case No. 2:25-cv-00670 (W.D. Pa.). The lawsuit alleges that Melnor violated the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101, et seq., by failing to take the necessary steps to ensure its website and mobile apps do not discriminate against individuals who are Blind and/or who have a Visual Disability. Under the settlement, Melnor agrees to make its website, mobile apps, and any new website or mobile app it develops or acquires accessible to individuals who are Blind and/or who have a Visual Disability. For a more complete summary of the
terms of the proposed settlement, please visit <https://melnoradasettlement.com/>. Have questions? Contact East End Trial Group at [https://eastendtrialgroup.com](https://eastendtrialgroup.com/).