



HOT AER

Summer 2019

Publication of Indiana AER Chapter

in-aer.net

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Message from the President

July 28, 2019

On behalf of the Board and the Program Committee, I would like to thank all our members and guests who attend our 2019 Conference. Your participation helped to make our conference a success. We hope you will join us again next year. If you have not already done so, please complete the Survey Monkey Conference Evaluation which was emailed to you earlier this month. Your feedback is vital as we begin to plan for next year.

We are grateful to the vendors who participated in the conference, especially the Silver Sponsors, LS&S and ISU's PASS Project, for the tasty treats we enjoyed during the conference.

The speakers were outstanding and offered new insights. They challenged us to find new ways to assist our students/clients. ACVREP's support of our conference by providing the Keynote Speaker, Jack Chen, as well as presenter Kathleen Zeider was fantastic.

We could not have had a more welcoming venue than BOSMA. The administration and staff members were so gracious and hospitable.

Finally, as President, I want to thank the Program Committee and the Board for your dedication and service to IN-AER. You did a wonderful job on the conference.

I hope you have had a chance to enjoy the summer with family and friends.

Take care,

Char Maternowski-Paul

President, IN-AER

GEAR UP FOR SUCCESS: INDIANA AER 2019 CONFERENCE: A LONG-TIME BOARD MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE



By John E. Trueblood, IN-AER Board Member

Only a few weeks ago, Indiana AER's 2019 Conference--Gear Up For Success--took place in Indianapolis, hosted by Bosma Enterprises, and taking place in June, rather than our usual fall date. With the new Board taking its place last summer, many changes and new perspectives on our conference were discussed and implemented. Through the suggestions and hard work of the Program Committee under the guidance of Chairperson Becky Deerr (and of which I was a member), the most notable change was in the date and the venue. The general consideration was that June was a more accessible date for many of our AER members, especially those who may be in the education field--and, as for the change in venue, the committee thought that the central location of an Indianapolis location could be more accessible to members in the state, and Bosma, in their generous offer of their facility, promised to be a most welcome and appropriate location. These suggestions by the Program Committee were discussed and ultimately approved by the board. In choosing this venue, it was possible to use more sophisticated technologies and to utilize for the first time an interactive session remotely transmitted via internet, which proved to be quite a success.

All of these changes were considered quite seriously. The move from a State Park venue, as we have enjoyed for many years, was not an easy decision to make, especially for those of us who have been active in planning prior conferences. However, after much discussion, it seemed an appropriate time to make such a move to encompass a more central location and to have access to more sophisticated technical possibilities. However, it was a rather bittersweet move, at least for me, losing the quaint ambiance of the Canyon Inn and the quiet beauty of the Turkey Run State Park. That being said, the welcoming and open access to excellent facilities at Bosma was most appreciated and certainly met more than our needs. And, it must be emphasized, the accessible accommodations of the TownePlace Suites that were made available for those of us from out-of-town were quite comfortable.

This conference held a number of unique and interesting sessions, including an informative tech discussion from HumanWare; in-depth explanations and comments from Kathleen Zeider from

ACVREP; comments from Belva Smith from CATIS, Easterseals Crossroads; and a very interesting session from Ryan Odland, HKNC's new Midwest representative, relating transition services and resources available for deafblind students. In addition, there was a fascinating discussion by Elizabeth Sammons involving disability communities in post-communist nations; a myriad of ideas for teaching the extended common core from Tommie and Kelly Roesch's interactive session; the web-based interactive session on heart-centered approaches/positive communication from Debbie Hazelton; and an in-depth discussion of the present VR services from Jeff Russell from the State Of Indiana BVIS. One of our sessions had to be cancelled due to a family emergency, so the Orientation and Mobility staff at Bosma stepped in with an impromptu and informative discussion of the Sunu-Band and the OrCam devices, which proved a most welcome substitute. And we certainly cannot forget our vendors, two of which were Silver Sponsors this year: LS&S and Indiana State University--PASS Project.

Perhaps the highlight of our conference this year was the keynote address from Mr. Jack Chen. He delivered a most interesting presentation concerning his many athletic accomplishments and his ultimate cross-country bicycle journey from coast-to-coast. This was termed the Race Across America, and Mr. Chen's team was Team Sea to See. It was certainly an entertaining presentation, including film clips. A feature film concerning this journey is being produced, and IN-AER presented Mr.Chen with a \$500 gift toward its completion. Prior to this keynote, Outstanding Professional/Parent/and Student awards were presented (see our website for our winners!).

All in all, the 2019 IN-AER conference was a success. While the presentations and the venue were very accommodative and appropriate, I often missed the intimacy and camaraderie of the Canyon Inn. However, in this changing world with more and more technology and the myriad ways of conveying and receiving information, it is certainly important to be in a position to utilize the best of this technology. The Board of Directors for IN-AER will certainly be discussing your evaluations and the ways of improving our future conferences. Nothing is written in stone--we will continue to strive to make our conferences the most informative and accommodative that we possibly can. And we always want to hear from our members as to your suggestions to achieve that goal. While our attendance at this year's conference was gratifying, there was certainly room for more participation. And with such an excellent roster of presentations that we had this year, it was certainly a professional gain for all of those who attended (as well as ACVREP approved CEU's). Don't miss us next year!

Meeting IN-AER Members

Name: *Kristen A. Pierski*

Where are you originally from?

Northern/far northern suburbs of Chicago. Born and raised in Niles Illinois for 25 years, and moved with my parents to Vernon Hills for 13 years.

Where do you currently work?

Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

What is your occupation?

Certified Orientation and Mobility Instructor

What brought you to becoming [an orientation and mobility instructor]?

My best friend in Wisconsin. She was attending WMU, while I had just graduated from NEIU in Chicago with a bachelors in Art. She wanted me to come to school with her, and I thought "I JUST graduated!!!!!!". I continued to look for a job in graphic design, while she kept on pushing me to go for O&M. 4 years passed, and (I never found a job in graphic design), I was working as a teacher assistant for a school district for kids with special needs. By now my friend was working out in the field, and she started pushing me again. This time I started to listen. I started to look into the topic (looking at different schools, learning about the position and what it all entails). I probably spent about a year doing my homework, before I decided to go for it. I ended up at WMU as well, and after graduation, my first position was in Daytona Beach, Florida, where I worked for 1 year, before accepting a position at ISBVI, where I've been for 4 years, going on my 5th.

Why did you become an AER member?

I wanted to be able to learn about new ideas and topics related to the field, and thought that attending conferences would help with that.

What benefits do you find for yourself becoming an AER member?

I'm able to learn new things, ideas, concerns that have come out since I graduated, and I'm able to help get questions answered.

What do you enjoy to do during your free time?

I'm very connected with my family so I love spending time with them (my parents, sister, brother and sister-in-law, and two nephews). I do a lot of traveling back to the Illinois area on weekends and breaks to hang with them. I also love hanging out with my little 2 year old "puppy" Moana. I'll admit it, I'm a total couch potato, and I have a whole series of TV shows (ranging from home remodeling/deco/hunting, to anything on TLC/Animal Planet, along with Oak Island and Forged in Fire J), that I love to watch!!! In the summer time, if I'm in the area,

I LOVE laying out at my complex pool!! When I'm not driving to Illinois, hanging out on my sofa with my dog watching my shows, or laying out by the pool, I still have a passion for photography (which is why I tried majoring in art for my bachelors in the first place), so sometimes I'll be out taking pictures of anything that inspires me. I also love to travel. Anywhere. Hawaii (my favorite), Florida (my second favorite), D.C., Wisconsin, and I just recently got back from my first (family!!) trip to Europe. And shopping!! How can I forget that??? That's pretty much me in a (long??) nutshell.

Become a Member

There are benefits to becoming a member. If you know someone in the field that isn't a member, here are a few perks!

- Discount to the IN-AER Conference
- Discount to national and international conferences
- Access to professional development
- Access to current and past publications
- Access to fellow professionals in your state, region, and occupation
- ACVREP credit
- Advocacy at local and national levels
- Low cost professional insurance

Most importantly, we support change and progress for our students and clients with visual impairment!

IN-AER Needs You!

IN-AER relies on member participation to keep the chapter viable. We have several standing committees in need of volunteers. Please consider volunteering for a committee. IN-AER needs you. The following describes the role of each committee. Please contact Char Maternowski-Paul if you are willing to serve on a committee at windswpt@hotmail.com. Committee descriptions can be found on the chapter website, <http://in-aer.net>.

Up & Running

Reminder, the new website is up and running. This is where you can find what you need for the IN-AER chapter. The chapter has revamped the website and made it work better for you. If you have content you would like to see on the website, let us know. Email us at inaercommunications@gmail.com

You will find newsletters, past award recipients, meeting minutes, and any information you need to know about Indiana AER Chapter. To see our new website you can go to <http://in-aer.net>



What's Happening

AER Board Meeting

Next board meeting is

Committee Meetings

<p>Membership Committee</p> <p>TBD</p>	<p>Communications Committee</p> <p>TBD</p> <p>Phone conference</p>
<p>Program Committee</p> <p>TBD</p> <p>Phone Conference</p>	<p>Finance Committee</p> <p>TBD</p>

*Note that Indiana AER meetings are held at Bosma Enterprises, unless otherwise noted. All are welcome to attend meetings. Updated chapter documents, meeting dates, and times can be found at the IN-AER webpage: <http://in-aer.net>

Location:

Bosma Enterprises
7225 Woodland Dr
Indianapolis, IN 46278

Conference phone number: 877-314-9891
No code needed

Other Events

AER International Conference 2020

July 22nd-26th, 2020
St. Louis, MO
St. Louis Union Station Hotel

For More information go to www.aerbvi.org

Put it into Practice: Daily Living Skills

By Tommie Roesch

Do you have time to teach ECC?

As a traveling blind and low vision teacher I find it hard to teach the entire common core curriculum, let alone adding in teaching the expanded core curriculum (ECC) that our job expects us to do on a daily basis. So, I wanted to share a set of activities that I have learned. These activities only take a few minutes of the day, and will greatly improve your student's ECC abilities. The activities can be completed at the beginning of the session, or during a break. The activities are fun and made into games that the children will love to play. I personally enjoy using them for my student's break time activities, and when given an option to do other things he chooses to do these fun activities instead.

Activity: Knife skills

You need:

1. 1 plastic knife
2. 1 Ziplock bag
3. 1 container of peanut butter

How to play:

1. Place some peanut butter into the Ziplock bag
2. Have the student hold the knife as if he/she is spreading the peanut butter in the bag
3. Have the student spread the peanut butter within the plastic bag and feel the bag to see how it turned out.

Benefits:

1. The student will learn how to spread without making a mess
2. It helps students that are tactile sensitive

Activity: Scooping

You need:

1. Plastic balls, pompoms, bell balls
2. Various objects and sizes that could represent food items (plastic food)

3. Plastic spoons or forks
4. Small box or container

How to play:

1. Put a variety of objects inside the container
2. Give the student a spoon and explain that he/she will be scooping up the items in the box
3. Explain that the student is only to use the spoon to scoop up the item and the sides of the box and not two hands
4. Have the student practice picking up items out of the box with the spoon
5. Once the student has this skill you can move on to forks

Benefits:

1. This activity teaches the student how to use a spoon/fork without touching the food with their other hand
2. This activity works on hand coordination and search patterns with a spoon or fork

These are just a few activities to get you started on including ECC in your daily lessons with your students. Please look for more activities in the next newsletter.

Past Award Recipients

Outstanding Professional Award

2019 Tiffany Sanders
2018 Lou Moneymaker
2017 Becky Smallwood
2016 Kathy Nimmer
2015 N/A

Outstanding Employer Award

2019 N/A
2018 N/A
2017 N/A
2016 N/A
2015 N/A
2014 N/A

Outstanding Volunteer Award

2019 N/A
2018 Don Koors
2017 Lions International & Lions of Indiana
2016 N/A
2015 N/A
2014 N/A

Outstanding Student Award

2019 Katie
2018 N/A
2017 N/A
2016 N/A
2015 N/A

Outstanding Parent Award

2019 Meredith Howell
2018 N/A
2017 N/A
2016 N/A
2015 N/A

2018-2020 Board Members



From left to right, front row: Kristi Hughes, Becky Deerr, Char Maternowski-Paul, John Trueblood, Marsha Egan, Katrina Anderson
Back row: Bianca Gerena-Perez, Jill Pangle, Tommie Roesch

President Elect: Becky Deerr
 President: Char Maternowski-Paul
 Past President: Kristi Hughes
 Secretary: Tommie Roesch
 Treasurer: Marsha Egan

Member at Large: Katrina Anderson
 Member at Large: Bianca Gerena-Perez
 Member at Large: Jill Pangle
 Member at Large: John Trueblood

We are striving to provide quality professional support and development to the Indiana AER Chapter members, so that we can better teach and assist our students and clients to be self-sufficient, independent, and successful in present and future endeavors.

Hot AER is published by the Indiana AER Chapter (IN-AER).

If you have suggestions or articles for inclusion in Hot AER please submit them by October 20th, 2019 to: inaercommunications@gmail.com