

ACVREP NEWSLETTER – MAY 16, 2006

ACVREP – The Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals

Table of Contents:

1. **The ACVREP Office Is Moving...Again!**
2. The Future Of Vision Rehabilitation Professionals Is NOW Or It Is OVER!
3. Identifying Ophthalmologists And Optometrists In The Six Demonstration Site Areas.
4. ACVREP Reception At The 2006 AER International Conference In Snowbird, Utah.
5. ACVREP Exams To Be Administered At The AER International Conference.
6. ACVREP Presence At The AER International Conference.
7. Teacher Of The Visually Impaired Job Opening – San Francisco, California.
8. Executive Director Job Opening – Palo Alto, California.
9. Living Skills Specialist Job Opening – West Haven, Connecticut.
10. Teacher Of The Visually Impaired/Orientation & Mobility Instructor Job Opening – Cleveland, Ohio.
11. Assistant Or Associate Professor And Co- Director Of Professional Preparation Program For Teachers Of Children With Visual And Multiple Impairments (TVI) Job Opening – Elkins Park, Pennsylvania.
12. Visual Impairment Teacher (Orientation & Mobility) Job Opening – Staunton, Virginia.
13. National Independent Living Associate Job Opening – Dallas, Texas.
14. Quote Of The Day!

The ACVREP Office Is Moving...Again!

Since 2004, we have subleased space from United Way. However, they are expanding and, unfortunately, need their space back. As such, we will be moving our office on May 31st. Our new address will be 3333 N. Campbell Ave., #11, Tucson, AZ 85719. Our phone numbers and email addresses will remain the same. Effective June 1st, please send all correspondence to our new address. Thanks!

The Future Of Vision Rehabilitation Professionals Is NOW Or It Is OVER!

Everyone in the field needs to be made aware of the importance of the Medicare Low Vision Demonstration Project that began in April, and the link it inherently has to the future of our professions in America.

Let's say that, after the demonstration project, CMS/Medicare reviews the numbers and outcomes and decides that Vision Rehabilitation Professionals (VRPs) are not needed and, therefore, decides not to reimburse for vision rehabilitation services? Let's say that

this branch of our federal government decides we are not worth it. What do you think will happen in the federal programs that sponsor professional training? Think of this in light of the recent directions of RSA. We will be dead in the water; no money for professional training programs and no reimbursement for services. Our professional group is not structured nor are we ready to defend this type of challenge. However, there is one group that has political clout, connections, and consistent planning, and I am sure they are waiting in the wings.

If Medicare decides against us, do you think any private insurer will pay? The answer is no.

The other side of the coin is if the Medicare Low Vision Demonstration project is successful and ACVREP certified professionals are to receive reimbursement. We will then be in the position to guarantee qualified services leading to client independence, and the future of specialized services.

Administratively, it is an ugly world out there and we are at a crossroads; we have five years to prove ourselves to the feds. Many administrators who do not serve Medicare recipients are saying that this does not affect them so why be involved? However, it truly affects everyone, including the certified vision rehabilitation therapists who work in the school systems, the future of the profession for all of us, the future of professional preparation programs, and, ultimately and most importantly, the clients. All of the agencies and schools and all of us need to help make this demonstration project work. Educators, be wary, this is another possible erosion of specialized services for blind and visually impaired individuals.

So, each and every one of us, in our positions, needs to be dedicated and passionate. AER, its leaders, its division chairs and its membership need to be educated and become energized leaders in support of this pivotal and consequential opportunity in the history of our profession. We have missed too many opportunities in the past to make us viable professions (e.g., insurance and Medicare coverage, licensing) and now we have the chance!!!

We must be passionate! Some of us are disappointed in the professionals in the vision rehabilitation field thinking we can just go on the way we are - low salaries, not a recognized profession by the feds, not recognized by the public, and not understanding the bigger picture.

We must not miss this window of opportunity given to us now!

What needs to be done now?

1. First, understand the importance of this project and to act on this understanding!
2. Second, support agencies and individuals in the current six demonstration project sites to help them be successful; maybe we need to funnel appropriate clients from a non-participating agency to one that is participating. Let your local Office for Aging know

about this project and spread the word through your medical contacts, especially in the six chosen sites.

3. Third, continue to provide the good service that we do provide.

Submitted by Martin S. Yablonski, COMS, Chair of ACVREP's Board of Directors

Identifying Ophthalmologists And Optometrists In The Six Demonstration Site Areas

ACVREP is currently trying to identify and develop a list of ophthalmologists and optometrists who are practicing in the six Medicare Low Vision Demonstration Project sites and include low vision rehabilitation services in their practice. As we identify these physicians, we will help link ACVREP certificants who wish to participate in the Medicare Low Vision Demonstration Project with these ophthalmologists and optometrists.

If you know of any ODs or MDs who meet the above criteria, please provide their names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses, if possible. Please contact Bryan Gerritsen at 801-547-5903 or bryangerritsen@comcast.net or Sharon Mikrut at 520-887-6816 or smikrut@acvrep.org.

ACVREP Reception At The 2006 AER International Conference In Snowbird, Utah

As it did in 2004, ACVREP will be hosting a reception at the 2006 AER International Conference on July 16th, from 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. At our reception, we will recognize those certificants who are certified in all three areas, the individual who receives the ACVREP Eileen Siffermann Volunteer Award, and the employer who receives the ACVREP Outstanding Employer Award. There will also be an opportunity to meet and talk with ACVREP board members.

A description of the two awards follows. If you would like to nominate an individual for the ACVREP Eileen Siffermann Volunteer Award or an employer for the ACVREP Outstanding Employer Award, please use the nomination form that follows the award description. All nominations must be submitted by

ACVREP Eileen Siffermann Volunteer Award

The ACVREP Eileen Siffermann Volunteer Award was established in 2004 to honor an individual who has made a significant contribution through volunteer work (e.g., committee service, supervision of certificants, fund raising, etc.) to further the mission and work of ACVREP, to promote professional certification standards in the rehabilitation and education of individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and/or to support the certification and re-certification of professionals in the field.

The Eileen Siffermann Volunteer Award will be presented at the 2006 AER International Conference. The individual must be nominated by an ACVREP certificant. Current directors of the ACVREP Board are not eligible to be nominated for this award.

Nominations must be submitted to the ACVREP office by email, fax or regular mail by June 1, 2006. The ACVREP Awards Committee will make a final selection of the recipient based on received nominations.

ACVREP EILEEN SIFFERMANN VOLUNTEER AWARD
NOMINATION FORM

Date of nomination: _____

Nominee's Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Nominator's Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

ACVREP Certification(s) Held: _____

Please provide a brief description of why this individual is deserving of the award (200 words or less):

Please explain the nominee's significant contribution through volunteer work:

Nominations must be received no later than **June 1, 2006**.

Please return the completed form to:

ACVREP Awards Committee

ACVREP

330 North Commerce Park Loop, Ste. 200

Tucson, AZ 85745

Phone: 520-887-6816

Fax: 520-887-6826

smikrut@acvrep.org

ACVREP Outstanding Employer Award

The ACVREP Outstanding Employer Award was established in 2004 to recognize an agency/organization that has promoted professionalism in the field by hiring ACVREP certificants and has advocated for the highest standards of professional service through the support of continuing education.

The following list includes, but is not limited to, areas in which an employer recognizes the value of certification:

1. The employer requires its vision rehabilitation staff to be ACVREP certified or to obtain ACVREP certification within a specific period of time.
2. The employer pays the five-year certification/recertification fees of those employed by the agency/organization.
3. The employer provides a salary increase for certified employees (ongoing or “bonus”).
4. The employer allows staff time to attend continuing education programs/activities and/or pays for continuing education related to recertification.

Please note: Employers do not need to meet all of the criteria above. These are only ideas to consider in nominating an employer for this award.

The ACVREP Outstanding Employer Award will be presented at the 2006 AER International Conference. The agency/organization must be nominated by an ACVREP certificant. Current directors of the ACVREP Board and their respective agencies are not eligible to be nominated for this award.

Nominations must be submitted to the ACVREP office by email, fax or regular mail by June 1, 2006. The ACVREP Awards Committee will make a final selection of the recipient based on received nominations.

ACVREP OUTSTANDING EMPLOYER AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Date of nomination: _____

Nominee's Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Nominator's Information:

Name: _____

Address:

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

ACVREP Certification(s) Held: _____

Describe how the agency or organization has promoted professionalism in the field by hiring ACVREP certificants and how it has advocated for the highest standards of care through the support of continuing education:

Nominations must be received no later than **June 1, 2006**.

Please return the completed form to:

ACVREP Awards Committee
ACVREP
330 North Commerce Park Loop, Ste. 200
Tucson, AZ 85745
Phone: 520-887-6816
Fax: 520-887-6826
smikrut@acvrep.org

ACVREP Exams To Be Administered At The AER International Conference

-

Sharon Mikrut will be administering all three of ACVREP's exams at the AER International Conference on July 19th, from 1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. If you are interested in taking any of ACVREP's exams, please make sure that you submit an eligibility application first. Eligibility applications can be downloaded from the ACVREP website (www.acvrep.org) under the "Downloads" page. In addition to submitting an eligibility application, you will also need to complete and submit an Exam Registration Form, with the \$100 exam fee, at least three weeks prior to July 19th. Exam registration forms will be sent to you only after an eligibility application has been submitted. For more information, contact Sharon Mikrut at 520-887-6816 or smikrut@acvrep.org.

ACVREP Presence At The AER International Conference

Sharon Mikrut will be giving a presentation on July 18th from 4:20 p.m. – 5:20 p.m. If you have any questions regarding certification, recertification, applicable fees, the Medicare Low Vision Demonstration Project, etc., this workshop is for you.

However, if you miss this workshop, ACVREP will also have a table next to the AER International Conference registration table throughout the entire conference. Sharon Mikrut will be available to answer your questions, listen to your concerns, etc.

Teacher Of The Visually Impaired Job Opening – San Francisco, California

Agency: West Contra Costa Unified School District

Qualifications: BA or MA in teaching students with visual impairments; California teaching credential or equivalent. Dually credentialed (TVI/O&M) applicants are welcome to apply.

Duties: Provide itinerant VI services to a diverse group of visually impaired students (preschool to 22 years) in the San Francisco Bay Area (north of Berkeley). Includes braille readers and low vision students, and students with multiple disabilities.

Salary: Competitive; excellent health and retirement benefits.

Contact: Visually Impaired Program office (510) 741-2896 or E-mail: tyeomans@wccusd.k12.ca.us

Executive Director Job Opening – Palo Alto, California

Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D), a national organization, provides educational materials in recorded and computerized formats for non-standard readers. Volunteers record these books in 30 studios throughout the country. The headquarters in Princeton, New Jersey, serve as a central distribution center and repository for over 100,000 titles already recorded. The Northern California Unit of RFB&D, founded in 1967, seeks a dynamic, entrepreneurial Executive Director (ED) who will serve as the public face of the organization and will bring new energy to the RFB&D finances and programs.

The new ED will:

1. Increase targeted outreach efforts designed to raise the level of public visibility of RFB&D and increase overall community support for its activities;
2. Design a top-tier fundraising program calculated to double individual and corporate sponsorship over the next few years;
3. Develop and leverage the Board to create new sources of sponsorship;
4. Build a strong team of professionals and volunteers to implement key programs;
5. Manage the annual budget and create strong working systems of internal accountability; and
6. Strengthen ties with the national headquarters and with local partners.

Qualified candidates will possess:

1. Relevant senior leadership (5+ years), preferably at a nonprofit or public sector organization;
2. A robust network in the Bay Area giving community;
3. Proven Board development strategies;
4. Strong team-building and mentoring skills;
5. Ability to motivate and inspire others to succeed;
6. Tact, diplomacy and the ability to broker compromise between and among competing interests;
7. Open, collaborative and communicative management;
8. Superior written and spoken language skills;
9. Engaging public presence and public speaking ability;
10. Master's degree; and
11. Professional references.

To apply, send your resume and a cover letter explaining your interest to:

Karen Alphonse
Vice-President
execSearches.com
RFBD@execsearches.com
(954) 252-3743 (fax)

Salary will reflect candidates' credentials, experience and ability to meet RFB&D's mission. RFB&D has a competitive benefits package, which it will share with qualifying candidates. For more information about RFB&D, kindly visit us at www.rfbd.org.

Living Skills Specialist Job Opening – West Haven, Connecticut

VA Connecticut Healthcare System

950 Campbell Avenue, West Haven, CT 06516

Announcement: # 06-126

Salary Range: \$46,944-\$73,842

Closing Date: July 31, 2006

For information, contact:

1-203-932-5711

Marianne Dubois, ext. 2347

Pauline McKee, ext. 3804

HOW TO APPLY: Internal employees must submit VA Form 5-4078, Application for Promotion or Reassignment, to Human Resources Management Service, Bldg. 4, West Haven Campus, on or before closing date. Employees should also update their Official Personnel Folder prior to the closing date of the announcement to show any additional qualifying experience. All internal applicants must submit their KASO's no later than seven calendar days after the closing date.

HOW TO APPLY: VA CT Employees: Must submit VA Form 4078, Application for Promotion or Reassignment to Human Resources, Bldg. #4, on or before closing date. Employees may also update their Official Personnel Folder to the closing date of the announcement to show any additional qualifying experience. External Applicants: Must Submit VA Form 10-2850c, Application for Associated Health Occupations and Optional Form 306, Declaration for Federal Employment. Veterans: Must attach a copy of their DD 214 Form to their application packet to insure they receive veteran's preference.

U.S. CITIZENSHIP: All applicants for federal employment must be a U.S. citizen.

DUTIES: Incumbent works in the EBRC as a Living Skills Specialist. In the written communications phase of the program he/she evaluates and instructs blind patients in use of handwriting guides, signature guides and check-writing templates to aid the patient with correspondence and personal business needs; recording skills and recorder usage are also taught for note-taking and list-making needs; teaches basic typewriting skills, such as manuscript writing, footnoting, tabulations, and various personal and business letter forms; the activities of Daily Living (ADL) program is to instruct the students in personal, food preparation and household tasks, designing the program to promote independence and confidence in the veteran's current or projected living situation, etc.

Performs other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS: If applicable, must also meet any time-in-grade, physical, language, license or degree requirements. Qualification standards are available for review in Human Resources Management Service, Building 4, West Haven Campus.

SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE: Experience that equipped the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the duties of the position, and that is typically in or related to the work of the position to be filled. To be creditable, specialized experience must have been equivalent to at least the next lower grade level in the normal line or progression for the occupation in the organization.

GS-9: Specialized experience 1 year equivalent to a GS-7, OR 2-full years of progressively higher level graduate education, OR Master's OR equivalent graduate degree.

GS-11: Specialized experience 1 year equivalent to a GS-9, OR 3-full years of progressively higher level graduate education, OR Ph.D. OR equivalent doctoral degree.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS: Degree; major study in an academic field related to the health sciences or allied sciences appropriate to the work of the position.

RATING/RANKING PROCEDURES: The following knowledge's, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAO's will be used as rating factors):

1. Demonstrate your knowledge of the blind rehabilitation process and of multi-disciplinary teamwork within a medical, residential setting.
2. Demonstrate your knowledge of theories, principles and practices in at least two of the following: Orientation and Mobility, Living Skills, Manual Skills or Low Vision.
3. Demonstrate your knowledge of the effects that additional handicapping conditions, e.g., physical, cognitive, or medical, have on the Blind Rehabilitation process.
4. Demonstrate your ability to develop an individualized program of instruction based on the needs and capabilities of the veteran.
5. Discuss your ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with individuals of varying backgrounds or educational experience, and with different target audiences. Include computer software programs which you have used for writing.

QUALIFICATIONS USED: OPM Handbook Group Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions, 601 series (TS-2), dated 8/94.

Displaced/surplus Federal employees covered under the provisions of the inter-agency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) and Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) (displaced VA employees) eligible's will be given priority consideration for vacancies within the local commuting area for which they are well qualified. To be considered well-qualified, applicants must meet all selective placement factors and rate at the fully successful level on all ranking factors for the position. Applicants requesting this consideration must attach appropriate proof of the ICTAP eligibility with their application. "Preference eligible's or veterans who have been separated from the armed forces under honorable conditions after 3 years or more of continuous active service may apply". This agency provides reasonable accommodations to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, please notify the agency. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis. VA CT Healthcare System is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Teacher Of The Visually Impaired/Orientation & Mobility Instructor Job Opening – Cleveland, Ohio

Cleveland Sight Center, a leader in the rehabilitation of persons who are blind and visually impaired since 1906, seeks a Teacher of the Visually Impaired/Orientation & Mobility Specialist to work as a member of our Children and Young Adult Services team. While a TVI/COMS is preferred, we will consider an individual who is solely a Teacher of the Visually Impaired. Cleveland Sight Center offers the unique opportunity to work in an agency providing a full service team environment and includes a comprehensive compensation and benefits package.

Qualifications/Experience - Valid Ohio Teaching Certificate with special education VI endorsement and certified by ACVREP as an orientation and mobility specialist.

Position Summary - The qualified individual will assess student needs, develop individualized training plans and provide instruction in a variety of itinerant settings; provide support to students and parents; and serve as a consultant and resource to teachers and therapists.

Please forward resume to Human Resources, Cleveland Sight Center, 1909 East 101 Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216-791-8118 ext. 290; 216-791-1101 (fax); email: pbuckhold@clevelandsightcenter.org. Visit our web-site at www.clevelandsightcenter.org

Assistant Or Associate Professor And Co- Director Of Professional Preparation Program For Teachers Of Children With Visual And Multiple Impairments (TVI) Job Opening – Elkins Park, Pennsylvania

This is a tenure track full-time position at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry, Department of Graduate Studies in Vision Impairment

Primary Function: Teach and advise students and Co-Direct the TVI Program. Will participate fully as a faculty member in the Department of Graduate Studies in Vision Impairment.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities:

1. 100 % FTE as faculty member in the department of Graduate Studies in Vision Impairment.
2. Teaching responsibilities in TVI Program (and other areas of specialization, if qualified, such as Low Vision and O&M).
3. Provide day-to-day management of the TVI program along with program Co-Director.

4. Prepare and secure funding for TVI Program.
5. Assist in preparation of federal proposals and reports.
6. Conduct research.
7. Publish professional materials such as peer reviewed articles, chapters in relevant textbooks.
8. Develop and provide professional presentations at state, regional and national conferences.
9. Collect and report programmatic data.
10. Supervise student interns.
11. Other related duties as assigned, e.g., may be assigned specific responsibilities with National Center for Leadership in Visual Impairment (NCLVI) or within other Graduate Studies programs, depending on knowledge and experience of candidate.
12. Serve on various college and department committees.

Skills and Other Requirements:

1. Doctorate preferred (Master's degree considered) in special education in vision impairment.
2. Experience in teaching the Expanded Core Curriculum skills to children who are blind or visually impaired.
3. Experience working with parents of children who are blind or visually impaired.
4. Superior and demonstrated written, oral communication and organizational skills.
5. Experience working with and collaborating with consumers who are blind or visually impaired.
6. Experience working with diverse populations.
7. Experience in working with teams and collaborative efforts.

Skills and Other Preferred Requirements:

1. Additional related certifications: Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Early Childhood Certification, O&M Certification, Low Vision Certification, etc.
2. Experience working with individuals who are blind or visually impaired with multiple disabilities.
3. Experience in teaching within Higher Education.
4. Demonstrated success at securing federal and/or private grants.
5. Experience in administration.
6. Experience working with individuals with deaf-blindness.
7. Experience teaching infants and toddlers who are blind or visually impaired.
8. Experience in project management, including fiscal responsibilities.

Anticipated Start Date: Mid-August 2006 or when position is filled.

Salary: Commensurate with degree, certifications and experience.

Final candidates will be requested to interview and demonstrate teaching skills by giving a presentation to the graduate faculty.

If interested, send Letter of Application with professional vita and three letters of support to: Dr. Kathleen Mary Huebner, Professor, Associate Dean, and Chair of Search Committee, Graduate Studies in Vision Impairment, Pennsylvania College of Optometry, 8360 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027; kathyh@pco.edu; Fax: 215-780-1361.

Visual Impairment Teacher (Orientation & Mobility) Job Opening – Staunton, Virginia

The Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind at Staunton is seeking a Special Education Teacher with experience in Orientation and Mobility to provide a quality instructional program to children with blindness and visual impairment. The hiring range is \$33,408 - \$51,154 and the position number is F0005.

Responsibilities include:

- Instructional/unit planning.
- Instructional implementation.
- Classroom organization and management.
- Evaluation, reporting and recordkeeping.
- Participation in staff development.
- Development of Individualized Educational Programs (IEP).

Minimum Qualifications:

- A minimum of a Baccalaureate Degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
- Hold or be eligible for a valid Virginia teaching license issued by the Board of Education with endorsement in Visual Impairment. Prefer certification as a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist.
- Ability to design and implement appropriate instruction for children with visual impairments, including blindness.

- Knowledge of child growth and development, and special needs of children with disabilities.
- Knowledge of teaching reading using a variety of instructional methods and techniques.
- Ability to read and teach Braille or agreement to acquire this skill within three years.
- Ability to plan and organize work.
- Ability to work using a team approach.
- Ability to follow school policies and procedures.
- Experience in teaching children with visual impairments and using behavior management techniques is preferred.

Physical Requirements:

- Ability to interact on a physical level with children and to perform repetitive motion to include standing, sitting, reaching, lifting, walking, bending , and climbing.

Note: A criminal history check will be required for final candidates.

For consideration, submit State application form #10-012 to: The Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind-Staunton, Office of Human Resources, P.O. Box 2069, Staunton, VA, 24402-2069. For assistance, call TDD (540) 332-9069, FAX (540) 332-9042, or visit our website at www.vsdb.virginia.gov. Applications are available on our website.

National Independent Living Associate Job Opening – Dallas, Texas

The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) seeks a National Independent Living Associate for the Center on Vision Loss in Dallas.

Responsibilities include promoting and implementing AFB’s aging and independence initiatives through content development, program implementation and leadership, and expanding the awareness of the capabilities and needs of persons who are blind or vision impaired by serving as primary on-site coordinator at the Center on Vision Loss.

Position requires a graduate degree or equivalent with knowledge of national issues and trends in the vision rehabilitation field and related fields, and an understanding of vision rehabilitation concepts and processes. Five years hands on experience in providing independent living skills training in the field of blindness, and experience working with seniors, family members, caregivers, professionals and minority populations. Spanish is a plus. Must have knowledge of assistive technology and independent living devices, and experience in demonstrating their use.

Salary range: \$48,000 to \$60,000

E-mail resume and letter of interest, including salary expectations or history, and three professional references to Judy Scott, jscott@afb.net.

Quote Of The Day!

“The greater part of our happiness depends on our disposition and not our circumstances.” – Martha Washington