

# The Bulletin

Number 8, Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015

## Professional Development for 2015

Download fliers for the SVRC PD programs: [www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PL.shtml](http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PL.shtml); and for an overview of SVRC activities this year visit: [www.svrc.vic.edu.au/Acalendar\\_2015.doc](http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/Acalendar_2015.doc)

Event	Date
<b>Skill Power</b> 9.30 Brailliant/BN with iPad & laptop – Ramona Mandy, Humanware 11.30 Victor Reader Advanced – Ramona Mandy, Humanware 1.30 Practical braille labeling (school&home) – Garry Stinchcombe, SVRC	Wednesday 3 June
<b>Dot Power</b>	Tuesday 16 June
<b>Skill Power</b> 9.30 Braille Music – Lea Nagel, SVRC 1.30 NVDA introduction – Lea Nagel, SVRC	Wednesday 15 July
<b>Skill Power</b> 9.30 O&M: Excursion & new environments – Guide Dogs Victoria 11.30 Pearl camera & OpenBook – Trevor Boyd, Quantum 1.30 iPad with Mountbatten – Trevor Boyd, Quantum	Wednesday 29 July
<b>Skill Power</b> 11.30 iPad solutions! SonyQX10, Camera Apps – Lyn Robinson, SVRC 1.30 QuickTac+Duxbury+Embossers to tactual images – Lea Nagel, SVRC	Wednesday 12 August
<b>Skill Power</b> 9.30 O&M: Skill development – ages & stages – Guide Dogs Victoria 11.30 MU Readit Air, Readit Scholar & Prodigy – Tony Wu, Humanware	Wednesday 26 August

## Free Concert for Students with Vision Impairments

The Melbourne Recital Centre runs a program called ‘Share the Music’. This program offers free tickets to children with vision impairments for particular concerts. The first for 2015 is called ‘Mostly Mozart’ and is on Thursday, August 6 at 11am (for 70 minutes). To take advantage of the free tickets, they must be booked through SVRC and parents need to attend with their children.

**Please note:** being on a Thursday, this is not an SVRC excursion and our SVRC staff will not be attending. If you would like to go, contact Marion Blazé at SVRC (03) 9841 0242 with your name, contact details and the number of children and adults (specifying any adult concessions) attending before July 17. For more information about the concert, go to:

[www.melbournerecital.com.au/events/2015/the-school-for-lovers/](http://www.melbournerecital.com.au/events/2015/the-school-for-lovers/)

**Where:** Melbourne Recital Centre is at 31 Sturt St Southbank

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## ECC Essentials: Teaching the Expanded Core Curriculum to Students with Visual Impairments

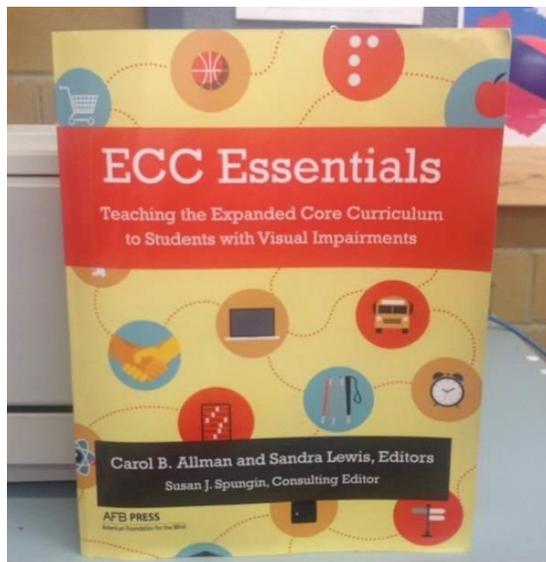
Edited By: Carol B. Allman, Sandra Lewis, Ed.D., Susan J. Spungin

This new publication from the American Foundation for the Blind is a fantastic resource for vision specialists working with students with vision impairments. Dedicated to the Expanded Core Curriculum this tome of 638 pages is packed full of valuable information from the leaders in the field.

From the AFB website:

“*ECC Essentials* is the first comprehensive book for teachers working to meet the unique learning needs of their students with visual impairments. It focuses on the education of children and adolescents in the expanded core curriculum by providing the rationale, suggestions, and strategies necessary to implement instruction. *ECC Essentials* gives teachers a road map for helping their students achieve success in school and life.”

The SVRC now has a copy of this valuable resource if you would like to review it before buying it for your professional library.



The book costs US \$59.95 so with postage and currency conversion the total cost is approximately AU \$90.00 but check with AFB first as prices may vary.

More information about how to order this book is available from the AFB website at:

[www.afb.org/store/Pages/ShoppingCart/HomePage.aspx](http://www.afb.org/store/Pages/ShoppingCart/HomePage.aspx)

## Reading, Writing & Spelling PD: David Hornsby & Deb Sukarna

Source and more information: <http://www.davidhornsby.com.au/>

- Saturday 1 August: **Effective Strategies for Teaching with Non-Fiction Texts**  
Prep to Year 2 with David Hornsby  
Years 3 to 9 with Deb Sukarna
- Saturday 22 August: **Teaching the Craft of Writing**  
Prep to Year 6 with Deb Sukarna
- Saturday 29 August: **Organisation of a Reader's Workshop**  
Year 2 to Year 6 with Deb Sukarna
- Saturday 12 September: **Spelling**  
Years 2 to 6 with Deb Sukarna
- Saturday 24 October: **Introduction to Writer's Workshop**  
Prep to Year 6 with Deb Sukarna

**Where:** Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre, Cnr Bell Street and St Georges Road, Preston.

**Cost:** \$210 per person (Morning Tea, lunch and handouts provided)

**Enquiries:** Paula Welham – email: [pwelham@bigpond.net.au](mailto:pwelham@bigpond.net.au) / mobile: 0402 421864

## Art4KidswithVI?

PD day review by Lea Nagel

Michael Donnelly, our talented Visiting Teacher / Support Skills Art Teacher, has been an advocate for the inclusion of people who are blind or have low vision in the Arts for many years. He has taught Art through the Support Skills program at RVIB, Vision Australia and SVRC, conducted touch tours of sculptures in Melbourne city streets for international conferences and organised touch tours for children at art galleries – most recently the McClelland Art Gallery. Michael is also a professional artist / painter.

*Image: A sleeved hand holds hand of Henry Moore Sculpture*



Michael presented another outstanding seminar and workshop on including a student who is blind or has low vision in the school art program. Due to lower than expected numbers, the Art PD Day was conducted at SVRC rather than Heide as gazetted.

*Image: Michael presenting via megaphone as students and teachers from Support Skills tactually investigate a sculptural soldier in the Melbourne CBD.*



Michael discussed options, strategies and issues and gave practical tips for setting up or adjusting the room to better accommodate your student; issues of access to the visual arts; specialist techniques; budget options; and gave opportunities for “hands-on” art making.

*Image: the Art room at Statewide Vision Resource Centre*

Under blindfold, participants became artists with vision impairments and

used adaptive tools and materials to draw a hand-held item. They used Raised-line or Tactile Drawing Kits, Crayon on Litho over Wire-boards, Spur-wheels on paper over rubber mats, Wikki-Stix, Aromatic Markers and Swell (stereo) paper.

Participants also explored works of art under blind-fold, investigating the use of visual description, tactile diagrams and touch access.



*Image: Student who is blind investigating a Peter Corlett's "Tarax Play Sculpture" at the McClelland Art Gallery + Sculpture Park.*

Feedback from the day was superlative: it was by far the best PD day that one art teacher had ever attended!

Watch out for our Art PD day next year in term 2, and begin planning your PD schedule early!

## Art Resources

Michael has shared some art-related websites and addresses:

[www.svrc.vic.edu.au](http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au)

[www.ngv.vic.gov.au/learn/schools-programs](http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/learn/schools-programs)

[www.artbeyondsight.org](http://www.artbeyondsight.org) USA-based organisation.

[www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/imap-creative-access](http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/imap-creative-access)

<https://www.tsbvi.edu/> (Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired)

[www.visionaustralia.org](http://www.visionaustralia.org)

[www.visionaustralia.org/shop](http://www.visionaustralia.org/shop)

<https://www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au>

[www.zartart.com.au](http://www.zartart.com.au) 4/41 Lexton Road, Box Hill North Vic 03 9890 1867

With excellent art education website [www.zartart.com.au/html/zartextra.html](http://www.zartart.com.au/html/zartextra.html)

[www.schoolartsupplies.com.au](http://www.schoolartsupplies.com.au) education section of: [www.artshedbrisbane.com.au](http://www.artshedbrisbane.com.au)

[www.reversearttruck.com.au](http://www.reversearttruck.com.au) 17 Greenwood Avenue Ringwood Vic 3134

Phone/Fax: (03) 9879 1264 Tues-Fri. 9-5. Sat 9-1. (also in Cranbourne).

[www.discountcraftsupplies.com.au](http://www.discountcraftsupplies.com.au)



(Resource Rescue, 7/31 Hosie Street, Bayswater North Vic 3153 (03) 9738 1004)

[www.eyeland-design.com/CD-MSD-EN/VS-MSD-EN.swf](http://www.eyeland-design.com/CD-MSD-EN/VS-MSD-EN.swf)

Vision Simulation - interactive pdf.

*Image: ceramic birds created by students at the Support Skills Program.*

## International Albinism Awareness Day

You are invited to come and join us on the 13th of June 2015 to celebrate the 1st official International Albinism Awareness Day which was sanctioned by the United Nations late last year! Catch up with friends and meet new people, all who have been touched with albinism.

**When:** Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2015 from 11am to 3pm

**Where:** Vision Australia 454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong (Venue is wheelchair friendly)

**Cost:** Gold coin donation to cover cost; any extra money will be given to Albinism Fellowship of Australia

**RSVP:** by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015, to either Glen on 0431 647 334 (email [glenbracegirdle@me.com](mailto:glenbracegirdle@me.com)) or Linda on 0400 456 774

**Food and Drink:** Catering will be advised on June 2nd after RSVP's are received.

Photographer Andrew Follows will be taking photos on day if you wish (You will be provided copies of photos with you in them after event for FREE)

Please feel free to bring any toys / entertainment for your children. This is an indoor venue, but we will have plenty of space for them to run around.

## Blaze EZ Multiplayer

On Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May Pacific Vision visited the Statewide Vision Resource Centre to demonstrate some of their products.

The Blaze EZ is a small portable OCR device about the size of a mobile phone. It can be used to take pictures of print in the environment and the OCR will convert the text to audio. It also comes with a stand which can be used to take pictures of print documents.

It has Bluetooth and Wi-Fi which allows you to connect to the internet to download music, documents, audio books or listen to web radio or podcasts.



The Multiplay has easy navigation using three buttons with the braille letters “M”, “R” and “B” on them to give quick access to Music, Radio and Books.

Above this is a record button, and below it is a set of navigation buttons with up, down, left and right arrows. In the middle of the arrow buttons is a round enter button. At the bottom right corner, is a square button with a braille letter “O” for OCR. A single press enters OCR mode and a second press will begin the capture and read process.

You can also use the Blaze EZ to record high-quality audio from an internal microphone or plug in your own microphone if you wish. The device has 12 GB internal flash memory and the battery lasts 12 hours per charge.

For the technically minded, supported file formats include:

Daisy Player -Daisy2.0, 2.02, XML DAISY, ANSI/NISO, Z39.86 (DAISY3.0), NIMAS1.1, NLS, Learning Ally, Bookshare.org, Serotek (SAMNet), Open Library

Media Player - MP3, MP4, WAV, WMA, WMV, OGG, ASF, AAC, AVI, FLAC, 3GP, MPG, M4A

Book Reader - TXT, RTF, HTML, HTM, XML, DOC, DOCX, PDF, EPUB, FB2, PDF

Recorder - MP3, WAV For more information go to [www.lowvision.com.au](http://www.lowvision.com.au)

## Cameroon School Teaches Braille to All Students

Source: The Guardian, 19 May 2015

Opened in 1975 as part of a private philanthropy project, the Promhandicam School in Cameroon's capital city educates its 120 students with and without disabilities together.

“The UN's children agency, Unicef, estimates that 23% of children aged between two and nine in Cameroon have at least one type of disability, and 65% of children acquired their disabilities through illnesses, such as polio, malaria, leprosy or measles.

The most recent World Report on Disability, published by the WHO in 2011, noted that ‘children with disabilities are less likely to start school than their peers without disabilities, and have lower rates of staying and being promoted in schools’.”

To read more, visit: <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/may/19/cameroon-promhandicam-school-disabled-children-integration>

## American Foundation for the Blind Announces 2015 Helen Keller Achievement Award Honourees

**NEW YORK (May 6, 2015)** The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) today announced the names of four honourees who will receive the prestigious Helen Keller Achievement Awards at a special gala in New York City on June 18th.

Awardees include **Apple Inc.** for breakthroughs in accessible technology, actor Charlie Cox for his portrayal of a blind superhero, **Ward Marston** a musician/recording engineer with vision loss, and **Vanda Pharmaceuticals Inc.** for pioneering treatment of a circadian rhythm disorder, Non-24 Sleep-Wake Disorder that can affect people who are totally blind.

“We are honouring accomplished individuals and companies for their success in improving quality of life for people with vision loss either through ground-breaking innovation or inspirational achievement that changes perceptions about what it means to be visually impaired,” said AFB President & CEO Carl R. Augusto.

AFB is recognizing Apple for *VoiceOver*, a gesture-based screen reader that allows users to hear a description of everything happening on the display, and other features that make iPhone, iPad and other iOS devices accessible to people with vision loss. Apple received an AFB Access Award in 2009 for its trailblazing engineering of accessible products and continues its extraordinary efforts to make their products accessible for everyone.

Charlie Cox, a British actor who has appeared in major UK and US television and film productions, is being honoured for introducing a new generation of audiences to the iconic Marvel character Matt Murdock in *Marvel's Daredevil*, a new original series on Netflix. After being exposed to radioactive material as a child, Murdock went blind but found that the accident also granted him heightened senses. Along with his special training, Murdock uses his special abilities to fight crime in modern day Hell's Kitchen, New York.

Musician and band leader Ward Marston is being recognized for a distinguished career both as a performer and musical historian and preservationist. He has re-mastered hundreds of classical recordings and jammed with the likes of Count Basie traveling widely with the Ward Marston Orchestra and performing at major events and venues across the country.

For more information about the awards please go to: <http://www.afb.org/info/about-us/press-room/press-release-archive/afb-announces-2015-helen-keller-achievement-award-honorees-/1245>

## **Australian Trial for Breakthrough Braille Phone**

By Frances Mao – The Australian, May 18, 2015

SYDNEY, May 18 AAP - Michelle Stevens glides her fingers over a Braille keypad, and for the first time the deafblind Victorian is able to have good old phone chat with her sister.

“This is the first time in a very, very long time where my sister has been able to hear my voice and the conversation is translated into Braille (for me)”, she said, her face splitting into a grin.

“I have one thing to say - it’s absolutely awesome.”

Ms Stevens became the first person in the world to use a Braille Cap-tel phone on Monday at the launch of the Australian trial in Sydney. The device, which connects a caption-displaying phone with a Braille reader, makes it much easier for deaf and blind people to make calls and have conversations.

Designed by US company Ultratec, it has been picked up by local non-profit Conexu Foundation, which will run a six-month \$3300 trial for five deaf and blind people in NSW, Victoria and Queensland.

Ms Stevens, 58, said her condition has previously inhibited her conversations on the phone.

“Although I have a cochlear implant, when I’m on the phone I tend to ask people to repeat themselves again and again,” she said.

She also believes the technology will help deaf and blind people out of isolation and aid them in the workforce.

“That remains a barrier ... how people are going to interact in the office on the telephone so I think with this we’re giving deaf and blind people more independence in the workplace,” she said.

The Australian trial will run alongside a US version, which has already gained interest from organisations including the Helen Keller School and the US Department of Veteran Affairs.

## **Adapting Signs for Children with VI & Additional Impairments**

Annette Clark, Speech Pathologist and Acting Manager of the RIDBC Assessment Service has recently completed work on an app to show families how to adapt signs for children who have vision impairment and additional needs.

It is intended for children who may benefit from a small number of expressive signs and has an individualised dictionary in it so that individualised signs can be videoed and stored.

Annette is also interested in any feedback and hopes that the app may assist families with this specific need.

App download link available for free for two weeks

<https://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewSoftware?id=951955092&mt=8>

Use the “Redeem” feature and key in the promo code: 4JAJ3XT69REX

For further information contact Annette via email: [annette.clarke@ridbc.org.au](mailto:annette.clarke@ridbc.org.au)

## **SPEVI Journal: Call for Papers**

You are invited to submit an article or report for this year's volume of the Journal of the South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment (JSPEVI). Topics appropriate for the journal include, but are not limited to, reports of original research studies; literature and book reviews; conceptual policy or position papers; descriptions, reviews or evaluations of instructional curricula; or reports from organisations/agencies that provide services for children and youth with vision impairment and their families.

Please find attached the JSPEVI Second Call for papers and reports, and the JSPEVI Guidelines for contributors. Please note that the due date for submissions has been extended to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015.

The Call for Papers and guidelines are also available on the SPEVI website:

[www.spevi.net/spevi/spevi-publications.php#tab2](http://www.spevi.net/spevi/spevi-publications.php#tab2).

Please email Frances Gentle if you have questions about the journal: [frances.gentle@ridbc.org.au](mailto:frances.gentle@ridbc.org.au)

## **Public Transport and Taxi Concessions**

Students who are legally blind are able to apply for a concession card which gives them a discount on public transport and travel by taxi. The eligibility criteria are slightly different for each concession type so please refer to the following websites for more information.

### ***Multi-Purpose Taxi Program***

Website <http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/>

The Multi-Purpose Taxi Program provides a 50 per cent discount on taxi fares for permanently and severely disabled people up to a maximum amount per trip. An annual limit also applies. To be eligible for the program, members must be permanent Victorian residents and have a disability that affects their ability to use public transport independently. There is a small fee to receive your card.

### ***Vision Impaired Travel Pass***

Website <http://ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/free-travel-passes/vision-impaired-travel-pass/>

The Vision Impaired Travel Pass is issued by the Public Transport Victoria Pass Office to people who are legally blind (as defined under Section 95 of the Social Security Act 1991) and who are permanent residents in Victoria.

Holders of the Vision Impaired Travel Pass are entitled to free travel on:

- Melbourne metropolitan trains, trams and buses,
- V/Line services,
- regional town buses,
- regional services that have a contract or service agreement with Public Transport Victoria.

## **SVRC Competition 2015**

In the spirit of our information-sharing philosophy this year's SVRC Competition is designed to gather information that we can share with others. The challenge is to write up something interesting that you think other readers of The Bulletin need to know in relation to technology or "work arounds" for students with vision impairments.

**What:** A paragraph or a set of instructions or a cheat sheet or a nifty and imaginative use of technology

**When:** Must be received by the end of term 3 (18<sup>th</sup> September 2015)

**Who can participate:** Victorian primary- and secondary-aged students with vision impairments

**Format:** Print or braille or electronic or audio

**Prizes:** The best entry overall will receive a copy of KNFB Reader Mobile for i-Device or Android. Runners-up will receive one of a number of audio books, donated by Bolinda.

Please send your best entries to SVRC Competition – PO Box 201 Nunawading 3131 or [svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au](mailto:svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au). Please include your name, year level and VT name.

## **Finally**

Editors Deb Lewis and Lyn Robinson would like to thank everyone for their contribution to this issue of The Bulletin, and in particular Marion Blazé, Frances Gentle, Sandy George, Garry Stinchcombe and Emily White.