

# MAER

2020

THINK DIFFERENTLY, MAKE A DIFFERENCE



## GENERAL SESSION 1

Tyler Merren will discuss how to find out the keys to finding the champion within to reach your maximum potential.

## GENERAL SESSION 2

Corinna Bauer will highlight how the underlying etiology, timing, and extent of brain injury influence the potential for neuroplasticity and functional (re)habilitation in children and adults with NVI.

ONLINE

MARRIOTT HOTEL  
11100 LAUREL PARK DRIVE NORTH  
LIVONIA, MICHIGAN 48152



# MAER ONLINE

For the first time ever MAER will be held online! Be sure to [Enroll in your MAER Professional Development Portal](#)

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## Summer 2020 Camp Tuhsmeheeta Events

### Save the Date!

#### **\*June 28-30 Adventure Camp (ages 13-18)**

Campers will engage in many adventures at this two-night camp. Participants will have an opportunity to hike, practice archery, scale the climbing tower, swim, and warm up around the campfire.

#### **\*July 26-28 A Blast From the Past Camp (ages 7-12)**

Campers will participate in traditional camping activities such as canoeing, arts and crafts, archery, outdoor games, and gathering around the campfire.

#### **\*August 15 Camp T Reunion for Campers and Staff**

Over the years, many memories have been made at Camp T. This year, we would like to invite former campers and staff members to a camp picnic to reminisce about the good ol' days while making new memories!

### Details

#### **Location:**

Camp Tuhsmeheeta  
10500 Lincoln Lake Rd. NE  
Greenville, MI 48838

#### **Cost:**

\$5 Registration

#### **Learn more:**

[mdelio.org/events](http://mdelio.org/events)

\*Upcoming events are subject to change due to COVID-19. MDE-LIO's website will be updated as new information is available.

[www.camptuhsmeheeta.com](http://www.camptuhsmeheeta.com)



Low Incidence Outreach  
702 W. Kalamazoo St.  
Lansing, MI 48915  
[www.mdelio.org](http://www.mdelio.org)



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## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



**Gerald Abner**

Gerald Abner is a Clinical Instructor in the Teacher Preparation Program for Visual Impairments. Working as an itinerant teacher for 29 years

in Kentucky public schools, his current work at the University focuses on bringing that clinical experience to the university classroom. Currently Abner's area of interest is increasing literacy and communication for students with visual impairments and complex needs.



**Dr. Dawn Anderson**

Dr. Dawn Anderson is the coordinator of the O&M with Children and Teacher of the Visually Impaired programs at Western Michigan University. Her

research interests include validation and reliability study of assessment tools in O&M and other ECC areas. She has focused her study on personnel preparation of O&M specialists who are blind, Deaf, or visually impaired. She serves as a board member on the Michigan Blind Athletic Association.



**Roxanne Balfour**

Roxanne Balfour is the Director for the Michigan Department of Education, Low Incidence Outreach (MDE, LIO). She has worked for MDE, Office of Special Education (OSE) for twenty years, six of those years at Low Incidence Outreach. At MDE, OSE she had oversight of the State Special Education Personnel system, grant management, program development, and policy, finance/business operations. Before coming to MDE, she worked at Grand Valley State University, Graduate School of Education. She is a member of the Association of Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Council of Schools and Services for the Blind. She earned her Bachelor's degree from Central Michigan University and Master's degree from Grand Valley State University.



**Karen M.L. Barsy**

Karen M.L. Barsy, M.A., R-DMT- Dance Movement Therapist; B.S., Dance Education, Eastern Michigan University; M.A., Dance Therapy, Lesley College.

She has been practicing in the Detroit area since 1987; including as an independent Contractor working through Creative Arts Therapies, Inc. (Penrickton Center, Hawthorn Center), Dance Therapist at MSU Community Music School-Detroit (2009-present). She has experience with developmentally disabled, cognitive impairments, TBI, blind-multi handicapped, pre-primary impaired, ASD, VI, psychiatric, sexual abuse victims, and geriatric populations. This is her 30th year at Penrickton Center for Blind Children.



## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



**Corinna M. Bauer, PhD**

Dr. Corinna Bauer focuses her research on understanding how the visual dysfunctions observed in cortical/cerebral visual impairment (CVI) relate to

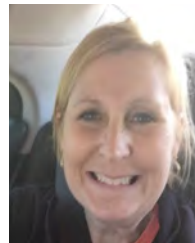
brain structure and function. Following a master's in bioimaging, she completed her doctoral studies in neurobiology at Boston University School of Medicine utilizing neuroimaging techniques in the study of Alzheimer's disease and mild cognitive impairment. Currently, she applies advanced MRI techniques to study how the brain adapts to vision loss due to both ocular and cerebral causes. Corinna's recent work concentrates on the relationship between brain structure and function with performance on assessments of higher-order visual processing in individuals living with cortical/cerebral visual impairment.



**JoAnne Chalom**

Joanne Chalom is President and Founder of In Focus Mobility, Inc.. She advocates for the accessibility needs of individuals with disabilities as a member of the Environmental

Access Committee of the Orientation and Mobility Division of AER. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of South Florida in Exceptional Education, a Master of Science from Nova Southeastern University in Early Childhood Exceptional Education and an Educational Specialist from Barry University in Computer Applications in Education. She completed graduate level coursework at the University of Pittsburgh's Vision Studies Program and is a Certified O&M Specialist.



**Dr. Donna Carpenter**

Donna Carpenter is the State Coordinator for the Kentucky Deafblind Project. Donna is a certified teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Elementary

Certified Teacher, Montessori Early Childhood Certified with her doctorate in Educational Leadership. She signs fluently in American Sign Language (ASL) Donna's parents had cerebral palsy, which greatly influenced her choices to work with children, families, and professionals in the field of special education. She is very interested in how we present our children to other professionals and how to create a positive mindsets using photo stories from families. She loves her job!



**Alan Elias**

Alan Elias is a Special Education Compliance Consultant for Oakland Schools. Alan worked in West Bloomfield School district for 14 years,

most recently as Supervisor of Special Services, prior to coming to Oakland Schools 2 years ago. He has a Bachelor's of Business Administration degree from Eastern Michigan University, a Master's in Social Work from Wayne State University and an Education Specialist in Special Education Administration from Saginaw Valley State University. Alan currently works in the Compliance Unit providing consultation to 28 member districts and is the lead on the General Supervision Monitoring initiative.

## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



**Ashley DeLaFranier**

Ashley DeLaFranier, MT-BC, ATRL- Music Therapist-Board Certified, Certified Neurological Music Therapist, Registered and Licensed Occupational

Therapist; B.M.T., Music Therapy, Eastern Michigan University, Neurological Music Therapy certification, MOT- Wayne State University, Independent Contractor with Creative Arts Therapies, Inc. (Penrickton Center for Blind Children), Attuned to You, LLC- Owner. Diagnoses include developmental delays, cognitive disabilities, multiply impaired, visually impaired, blind-multi handicapped, autism spectrum disorder, traumatic brain injured, spinal cord injuries, and geriatric and hospice populations.



**Leslie Hoskins**

Leslie Hoskins is a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist and the Outreach Services and Community Engagement Manager at Leader

Dogs for the Blind. She joined the O&M team in March of 2014 and transitioned to her new role of Outreach Services in January of 2020. Leslie attended Western Michigan University where she graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and a Master of Arts in Orientation and Mobility.



**Leanne Ford**

Leanne Ford received a B. S. from Lake Superior State University in Human Services and a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Teaching from

Western Michigan University. She has worked for over 13 years at the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons in the Independent Living Program. She has been involved with Sports Education Camp for 20 years, serving as the director for more years than she can recall. Leanne's free time is spent caring for her elderly mother and spending time with family. Leanne and her husband enjoy camping with their dog.



**Jessica Klenk**

Jessica Klenk has been a teacher consultant for 10 years. She graduated from Ball State University with a bachelors in special education- SXI and a

Masters in special education-visual impairment. She also has a Masters in Orientation and Mobility from Western Michigan University. During this time, she has worked with children aged 0-26. She is certified in IDA administration and is working on the CVI Endorsement. Her husband, David Klenk, is on the USA Blind Hockey team.

## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



### **Julie Lutz, MAET**

Julie Lutz is a co-collaborator on the MDE-LIO Assistive Technology Guidelines. Julie has been a member of the MDE-LIO Technology Team for nine

years. Being an educator, trainer, and consultant for decades, she is dedicated to the success of all teachers and students in the utilization of the twenty-first century technology tools. Julie holds Masters Degrees in Educational Technology from Michigan State University and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from Eastern Michigan University and a Bachelor's Degree in Speech and Language with Secondary Certification from University of Michigan.



### **Tyler Merren**

Tyler Merren, born and raised in Michigan, has spent many years in elite competition with the USA Men's Goalball team. He has Traveled the world

representing our nation, all while being a husband and father, student, Personal Trainer, Motivational Speaker, and Business Owner. He currently lives in Fort Wayne, IN with his wife and 3 girls while his son is attending Florida Atlantic university. Tyler is preparing for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, working part time for the Northeast Indiana Disability Advocacy Coalition, and growing his business ReVisionTraining.



### **Jasamyn Nichols DeGrant**

Jasamyn is a Teacher of the Visually Impaired for Clark County Public Schools in Winchester, Kentucky. She completed the Teacher

Preparation Program for Visual Impairments at the University of Kentucky and is currently in the Orientation and Mobility program. While in the Teacher of the Visually Impaired program, Jasamyn had the opportunity to work alongside her Professor, Gerald Abner, on the grant to address and improve communication and educational services to students with the most significant disabilities, including visual impairments, in KY public schools. The grant is called Teaching Age-Appropriate Academic Learning via Communication (TAALC) and is managed by the Human Development Institute at the University of Kentucky.



### **Colleen O'Donnell**

Colleen O'Donnell is a Certified Low Vision Therapist and Occupational Therapist who has worked in the area of vision rehabilitation for over 20 years.

Colleen works at the Henry Ford Center for Vision Rehabilitation Colleen has presented at International and Michigan AER, American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Occupational Association and Envision conferences. She is the author of articles on vision loss in JVIB and OT Practice and has contributed to the online learning programs of American Foundation for the Blind and Envision University. Colleen is a member of ACVREP's Subject Matter Expert CLVT committee.

## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



**Jennifer Paul**

Jennifer Paul began her career in education as a middle school and high school teacher of English, Spanish, and English as a Second Language. Her

strong interest in the needs of English Learners eventually led her to the Michigan Department of Education where she managed the development and administration of the state's English language proficiency assessment. In recent years, Jennifer's work has included serving as co-chair of the Smarter Balanced workgroup focused on accessibility and ensuring all of Michigan's assessments include necessary tools, supports, and accommodations now and in the future.



**Kristy Plesscher**

Kristy Plesscher graduated with an M.A from Western Michigan University in 2013. She completed her practicum at Leader Dog and her internship

at Southeastern Blind Rehabilitation Center in Birmingham, AL. Kristy worked as an Orientation and Mobility Specialist with adults in Alabama, and with school aged children in Ohio. She also worked for Peckham Industries in Lansing, MI as a Vocational Services Specialist, where she supported people with disabilities in reaching their employment goals. In 2017 Kristy joined the Extended Services team at Leader Dogs for the Blind as a COMS.



**Anne Riddering PhD**

Anne Riddering is the Director of Rehabilitation Services for Henry Ford Health System's Visual Rehabilitation and Research Center of Michigan.

She has taught in WMU's occupational therapy department and is a guest lecturer in the OT departments at Wayne State University and Eastern Michigan University. Anne has served as the secretary/treasurer for AER Division 7 (Low Vision Rehabilitation Division), as a member of the Division 7 Awards Nomination Committee, and AER's by-laws committee. She was a committee member for low vision therapists for the Academy of Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals, the American Occupational Therapy Association's Specialty Board Panel on Low Vision Rehabilitation and The Low Vision Consensus Project. Anne is a member of the American Occupational Therapy Association and AERBVI. She currently has been appointed by the governor of Michigan to the board of Michigan Council of Rehabilitation Services and serves on the executive board. Anne's other interest areas in low vision include geriatrics, environmental modification, return-to-work adaptations, sports participation among the elderly and research in the field of low vision and blindness.



## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



**Peggy Sinclair-Morris**

Peggy Sinclair-Morris is an educational specialist for the Kentucky Deaf Blind Project. She was the Director for Outreach Services at the

Kentucky School for the Blind. Peggy has worked in the field of Visual Impairment and Deaf-Blindness for 32 years as a TVI and O&M Specialist, and Deaf Blind Specialist. Peggy has a B.S.R. in O&M from Stephen F. Austin State University, an M.A. in Deaf Education from Gallaudet University and Director of Special Education certification from University of the Cumberlands. She is very passionate about ensuring that all children with deafblindness are viewed as teachable and having the ability to learn and communicate.



**Sarah Stargardt**

Sarah Stargardt is a TCVI/COMS working for Oakland Schools. She completed her undergraduate studies at Michigan State University and

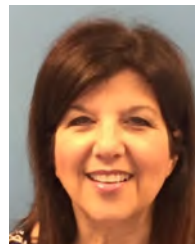
graduate school at Western Michigan University. Sarah served as a TCVI/COMS in Chicago Public Schools for 10 years before moving to Michigan in 2011. She has been in the blindness and low vision field for 20 years and has a passion for incorporating the use of technology with her students. She is a member of the MDE-LIO Braille Team as well as the Region IV Technology Consortium.



**Stephanie Steffer**

Stephanie Steffer is a Teacher Consultant for the Visually Impaired in Lincoln Park Public Schools (serving Southern Wayne County). She earned

a bachelor's from Eastern Michigan University for Special Education for the Visually Impaired and Early Childhood Education. Additionally, she has her Perkins-Roman CVI Specialist Certificate. Throughout her nine years of teaching, Stephanie has spent much of her career researching supports for children with CVI. Beyond the classroom, Stephanie is a CViConnect Support Professional and one of the founders of the CViConnect system.



**Julie Unatin**

Julie Unatin graduated from Eastern Michigan with her TVI and Western Michigan with her Masters Degree in Orientation and Mobility. She has been with

Oakland Schools for 27 years providing services for students with visual impairment and blindness birth-26. Julie is on various committees around the State of Michigan, and is also a Regional Braille Team Member (providing On-Demand Braille Classes) with MDE-LIO. Most recently, Julie has entered college again at Texas Tech University and will have her Master Degree Certificate through their graduate school in DeafBlind Studies in May of 2020.

## ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



**Dr. Robert Wall Emerson**

Robert Wall Emerson is a professor in the Department of Blindness and Low Vision Studies at Western Michigan University. He has worked as a TVI, an O&M specialist, and a researcher. He has been involved in a wide range of studies in the field of vision, has authored over 75 peer reviewed articles and 8 book chapters, and is research editor for the journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness. He has two children, a lovely wife who is also an O&M specialist, and a little dog.



**Michelle Wolschlager**

Michelle Wolschlager received a Bachelor's in Special Education from Old Dominion University, and a Master's in Educational Leadership and an Educational Specialist in Special Education Administration from Eastern Michigan University. Michelle was a special education teacher for Fenton Schools for 8 years, a Special Education Director for Fowlerville Schools for 5 years, and has been a Special Education Compliance Consultant for Oakland Schools for the last 10 years. Michelle completes monitoring activities and investigates state complaints with the Michigan Department of Education and heads up the IEP Coach training initiative in Oakland County.



**Margaret Winn, MA, COMS**

Anne Riddering is the Director Margaret "Maggie" Winn graduated from Western Michigan University with an M.A. in O&M in 2011. Maggie has been a COMS with Leader Dogs for the Blind for five years. Maggie serves clients in Metro Detroit as an independent contractor with the State of Michigan. She previously instructed O&M clients with The Chicago Lighthouse and Blind and Vision Rehabilitation Services of Pittsburgh before returning to Michigan. Maggie earned her bachelor's degree from the Honors Scholar Program at the University of Michigan-Flint in Health Care Administration. Maggie worked as an ABO Certified Optician and optical manager before pursuing a career in O&M. Maggie has served as District 3 Director for the AER Division 9 (Orientation and Mobility) from 2016 to 2020.



**Jennifer Wong, O.D.**

Dr. Wong is an optometrist and vision rehabilitation specialist for patients suffering from vision loss due to disease, traumatic brain injury and stroke. She has an optometry degree from Illinois College of Optometry and is a certified low vision specialist who is affiliated with Beaumont Hospital and has practiced for over 26 years.

# Join Our Team

- 
- 
- ✓ ***Ready for support from a team that understands your profession?***
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  - ✓ ***Do flexible hours appeal to you?***

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Penrickton Center for Blind Children was established in 1952 by three Taylor families (*Penman, Ricker, Wigginton*) as a day nursery for blind pre schoolers because no such program existed. Over the years, Penrickton Center has changed to meet the needs in the community. Currently, we specialize in treating blind children ages 1-12 with a least one additional handicap such as deafness, cerebral palsy, brain damage, and developmental delay.

Since no fees are ever charged for our services, we continue to need the support of many caring people. Penrickton Center does not receive any state, federal, United Way or insurance money. Instead, we rely solely on private donations.

## Penrickton Center For Blind Children

Is Proud to Announce the Official Website  
for Active Learning Information:

**[www.activelearningspace.org](http://www.activelearningspace.org)**



Penrickton Center for Blind Children has partnered with Texas School for the Blind and Perkins School for the Blind to establish the website:

**[activelearningspace.org](http://activelearningspace.org)**

This collaboration is an informative and interactive place for parents, teachers, therapists and interested professionals to learn about Dr. Lilli Nielsen's "Active Learning" theory.



## LIVE SCHEDULE: THURSDAY

TIME	SESSION
8:30 - 10:00	<b>Welcome</b> <b>MAER President Amy McDonald-Lamiman</b> <b>General Session: Finding the Champion Within</b> <b>Tyler Merren</b> <p>In a world of passes and fails, rankings and percentages, grades and markings, how does a person see their own success when there are always others who are better? Find out the keys to finding the champion within to reach your maximum potential.</p>
10:00 - 10:15	<b>Break</b>
10:15 - 11:30	<b>General Session: Characterizing Neurological Visual Impairment: Evidence from Neuroimaging and Behaviour</b> <b>Corinna Bauer</b> <p>Neurological Visual Impairment (NVI) occurs frequently following brain injury in children and adults. This presentation will highlight how the underlying etiology, timing, and extent of brain injury influence the potential for neuroplasticity and functional (re)habilitation in children and adults with NVI.</p>
11:30 - 11:45	<b>Break</b>
11:45 - 12:30	<b>Vendor Highlights</b>
12:30 - 1:45	<b>Lunch and MAER Annual Business Meeting</b>



## LIVE SCHEDULE: THURSDAY

TIME	SESSION
2:00 - 3:15	<p><b>Putting the Pieces Together: Collectively Creating Equity Access and Opportunities for Students</b></p> <p><b>Roxanne Balfour</b></p> <p>In this presentation, MDE-LIO staff will discuss services and events that were offered this year based on feedback from the field. We will also discuss plans for continuing to implement this work in the 2020-2021 school year with collaboration from educators and school personnel. Underutilized MDE-LIO services and resources will also be highlighted, and participants will be invited to ask questions.</p>
3:15 - 3:30	<p><b>Break</b></p>
3:30 - 4:45	<p><b>Tactile Symbols: Core Vocabulary and Literacy</b></p> <p><b>Gerald Abner and Jasamyn Nichols Grant</b></p> <p>Using the tactile symbols cards developed by the American Printing House for the Blind, we have developed 45 tactile core vocabulary cards. Using these core cards we will demonstrate a variety of ways to provide opportunities to develop literacy skills for students whose learning media includes tactile symbols.</p>

### THANK YOU!

A special thank to the Michigan Department of Education - Low Incidence Outreach for their continued support of MAER.



Low Incidence Outreach  
702 W. Kalamazoo St.  
Lansing, MI 48909  
[www.mdelio.org](http://www.mdelio.org)

## LIVE SCHEDULE FRIDAY

TIME	SESSION
8:15 - 9:15	<p><b>Connecting the Dots: My Top 15 Strategies for Building Connections for Students with DeafBlindness</b></p> <p><b>Julie Unatin</b></p> <p>Each student with DB is unique; Not one is like the other. Building concepts with a deficit in both vision and hearing is challenging for a variety of very good reasons. This presentation will focus on 15 strategies that I have found useful, when applied consistently. Some may be familiar, (with a twist), and others may be new to some, but are easy to implement. Participants will hopefully find some materials/strategies useful with the hope of Connecting the Dots for individuals with DB.</p>
9:15 - 9:30	<p><b>Break</b></p>
9:30 - 10:30	<p><b>An O&amp;M on Every Vision Student's Team</b></p> <p><b>Dawn Anderson</b></p> <p>O&amp;M specialists have a role to play on the team for all students who are blind or visually impaired. For some students their role is obvious for others it is not so clear. This can make decisions difficult for vision teams, supervisors and parents to understand.</p>
10:30 - 10:45	<p><b>Break</b></p>
10:45 - 11:45	<p><b>Baby Steps: Key Concepts in building Meaningful Functional Vision Evaluation for Birth to 3 Students with Visual Impairments and DeafBlindness</b></p> <p><b>Julie Unatin</b></p> <p>What is involved in an evaluation for a young child? What role does the vision consultant play in the process and how do we work together with an Early Intervention Team? It is not just about assessments. How do we gather good information, assess and give both family and staff meaningful information? Participants will hear strategies to assess when testing doesn't go as planned, and gain useful resources to build a birth to 3 kit to enhance evaluations on this special population.</p>

## LIVE SCHEDULE FRIDAY

TIME	SESSION
11:45 - 2:00	<b>Digital Networking Party!</b> Bring your lunch and enjoy a networking party with your closest friends, from home.
2:00 - 3:15	<b>Best Practices in VRT</b> <b>Leanne Ford</b> Discussion of current best practices in vocational rehabilitation teaching.



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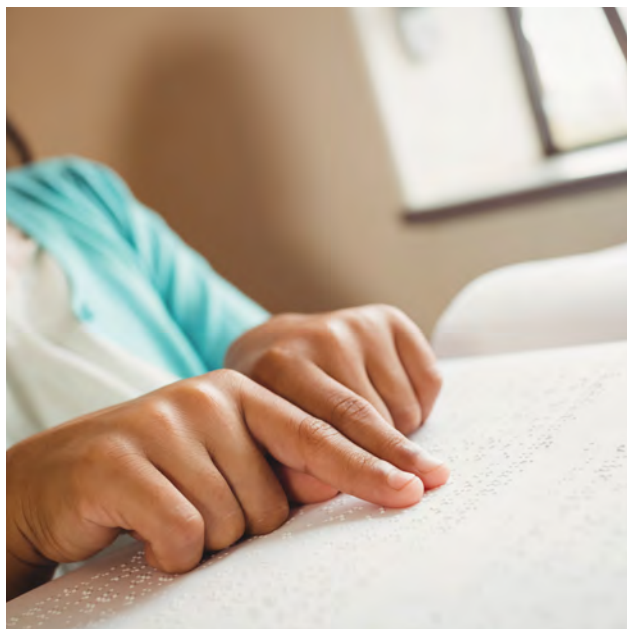
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# MDE-LIO

## Low Incidence Outreach



### Book Orders

Please continue to submit requests for braille textbooks and large print books ([bit.ly/LIORequestBooks](https://bit.ly/LIORequestBooks)) for the 2020–2021 school year! MDE-LIO is not currently shipping books, but we are working on a rotation schedule for production requests to make sure students have textbooks for next school year.

When you submit a request in April, MDE-LIO staff has more time to produce the book and get it into students' hands in August. If MDE-LIO doesn't receive the request until August, students might not receive the book until late fall.

### MDE-LIO Updates

In accordance with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' recommendations to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, MDE-LIO has canceled all in-person workshops and events until further notice. We will continue to offer online workshops and webinars as scheduled.

During this time, MDE-LIO staff members are continuing to provide support and answer questions via phone and email. Reach us by emailing [outreach@mdelio.org](mailto:outreach@mdelio.org) or submitting a message via our contact form ([mdelio.org/contact-us](https://mdelio.org/contact-us)). To contact a specific staff member, visit our staff directory ([mdelio.org/staff-directory](https://mdelio.org/staff-directory)).

### APH Census

This year, MDE-LIO launched a new online system for the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) census. This update improved how MDE-LIO collects census information in Michigan, replacing a system that involved mailing and faxing forms to and from intermediate school districts. As this year's census wraps up, MDE-LIO would like to thank district representatives for their cooperation!

[www.mdelio.org](https://www.mdelio.org)



## MDE-LIO Support Team

MDE-LIO is building a team that will support new teachers and certified orientation and mobility specialists in Michigan starting in fall 2020. Through the program, our Support Team members will support new teachers in a variety of situations. More information will be shared soon; subscribe to the MDE-LIO email list ([bit.ly/LIOEmailSignup](https://bit.ly/LIOEmailSignup)) to receive information as it becomes available.

## LIVE With LIO Webinars

Join MDE-LIO staff every Wednesday at 12 p.m. ET for interactive live presentations and discussions on topics specific to supporting students who are Blind/Visually Impaired (BVI). Webinars have included topics such as virtual resources for families and educators, guide dog readiness, using video conferencing software with students, and more.

Visit the MDE-LIO event section ([mdelio.org/events](https://mdelio.org/events)) for information on upcoming webinars.

## American Printing House for the Blind (APH) Orders

For the past month, MDE-LIO has not shipped APH products due to COVID-19 and APH being closed. However, APH is now able to ship orders, and our APH Coordinator, Sarah Oberlin, is back from maternity leave and eager to fill APH orders! We are looking into a new, temporary process for loaning APH products during this time. Please begin submitting APH requests, either for use right now or for the start of the 2020-2021 school year. We will notify teacher consultants when we are able to start shipping products





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HAS OFFICES STATEWIDE

## PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS



### What BSBP Can Do for You:

#### 5 Pre-employment Transition Service Categories

- 1) Job Exploration & Counseling:** Counseling and guidance to help students explore career options. Examples include:
  - ❖ Job clubs
  - ❖ Career exploration
  - ❖ Job shadowing
  - ❖ Workshops and presentations
- 2) Work-based Learning:** An educational approach that uses the workplace or real work to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will help them connect school experiences to real-life work activities and future career opportunities. Examples include:
  - ❖ Work experiences
  - ❖ Internships
  - ❖ Work-site tours
  - ❖ Community service and/or volunteering
- 3) Post-secondary Exploration:** Exploration of both post-high school transition programs at institutions of higher education, trade and vocational schools, as well as two and four-year colleges. Examples include:
  - ❖ Campus visits
  - ❖ College prep/Reading skills
  - ❖ Study skills
  - ❖ Exploring career and tech options

#### 4) Workplace Readiness Training, Including Social Skills and Independent Living:

Designed to develop independent living and social skills necessary for a student to be successful in employment. Workshops/job clubs on social skills, workplace behavior and interaction, multicultural awareness and problem-solving skills. Examples include:

- ❖ Skills of blindness training
- ❖ Adaptive computer skills training
- ❖ Budgeting
- ❖ Soft skills training
- ❖ Travel training

**5) Self-Advocacy Instruction:** Opportunities to learn about rights, responsibilities and how to request accommodations, services or supports students may need to successfully complete the transition from secondary to post-secondary education and/or employment.

- ❖ Mentoring
- ❖ Youth leadership programs
- ❖ Time management, organization and balanced life planning
- ❖ Disability awareness classes and groups
- ❖ Self-advocacy, peer support, and mentoring groups



## WORKSHOPS

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SKILLS OF BLINDNESS

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near you, visit:  
[www.michigan.gov/bsbp](http://www.michigan.gov/bsbp).

# VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

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## **When Your Student's Learning Media is Symbols**

**Gerald Abner and Jasamyn Nichols Grant**

Using the tactile symbols cards developed by the American Printing House for the Blind, we have developed 45 tactile core vocabulary cards. Using these core cards we will demonstrate a variety of ways to provide opportunities to develop literacy skills for students whose learning media includes tactile symbols.

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## **Writing Measurable Goals for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

**Michelle Wolschlager and Alan Ellias**

This session will review how to write measurable SMART goals for Blind and Visually Impaired students. We will review the importance of connecting the baseline data identified in the PLAAFP to the measurable goals. Examples will include braille, assistive technology, and orientation and mobility skills.

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## **Thinking Differently: Vision Loss and Cognition in Older Adults**

**Colleen O'Donnell**

Current research suggests a strong association between vision loss and cognitive decline in older adults. Successful adjustment to vision loss may prevent cognitive decline. Understanding effective strategies to enhance learning of vision rehabilitation principles is essential to success. Group participation and sharing will be encouraged.

---

## **Measuring Clients' Independent Travel Skills Before and After O&M**

**Kristy Plesscher**

This session will focus on what makes Leader Dog's service delivery model unique, and the research-based structure that was used to track clients' independent travel skills pre and post O&M instruction. The facilitator will describe why there is a need to track clients' skill levels, the data collection method, and how the insights discovered will be used moving forward.

---

## **Tapping into Your iDevice**

**Sarah Stargardt**

In today's world, we have increasing access to Apple devices. Are you using yours to the best of its capacity? Come to this session to learn new, fun, and out of the box ideas for using an iPhone or iPad in your work. This will include: alternative ways of writing, changing the appearance of text, reducing clutter on the screen, having information read aloud, blocking access to certain features, various ways of using voice input, and more! Bring your Apple device upgraded to iOS13!



# VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

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## **How Assessment Tools Can Jump-Start Your Training**

**Margaret Winn and Anne Riddering**

Learn how COMS at Leader Dogs for the Blind, with the guidance of COMS/OT Anne Riddering, have been tracking O&M clients' short-term memory and physical abilities. Also learn about conducting/interpreting these two quick and easy assessment tools, TUG and Short Blessed Test, appropriate for a variety of settings.

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## **Shake, Rattle, and Roll: Creative Interventions for Individuals with Visual Impairments**

**Karen M.L. Barsy**

Dance and music therapy intervention techniques will be presented in an experiential format. Instruments/props will be shared that can easily be utilized to aid children in reaching a variety of goals. Presentation will highlight dance/music therapy sessions done with visually impaired children in a variety of settings.

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## **Persistent Post-Concussion Symptoms, how we test for it, what we can do about it**

**Jennifer Wong, O.D., Low Vision Specialist**

Post-concussion syndrome is all about ocular motor problems like convergence insufficiency, saccades, pursuits and fixation. Additionally, there are issues with photophobia, noise intolerance, headaches and emotional changes. This presentation addresses what symptoms students may have and what vision professionals can do to support students.

---

## **Accessibility Assessment Updates for MDE**

**Jennifer Paul**

Staff from the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability within the Michigan Department of Education will provide an update on state assessments and accessibility options for students taking these assessments. Participants will also be able to review the performance of students with visual impairments on our state assessments. Come prepared to learn and ask questions of the MDE team.

---

## **Stuck in the Middle**

**Sarah Stargardt**

In today's world, we have increasing access to Apple Devices. Are you using yours to the best of its capacity? Come to this session to learn new, fun, and out of the box ideas for using an iPhone or iPad in your work. This will include: alternative ways of writing, changing the appearance of text, reducing clutter on the screen, having information read aloud, blocking access to certain features, various ways of using voice input, and more! Bring your Apple device upgraded to iOS13!

# VIDEO PRESENTATIONS

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## **Investigation of Hand and Finger Movements During Braille Reading**

**Robert Wall Emerson**

This presentation will cover hand and finger movement data collected during braille reading and explore relationships between hand movements and reading speed. Information regarding braille as a code or writing system will also be explored.

---

## **Support Canes: Who Is In Support of Them**

**Margaret Winn and JoAnne Chalom**

The AER O&M Division was tasked with determining if practitioners should consider issuing support canes. Two questionnaires were created and dispersed. Discover the results: one focusing on academia, and one on practitioners. Discuss where we will go from here. Should a position paper address support canes?

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## **Literacy for Students with Visual Impairments & Complex Needs, Including Deafblindness**

**Peggy Sinclair-Morris and Dr. Donna Carpenter**

This session will focus on the website Literacy for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss and how to determine where a student is on the literacy continuum using the Literacy Skills Checklist. Focusing on a learner with visual impairment and complex needs, including deafblindness, participants will complete a Literacy Skills Checklist during the session. Using videos and interactive discussion, participants will learn strategies to help build a literacy foundation.



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The innovative **BrailleNote Touch +** combines the simplicity and accessibility of a note taker with the power and efficiency of a tablet. Powered by Android Oreo and driven by KeySoft, it is the world's first Google-certified Braille tablet. The **BrailleNote Touch +** is hands down the most up-to-date, powerful and efficient braille note taker!

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## MAER BOARD MEMBERS



**Beth Brabbs**

Beth Brabbs has been teaching students who have visual impairments in public schools for 33 years. From Flint, Michigan, she got her Bachelor of Science Degree from Eastern Michigan

University, where she studied teaching with a specialty in teaching students who are visually impaired. Beth then got her Master of Arts Degree in Orientation and Mobility at Western Michigan University. She has taught in Maryland, and in Lenawee, Oakland, and Macomb Counties in Michigan as a TCVI and O&M Specialist. Beth is currently employed as an O&M Specialist for the Macomb Intermediate School District. She has previously served as a member of the board of MAER and has been a long time member of AER.



**Micah Bormann**

Micah Bormann is a Teacher Consultant for the Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Specialist currently working for Kalamazoo RESA.

He has been working in the field for 17 years after finishing both his B.S. and M.A. at Western Michigan University. Micah is the President-Elect of MAER this year, and has volunteered and worked in a wide variety of positions with camps and WMU's Blindness and Low Vision Studies over the years. He is married and the father of two growing boys, and enjoys books, travel, and watching far too many kids' soccer games.



**Amanda English**

Amanda English is an Education Consultant for the Michigan Department of Education, Low Incidence Outreach (MDE-LIO).

Prior to her current position, she taught for Kalamazoo RESA for 20 years as a Teacher Consultant for Visually Impaired and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist. Amanda is a graduate of Western Michigan University where she earned her Bachelors and Masters degrees. Amanda is the current Past President for MAER. She has been a volunteer and shot put coach for the Michigan Blind Athletic Association Sports Education Camp for the past 24 years. In her free time, she is a hockey mom, enjoys visiting her daughter at college, is a blackbelt/instructor in taekwondo and enjoys spending time with her husband.



**Leanne Ford**

Leanne Ford received a B. S. from Lake Superior State University in Human Services and a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Teaching from

Western Michigan University. She has worked for over 13 years at the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons in the Independent Living Program. She has been involved with Sports Education Camp for 20 years, serving as the director for more years than she can recall. Leanne's free time is spent caring for her elderly mother and spending time with family. Leanne and her husband enjoy camping with their dog.

## MAER BOARD MEMBERS



**Patty Killey**

Patty Killey is a Teacher Consultant for the Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Specialist currently working for Midland County

ESA. She received her education from Western Michigan University. She has been working in the field for 20 years. She's married with one daughter. She enjoys spending time with family, camping, and horseback riding.



**Roberta McCall**

Roberta McCall received her B.S. degree from Michigan State University and Master's in Rehabilitation Teaching from Western Michigan University.

She worked for many years as a Rehabilitation Teacher for the Michigan Commission for the Blind in their Independent Living Program and retired in October 2013. Roberta has served as the MAER secretary for many years. Interests include biking, walking, professional issues in blindness, singing, and reading.



**Amy McDonald-Lamiman**

Amy McDonald-Lamiman works at Oakland Schools as a Teacher Consultant for the Visually Impaired. Amy has a Bachelor's degree in elementary education,

and a Master's degree in special education with endorsements in learning disabilities and visual impairment. Amy also has been trained in Reading Recovery and is a Crucial Conversations presenter.



**Elizabeth Mulligan**

Elizabeth (Liz) Mulligan has worked for Oakland Schools ISD as a Teacher Consultant for the Visually Impaired for the last seven years. She has

been a Special Educator in Oakland County for thirteen years, spending five years as an Elementary Resource Teacher. Liz holds a B.S. in Business Administration and M.A. in Teaching degrees, both from Wayne State University. Her endorsements include Learning Disabilities, Social Studies and Visual Impairments.



**Lori Vargo**

Lori is the staff Social Worker at Penrickton Center for Blind Children in Taylor, MI. Partnering with families who are raising children with

developmental, visual and cognitive disabilities, she assists them with resources and services to meet individual and family goals.

A graduate of Wayne State University and the University of Michigan, Lori has been instrumental in providing social work services for children, individuals and families throughout southeast Michigan for 19 years, and has served as Director on the MAER board for five years.





# Opportunities Unlimited for the Blind



*Serving youth with  
blindness or low vision*

## OUB's Mission:

Building life-skills, self-confidence and independence for children and young adults who are blind or have low vision.

*OUB is a charitable nonprofit organization under Section 501(c)3. We gladly accept your generous donations!*



## Contact Us:

**989-855-2430**

**[oubmichigan.org](http://oubmichigan.org)**

Located in Grand  
Rapids, Michigan

Registration is limited.  
Accepting applications for  
staff members! Apply today!



## More than a Summer Camp!

OUB Camps are fantastic opportunities for children and young adults with blindness or low vision to learn, grow and thrive! Our camps provide outdoor educational experiences and job training where kids and staff can participate in all of the usual camping activities like campfires, boating, swimming and hiking, while learning skills, like cooking, that will help them prepare for a lifetime of independence and success.

At OUB Camps, children and adults learn:

- Social Skills
- Cooking
- Mobility
- Gardening
- Science
- Nature
- Self-reliance
- Self-confidence
- Blindness is not barrier, just an obstacle!



## Who can attend?

Any child age 7-19 who is blind or has low vision that interferes with their living, learning and social interaction is welcome to attend OUB Camps.

## VENDOR EXHIBITORS

### Ablezone

Kathryn Gargagliano  
Phone: 248-689-9883  
Fax: 248-689-0995  
Email: [gargagklf@yahoo.com](mailto:gargagklf@yahoo.com)  
Website: [Ablezone.com](http://Ablezone.com)

Ablezone, Inc. is a retail store in Troy, Michigan featuring a variety of products specifically for individuals with low vision or blindness.

Ablezone represents a number of different special manufactures: VFO-Group (Freedom Scientific, Optelec, AiSquared), En-Vision, Eschenbach, Verilux, Ott-lite and Sonic Alert. Their equipment is displayed in the store for demonstration. This would include computer related products like talking software, large print software as well as stand-alone video and speech technology like hand-held video magnifiers, reading machines, bar code readers, etc. Independent living aids are also available especially lighting and other large print and talking products (calendars, address books, clocks, watches, thermometers, scales). Some special services like training, technology delivery and technology presentations are set up by appointment.

### AT Guys

J.J. Meddaugh  
Phone: 269-216-4798  
Email: [support@atguys.com](mailto:support@atguys.com)  
Website: [atguys.com](http://atguys.com)

Hello. Thanks for visiting the A T Guys, your home for cool gadgets, accessories, and more. We're glad you stopped by. Our products are all tested to work great for blind and visually impaired users but also work just as well for anyone. If there's an item you're looking for, or if you have a question, please don't hesitate to contact us.

### Bureau of Services for Blind Persons

Diamalyn Gaston  
Phone: 517-335-4956  
Fax: 517-335-5140  
Email: [gastond@michigan.gov](mailto:gastond@michigan.gov)  
Website: [www.michigan.gov/bsbp](http://www.michigan.gov/bsbp)

The Bureau of Services for Blind Persons is a state and federally funded agency providing the following services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired: Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, Pre-Employment Transition Services, Youth Low Vision, Business Enterprise Program, Braille and Talking Book Library, Business Services and the Residential Training Facility.

### CViConnect

Stephanie Steffer  
Phone: 269-615-7806  
Email: [stephanies@cviconnect.co](mailto:stephanies@cviconnect.co)  
Website: [www.CViConnect.co](http://www.CViConnect.co)

The CViConnect Professional Edition is designed to allow a student's educational team to work collaboratively in order to provide a consistent approach at school and home. The application runs on an iPad, although many features can be accessed through a standard web browser.



## VENDOR EXHIBITORS

### **DB Central (DeafBlind Central: Michigan's Training & Resource Project)**

Beth Kennedy  
Phone: 989-774-2726  
Fax: 989-774-1572  
Email: [Beth.Kennedy@cmich.edu](mailto:Beth.Kennedy@cmich.edu)  
Website: [www.dbcentral.org](http://www.dbcentral.org)

DB Central is a grant project funded by the United States Department of Education. The project is housed at Central Michigan University, but provides statewide services including training, educational consultation, family support, and information & referral. Services are provided free of charge and are available year around for families and school teams who support someone who is listed on the project census/registry. People ages birth through 26 years who have both a vision and a hearing loss should be registered, including those who have additional disabilities. Consider DB Central staff a resource as you strive to meet the needs of people who are deafblind and their families.

### **E. M. VITU, Inc.**

Ed Vitu  
Phone: 847-367-4004  
Email: [evitu@flash.net](mailto:evitu@flash.net)

E. M. VTU, Inc. is a distributor of assistive technology for persons with visual impairment, including blindness, or other information access needs. We offer access to print and electronic data using enlargement, speech and/or refreshable Braille output. We also do handheld and desktop CCTV's and Braille embossers.

### **Leader Dogs for the Blind**

Leslie Hoskins  
Phone: 248-650-7104  
Fax: 248-218-6358  
Email: [leslie.hoskins@leaderdog.org](mailto:leslie.hoskins@leaderdog.org)  
Website: [LeaderDog.org](http://LeaderDog.org)

Founded in 1939 by three Lions club members, Leader Dogs for the Blind has proudly provided over 16,000 clients with independent travel skills. Their mission is to empower people who are blind or visually impaired with lifelong skills for safe and independent daily travel. All services (Orientation & Mobility Training, Guide Dog Training and a summer camp for teens) are provided free of charge to clients thanks to the funds provided by individuals, foundations, community service clubs such as Lions clubs and corporate donations from around the world.

### **Lions Bear Lake Camp**

Dennis Tomkins  
Phone: 810-245-0726  
Fax: 810-245-0750  
Email: [dtomkins@bearlakecamp.org](mailto:dtomkins@bearlakecamp.org)

Lions Bear Lake Camp provides two 1-week sessions for visually impaired/blind youth. Our sessions expose youth to opportunities to explore independence, outdoor recreational skills, constructive and positive social skills all in a nurturing and safe environment.

Our Sessions are financially supported by Lions Clubs, and are offered at reasonable fees that do not pose a financial barrier for participation.

Lions Bear Lake Camp is licensed through the state of Michigan to operate summer residential programs and are accredited by the American Camp Association.

## VENDOR EXHIBITORS

### Michigan Parents of Children with Visual

Jessica Burt

Phone: 734-644-1350

Email: [jessicaburt@mpviweb.org](mailto:jessicaburt@mpviweb.org)

Website: [mpviweb.org](http://mpviweb.org)

Michigan Parents of Children with Visual Impairments is a group of families and professionals who have or work with children who are blind or visually impaired. We strive to help families with support, information, advocacy, and events that are fun, educational, and practical. We can help answer questions about Individual Education Plans (IEP), what to expect from a child's school and from your child, and how to raise a child who is blind or visually impaired to be as independent as possible. MPVI publishes a newsletter two to three times per year. Membership is through our national chapter, the National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (NAPVI), but our newsletter is free to any who send us an e-mail address.

### Michigan Department of Education – Low Incidence Outreach (MDE-LIO)

Staff Directory: [mdelio.org/staff-directory](http://mdelio.org/staff-directory)

Phone: 517-241-7083

Fax: 517-335-1632

Email: [MSDB-Outreach@Michigan.gov](mailto:MSDB-Outreach@Michigan.gov)

Website [mdelio.org](http://mdelio.org)

MDE-LIO provides consultation, guidance, training, and resources to families and educational teams serving students who are Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI) and/or Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH). MDE-LIO's vision is to ensure equal access to a quality education for all students who are BVI and/or DHH.

### National Federation of the Blind of Michigan

Michael Powell

Phone: 586-754-1325

Email: [treasurer@nfbmi.org](mailto:treasurer@nfbmi.org)

Website: [nfbmi.org](http://nfbmi.org)

The National Federation of the Blind is the only organization that believes in the full capacity of blind people, and has the power, influence, diversity, and determination to help transform our dreams into reality. We believe in blind people because we are blind people. Our democratically elected leaders and our diverse nationwide membership are made up of blind people, our families, and our friends. We are bound together by our belief that the blind are capable of achieving our dreams and living the lives we want, and by the love and respect we have for one another and for all blind Americans. We support one another, act with courage and determination when we encounter barriers or experience setbacks, and engage in collective action to improve our lives.

### Opportunities Unlimited for the Blind

Gwen Botting, Executive Director

Phone: 616-755-2221

Email: [gwen@oubmichigan.org](mailto:gwen@oubmichigan.org)

Website: [oubmichigan.org](http://oubmichigan.org)

Opportunities Unlimited for the Blind provides summer camps and employment opportunities for children and young adults who are blind or have low vision. OUB operates out of Camp Optimist on the west side of Grand Rapids, MI. We love having our kids do camp activities that are expected at any summer camp like swimming, boating, rock climbing, nature hikes, and campfire. Beyond that, we also focus on learning and practicing daily living skills, mobility, social skills, and cooking skills. We have a variety of camps for different age groups and levels of independence. We have a one-to-one staff ratio and at least half of our staff are also blind or have low vision, giving great role models for our campers.

## VENDOR EXHIBITORS

### Penrickton Center for Blind Children

Penrickton Center for Blind Children

Lori Vargo, L.M.S.W.

Phone: 734-946-7500

Fax: 734-946-6707

Email: [lori@penrickton.com](mailto:lori@penrickton.com)

Website: [www.penrickton.com](http://www.penrickton.com)

Penrickton Center for Blind Children is a non-profit agency specializing in working with children who are blind and multi-disabled. We provide five-day residential, day care and consultation services to children ages one through twelve. All of our services are provided to families at no charge. Portable vision and reading systems, and the ultra-portable explore line of electronic handheld magnifier.

### Seedlings Braille Books for Children

Karen Smith

Phone: 734-427-8552, ext. 301

Fax: 734-427-8552

Email: [seedlink7@ameritech.net](mailto:seedlink7@ameritech.net)

Website: [seedlings.org](http://seedlings.org)

Seedlings Braille Books for Children is a non-profit in Livonia, MI. We produce and distribute braille books to children with vision loss all over the world. We give half of our books away free, and we sell the other half for an average price of just \$10 a book. Seedlings has one of the largest selections of children's books available in Unified English Braille (UEB).

All 312 of our print-and-braille books for younger readers are in UEB, and more than 230 of our all-braille books for independent readers are in UEB. Every few weeks we add new UEB titles. Check our Facebook page and website, [www.seedlings.org](http://www.seedlings.org), for the latest additions. Make sure you are opted in to receive emails from Seedlings so you don't miss any of our special giveaway programs for students and teachers.

### Camp Tuhsmeheeta (Camp T)

Phone: 616-835-9059/616-835-9059

Email: [campt@michigan.gov](mailto:campt@michigan.gov)

Website: [camptuhsmeheeta.org](http://camptuhsmeheeta.org)

Camp Tuhsmeheeta (Camp T) is located near Greenville, Michigan and hosts three outdoor education programs for youth and families who are blind/visually impaired (BVI). The Family Nature Club, Outdoor Education Workshops and Camp T User Groups seek to promote health, wellness and community integration for youth and their families (BVI) in Michigan. Utilizing 300 acres of woods and wetlands, Camp T Outdoor Education Programs integrate experiential learning and expanded core curriculum in a natural, outdoor environment.

**DESIGNED BY:**



Low Incidence Outreach  
702 W. Kalamazoo St.  
Lansing, MI 48909  
[www.mdelio.org](http://www.mdelio.org)