

The Bulletin

Number 2, Friday 14 February 2020

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PD events at SVRC: 2020

Click on the links to read more information and to register online. Programs for a number of these events are included in the PDF copy of this issue. If you have any questions, please [contact us](#).

Wednesday March 11 [Including students who are blind or have low vision in physical education](#)

Providing fresh ideas and practical strategies to enable teachers to support the inclusion of students who are blind or partially sighted in physical education. \$92.00

Thursday March 19 [Educational support of SECONDARY students who are blind or have low vision in mathematics](#)

Providing practical strategies that maths teachers can use to promote inclusion and achievement for students who are blind or have low vision. \$46.00

Tuesday March 24 (please note change of date) [Educational support of students who are vision impaired with additional impairments](#)

Providing practical strategies that teachers and ES staff can use to support students with a vision impairment and additional disabilities. \$92.00

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

If you require an invoice for SVRC PD, please email or phone us.



Lots of changes at SVRC!

From: Marion Blazé (Acting Manager, SVRC) and Kim Foley (Acting Manager – Blind and Low Vision Support)

In the 'Year of Vision' (2020 – ha ha!), SVRC are full steam ahead in support of you and your students. We are very excited to be putting in place a new 'Workforce Plan'. Here is what is in place so far:

- Acting Manager – Blind and Low Vision Support – Kim Foley
- Acting Manager, SVRC – Marion Blazé
- Leading Teacher – Lea Nagel
- Student Programs and Professional Learning Teacher – Di Bennett (0.8)
- New Braille Transcriber – Ange McDonnell
- New Braille Transcriber – Brooke Fairley
- Assistive Tech Trainer on Support Skills – Elise Lonsdale (only on Fridays)
- Assistive Tech Trainer on Support Skills – Olivia Muscat (only on Fridays)
- Teacher on Support Skills – Charlie Roberts (back from long service leave – at SVRC only on Fridays)
- Teacher on Support Skills – Emily White (only for the next two Fridays then she'll be on maternity leave – best wishes, Em!!)

Soon to be in place:

- Administrative officer – Naomi Thompson – we hope to welcome Naomi in the next few weeks
- Education Officer (EVAC) – tbc

We were also very pleased to offer ongoing positions to a few eligible staff who were on contracts, and some extensions of contracts.

Please let us know about your changes for 2020. We need to keep our tracking system up to date with caseloads, so that we can ensure materials and technology gets to the right place. Please email if you have had changes to your caseload.

Once our Workforce Plan is in place, we will be working out our various roles and will share that with our 'stakeholders' through the Bulletin. In the meantime, we are madly producing alternative format materials, answering questions from schools and VTs, sending out technology (see photo right), running professional learning days and clinics followed by functional assessments.



Master Class with Dr Karen Wolffe: Career education for children who are blind or have low vision

When: Monday, March 2 and Tuesday March 3, 2020 9am to 4pm at SVRC

Cost: free for Visiting Teachers and students/family members; others \$50 (or \$25 for one day), morning tea and lunch provided



We are thrilled to again host Karen in Melbourne for a two-day seminar on career education for students with vision impairments.

Karen will be on an Australian 'tour' of education facilities supporting students with vision impairments. Karen is a dynamic and entertaining speaker who was instrumental in the creation of American Foundation for the Blind's 'CareerConnect' online career mentoring program. She was the director of professional development at the AFB and now runs a career consultancy in Austin, Texas.

Karen Wolffe, Ph.D. will describe the importance of career education for students who are blind or visually impaired. Dr. Wolffe will emphasise the importance of starting very early in a child's development in order for the student to develop the necessary skills to achieve success in the future.

We will discuss the "golden opportunity" of career awareness and the role this instruction plays in the student's dreams and choices they make for the future.

Finally, Dr. Wolffe will explore the barriers and challenges individuals who are blind or visually impaired face in their path toward employment.

This event is for Visiting Teachers Vision. Preference will be given to VTs on registration. Other professionals can express interest in the event by emailing Marion Blazé at blaze.marion.g@edumail.vic.gov.au and we'll see if we can fit you in.

The second day of this seminar (March 3) will be also open to a limited number of students. Students interested in attending can email their expression of interest to Marion Blazé at blaze.marion.g@edumail.vic.gov.au stating what they wish to gain from the session.

Space Camp 2020

Registration: Saturday Sept 26, 2020 from 11am

Graduation: Thursday Oct 1, 2020.

Departure: Friday Oct. 2, 2020

Program costs: \$965 - Camp, Academy, Mach I, II, III, Robotics

Program cost for Advanced Academy: \$1135

Additional costs: transportation, early arrival / late departure etc

Scholarships:

- [Lighthouse Scholarship Form Application Deadline: March 15, 2020](#)
- [Northrop Grumman Scholarship Form Application Deadline: March 15, 2020](#)

We have a group of students interested in travelling this year. Peter Davis and Hilary Frost will chaperone this group.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING THE GROUP, PLEASE EMAIL Peter or Hilary ASAP

Peter: davis.peter.j1@edumail.vic.gov.au; Hilary: frost.hilary.a@edumail.vic.gov.au



VCE Special Provision 2020

If you have students doing any year 12 (Unit 3 & 4) subjects this year, the final date for schools to submit Special Examination Arrangements for 2020 external assessments is March 27, 2020. This is documented in the VCAA advice booklet: '2020 Important Administrative Dates' available online.

<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/Key-dates/Pages/Admin-dates.aspx>

Please contact Marion Blazé at SVRC if you or your schools require further information around VCE Special Provision: blaze.marion.g@edumail.vic.gov.au

National Braille Music Camp

When: 27 June to 4 July 2020

Where: Mittagong, NSW

For students who are braille readers and interested in music, the National Braille Music Camp is a week of singing and music-making all from braille. It has run in Mittagong, NSW for over 30 years, and many of the people running the camp began attending as students.

Please let Jordie or Lea Nagel know if you are interested and want more information.

Making the City of Melbourne more inclusive for youth with disability

Source and further information: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/making-the-city-of-melbourne-more-inclusive-for-youth-with-disability-tickets-88984584287>

If you are aged between 8 to 17 years and are living with disability, we would like to invite you to attend a workshop hosted by the City of Melbourne. Your voice is important in telling us what makes it easy or difficult about travelling in and around the city.

If you agree to participate, you will attend a 3.5 hour workshop, where you will collaborate with other young people with disability about ways to make the City of Melbourne a more inclusive and accessible place.

Lunch will be provided, and you will receive a \$50.00 gift card to thank you for your time and commitment to our workshop.

Further information, including venue Access Key, will be emailed to you when you register.

Round Table 2-5 May 2020 – Funding available

Thanks to Leona Holloway for this information:

Funding is available to support self-funded people wishing to attend this year's Round Table Conference in May. Join us for the ABA annual meeting, ABA workshop and lots more besides. Please note that applications are due by 21 February.

More information: <http://printdisability.org/conference/2020-round-table-conference/2020-round-table-conference-registration-details/>

Journal of SPEVI 2019 now available

Volume 1 Number 1 of JSPEVI is available now and can be viewed and downloaded from the JSPEVI website: <https://www.spevi.net/jspevi/>

This issue includes articles by the following leading educators and researchers:

- Emily White - Strategies for teaching digital literacy to students with multiple disabilities including vision impairment (MDVI): Combining evidence with expertise
- Glenda Jessop - Social Inclusion and High School Students with Visual Impairments
- Brian Sevier - The Role of the ECC in Developing Skills for the Successful Transition to Adult Life
- Patricia Izzard - Early learning experiences for children who are blind or have low vision: the building blocks of later Orientation and Mobility (O&M) skills.
- Louise Curtin, Debra Lewis and Leona Holloway - Documenting Tactile Graphicacy
- Lily Gower - Now you see me...now I see myself. A sequential guide to teaching portraiture to students who are blind and vision impaired.
- Lindsey A Patti - Critical Reflection on Working with Students with Vision Impairment and Complex Needs
- Skye Jones and Sharon Rattray - South Australian School for Vision Impaired Braille Butterflies Program: The metamorphosis to braille proficiency through a whole school approach to literacy

Australian of the Year 2020 awarded to eye surgeon James Muecke

Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-01-25/australian-of-year-awards-2020-announced-in-canberra/11901006>

An eye surgeon's work preventing blindness earned him the title of Australian of the Year for 2020.

Dr Muecke was honoured recently in a ceremony in Canberra.

In 2000 he co-founded Vision Myanmar at the South Australian Institute of Ophthalmology and later co-founded Sight For All, a social impact organisation aiming to create a world where everyone can see.

More recently Dr Muecke's work has specifically focused on preventing the leading cause of blindness in adults — type 2 diabetes.

When accepting the award from Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Dr Muecke said he viewed type 2 diabetes — something that impacts nearly one in every 10 Australians — as a "looming catastrophe for our health system".

But he said he recognised he had 12 months as Australian of the Year to draw attention to the disease and instead chose to focus on Australia's "most recent catastrophe".

Accessible public art in Australia and New Zealand

From Leona Holloway, ABA

As part of World Braille Day Celebrations, and in response to discussions in the ANZAGG Facebook group, I launched a web page under the auspices of ANZAGG sharing information about public art that can be explored by touch. See <http://printdisability.org/about-us/accessible-graphics/publicart/>

As an ANZAGG page, I would love to cover all of Australia and New Zealand, however at the moment it is restricted to places that I have been able to access myself. There is a lot from Melbourne and Adelaide but not much from anywhere else. That's where the power of the collective comes in.

How you can help (and have fun in the process!):

- suggest an artwork for inclusion
- visit an artwork in person – this is essential to confirm that the artwork is still there and can be touched. Sadly, some artworks I thought would be great candidates were actually on tall plinths or surrounded by flower beds or ponds.
- take a photograph of the artwork for inclusion on the web page. Note that we should only use photographs that we have taken ourselves. Please try to avoid capturing any unsuspecting people in the photograph. A photograph of any accompanying information (often on a plaque nearby) is also super helpful as this information should be included on the web page.
- provide information about the artwork - its exact location and anything else you know about it
- share what you have found. You can send your information and photographs directly to me at leona_holloway@yahoo.com.au or share with the group on this listserv or on Facebook

Thanks everyone, I'm really looking forward to hearing about your finds :)

Leona

Example (photo right): Unknown title and artist

Location: Corner of Macarthur Street and St James Place, East Melbourne

Materials: Bronze and stone

Description: A group of large volcanic rocks are placed on the street corner. On each rock, there is a bronze insert depicting a native Australian animal skeleton and a piece of rubbish left by humans, such as bottle tops and plastic bags. This work conveys a strong message about pollution and duty of care for our wildlife. Can you find all of the skeletons? What animals are they?



Big Bird learns about braille

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNpsaXrDKfw&feature=youtu.be>

Aristotle, a blind muppet, teaches Big Bird that blind people can read.

Big bird: How do you read?

Aristotle: With my fingers ...

Big Bird: I bet I could do that. Let me see if I can read my book with my fingers ... that's funny. I can't feel the letters at all. I should be reading "Once upon a time," or something like that but I don't think my fingers are smart enough!

Can Aristotle help Big Bird to understand braille?



In the photo (right), Aristotle, the character on the left, is reading from a braille book to Big Bird (right), who is holding a print book.

A rather cute under-4 minute video! (ed)

More images from the SPEVI Conference, Adelaide, January 2020

The 2020 SPEVI Conference Opening was held at the South Australian Art Gallery where participants enjoyed the company of the range of folks from the field of education of students with vision impairments.



These photos of Emily White with Frances Mary D'Andrea and Visiting Teachers (Catholic Education) Lisa Zarb and Odette Budge demonstrate the eager anticipation in the room!



UEB Online

Source: <https://uebonline.org/>

UEB Online website is administered by the RIDBC Renwick Centre, Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC). This website offers free, online training programs in braille literacy and mathematics using the Unified English Braille (UEB) code.

The purpose of the UEB Online website is to promote equitable information access and expression in braille for persons with blindness and severe vision impairment.

The UEB Online training programs are suitable for anyone who wants to learn braille. This includes educators, families, allied health professionals, and education administrators and policy makers who promote the use of braille as a medium for information access and communication.

UEB Online has been created using accessible, inclusive digital technologies that enable equal information access for all.

- **Visual access mode:** For people with sufficient sight to access regular sized print
- **High contrast mode:** For people with low vision who wish to adjust the font size, background colour or text colour
- **Non-Visual access mode:** For people who wish to use a screen reader

The following UEB training programs are available:

1. [UEB Literacy](#) consists of two modules that, together, address the literacy aspects of Unified English Braille. Module 1 presents lessons 1-14, and Module 2 presents lessons 15-31.
2. [UEB Introductory Mathematics](#) is presented as ten lessons that address mathematics symbols and expressions that are encountered during the primary years of schooling. It is recommended that the UEB Literacy modules are completed prior to commencing UEB Introductory Mathematics.
3. [UEB Advanced Mathematics \(NEW\)](#) consists of ten lessons that address mathematics symbols and expressions that are encountered during the junior years of secondary schooling. The UEB Introductory Mathematics topic **must** be completed before commencing the UEB Advanced Mathematics topic.

Little braille quiz

Here's a little bit of braille-brain-gym:

1. What word occupies ten cells in grade one (uncontracted braille) and three cells in grade two (contracted braille)?
2. What braille contraction has the same number of dots in its grade one equivalent?
3. What braille contraction saves only two dots?

Answers below!

Finally

You may be interested to know that we have had over 800 requests for materials in alternative format this year. That's a lot of requests!!!

Little braille quiz: 1. altogether; 2. as; 3. ea

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