**Dots and Dashes**

**September 11, 2023**

# **Sign-On Opportunity**

The SSI Savings Penalty Elimination Act would raise the asset limits for SSI beneficiaries to $10,000 for individuals and $20,000 for couples. These limits will be adjusted each year for inflation. The Senate leads for the bill are Senator Brown from Ohio and Senator Cassidy from Louisiana; the House leads are Representative Higgins from New York and Representative Fitzpatrick from Pennsylvania. The deadline for sign-on is **today!** To sign on, visit [**https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdDTtJZuPMtRGHVCCdjsH3bFnKvFrNiKMfYZAR2uTN7K0Mrcw/viewform.**](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdDTtJZuPMtRGHVCCdjsH3bFnKvFrNiKMfYZAR2uTN7K0Mrcw/viewform.)

# **NPRM on Updating Section 504 Regulations**

On September 14th, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will publish a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) updating its Section 504 regulations to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in HHS-funded programs and services. The proposed rule will address web and mobile accessibility for individuals with disabilities, crisis standards of care that bar access to medical treatment on the basis of disability, and access to durable medical equipment. Read the proposed rule at[**Federal Register: Public Inspection: Discrimination on the Basis of Disability in Health and Human Service Programs or Activities**](https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection/2023-19149/discrimination-on-the-basis-of-disability-in-health-and-human-service-programs-or-activities)**.**

# **Making Sense of ACB Membership, Part 1**

At the Leadership Conference in March, we held several focus groups to discuss membership, and we’d like to continue the discussion. The purpose in this first round is to learn what is important to our membership, what brought you to ACB, and what keeps you coming back.

We’ll meet this Saturday, September 16th, at 1 p.m. Eastern. [**Listen on ACB Media 5**](http://www.acbmedia.org/5) or join [**Making Sense of ACB Membership** on Zoom](https://acb-org.zoom.us/j/84213804241?pwd=V2xQdnNNRldvNy9NeXRJazdtbGEzQT09), or participate by phone by calling (312) 626-6799, entering the Meeting ID: 84213804241#, and passcode: 4541. For one-tap mobile, dial: +13126266799,,84213804241#.

The questions are below. You may email your responses to [**community@acb.org**](mailto:community@acb.org), or call 1-800-424-8666.

* When did you join ACB?
* Why did you join ACB?
* Why do you continue to stay involved?
* What do you value most about ACB? (choose three) Advocacy; ADP; convention and conferences; communications (ACB Media Network and publications); community and peer support; leadership opportunities; volunteerism

# **Vote for Amarillo Store!**

The American Council of the Blind Thrift Store in Amarillo, Texas has been nominated for best Thrift Store and Best Second Hand Clothing & Consignment Store for CommunityVotes Amarillo 2023! We need your vote to help us win.

You can vote by sending an email to [**vote@communityvotes.com**](mailto:vote@communityvotes.com) with the message “I would like to vote for the American Council of the Blind Thrift Store for best Thrift Store and Best Second Hand Clothing & Consignment Store for CommunityVotes Amarillo 2023.”

Voting ends on September 17. We greatly appreciate anyone who takes the time to vote for us!

# **ACB Introduces 2023-24 INSPIRE Explorers and Guides**

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.

This year’s Guides are:

Karyn Campbell – Springfield, Illinois

Denise Colley – Richmond, Texas

Christy Crespin – Highland, California

Allan Peterson – Horace, North Dakota

Amanda Selm – Louisville, Kentucky

Kerry Smith – St. Louis, Missouri

Jeff Thom – Sacramento, California

Sheila Young – Orlando, Florida

And the Explorers are:

Kaila Allen – Mesa, Arizona

Conrad Bennett – Romney, West Virginia

Danette Dixon – Mill Creek, Washington

Mary Haroyan – Worcester, Massachusetts

April Martin – Talladega, Alabama

RaLynn McGuire – San Antonio, Texas

Olivia Ostergaard – Fresno, California

Tyanne Wilmath - Portland, Oregon

# **10,000 Titles with Audio Description!**

Audio description has come a long way since the Audio Description Project (ADP) title catalog started keeping track in 2010. Then, there were 101 DVDs with AD and streaming services didn’t exist. Now there are 10,000 titles across multiple platforms and in multiple languages. All major streaming services have more than doubled the number of titles available with AD over the last few years; for example, in 2016, iTunes and Netflix provided a combined 750 titles, and they now offer more than 2,000 each. The ADP thanks everyone who has helped create these 10,000 titles – the producers, writers, voice talent, sound engineers, quality control, consumers, and advocates. We can’t wait for the next 10,000 titles, so keep listening and keep advocating! Learn more about ADP and check out our 10,000+ titles at [**adp.acb.org**](https://adp.acb.org/).

# **NLS Patron Corner: Job Hunting**

This evening at 7 p.m. Eastern time, the NLS Patron Engagement Section will host the quarterly Patron Corner. The topic for this program is Job Hunting: Dos, Don’ts, Whys and Why nots. The session will be a panel of speakers who will address experiences with employees and employers. Speakers include Richard Rueda, Assistant Director of the APH Connect Center; Katie Frederick, Digital Content Manager for Vision Aware at the APH Connect Center; and Lex Huth, Communications Director for the Partnership on Employment and Accessible Technology (PEAT), a policy initiative funded by the US Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy. The session will run for 90 minutes.

Please join us at [**https://loc.zoomgov.com/j/1610826275?pwd=c0g0YWVWdlpMNE10RUVxZ1pXZW5QZz09**](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/loc.zoomgov.com/j/1610826275?pwd=c0g0YWVWdlpMNE10RUVxZ1pXZW5QZz09__;!!EDx7F7x-0XSOB8YS_BQ!aJ55b0nRv0bhQX11_gn359ZzFIJWwUiUMYo5dvHGf4wgNlswO5nFG_NXweWn8m-6JNKFZ10iIV6P6ioF9XG_m2K496V7lwXS4PYmSw$). You may also participate by phone by calling (312) 626-6799, and using meeting ID 161 082 6275; the passcode is 318436. For one-tap mobile, dial +16692545252,,1610826275#

# **Many Faces of BARD**

The topic for the Thursday, September 14, Many Faces of BARD program will be Using Your Braille Display to Read Braille BARD Books on Your iPhone. The program will begin at 7 p.m. Eastern time and last for one hour. This program will be recorded.

For this session, Judy Dixon will demonstrate how to access BARD braille books located on your iPhone and read them with your braille display. Note that information in this session will apply to any braille display including the NLS Braille eReaders. After the demonstration, Judy and the rest of the NLS staff will take questions about the demonstration or anything else relating to BARD.

To join the session, go to [**https://loc.zoomgov.com/j/1609390773?pwd=bWtTcmhyNlplcm9ndnRrd0xOZFFRQT09**](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/loc.zoomgov.com/j/1609390773?pwd=bWtTcmhyNlplcm9ndnRrd0xOZFFRQT09__;!!EDx7F7x-0XSOB8YS_BQ!aqUpFcFpkIt4p05SQRNZ4ECjcaasvS1z3Th_gH2jG5KgI1MsLd_3_1hrmq2Tq4vd3AEzTCFkI-8TyWbgp3dgKJueWaz9CxTbb0feDQ$)**.** You may also participate by phone by calling (312) 626-6799, and using meeting ID 160 939 0773, with the passcode 429260. For one-tap mobile, dial +16692545252,,1609390773#.

# **Webinar on Long-Haul COVID**

The Center for Health Equity at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community at Indiana University Bloomington is hosting a webinar that will feature Dr. Vidya Sundareshan from the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. Dr. Sundareshan is a professor of Infectious Diseases and medical advisor to Sangamon County Department of Public Health. In this webinar, Dr. Sundareshan will provide an overview of the current research and treatment of Long COVID.

This free webinar will be on Monday, September 18, from 12 to 1 p.m. Eastern time. Live captioning and sign language interpreting will be provided. Registration is required. If you have any question for Dr. Sundareshan, please include your question when registering for the webinar.

To register for the webinar, visit [**https://go.iu.edu/4QtI**](https://go.iu.edu/4QtI).

# **Survey on Audio-Described Videos**

The National Library of Medicine (NLM), part of the National Institutes of Health, has created a series of [**audio described (AD) videos**](https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7dF9e2qSW0aXY_jm_OUCNC0DUFcYp892&feature=shared) that convey visual-only information to people who are blind or have low vision. As the world’s largest biomedical library and a leader in biomedical informatics/computational health data science research, NLM is committed to enhancing information accessibility for all.

NLM is [conducting a survey](https://nlmenterprise.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_blP2PAPdlmzF15k) (OMB Control Number: 0925-0648) to evaluate the effectiveness of our AD videos and to improve the user experience. To take the survey, go to [**https://nlmenterprise.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\_blP2PAPdlmzF15k**](https://nlmenterprise.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_blP2PAPdlmzF15k).

# **DFHV Needs Your Help**

The Department of For-Hire Vehicles (DFHV) is looking for passionate individuals interested in disability rights, taxi and ride-hail companies, also known as TNCs, and drivers to serve on the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

The AAC covers a wide range of topics, including but not limited to the following:

* Policy ideas to improve the availability of wheelchair-accessible taxis in the District;
* Rider and driver expectations and needs; and
* Monthly data on accessible trip requests to monitor utilization and demand.

Virtual meetings are generally held on the second Tuesday of every other month from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, or to apply, visit [**https://dfhv.dc.gov/page/accessibility-advisory-committee-aac**](https://dfhv.dc.gov/page/accessibility-advisory-committee-aac).

Applications are due by **Friday, September 29, 2023.**

# **Blindness and Mental Health Webinar**

Accessible Pharmacy will host a blindness and mental health webinar on Friday, September 29, at noon Eastern. One of the featured speakers is Pam Shaw, chairman of ACB’s Mental Health and Wellness Committee! To learn more, or to register, visit [**https://accessiblepharmacy.com/blindness-and-mental-health-webinar/**](https://accessiblepharmacy.com/blindness-and-mental-health-webinar/).

# **Protecting Your Identity Webinar**

The Financial Resilience Center at National Disability Institute is excited to invite you to its upcoming webinar, **Safe Amidst the Frenzy: Guarding Your Identity**. This is a virtual event taking place on Zoom, Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 2 p.m. EST.

You’ll learn about:

* Common ways identity theft occurs and scams to avoid
* How to protect your personal information and stay safe online
* Steps to take if your identity is stolen

To register, visit [**https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\_n\_i7l5qHSsGJ-lIFC6NDhA#/registration**](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_n_i7l5qHSsGJ-lIFC6NDhA#/registration).

# **An Alt Text Guide for Memes**

The meme economy rarely falters, and as the impetus for much of our social posting, memes have become the common vernacular and social currency of generations of users. But a huge portion of those digital consumers are frequently left out of the loop, the product of failed website accessibility, user error, or even misinformation. Meme inaccessibility isn’t simply a technological or communicative gap: “Barriers to participating in meme culture can also directly affect social lives,” TIME reported in a 2020 story with researchers from Carnegie Mellon University. Accessible memes make the Internet a fun place for everyone! [**This article from Mashable**](https://mashable.com/article/how-to-write-alt-text-memes-social-media) provides guidance on how to make memes accessible with alt-text.

# **Want to Win a Plush Guide Dog?**

GDUI is holding a drawing for Venture, a large plush golden retriever who proudly wears his leather harness.

Tickets are available now through October 21 at 11:59 a.m. EDT. They are 3 for $5 or 7 for $10. To get yours, visit [**https://guidedogusersinc.org/september-2023-drawing/**](https://guidedogusersinc.org/september-2023-drawing/). Or call our office manager, Lynn Merrill, at (866) 799-8436.

The lucky winner will be drawn during the GDUI annual membership meeting on October 21st. You do not need to be present to win.