

The Bulletin

Number 11, Friday 2nd August 2019

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Dates for Your Diary

Here is a list of our planned PD and other activities for the remainder of 2019:

Tuesday August 13: [Educational support of students who have low vision](#) – see PDF or the SVRC website for program

Tuesday October 15: Preparing your school for inclusion of a student who uses braille

Tuesday November 26: Assistive Technology Expo

*****Tuesday 10 December: SVRC Christmas Morning Tea – PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE*****

2020

12-15 January 2020: SPEVI Conference in Adelaide

[Dates for 2020 SVRC Professional Development activities coming soon!]

Note: For upcoming professional learning at SVRC along with programs, registration & online payment, visit the SVRC [professional learning page](#).

Equipment Boost for Schools: 2019 Application Round

Source: [Equipment Boost for Schools](#) with thanks to Wendy Morley

In Term 3 2019, Victorian government schools can apply to purchase new equipment and assistive technology to support students with disabilities or additional learning needs to participate, learn and succeed in all aspects of school life.

Applications opened on **15 July 2019** and close on **20 September 2019**.

For further information including eligibility, scope, application form, please visit [Equipment Boost for Schools](#)

Applications must be submitted online by **20 September 2019**.

For more information, please [email the Inclusive Education Grants team](#) or phone (03) 9084 8496.

Support Skills Try Day 2019 (for 2020)

When: Friday November 15th 2019

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre, Donvale

Time: 9:30 to 1:15pm

Who: Students considering the Support Skills Program for 2020 and their families.

RSVP: Monday 28th October to Lea Nagel at statewide.vision@edumail.vic.gov.au

We are currently taking enrolments for 2020. The Come and Try Program allows students and their families to participate in the program for half a day, meet with the staff teaching in the program and have an opportunity to assess its suitability and ask questions. If families would like to explore this option for their child in 2020 then please fill in the online form at <http://svrc.vic.edu.au/support-skills/enrolment>.

Please return the form to us **by Monday 28th October 2019**.

We would encourage families to speak to their child's Visiting Teacher and school to discuss the appropriateness of this program in context of their child's overall education plan.

If families, Visiting Teachers or school staff have any questions prior to the day or need further clarification about the program, please call and speak to either Lea Nagel, Emma Hall or Marion Blazé, SVRC Manager on (03) 9841 0242.

Space Camp 2020

Every couple of years, SVRC supports a team of students with vision impairments, and chaperones (VTs) who fund-raise and go to Space Camp – specifically SCI-VIS or 'Space Camp for Interested Vision Impaired Students'. A team of three students and two chaperones went in 2018. We have already had two students and their families express interest in going in September 2020.

Space Camp is a 6 day program in Huntsville, Alabama at the US Space and Rocket Centre. For one special week of the year, it is set up to enable students who are blind or vision impaired to access the program with assistive technology and all information in alternative formats. Our students change academically, socially and emotionally in the course of the camp but also in the lead-up and the weeks that follow. They come to be known as the kid who went to NASA for astronaut training! They are rightly proud of their achievements and become leaders in their schools and communities.

Please contact Marion Blazé at SVRC if your student or son/daughter is interested. Then we can form a team and start fund-raising, applying for scholarships and organising the itinerary: blaze.marion.g@edumail.vic.gov.au or (03) 9841 0242.

From Kate:

Kate is a former student who attended Space Camp in 1998. Following her return, Kate wrote:

"It was more than a once in a lifetime experience, it was the time of our lives. It helped us not only realise that if we try hard and aim for the sky we can reach the stars, but we also met friends that would last a lifetime. We lived each day as if it were our last and can recall every minute spent with our friends. The hardest and saddest time over there was saying goodbye. Our hearts were broken and as we left, a part of us stayed forever. We learnt knowledge that we can use in our curriculum, met others with similar problems, and ways to deal with it."

Sensory Scientific Exhibition and Discovery Day

The [ARC Centre of Excellence in Advanced Molecular Imaging and the Monash Biomedicine Discovery Institute](#) Monash University invites members of the blind and low vision community to experience the wonders of science using tactile, sound, olfactory and low vision accessible displays and exhibits. The Sensory Scientific Exhibition and Discovery Day is a half-day scientific exhibition and a showcase of the research conducted by the Cancer Program, at the BDI, Monash University, specifically geared for the blind and low vision community.

The exhibition will cover a range of topics including learning about cells and cell division, tumour growth and invasion, the genetic basis of cancer, interactions with the body's immune system and new and existing treatments for cancer.

The exhibit will include:

- Interactive 3D models
- Tactile posters
- Hand-held manipulatives

When: Friday 6 December 2019, 8.45 am-1.00pm

Where: Biomedicine Discovery Institute, Monash University, Clayton Campus, Wellington Rd, Clayton, Victoria

Registration: is essential – see the link above for more information

Extra Sensory

Source: [Extra Sensory: See. Hear. Smell. Taste. Feel. More!](#)

See the unseen, and walk on the surface of a cell. Find your way with your fingers, and experience next generation 3D audio and hearables. Sniff out some bacteria and feel your immune system at work, then if you're brave wash your hands with soap made from sewage.

Tell a story about the patterns hidden in the night sky, and try our virtual balance challenge. Ponder the concept of common sense, and what animals can perceive that humans can't. Listen to the music of the elephants, the last moments of the Mars Rover, and the unfolding of the evolution of species.

Extrasensory is presented by the Victorian Coordinating Committee for National Science Week, The Royal Society of Victoria, and the Parliament of Victoria.

This event is recommended for a 16+ audience. Finger food provided as part of your ticket price. Beverages will be available for purchase at the event.

When: Saturday 10 August 2019 from 6.00-10.00pm

Where: Parliament of Victoria, Spring Street East Melbourne

Cost: \$9.53-\$12.64

Purchase tickets (see link above) to a 30 minute session but ticket holders are welcome to remain at the event for as long as they wish until the event concludes at 10.00pm.

SPEVI: Propose a Project

Message from Frances Gentle and Phia Damsma, Co-presidents of SPEVI

SPEVI is an association of, and for, its members. The Australian SPEVI Committee of Management invites current SPEVI members to consider submitting proposals for projects, activities, or events that support SPEVI's Mission and Aims, and for which a funding contribution from SPEVI is sought.

Members can submit a project by using the SPEVI Members Project Submission Form. Additional relevant information should accompany the project application. All information, including the submission form, can be found [on the SPEVI website](#) (About Us > SPEVI Members' Projects).

To give you an idea of the possibilities, we are happy to **present two wonderful, completed projects** that were proposed by SPEVI members, for which the Committee of Management approved the provision of grants. The projects are aligned with and promote SPEVI's Mission and Aims.

1. Creation of an archive of the presentations and papers of previous SPEVI Conferences. This project has been completed. A repository of the papers and presentations for the 2013, 2015 and 2017 conferences is [now available on the Conferences page on the SPEVI website](#). You can access the archives for free and browse for valuable information.
2. Publication of a booklet by Emma-Mae Schmidt, entitled "The Blind Girl's Guide to Puberty". SPEVI's contribution included assisting with the creation of the front cover, formalising the publication so that it can be catalogued by libraries, and posting the booklet on the SPEVI website for easy download. This project has been completed. The booklet is available in an accessible Word and PDF format from the SPEVI webpage with [Educational Information](#). Use Ctrl-F to find the title on the page.

We are certain that these projects will be greatly appreciated by SPEVI members and all people in the field of VI education, and we look forward to receiving new submissions for review.

Upcoming SPEVI Conference

Message from Frances Gentle, Phia Damsma and Sharon Duncan, SPEVI Presidents

This is a friendly reminder that the final date for Abstracts for the January 2020 SPEVI Conference is Wednesday 31 July 2019. The Call for Abstracts and Abstract Submission Form may be downloaded from the Conference website, <https://synergievents.eventsair.com/spevi-2020/call-for-abstracts>.

The Conference Organisers will provide feedback to potential presenters by 16th August 2019. Please forward your Abstracts (and any questions) to SPEVI2020conference@gmail.com

Walter and Eliza Scholarship for 2020

Message from Melanie Morrison, Communications Manager, Public Education Foundation via BCA

The Walter and Eliza Hall Trust Opportunity Tertiary Transition Scholarship is now open. This scholarship provides financial assistance to students who have a physical disability to enable them to reach their academic potential as they transition to tertiary education. There are a total of three scholarships in 2020, each valued at \$10,000. This scholarship is available to students in public schools in the ACT, NSW, Queensland and Victoria. For more information and to apply: <https://publiceducationfoundation.org.au/walter-and-eliza-hall-trust-opportunity-scholarship/>.

Applications close on 27 August 2019.

Guidelines for Accessible Assessment (2019)

Message from Sonali Marathe, President, Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities

The Guidelines for Accessible Assessment (2019) are now available for download from the Round Table website: [Guidelines for Accessible Assessment \(2019\)](#)

From the introduction:

"This document aims to guide the preparation and production of assessment tasks to ensure full participation for students with vision impairment enrolled in all public and privately funded education and training institutions in Australia and New Zealand. The Guidelines for Accessible Assessment (2019) may be of benefit to:

- teachers and academic staff
- education and training authorities
- inclusion and/or disability support personnel in universities, TAFE colleges and private training organisations
- accessible format producers
- students and their parents/carers

The Guidelines reflect current disability discrimination legislation, standards and protocols which seek to ensure that students with disability, including those with vision impairment, can access and participate in education on the same basis as other students."

Blind Skater

Source: <https://www.fastcompany.com/90372781/this-blind-skater-is-doing-tricks-thanks-to-this-cool-sound-based-tech> via Emily White ... and yes, it's soooooo cool!

At age 25, competitive skateboarder Justin Bishop lost his vision to the degenerative eye disease retinitis pigmentosa. But seven years later, he's pulling even more insane stunts, thanks to a new assistive technology that he helped pioneer.

It's called the Sonic Localizer, a portable sound system that's the size of a boom box but with eight small speakers positioned in a tight line so that their sound waves overlap and mostly cancel each other out. Instead of just blasting one giant wall of sound, the device uses this "acoustical phased array" to create a tightly focused beam of sound. The beam narrows the further you get from the device, so when Bishop positions it near a ramp or jump, he now has a homing beacon he can follow. Stagger a few around a skate park, and the various rhythmic tones create what he calls a "soundscape" of machine-made echolocation.

Technology company [Not Impossible Labs](#) designed the device to be piloted by Bishop as part of an "Absurdity Project" with the shoe and clothing company [Zappos](#). For Zappos, the idea represented a unique way to highlight their brand values and team build at the same time.

To read more and watch the video, click the link above.

Photo above shows Justin, holding his cane and skating at a skate park. The Sonic Localizer (orange) can be seen to the right of Justin.



Q&A: Victor Reader Stream

Question: How can I read .doc documents on the Stream?

Answer from Sarah Hayman: You can use your computer to save these files in .docx, .html or txt format and transfer them to the Stream. The .html format has the advantage of keeping the formatting of the original text, which will make navigation that much easier. When converting to .html format, we recommend you save your document as a filtered web page.

School Seeking ES with Braille Skills

Thornbury High School will have a new student who is blind in 2020 and have an advertisement currently on the Department's 'Recruitment online'. It's job number 1160968. The closing date for applications is August 5, 2019 and the contact for questions is Ellie Haydock 9480 4066.

Upcoming Dot Power Days

Our young braille readers will, again, be in for a treat at the term 3 Dot Power days:

- **Braille readers in years 1-3:** Tuesday 27 August
- **Braille readers in Pre-school and Foundation year:** Tuesday 10 September

I wouldn't want give too much away but I heard some Dot Power songs being played on a tuba earlier this week ... watch this space! (Ed)

Finally

If you have any news or gossip for the next issue, please be in touch!

– Deb Lewis (Ed) lewis.debra.d@edumail.vic.gov.au



Education
and Training



Statewide Vision Resource Centre
presents

Educational Support for Students with Low Vision

Tuesday 13 August 2019 from 9.00am to 3.30pm
(Registration from 8.30am)

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre, 370 Springvale Rd Donvale

Parking: Lower car park – next door at the Donvale Sports Complex

For: Teachers, integration staff, therapists, family members and Visiting Teachers

PROGRAM

8.30	Registration
9.00	Seeing with low vision - simulations of a vision impairment – Staff of SVRC
10.20	Welcome, Overview – Marion Blazé
10:35	Vision and vision impairment – Marion Blazé
10.45	Morning Tea
11.05	Strategies to Support the Student with Low Vision – Sam Oxley
11.50	Technology for Success at School – Lea Nagel
12.40	Lunch
1.20	Concurrent Sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation and Mobility – Staff of Guide Dogs Victoria • iPad with VoiceOver: – Staff of SVRC
2.10	The Vision Impaired Student in Your Classroom – Individual, Social and Family Perspectives – Geoff Bowen
3.00	Let's Hear it from a Student
3.30	Close

Cost (GST incl.): \$88.00 per participant

Visiting Teachers or family members: \$44.00

Payment includes a light lunch (please bring your own fruit)

Online registration is essential: please visit the SVRC website

For further details: phone 9841 0242

For parking and public transport information, please see the SVRC website: svrc.vic.edu.au