



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

2024 Awards Nominations

Each year Penn-Del AER recognizes achievements of its members and others dedicated to the field of visual impairment in education and rehabilitation. The 2024 Awards Committee seeks nominations for this year's awards that highlight professionals who are committed to providing quality services for children or adults with visual impairments. Take advantage of this opportunity to acknowledge an outstanding colleague. Help us to identify those who exemplify the very best in the field!

Consider nominating a colleague for one or both awards!

Awards Descriptions

Penn-Del AER Richard L. Welsh Service Award Description

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

The Welsh Award is named after Richard L. Welsh, a visionary and international leader in the field of vision impairment providing services and support to education, rehabilitation, and orientation and mobility for over 40 years. Dr. Welsh was the first President of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER).

To be eligible for the Welsh Award, an individual must be a current member of AER and not a current member of the AER Board of Directors. Nominees do not have to be direct service providers.

Elinor Long Educator of the Year Award Description

The **Elinor Long Educator of the Year (ELEY) Award** was established to recognize an outstanding professional in the field of education of students with visual impairment. The awardee is encouraged to be an AER member, but it is not a requirement.

The ELEY Award is named after Elinor Long, who dedicated her career to developing and supporting programs for students with visual and dual sensory impairment in Pennsylvania.

The ELEY is awarded on a five-year cyclical basis. For four consecutive years, nominations are accepted for educators of children with visual impairment (birth-21 years of age). Award consideration for the fifth year is extended to other service providers such as: administrators, university faculty, and medical personnel.

Nominations for the 2024 ELEY Award target educators of children with visual impairment (birth-21 years of age).

Nominee Criteria

A nominee for either award may have demonstrated traits of outstanding professionalism in areas such as, but not limited to: improved services that benefited students or adults in the field of visual impairment; development or adaptation of programs and/or materials; community involvement; contributions to their professional association; or contributions to the field of research. These activities may have been consistently demonstrated over a long career or may have been dramatically demonstrated in some specific instance.

Penn-Del AER Richard L. Welsh Service Award Criteria

Innovative Practice: Demonstrates how the nominee has significantly contributed to clients in the fields of rehabilitation, orientation and mobility, and/or teaching students with visual impairments that have led to increased or improved services or outcomes.

Training and Advocacy: Demonstrates the significance of the nominee's contribution to teach, support, and share preferred practices from the field of visual impairment with parents/families, colleagues, professionals, and paraprofessionals.

Pre-Service and/or In-Service Training: Demonstrates the significance of the nominee's contribution in professional activity to educate, support, consult, and share preferred practices that impact the field of visual impairment.

Collaboration and Consultation: Demonstrates the significance of the nominee's contribution of consultation and collaboration that impact the field of visual impairment.

Geographic Impact: Provide examples of the scope of the nominee's contributions made to the field of visual impairment.

Contributions to the Field: Elaborate on the breadth and depth of activities the nominee provided that has enhanced the field of visual impairments (e.g., service or participation in AER, teaching courses, publications, membership in other professional organizations, etc.).

Elinor Long Educator of the Year Award Criteria

Innovative Practice: Demonstrates the significance of the nominee's contribution as an educator or service provider for children with visual impairments (birth-21) that have led to increased or improved services or outcomes.

Training and Advocacy: Demonstrates the significance of the nominee's contribution to teach, support, and share preferred practices from the field of visual impairment with parents/families, colleagues, professionals, and paraprofessionals.

Collaboration and Consultation: Demonstrates the significance of the nominee’s contribution of consultation and collaboration that impact the field of visual impairment.

Contributions to the Field: Elaborate on the breadth and depth of activities the nominee provided that has enhanced the field of visual impairments (e.g., innovative teaching techniques, supporting extracurricular activities for students, service or participation in professional activities or organizations, etc.).

Nomination Packet Preparation and Submission Details

Award Nomination Form

Complete all fields in the Award Nomination Form. This form must be included in the nomination packet.

Nominator’s Letter of Support

Supply the information requested under each of the following heading areas:

Nominee’s name

Nominee’s current and previous professional positions

- Job title
- Name of the organization
- Nominee’s approximate number of years in that position, if applicable
- Nominee’s educational and training background

Reasons for the nomination

Reference the “Nominee Criteria” section above. Provide examples of your nominee’s excellence in service and contributions.

Additional Letters of Support

In addition to the nominator’s letter of support, include at least three (3) additional letters of recommendation written by individuals who can address the specific criteria for each award to support the nomination.

Curriculum Vitae or Resume

Include the nominee’s curriculum vitae or resume in the nomination packet, if possible.

Deadline

- Deadline for nominations is due no later than February 1, 2024.
- Nominations will not be accepted after February 1, 2024.

Upon Acceptance

- Anticipate the following: the need for a current photo along with the name, title and employer information to be included in the program, poster and website.
- The Penn-Del AER Chapter will honor the award winners at the 2024 Penn-Del AER Awards Banquet on Thursday, April 25, 2024.
- Plan that the nominator and the nominee will attend the event. The nominator will provide a brief introduction of the nominee and the nominee will deliver a brief acceptance speech.
- Attend the Awards Reception held after the Awards Banquet where our Awardees will have the opportunity to mingle and receive much-deserved congratulations from fellow colleagues.
- The following year, the nominee will be expected to share comments on what the award has meant to them.

Submission Instructions

Submit completed nomination packet along with a list of each attachment via email by Thursday, February 1, 2024 to Brenda Egan at began1723@gmail.com.

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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