**Dots and Dashes**

**April 8, 2024**

# **Solar Eclipse Is Today!**

The 2024 solar eclipse is today, and ACB Community and ACB Media are getting into it. There will be a Community event, as well as a program on ACB Media, featuring the eclipse. This afternoon at 2, ACB Media will broadcast the live Harvard University eclipse stream on Media 2. There will also be a community event starting at 2 p.m. on ACB Media 5 called “Share in the Solar Eclipse.” Those along the pathway of total eclipse are encouraged to join us from a mobile device to provide real-time commentating.

Lighthouse Guild offers five tips to help protect your eyes while viewing the eclipse:

* The safest way to look directly at the sun is through special-purpose solar filters, such as “eclipse glasses” or handheld solar viewers. Homemade filters or ordinary sunglasses, even very dark ones, are not safe for looking at the sun. They transmit thousands of times too much sunlight.
* If you normally wear eyeglasses, keep them on. Put your eclipse glasses on over them or hold your handheld viewer in front of them.
* Stand still and cover your eyes with your eclipse glasses or solar viewer before looking up at the bright sun. After looking at the sun, turn away and remove your filter. Do not remove it while looking at the sun.
* Do not look at the sun through a camera, telescope, binoculars, or any other optical device while using your eclipse glasses or handheld solar viewer. The concentrated solar rays could damage the eclipse glasses and allow harmful rays to enter your eyes, causing serious injury.
* Never look at the sun through an unfiltered camera, telescope, binoculars, or other optical device.

# **More Eclipse News**

Join Aira and the South East Area Coalition of Rochester, NY, on April 8th for the “Total Eclipse of the Park” event at Genesee Valley Park, situated directly in the path of totality. This once-in-a-lifetime solar eclipse viewing experience will be enhanced with Aira’s live visual interpretation, ensuring the blind and low vision community can partake in the astronomical spectacle alongside 31 million others in the path of totality.

From 2 to 4 p.m. Eastern time, Aira’s visual interpreters will bring the eclipse to life via Aira’s YouTube channel, adding insights on the appearance of the sky, the sun’s corona during totality, and capturing the reactions of park patrons as day turns to night. This live broadcast will be streamed throughout Genesee Valley Park during the totality, making it a truly inclusive event. Access Aira’s YouTube channel here: [**https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvTWpoo6BVrn2pOFreWQGGw**](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvTWpoo6BVrn2pOFreWQGGw)

## **In-Person Event Details:**

- When: Monday, April 8th, 1 PM - 6 PM

- Where: Genesee Valley Field House Lodge, 1316 Genesee Street, Rochester, NY 14611

- Live Aira Broadcast: 2 PM - 4 PM Eastern on Aira’s YouTube Channel

For more information, visit [**https://seacrochester.org/eclipse-event/**](https://seacrochester.org/eclipse-event/)**.**

# **Call for Nominations for the 2024 ADP Awards**

What do a chef, a museum, and a very large telescope have in common? They were all recipients of a 2023 ADP Award! The ADP Awards recognize achievement in audio description in seven categories, including media, performing arts, museums, the public sector, and research and development. Nominations will be accepted through April 21, and the winners will be announced in July at the ACB convention.

## **Who Can Submit a Nomination?**

Everyone! You are welcome to nominate yourself, your local theatre or museum, or a well-known institution. Complete and submit the [**nomination form**](https://forms.gle/AUTytxnPRdHUxbbr8) today.

## **Who Is Eligible for an Award?**

Any person, organization, or institution that fits in one of the categories below and is involved in the research, development, production, design, creation, and/or delivery of great audio description is eligible.

## **What Are the Criteria?**

The most important criterion is that the person or organization consistently develops, creates, and/or makes available high-quality audio description. But we encourage you to consider other vital accessibility and inclusivity elements, such as how easy it is to access the audio description; whether the website and/or physical spaces are accessible; and to what extent people on the blindness spectrum are involved in the creation of audio description, as writers, editors, sound engineers, or testers. You’ll want to include these details in your nomination.

## **What Are the Award Categories?**

There are seven categories. The same individual or organization may not be nominated in multiple categories.

* Media
* Performing Arts
* Museums, Visual Art, Visitor Centers
* Public Sector (government agencies – federal, state, or local)
* International (people and organizations working primarily outside the U.S.)
* Dr. Margaret Pfanstiehl Memorial Award for Audio Description Research and Development
* Barry Levine Memorial Award for Career Achievement in Audio Description

## **Submit Your Nomination!**

Help us celebrate the people and organizations that are contributing significantly to the growth of audio description. [**Submit your nomination on-line**](https://forms.gle/AUTytxnPRdHUxbbr8) **before** **April 21, 2024.**

# **Resolutions and Proposed Amendments to the ACB Constitution and Bylaws Due on April 25, 2024**

Resolutions should be specific and measurable: why we need to take action; what action should be taken; who is responsible for the action; when it should be completed. Resolutions about the distant future are not as useful as those with specific actions to be taken during the next year or two.

Constitution and Bylaws amendments should describe why the change is recommended and the expected impact.

You will be notified when the appropriate committee will consider your proposal and it is expected that you or someone representing your views will attend that discussion to give input.

All resolutions and constitution and bylaws amendments may be sent to **advocacy@acb.org**and will be distributed to the appropriate committee. Get them in by **April 25, 2024.**

# **Calling All Candidates!**

The ACB Board of Publications is pleased to announce the 2024 Candidates Pages. Any ACB member who wishes to run for one of the five board positions or one of the three elected BOP positions to introduce yourself by responding to the four questions provided below. You may also post links (separately) to related personal, professional, or social media web pages.

Your response to each of the four questions listed below should not exceed 300 words.

1. Introduce yourself, and explain why you wish to serve as a director on the ACB Board of Directors or a member of the ACB Board of Publications.
2. What have been your strongest contributions to ACB at the national, state or special-interest affiliate, ACB Community, and/or local chapter levels, and why are these significant?
3. Like many not-for-profit, membership-driven organizations whose missions revolve around advocacy and support, ACB has chosen in recent years to adopt the core values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). How does ACB’s stated mission of supporting people who are blind intersect with these core organizational values? If elected, what specific actions will you take to increase diversity, promote equity, encourage inclusion, and support accessibility within ACB, and how will you persuade members who are reluctant to embrace these principles to support DEIA as core ACB values?
4. What is the most important challenge facing ACB? How will you work to address it?

Send your Candidates Page, either in the body of an email or as a Word attachment, to **slovering@acb.org**, with the subject line “My Candidates Page.” The deadline for all submissions is 11:59 p.m. Eastern on Monday, May 20, 2024. Visit [**www.acb.org**](http://www.acb.org) for more information.

# **Iowa Council of the United Blind**

# **Offers New Scholarship**

Iowa Council of the United Blind recently launched a new one-year, non-renewable $2,500 college scholarship to be available for the 2024-2025 academic year. This scholarship will be awarded to a graduating high school senior planning to attend on a full-time basis a fully accredited community college, college, or university. The ICUB membership invites eligible students with a broad range of business, professional, skilled/technical, or service career aspirations to apply. All application materials should be submitted to the ICUB Scholarship Committee by **May 15.** The Committee will select a recipient who will be formally recognized and honored in a brief ceremony attended by the student and members of his/her family at the annual ICUB convention luncheon on Saturday, August 24, 2024.

Applicants for this scholarship must be:

* A 2024 high school graduate
* A legal resident of the state of Iowa
* Blind or legally blind
* Have a minimum high school cumulative grade of B

Applicants must submit to the Scholarship Committee:

* A completed ICUB scholarship application form
* Documentation of legal blindness by a certified medical professional
* Verification of acceptance by an accredited post-secondary institution
* An essay of approximately 650 words discussing briefly educational or career goals and explaining why the applicant should be considered for the scholarship
* Three reference letters from individuals sufficiently knowledgeable to address the applicant’s academic ability or other characteristics or experiences relevant to probable future success

You can find the application online at [**https://www.icublind.org/post/empowering-the-future-the-new-iowa-council-of-the-united-blind-scholarship**](https://www.icublind.org/post/empowering-the-future-the-new-iowa-council-of-the-united-blind-scholarship). Any questions may be addressed to **President@icublind.org**.

# **Chicago Lighthouse Scholarships**

Applications are now being accepted for The Chicago Lighthouse’s Lader Family Scholarship Program for the 2024-25 academic year. The Lader Family Scholarship is open to Illinois residents who are blind, vision impaired or multi-disabled (vision impaired with an additional diagnosis) who are pursuing any type of accredited post-secondary education, including associate’s and bachelor’s degrees, professional certifications, or post-collegiate graduate studies.

Scholarships are between $1,000 and $5,000 and are based on a variety of factors, including need, area of study and overall strength of application. Scholarship recipients will be expected to attend the award ceremony on Saturday, July 20, 2024, at The Chicago Lighthouse.

Applications must be completed before **9 a.m. on April 29th.** You may apply online at [**https://chicagolighthouse.org/program/lighthouse-scholarship/?mc\_cid=a4e3736d9e&mc\_eid=22cf83ca70**](https://chicagolighthouse.org/program/lighthouse-scholarship/?mc_cid=a4e3736d9e&mc_eid=22cf83ca70).

# **Texas A&M Transportation Institute Survey**

Are you a member of the blind or low vision community who rides public transit? Are you at least 18 and live in the United States?

If so, you can help improve how transit information is provided to people who are blind or low vision by taking a Texas A&M Transportation Institute survey. To indicate your interest or learn more, call (979) 393-0168 or email **BLV-Info@tti.tamu.edu**.

You will be asked a few questions to confirm your eligibility and then you can fill out the survey online or by phone.

Complete the survey by the deadline, and you’ll get a $10 gift card of your choice and be entered to win one of five $100 gift cards!

The deadline to complete the survey is **April 30, 2024.**

To help us reduce fraudulent responses, please do not post this invitation to social media.

# **NRTC Recruiting Participants for Career Mentoring Survey**

We know that mentoring is important for people who are blind or have low vision (B/LV), but we know little about how effective career mentoring relationships are established. We are conducting a study to identify the characteristics of successful mentoring relationships and the factors that shape these relationships.

The survey is open to people who are B/LV, between ages 30 and 65, who have received career mentorship. The survey will take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete and can be conveniently accessed on your computer or mobile device.

As a token of our appreciation, qualified participants who complete the survey may enter a drawing for a chance to win one of three $100 gift cards.

To see if you qualify for this study, visit

[**https://msstate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\_8vJutErGmc74n6S?Source=5**](https://msstate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8vJutErGmc74n6S?Source=5).

If you need assistance, please contact Jamie Boydstun at jboydstun@colled.msstate.edu or call (662) 325-2001.

# **NLS Braille-on-Demand Pilot Continues**

Interested in braille you can keep indefinitely? The NLS Braille-on-Demand pilot program now allows all registered patron to receive five hard-copy braille books per month with no return date. Patrons may request books directly using the form at [**www.surveymonkey.com/r/NLSbrailleondemand External**](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NLSbrailleondemand) or may contact their network library for assistance in filing their requests. Any braille book available on BARD is eligible to be produced in hard copy by this program. Books will be mailed directly to the requesting patrons.

# **News from Social Security**

The Social Security Administration recently announced that it will decrease the default overpayment withholding rate for Social Security beneficiaries to ten percent (or $10, whichever is greater) from 100 percent, significantly reducing financial hardship on people with overpayments.

When a person has been overpaid, the law requires the agency to seek repayment, which can create financial difficulties for beneficiaries. As of March 25, 2024, the agency will collect ten percent (or $10, whichever is greater) of the total monthly Social Security benefit to recover an overpayment. There will be limited exceptions to this change, such as when an overpayment resulted from fraud.

There will be a short transition period where people will continue to experience the older policy.  **People placed in 100 percent withholding during this transition period should call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 to lower their withholding rate.**