



## FALL NEWSLETTER 2019

### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, AMY MCDONALD-LAMIMAN

The air is getting cooler and the days are getting shorter. Welcome to autumn!

Autumn is by far my favorite time of year, yet it is also my busiest. It can be difficult to take time to stop, look around, and truly enjoy the season. Speaking of being busy, the MAER Board is already preparing for our annual conference! If you are interested in sharing your expertise, please watch for the "Call for Presentations" form that is coming out soon.

In addition to preparing for the annual conference, we have had interest from quite a few of our members in participating in an outreach committee. This committee will look to increase interest in our line of work, since there is a huge shortage of professionals in our field (internationally). Please contact a member of our board to find out how you can also get involved with the outreach committee.

Our WMU MAER Student Council has recently held their elections. Jack Colbry is the current President; Abby Tongue is the Past President. The President Elect is Rachel Pavone, the new Secretary is Blake Collins and the Treasurer is Michele Jimenez. This group is currently fundraising to attend the annual Michigan Ski for Light, which is held Friday, January 17<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. Our MAER Board just voted to pay for the Student Council's annual AER membership fees again this year. We are thrilled to support this wonderful group, who will one day join us in our profession!

In closing, here is a quote from Eleanor Roosevelt that makes me think about this time of year:

"The purpose of life is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience."

Take some time to look around and enjoy the season, even though it may feel rushed and hard to slow down.

Enjoy the fall, the new school year, and those you work with!

Amy McDonald-Lamiman  
President, Michigan AER

## **AER UPDATES**

Check out AERBVI on Social Media!

<https://www.facebook.com/AERBVI/>

[Link to AERBVI Twitter](#)

[Link to AERBVI Instagram](#)

## **HELPFUL INFORMATION**

### **New Board Members**

Please welcome our new Board members, Directors Beth Brabbs and Liz Mulligan. Thank you to Maria Jiminez and Naomi Witham Welborn for your service on the MAER Board. Beth Brabbs was appointed to complete Amy Schreiner's term as Director while Amy Schreiner completes the term as Treasurer. Liz Mulligan was appointed as a Director.

## **ADVOCACY AND LEGISLATION**

Submitted by Patty Killey

On 07/30/2019 H.R. 4099 ACCESS Act (ADA Compliance for Customer Entry to Stores and Services Act) was introduced to the House. The Act states the following: "To amend the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to promote compliance through education, to clarify the requirements for demand letters, to provide for a notice and cure period before the commencement of a private civil action, and for other purposes."

American Foundation for the Blind published an article on their website discussing the ACCESS on September 16, 2019. The article explains "H.R. 4099 requires anyone who is denied access or service by a business that is out of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to provide its owner or operator with a written notice that is specific enough to allow the operator to identify the barrier to the person's access and remediate it. Within 60 days, the operator would be required to provide the individual a description outlining plans to address the barrier. The operator would then have 60 more days to make substantial progress toward removing the barrier. Only after all of these actions were taken would an individual have a right to pursue a legal remedy under the ADA."

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **MAER Awards**

NOMINATE YOUR COLLEAGUES!!

It's that time of year again—time to honor your colleagues by nominating them for one of the Michigan Chapter AER Awards.

The David and JoAnn Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to an individual who is near or recently retired who has demonstrated a lifetime dedication to serving persons who are blind and visually impaired in Michigan.

Preference will be given to those nominees who demonstrate activity and achievement, either past or current, in the following:

- 1) Overall professional experiences;
- 2) Innovative practices;
- 3) Unique or extraordinary contributions to the field;
- 4) Professional presentations and/or publications;
- 5) Research; and,
- 6) AER involvement at the chapter and/or international level.

The Awards Committee will give preference to nominees who are or have been members of MAER. Preference is also given to individuals who have served on the Michigan AER Board.

The MAER Award is a recognition award given to an individual(s) or organization(s) which has made a significant contribution to the field of blindness and/or in the service of persons who are blind and visually impaired in Michigan.

Preference will be given to those nominees who demonstrate activity and achievement, either past or current, in the following:

- 1) Overall professional experiences;
- 2) Innovative practices;
- 3) Unique or extraordinary contributions to the field;
- 4) Professional presentations and/or publications;
- 5) Research; and,
- 6) AER involvement at the chapter and/or international level.

The Awards Committee will give preference to nominees who are or have been members of MAER. Preference is also given to individuals who have served on the Michigan AER Board.

If you have questions or would like a copy of one of the award nomination forms, contact me at the info below.

Submitted by Roberta McCall

Awards Committee Chair

[Mccallr6246@att.net](mailto:Mccallr6246@att.net)

[Michiganaer@gmail.com](mailto:Michiganaer@gmail.com)

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## **MAER CONFERENCE 2020**

Call for Presentations is OPEN!

Consider sharing a success you have had, a great training you can pass along, results from research, or a group presentation with colleagues, etc., at the upcoming April 23-24, 2020 MAER conference! We are always looking for new ideas to promote growth and positive results for our students and clients!!

Use the link below to submit your proposal. This application must be fully completed for presentation consideration. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS: SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2019.

## Michigan AER Annual Conference: Call for Presentations Application

\*if you are having difficulty accessing this form, please contact Amy McDonald-Lamiman at [amy.mcdonald-lamiman@oakland.k12.mi.us](mailto:amy.mcdonald-lamiman@oakland.k12.mi.us)

### **Two Exciting Opportunities!**

Your MAER Board of Directors is pleased to offer two opportunities open to professionals and University students who work with persons who are blind/visual impaired.

#### **MAER Mini Grant**

Monies are available on a yearly basis for MAER members to attend a conference or workshop or materials to enhance your program. See the attachment for more details.

#### **MAER Conference Request**

MAER will now sponsor up to two persons to attend the MAER conference. You do not have to be a MAER member to apply. See the application details below.

Additional questions please email: [Michiganaer@gmail.com](mailto:Michiganaer@gmail.com)

### **Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired**

Michigan Chapter (MAER)

MAER Conference Request

Each year the MAER Board will grant up to **2 registrations** to attend the annual MAER conference in exchange for 10 hours of volunteer service hours in preparation and execution of the conference. Recipients may be asked to help assemble materials, set-up the evening before the conference and work at the registration table during the conference. Persons are required to attend both days of the MAER conference and annual business meeting. Person needs to be a student or a professional in the field of visual impairment and blindness. It is not a requirement to be a member of AER.

#### Application Process:

- Submit a letter of interest to [Michiganaer@gmail.com](mailto:Michiganaer@gmail.com) by December 31<sup>st</sup> for consideration.
- Put **Conference Request** in the subject line of your request.
- Include all contact information and a statement of how attending the conference will enhance your studies or practice.
- You will receive a confirmation email stating receipt of request.
- Priority may be given to new applicants
- Funding decisions are made by your elected MAER Board of Directors and must be approved with 2/3rds majority vote at the January Board meeting.

## Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired

### Michigan Chapter (MAER)

#### Mini-Grant Criteria and Application Process

The MAER Mini-Grant will not exceed \$2000.00 per year (with a limit of \$400.00 per person) and is disseminated at the discretion of the MAER Board of Directors. Grants will be awarded to eligible applicants. The MAER Board reserves the right to retract the grant if set requirements are not met by applicant or yearly funding is not available.

#### Criteria:

- Applicants must be a current AER member
- Monies can be used for
  - Fees for Enrichment Workshops/Learning Opportunities
  - Conference Registration (with the exception of the MAER conference)
  - Materials to enhance program or event for students/clients who are blind/visually impaired
- Applicants may only apply once for mini grant per calendar year
- Request Limited to \$400 per Applicant
- Upon approval applicant agrees to share information regarding event through one of the following
  - Submit a newsletter article within 1 month of completion
  - Present at the MAER conference
  - Share experience at Issues in VI, OM or VRT session at MAER conference

#### Application Process:

- Submit a letter of interest to [Michiganaer@gmail.com](mailto:Michiganaer@gmail.com)
- Put Mini-Grant in the subject line of your request
- Include all contact info
- Attach a conference or event flyer (if applicable)
- Include detailed description of materials requested with a link to the website (if applicable)
- State the way in which you will share your information (newsletter article, presentation or session sharing)
- You will receive a confirmation email stating receipt of request. You will also be given the date your application will be reviewed. Applications are reviewed in January, April, June and September.
- Funding decisions are made by your elected MAER Board of Directors and must be approved with 2/3rds majority vote.

## MAER BOARD MEETINGS

The next Board meeting dates are scheduled for January 17, 2020 and April 22, 2020. For more information or to RSVP for a meeting, please contact [michiganaer@gmail.com](mailto:michiganaer@gmail.com) two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Upcoming Events	Events Page	<a href="https://aerbvi.org/">https://aerbvi.org/</a>
April 23-24, 2020	MAER Annual Conference	Please go to <a href="#">Michigan AER website</a> for more information.
July 22, 2020-July 26, 2020	AER International Conference 2020 "Gateway to Community" St. Louis Union Station Hotel	Please go to <a href="#">Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired Website</a> for more information.

## MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Do you have an article, resource, or other information you would like added to the MAER newsletter? Use this opportunity to get information to other members. Please send all ideas to [lori@penrickton.com](mailto:lori@penrickton.com)

## MAER BOARD OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Please contact [michiganaer@gmail.com](mailto:michiganaer@gmail.com) with any questions.

PRESIDENT: Amy McDonald-Lamiman

PAST PRESIDENT: Amanda English

PRESIDENT ELECT: Micah Borman

SECRETARY: Roberta McCall

TREASURER: Amy Schreiner

DIRECTORS: Teresa Gest, Lori Vargo, Patty Killey, Leanne Ford, Liz Mulligan, and Beth Brabbs

***Our AER Mission: To render all possible assistance to the promotion, development and improvement of all phases of education and rehabilitation of blind and visually impaired persons of all ages.***