



**Pennsylvania - Delaware Chapter**  
**Association for Education and Rehabilitation**  
**of the Blind and Visually Impaired**

## **2023 Conference Brochure**

**Penn-Del AER Conference**  
**Our Professional Landscape:**  
**Cultivating Our Vision for the Future**  
**April 19 – 21, 2023**  
**Best Western Premier Central Hotel**  
**Harrisburg, PA**



The Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter of AER invites you to participate in our annual conference as we focus on **Our Professional Landscape: Cultivating Our Vision for the Future**. Our nationally respected conference offers a notable line-up of professionals who will present three general sessions, 35 concurrent sessions, an exhibitor hall with a large group of exhibitors on Thursday's Exhibitor Day, professional poster presentations, the Penn-Del AER awards banquet, our AER Chapter meeting, and a tempting silent auction.

The 2023 Penn-Del AER Conference will be held at the Best Western Premier Central Hotel & Conference Center in Harrisburg, PA. The conference will open on Wednesday, April 19, at 1:00 PM and will conclude on Friday, April 21, at 12:45 PM.

### **General Sessions**

Our general sessions are presented by experienced, nationally respected leaders whose sessions provide inspiration and insights into ways that we can cultivate our professional landscape to benefit the individuals we serve!

#### **Keynote Address Speaker, Wednesday April 19:**

**Lee Sonnenberg, Executive Director, Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired**

#### **Mid-note Address Speaker, Thursday April 20:**

**Dr. Marla Moon, OD, FAAO**

#### **Footnote Address Speaker, Friday April 21:**

**David Epstein, Co-Founder, Awarewolf Gear and Developer of All Terrain Cane**

## Concurrent Sessions

Participants will have opportunities to attend a wide array of sessions in which professionals in the field of visual impairment provide information about new programs, products, research, methods, and other current topics. Participants will be able to choose from sessions focused on education and rehabilitation, including Vision Rehabilitation Therapy (VRT), Orientation and Mobility (O&M), technology, early intervention, transition, the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC), and many other areas of interest. Check the Penn-Del AER website for details on sessions to be offered.

## Poster Sessions

On Thursday, April 20, presenters will exhibit posters on new programs, innovative techniques, research, and more. Poster presenters will be on hand to answer questions and provide additional detail. Check the Penn-Del AER website for details on sessions to be offered.

## Exhibit Hall

Exhibitors from across the country will exhibit their products and services on Exhibitor Day held on Thursday, April 20. Come see the latest in assistive technology, training programs, adapted products, available services, and much more!

## Conference Materials

Conference materials will be available to all attendees in electronic format.

## Penn-Del AER Awards Banquet

Penn-Del AER is proud of its members and service providers. Each year we highlight and recognize the professional achievements of outstanding Chapter members and university students for their contributions in the field of vision education and rehabilitation.

The 2023 Penn-Del AER Awards Event will recognize and honor two of our members, Vince McVeigh and Mary Nelle McLennan who received awards at the 2022 International AER Conference. We will also recognize the recipients of the highly regarded Penn-Del AER Richard L. Welsh (Welsh) Service Award, the Elinor Long Educator of the Year (ELEY) Award, and the Student Scholarship.

**Vince McVeigh received The Richard L Welsh Chapter Leadership Award.** This award was established to recognize professionals who have contributed outstanding efforts in AER chapter leadership.

**Mary Nelle McLennan received The Douglas C. MacFarland Award.** This award was established to honor an individual who has provided leadership in the field of blindness and

visual impairment and who made innovative, significant, or outstanding contributions to the field.

**The Penn-Del AER Richard L. Welsh Service Award** was established to recognize a professional who serves the education and/or rehabilitation needs of individuals with visual impairment in Pennsylvania or Delaware, and who has demonstrated outstanding contributions and performance to the field.

**The Elinor Long Educator of the Year (ELEY) Award** was established to recognize a professional in the field of education of students with visual impairment in Pennsylvania and is now extended to those in Delaware who have demonstrated outstanding contributions and performance.

**The Student Scholarship** is granted to an outstanding university student who is pursuing certification in the field of blindness and visual impairment. The applicant must be a member of the Penn-Del AER Chapter.

The Awards celebration is open for all AER members and other professionals in the field of vision education or rehabilitation, for the families of the award recipients, their families, and guests. The 2023 Awards Presentation Ceremony, immediately following the dinner, will be celebrated both in-person and streamed for virtual attendees.

We hope you plan to attend and help us recognize the accomplishments of our colleagues!

## Penn-Del AER Chapter Meeting

The Penn-Del AER Annual Chapter Meeting is a wonderful way to hear about the work of the Penn-Del AER Board and Committees. We will also be able to thank those Board members who are rotating off the Board and welcome the new Directors-at-Large. Join us at the meeting to learn how you can become more involved in Penn-Del AER!

Penn-Del AER Membership Committee is excited to announce its annual membership incentives! Current and new members who attend the 2023 Penn-Del AER Chapter Meeting may be eligible for valuable prizes.

Not a Penn-Del AER Member? [Join AER or renew your membership \(aerbvi.org\)](https://aerbvi.org) for a chance to win!

## Networking Opportunities

There are a wide variety of both formal and informal networking opportunities, including an opening reception on Wednesday, our Alumni Reception (University Socials), and the Awards Reception that follows the annual Penn-Del AER Awards Banquet to recognize and celebrate our award winners.

## Silent Auction

There's a spot at the Silent Auction waiting for you! If you are interested in donating an item, please send an email to Dael Cohen at [cdael@aol.com](mailto:cdael@aol.com) telling her what the donated item will be with the approximate value and then simply bring the item to the Penn-Del AER registration desk at the conference.

If you would like to make a monetary contribution that will be used to purchase items to be auctioned, please include that on your registration form. Make the check payable to Penn-Del AER and note that it is for Silent Auction. Thanks, in advance, for your help in making the Silent Auction a success!

When at the conference, be prepared to see and bid on the items. It is fun and helps our Chapter!

## Professional Development Credits

Penn-Del AER offers certificates of completion for conference participants to apply for professional development credits.

## Registration Details

The conference registration fee is based on membership and postmark date. Early bird rates are available until April 3, 2023. The regular fees will apply after that date.

### Conference Rates

#### Early Bird Registration- Payment must be received by 4/3/2023

- AER Member - \$190
- AER Student - \$55
- AER Member Single Day - \$160
- Non-Member - \$280
- Non-Member Student - \$100
- Non-Member Single Day - \$250

#### Regular Registration – Payment received after 4/3/2023

- AER Member - \$210
- AER Student – \$150
- AER Member Single Day - \$170
- Non-Member – \$300
- Non-Member Student - \$175
- Non-Member Single Day -\$270

## [Registration Link](#)

AER members receive a discounted rate when AER membership number is included. For your convenience, we have included a direct link to the AER membership website. Join [AER](#) to take advantage of member rates!

## Payment Information

### Venmo

Payment is available by Venmo: [@PennDel-AER](#)

### Check

Payment by check: Make payable to **Penn-Del AER**

Remit payment to: Helene Marano, Penn-Del AER Conference, 75 Belmont Station, Southampton, Pa 18966.

## Email

For email communication regarding registration contact Helene Marano at [hmarano@obs.org](mailto:hmarano@obs.org).

## Cancellations

Cancellations made prior to April 3, 2023, are subject to a \$50 administration fee.

**NO CANCELLATION REFUNDS AFTER April 3, 2023.**

## Miscellaneous

All monetary silent auction donations should be included in your registration payment. For more information contact Dael Cohen at [cdael@aol.com](mailto:cdael@aol.com).

Request accommodations by April 3, 2023.

## Hotel Information

The conference sessions will be held at the Central Hotel and Conference Center at the Best Western Premier. You will have the option to register for sleeping rooms at both the Best Western Premier and the nearby Hampton Inn as the Best Western is undergoing renovations and rooms may be limited. A shuttle will be available for transport between hotels.

### The Central Hotel and Conference Center at the Best Western Premier

800 E Park Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17111-2807  
Phone: 717-561-2800

The conference room rate at the Best Western Premier is \$124.95 plus taxes. Rooms can be booked online by visiting the [Best Western Premier Reservation](#) or by phone at 717-561-2800.

If you need to book your room via phone, call the hotel directly at 717-561-2800. Just follow the prompts to reach the front desk and one of their reservation agents will be happy to make your reservation. You will need to mention that you are with the Penn-Del AER Conference to receive the conference rate.

### Hampton Inn

4230 Union Deposit Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111  
Phone: 717-545-9595

The conference room rate at the Hampton Inn is \$124.00 plus taxes. Rooms can be booked online by visiting the [Hampton Inn Reservation](#) or by phone at 717-545-9595.

## Conference Contacts

Holly Russell, Chair, Penn-Del AER Conference Committee; Past-President, Penn-Del AER Chapter, [russell.hm@comcast.net](mailto:russell.hm@comcast.net)

Maria Lepore-Stevens, Assistant Chair, Penn-Del AER Conference Committee; President-Elect, Penn-Del AER Chapter, [marialepstev@gmail.com](mailto:marialepstev@gmail.com)

Helene Marano and Brenda Egan, Co-Chairs Penn-Del AER Conference Registration Committee, Contact: [hmarano@obs.org](mailto:hmarano@obs.org)

Mary Nelle McLennan, Chair, Penn-Del AER Conference Program Committee, [mary.nelle@icloud.com](mailto:mary.nelle@icloud.com)

## Note

Photos and/or videos will be taken for publicity purposes.

## Thank You

On behalf of the 2023 Penn-Del AER Conference Planning Committee, we thank you for your continued support. We are grateful for your commitment to our conference and to our field.

The Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) supports professionals who provide education & rehabilitation services to people with visual impairments.

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