

**April 23, 2009**

**Penn-Del AER General Assembly Meeting Minutes**

**Approved April 22, 2010**

Harrisburg/Hershey Holiday Inn

Meeting called to order at 11:10 am by Brenda Egan, President.

**ATTENDANCE**

- Penn-Del AER Board Members and General Membership
- Quorum established for voting members

(See Appendix 1: General Assembly PowerPoint Presentation to support all details reported below)

**OFFICERS REPORTS**

*President, Brenda Egan:* Brenda began the General Membership Meeting by establishing the agenda and then introducing the Board Officers and the Directors-At-Large. In the Message from the President, Brenda highlighted this past year's efforts and activity which include:

- Penn-Del AER being more than just the Spring Vision Conference
- Unanimous Board response to the proposed changes from ACVREP
- Watched our budget to bring the Chapter back into the black, indicating that the Board is committed to achieving a balanced budget
- Board was thrilled to launch the Regional Meetings
- Made efforts to improve communication with the general membership
- Board's commitment to improve through self-assessment – demonstrated by their attendance at the four annual Board meeting and completing work in between meetings

Brenda acknowledged our two existing members: Jennifer Edgar and Dr. George J. Zimmerman and thanked them for their contributions as Directors-at-Large.

Addressed the Goals for 2010:

- Continue to work on meeting the goals of the revitalization plan that was started in the fall of 2006 – which includes being recognized as the Chapter of the Biennium at the 2010 AER International Conference
- The Board has a presence in Pennsylvania and Delaware and we are here to represent the general membership.

*Secretary, Lynn Fox:* Read the minutes from April 2008's General Assembly Meeting. John Ford made the motion to accept the minutes as submitted, Debby Holzapfel seconded the motion; motion approved.

*Treasure's Report, Vince McVeigh:* Vince reported that the combined account has a balance of \$43,293.21 as of 3-31-09. Once all of the expenditures for the conference are paid, the budget for the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2009, will be posted on-line.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Nominations Committee – Sandy Finkel:* Presented the goals and activity of the committee and presented the Slate of Nominations to the President and General Membership. The nominations

slate included: Holly Russell, Lori Love, Tracy Whitehead, Gerald Kitzhoffer, and Mary Tolbert. Brenda Egan opened the slate for additional nominations. None were made from the floor. Vince McVeigh made the motion to accept the slate as presented. Gary Nuss seconded the motion. Brenda called for the vote to accept the slate of nominations to the General Membership. All affirmative votes. The motion carried.

*Bylaws and Structure Committee, Vince McVeigh, Chair:*

The Bylaws and Structure Committee was charged to review the Bylaws to look for any corrections and inconsistencies. The Board approved the proposed changes to the Bylaws on February 19, 2009. The proposed changes were submitted electronically to the General Membership through e-Blasts and web site postings. The proposed changes were read during the General Meeting. Vince moved to submit the committee report to the President. Jennifer Edgar made the motion to accept the Bylaw changes as presented. Debby Holzapfel seconded the motion. Discussion addressed the wording changes in Article I. Agreed to accept wording as is. Brenda called for the vote to accept the proposed Bylaws changes. All affirmative votes. The motion carried.

*Special Report: ACVREP, Dr. George Zimmerman:*

(See Appendix 2) Provided overview of the December 16, 2008 announced ACVREP changes to the certification policies for Track 1 and 2. Due to national response to not implement these changes, ACVREP announced on January 14, 2009 to postpone the March implementation. On March 5<sup>th</sup>, various stakeholders met with ACVREP to discuss their various perspectives. The result is that ACVREP has rescinded their proposed changes – voted on April 6<sup>th</sup> and announced on April 13<sup>th</sup>. There is the need to have transparency between ACVREP and stakeholders. George also addressed certification requirements specified from the federal and state levels to emphasize the vague language to provide O&M services from certified specialists.

*Communications Committee, Sandy, Chair:*

Focus on improving free means of electronic communication.

1. Public Relations – Jen: presented slide content: goal and activity of the sub-committee
2. Newsletter/e-Blasts – Charlotte: highlighted slide content. Discussed approach to improve e-communication to transmit information to the general membership through the use of a new server called School Wires hosted by the Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children.
3. Website – Sandy: presented slide content and highlighted the web address and homepage content.
4. Legislation – Marla: presented slide content: goal and activity of the sub-committee. Briefly discussed the laborious process that bills undergo.

*Professional Development Committee, Sister Meg, Chairperson:*

1. SVC, Sister Meg, Chair: presented slide content: goal and activity of the sub-committee
2. Leadership – George: presented slide content: goal and activity of the sub-committee. Emphasized Board's need to look for new, up-and-coming leaders.
3. Scholarship – Lynn: presented slide content: goal and activity of the sub-committee

4. Regional Meetings – Gary: presented slide content: goal and activity of the sub-committee

*Membership Committee: Rebecca, Chair*

1. Presented slide content: goal and activity of the committee, emphasizing membership drive

*Ad Hoc Awards Committee: Amy, Chair:*

1. Barbara presented the goals and activity of this committee, highlighting the responsibility shift for selecting recipients of the ELEY and the Service Awards from the SVC to the Penn-Del Chapter.

Gerald Kitzhoffer presented Jackie Brennan with the AER International Samuel C. Howe Award.

*AER International Update: Debby Holzapfel, District 6 Representative:*

Highlighted the mission of AER International and the key strategies currently being employed:

- Improve communications
- Ensure financial stability and a balanced budget
- Grow membership numbers significantly

Vince McVeigh made the motion to adjourn. Debby Holzapfel seconded the motion.

**MEETING ADJOURNED** at 12:00.

**Next meeting:** General Assembly Meeting at the 2010 Penn-Del AER Spring Vision Conference. Time and location to be announced.

Respectfully submitted:  
Lynn Fox  
June 24, 2009

## **Appendix 1**

### **Penn-Del AER General Assembly Meeting PowerPoint Presentation**

**Pennsylvania-Delaware AER**  
General Assembly Meeting  
April 23, 2009



**Agenda**

- Introduction of the Board Members
- Message from the President
- Officers' Report
- Committee Updates
- Update on ACVREP
- International AER Report




**Penn-Del AER Officers**

**President:** Brenda Egan  
**President-Elect:** Sister Meg Fleming  
**Past-President:** Sandy Finkel  
**Secretary:** Lynn Fox  
**Treasurer:** Vince McVeigh

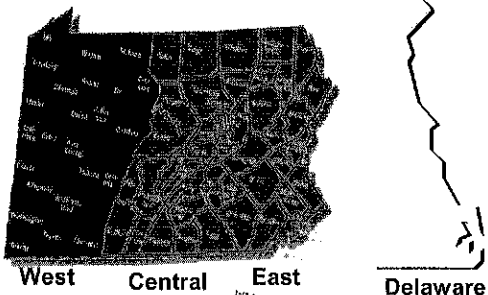


**Members at Large**

<b>Western Region</b>	<b>Eastern Region</b>
Dr. George J. Zimmerman	Jennifer Edgar
Charlotte Fisher	Cindy Mock
Rebecca Renshaw	
Mary Nelle McLennan	<b>Delaware Region</b>
Jonathan Fister	Barbara Mallory
<b>Central Region</b>	Amy Rotzinger
Dr. Marla Moon	
Lynn Murphy	
Gary Nuss	




### Regional Map




West Central East Delaware

### Message from the President Brenda Egan



3/6/2010 DRAFT - DRAFT - DRAFT 6




### Officers' Reports

**Secretary's Report:**  
Approval of the General Meeting Minutes,  
April 2008

**Treasurer's Report:**  
Review of the Budget

### Nominations Committee

Sandy Finkel, Chair  
**Committee Members:**  
Lynn Fox, Jennifer Edgar, & Debby Holzappel





### Nominations Committee

**Goals:**

To present an outstanding slate of candidates to become representatives of the Board

**Activity:**

Presentation of the Nomination Slate 2009  
Call for Vote



### Slate of Nominations

**Western Region**

Holly Russell

**Eastern Region**

Gerald Kitzhoffer

**Central Region**

Lori Love

**Delaware Region**

Mary Tolbert

Tracy Whitehead

### Bylaws Committee

Vince McVeigh, Chair

**Committee Members:**

Marla Moon & Gayle Aquino



### Bylaws Committee

**Goals:**

To define and refine committee policies and procedures

**Activity:**

Call for vote on proposed bylaw changes



### Proposed Bylaw Changes

Approved by the Penn-Del AER Board on February 19, 2009 for membership consideration at the 2009 Annual Meeting

**ARTICLE I: Name**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired. *Here after referred to as the Penn-Del AER Chapter. It is a chapter of The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, an International association.*

[Replacing]

**ARTICLE I: Name**

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, of the International AER office. *Here after referred to as the Penn-Del AER Chapter*



### Proposed Bylaw Changes

**ARTICLE X: Committees**

Section 2. Board Liaisons/Special Committees. Either at his/her own initiative, at the request of the Board of Directors, or by vote of the membership, the President may appoint board liaisons/special committees to conduct studies, consider specific questions related to work of the Penn-Del AER Chapter, and bring that information back to the Board, the Website subcommittee and the *Information* subcommittee.

[Replacing]

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### Proposed Bylaw Changes

**ARTICLE XI: Parliamentary Authority**

Section 1.2. The Communications Committee shall consist of the following four Sub-Committees: Public Relations, *Information*, Website, and Legislation. *The Communications Committee includes the Chair plus four Coordinators.*

The Chair of the Communications Committee shall appoint *Coordinators for each of the four Sub-Committees*. Each Sub-Committee will consist of as many members as necessary to carry out their functions.

The Public Relations Sub-Committee will be responsible for preparing informational materials highlighting the organization.

The *Information* Sub-Committee will prepare and disseminate *news* to chapter members.

The Website Sub-Committee will update and maintain all information relevant for membership.

The Legislation Sub-Committee shall keep the Board of Directors informed of all proposed legislation at the state and federal levels, which is of significance to the membership of the Penn-Del AER Chapter.

[Replacing]



### Proposed Bylaw Changes

**ARTICLE XI: Parliamentary Authority**

Section 1.2. The Communications Committee shall consist of the following four Sub-Committees: Public Relations, *Newsletter*, Website, and Legislation.

The Chair of the Communications Committee shall appoint *four Coordinators for each of the four Sub-Committees*. Each Sub-Committee will consist of as many members as necessary to carry out their function.

The Public Relations Sub-Committee will be responsible for preparing informational materials highlighting the organization.

The *Newsletter* Sub-Committee will prepare and disseminate a *newsletter* to chapter members.

The Website Sub-Committee will update and maintain all information relevant for membership.

The Legislation Sub-Committee shall keep the Board of Directors informed of all proposed legislation at the state and federal levels, which is of significance to the membership of the Penn-Del AER Chapter.



### Proposed Bylaw Changes

**ARTICLE XI: Parliamentary Authority**

Section 1.3. The Professional Development Committee shall consist of the following four Sub-Committees: Spring Conference, Leadership, Scholarship, and Regional Meetings. Except for the Spring Conference Sub-Committee, the Chair of the Professional Development Committee will appoint three Coordinators for each of the three Sub-Committees. Each Sub-Committee will consist of as many members as necessary to carry out their function.

The Scholarship Sub-Committee is responsible for developing scholarship opportunities for *Penn-Del AER members who live or work in Pennsylvania or Delaware and who are enrolled in university personnel preparation programs in a related field of study that addresses the educational and rehabilitation needs of persons with visual impairments.*

[Replacing]

Section 1.3. The Professional Development Committee shall consist of the following four Sub-Committees: Spring Conference, Leadership, Scholarship, and Regional Meetings. Except for the Spring Conference Sub-Committee, the Chair of the Professional Development Committee will appoint three Coordinators for each of the three Sub-Committees. Each Sub-Committee will consist of as many members as necessary to carry out their function.

The Scholarship Sub-Committee is responsible for developing scholarship opportunities for *university students who attend one of the three university personnel preparation programs in Pennsylvania.*



### Proposed Bylaw Changes

In addition, it is recommended that several non-substantive changes be enacted to add consistency to the document. They include the consistent use of *international* when describing the parent organization and the use of the lower case when referencing the *by-laws*.

### Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals Update

George J. Zimmerman



### Communications Committee

Sandy Finkel, Chair

**Subcommittees:**

- Public Relations – Jennifer Edgar
- Newsletter/E-blast – Charlotte Fisher
- Website – Sandy Finkel
- Legislation – Marla Moon





## Public Relations

**Goals:**

To promote AER and the professions it encompasses

**Activity:**

Established sub-committee members  
Action plan to be implemented in July 2009



## Newsletter/E-Blast

**Goals:**

To be the primary vehicle for the flow of information to and from the membership

**Activity:**

E-Blast events and announcements  
Contact: [fisherc@wpsbc.org](mailto:fisherc@wpsbc.org)



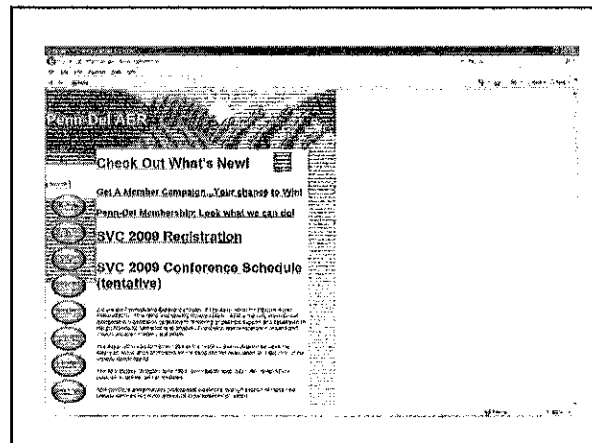
## Web Site


**Goals:**

To maintain an updated web site to serve as an accurate communication tool to our membership

**Activity:**

[www.penn-delaer.org](http://www.penn-delaer.org)





### Legislation

**Goals:**  
To monitor and respond to current legislative activity at a state and national level


**Activity:**  
Disseminate information to the Board and general membership (new legislation and proposals) in a timely manner

### Professional Dev Committee

Sister Meg Fleming, Chair

#### Subcommittees


- SVC – Sister Meg Fleming
- Leadership – George Zimmerman
- Scholarship – Lynn Fox
- Regional Meetings – Sister Meg Fleming



### Spring Vision Conference

**Goals:**  
To host a quality annual conference to support on-going professional development and networking

**Activity:**  
Solicited speakers, vendors, and participants to host an outstanding event



### Leadership

**Goals:**  
Penn-Del AER will commit our time to identify and grow leaders to carry the torch for the Chapter

**Activity:**  
Established mentorships  
Developing a process to identify future leaders  
Provide leadership opportunities



### Scholarship

**Goals:**

To define and refine student scholarship procedures to reward deserving applicants

**Activity:**

Announced scholarship in late January  
Selected and notified recipient  
Will present award this evening



### Regional Meetings

**Goals:**

To host effective and productive regional meetings for more frequent contact with membership

**Activity:**

Each region hosted at least one event this past fall

### Membership Committee

Rebecca Renshaw, Chair

**Committee Members:**

Charlotte Fisher, Jean May, & Rachelle Stauffer



### Membership Committee



**Goals:**

To develop and implement an action plan to recruit, retain, recognize, and educate chapter members  
To increase chapter membership by 20%  
(247 to 296)

**Activity:**

Created informational brochures  
Implemented a membership recognition program  
Increased membership

**Awards Committee**  
Amy Rotzinger, Chair  
**Committee Members:**  
Sister Meg Fleming & Debby Holzapfel




**Awards Committee**


**Goals:**  
To define and refine the Penn-Del AER awards to recognize and highlight the achievements of deserving professionals within this chapter

**Activity:**  
Call for nominations in February  
Selected and notified recipient  
Will present awards at Awards Banquet

**AER International Update**  
Debby Holzapfel  
District 6 Representative



**Call to Adjourn**  
Brenda Egan



## **Appendix 2**

### **ACVREP Certification Update PowerPoint Presentation**

## CERTIFICATION UPDATE

George J Zimmerman  
University of Pittsburgh

### What transpired

- On December 16, 2008 ACVREP announced significant changes to their certification policy:
  - ✓ Elimination of the three category certification eligibility criteria for each of ACVREP's three disciplines and the proposal of two NEW Tracks (1 and 2)
  - ✓ Elimination of university preparation (in O&M and Rehabilitation Teaching) to become eligible for certification, and
  - ✓ Elimination of the discount for ABR members
- On January 14, 2009 ACVREP announced the postponement of the implementation of these proposed changes :
  - ✓ Outcry from individuals, groups, Chapters and Divisions within ABR
  - ✓ Schedule of face-to-face talk at Jo Taylor on March 5, 2009

### What transpired

- On March 5, 2009 representatives from ACVREP along with representatives from ABR, ACB, AFB, Veterans Association, COSB, and VisionServe Alliance met to discuss the various perspectives relating to the NEW proposed certification policies.
- At the conclusion of this meeting it was decided that the ACVREP representatives would strongly recommend to the full ACVREP Board the following:
  - ✓ ACVREP rescind the proposed NEW certification policies and procedures
  - ✓ ACVREP develop and institute a transparent process that seeks input from stakeholders whenever modifications or changes in ACVREP professional competencies, certification criteria and/ or the code of ethics are to be considered

### Presently

- On April 13, 2009 the ACVREP announced the following:
  - ✓ The BOD of ACVREP voted on April 6, 2009 to rescind the proposed NEW Track 1 and Track 2 certification policies.
  - ✓ The former three category certification eligibility criteria for each of ACVREP's three disciplines have been reinstated.
  - ✓ In response to the recommendations made by ACVREP representatives, all parties pledged to work collaboratively to seek ways to address personnel shortages and other challenges facing the field in order to broaden the provision of quality services to include all individuals seeking and receiving services in a timely and complete manner. Strategies to improve communication and transparency among ACVREP and stakeholders is on the May 2, 2009 Board meeting agenda.

## O&M Qualifications at the Federal Level

- IDEA (1997, PL 105-17) included O&M as a Related Service
- IDEA (2004, PL 108-446) amended the language stating that "the State educational agency has established and maintains qualifications to ensure that personnel necessary to carry out [these services] are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including that those personnel have the content knowledge and skills to serve children with disabilities" . . . .
  - (i) Related services personnel include qualifications that "are consistent with any State-approved or State-recognized certification, licensing, registration, or other comparable requirements that apply to the professional discipline in which those personnel are providing special education or related services;
  - (ii) ensure that related services personnel who deliver services in their discipline or profession meet the requirements of clause (i) and have not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis . . ."

## Implementation of IDEA in PA

- Title 22 of the PA Code Chapter 49.11 (2006) states that "State certificates and permits will be issued as provided in this chapter, and teachers and other professional personnel may not perform professional duties or services in the schools in the Commonwealth in any area for which they have not been properly certified or permitted"
- PA CSPG No. 60, Instructional Area Code 9290 (2004) states "The certified educator is qualified to provide instruction in classroom orientation including the use of sighted guide techniques. Any additional instruction in the orientation and mobility for students with blindness/visual impairments (e.g., cane travel, street crossings) requires a professional certificate in orientation and mobility"

## The State of O&M in the Commonwealth of PA

- The federal guidelines are clear. They leave it up to the states to enforce.
- The PA State regulations are also somewhat clear but allow for confusing interpretation. For example, the PA DOE Division of Certification Services has not established a certification or license for O&M Specialists.
- I assume that the PA DOE Division of Certification Services knows about ACVREP certification in O&M and is defaulting to that agency to provide the certificate.
- If so, they are still not providing any oversight or enforcement to ensure that O&M Specialists are certified and retain certification as stipulated in the Chapter 49 regs.
- So, unless otherwise stipulated by an administrator/supervisor in an IU, school district, or specialized school, an Individual O&M Specialist is allowed to decide whether she or he wants to become and retain certification every five years through ACVREP.
- Would the Commonwealth allow a TVI to serve students without certification? Why then is it okay to allow uncertified O&M Specialists to serve this population?