

Number 12, Friday 20 August, 2021

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## PD events

The 2021 [Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available on the SVRC website. Most professional learning will continue to be online. Events are now on Eventbrite.

Tuesday Oct 19 [Preparing your school for inclusion of a student who uses Braille](#)

Providing practical support for school staff preparing to welcome and include a new student who will be learning to read using Braille.

Tuesday Nov 23 [EXPO: Assistive Technology for students who are blind or partially sighted](#)

Showcasing & demonstrating assistive technologies that can promote inclusion & achievement for students who are blind or have low vision

## From the Manager

**Source:** Kim Foley, Manager, SVRC

On Monday, I had the privilege of attending Next Sense Leaders in Vision Education Conference. It was interesting to hear each state across Australia give an update on the year so far and in particular any silver linings gained from teaching and learning in a virtual space. I was able to report on how the SVRC staff have continued to deliver all teaching and learning programs, requests for alternative formats, and delivery of assistive technology. All this work ensures that students who are blind or have low vision have an opportunity to actively participate in the curriculum while learning from school or home. We discussed the Itinerant (Visiting) Teacher – Vision and how each state implements resource provision for schools, caseloads, accessing assistive technology options and eligibility processes for service delivery. I look forward to continued Australia wide conversations on all issues pertaining to supporting students who are blind or have low vision.

As Victoria continues into another two weeks of lockdown, please reach out to SVRC staff for support with resourcing or questions as we remain committed to delivering on all requests in a timely manner.

## Online tutorials – Victor Reader Stream

**Source:** SVRC Youtube Channel

There are eight handy tutorials demonstrating how to use the Victor Reader Stream, on [SVRC's YouTube channel](#).

The wonderful (now retired) Garry Stinchcombe takes you through the basics of how to download content. Thanks, Garry!!

In fact, if you go to the SVRC website, take a look at our [Technology Support](#) page under 'Resources'.

## Using Gmail on a Polaris

**Source:** Di Bennett, SVRC

Students need to make sure that they regularly turn on less secure apps in their Gmail account by going to <https://myaccount.google.com/lesssecureapps> and selecting the less secure button and turn it on.

This is particularly relevant if students have not used their gmail account on their Polaris for a period of time because Google resets the security settings.

## 3D printing catalogue

**Source:** SVRC

A catalogue of 3D prints available through SVRC is now available on our website on the [Alternative Format Catalogue](#) page. The catalogue is arranged by subject, with photos and a description for each print. A great resource for Visiting Teachers and classroom teachers to look through as they plan for the year. We are always happy to receive new ideas for prints and ask users of prints to provide feedback so we can continue to improve our designs.

## SVRC Writing Competition 2021

**Source:** Marion Blazé, Support Skills and Professional Learning, SVRC

The annual SVRC writing competition usually happens in Term 4, but with most of our students in isolation at present, we are sharing the topics with you earlier, so that you can be inspired to start writing now.

This competition is open to any eligible student with a vision impairment who is supported by a Visiting Teacher and/or the Statewide Vision Resource Centre. You can 'write' in the format of your choice. Your writing can be creative or factual. A judging panel will award prizes at every age level and an overall winner's prize.

The topic this year is the theme of the Children's Book Council, Book Week (August 21-27, 2021): 'Old worlds, new worlds, other worlds'. Take inspiration from the wonderful poster designed for Book Week.



This is a broad theme that you can take in any direction. You could write about life before, during and after COVID. You could write about space, food, housing, transport, technology, almost anything.

Please include your name, age, school and contact details (for prizes and certificates). Please email your entry to: [marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au) or post to Marion Blazé, Statewide Vision Resource Centre, PO Box 201, Nunawading 3131. Entries will be accepted until November 8, 2021.

## **Year 12 students – SEAS applications are now open**

If there have been circumstances that have made it hard for you to do your best at study, you should consider putting in a special consideration application via [VTAC's Special Entry Access Scheme \(SEAS\)](#). SEAS is designed to make sure tertiary institutions get a sense of your full potential and it enables institutions to consider the circumstances you have experienced and their impact upon your studies when making selection decisions.

Applications opened August 2 and will close October 8, 2021.

## **Trans-Tasman Certificate of Proficiency in Unified English Braille**

**Source:** Ozbrl listserv message from Kathy Riessen, ICEB Code Maintenance Officer, Coordinator Accessible Format Production South Australian School for Vision Impaired

Registrations will soon be open for Australian candidates for this year's Trans-Tasman Certificate of Proficiency in Unified English Braille.

The two options for test dates this year are:

EITHER 3rd to 10th October

OR 11th to 18th October

The [sample papers](#) have been updated on the Braille Australia website.

There are separate sets of papers for print readers and touch readers.

For each set there is a separate file giving general instructions. For touch readers this includes information on the mark-up codes used in the braille copies.

The three papers: "ANZAC Centenary", "Lifeblood" and "Torturous Twenty Hours", have been updated for both print and touch readers. The paper "War on Waste", has not been updated and no answers are given.

The answers are given in two different page formats, 30 cells per line or 40 cells per line.

I would encourage potential candidates to make use of these papers as they prepare for this year's test.

## **Independent school student looking for VT Vision**

Micah is a legally blind student, supported by SVRC. He is in year 8 at Haileybury College's city campus in West Melbourne. The school would like to find a VT either for regular visits or even just a one-off consultation to direct the school on how best to support Micah. If interested, please contact Micah's mother, Elaine Wong at [ewon@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:ewon@unimelb.edu.au).

## Vision Australia Further Education Bursary

Source: [Vision Australia Further Education Bursary Website](#)

As of 1st July 2021, applications are now open for Vision Australia's Further Education Bursary 2022

Each year, Vision Australia awards Further Education Bursaries to a select number of students who are blind or have low vision.

The bursaries provide adaptive technology to help the students fully participate and succeed in their chosen tertiary studies.

Assistive technology can eliminate barriers to education and enhance access to information. It enables students to read course material, conduct research and improve their student life.

Since the inception of the bursary scheme in 1996, more than 440 students have been supported in their further education journey. Meet 2021 and prior years' recipients at the website

Applications close strictly on 30 September 2021.

## Paralympic Pen Pal

Source: [Paralympics website – for students](#)



Our Paralympians love hearing from their fans. Your words of encouragement inspire them to give their best performance and they love to answer your questions about their sport, life as an athlete and about the Paralympics in general.

To start, simply fill in the details, write your message, click submit and your message will be delivered to your Paralympic Pen Pal!

Please keep in mind, our Paralympians are still busy training and preparing for the Paralympic Games, so while they receive every message sent, they may not be able to write a reply to all of them.

Need some help getting started? Check out our Paralympic Pen Pal resource.

## Paralympian Goalballer – Jenny Blow

Source: [Paralympics website – Jenny Blow](#)

With two Paralympic Games under her belt, Jenny Blow is one of the Australian [goalball](#) team's most experienced competitors.

She first hit the court more than a decade ago at the 2006 Southern Cross Games in Auckland, New Zealand, but after being unable to find a local club to play for upon her return home, another three years would pass before Jenny began playing competitively.

Finally though, fate struck. The Australian women's coach, Georgie Kenaghan, was presenting to students at the University of Sydney about the opportunities available to children with a disability in Para-sport. Among them was Jenny, who was studying a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education.

Jenny made her international debut the following year at the 2010 International Blind Sports Federation Goalball World Championships in Sheffield, England, and represented Australia at her first Paralympic Games in 2012.

While the Aussie Belles lost their four preliminary matches in London, England, competing at the pinnacle event for her sport was the experience of a lifetime for Jenny, and one which ranks among her all-time favourite moments.

Incredibly, and long after she had given up hope, the opportunity to relive that moment came four years later in Brazil, when the Belles received an ultra late call-up to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. The Russian team had been banned and the Belles were next on the list.

Jenny is now on the verge of her most successful Paralympic campaigns to date, with the Belles having already qualified for the [Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games](#).



## Work for BCA

Source: Blind Citizens Australia Email List

Please find the [2 jobs at Blind Citizens Australia](#) that have been advertised today:

- Project Administration Support
- Project Officer Events and Initiatives

Both close on Monday 23rd August. Any enquires can be directed to Sally Aurisch or myself in her absence on 1800 033 660. All applications are requested to come to [recruitment@bca.org.au](mailto:recruitment@bca.org.au).

## And finally...

Thinking of Paralympics Pen Pals, when was the last time you posted or received a letter? With lockdowns continuing across various Australian states, why don't you send someone a letter, in print or Braille? It's always exciting to get something in the post!