

**TEACHING DURING A
GLOBAL PANDEMIC**

**WEST COST REENTRY INITIATIVE
ONE PERSON'S STORY**

**MENTAL HEALTH
SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS**

CTEBVI
JOURNAL



**CALIFORNIA TRANSCRIBERS
AND EDUCATORS
FOR THE BLIND AND
VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

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SUPPORTING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS



By May Nguyen,
MS, LEP, NCSP

WHY FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH?

The pandemic, social injustice, political unrest, and natural disasters over this past year have brought mental health to the forefront. Mental health is salient to overall health and wellbeing for individuals of all ages. In the years before the pandemic, federal monitoring and analysis of children’s mental health occurred, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2013) released a report detailing their findings, including that “[a] total of 13%–20% of children living in the United States experience a mental disorder in a given year [between 2005 and 2011], and surveillance during 1994–2011 has shown the prevalence of these conditions to be increasing” (p. 1). Mental illnesses are a broad spectrum of conditions that affect an individual’s mood, behavior, and cognition. With up to 1 in 5 children struggling with mental and emotional wellbeing, many families and educators are familiar with academic, social, and physical difficulties that may accompany

a mental health disorder. Children with visual impairments are at increased risk of experiencing mental health challenges when compared with their sighted peers (Augestad, 2017; Kuld et al., 2020; Sims et al. 2018). The lack or limited access to incidental learning (i.e., learning that occurs through observing and attending to people and



activities in an individual's surroundings) contributes to the challenges students with visual impairments encounter in the development of social, emotional, and communication skills. Daily activities such as accessing materials and negotiating social and physical environments may cause anxiety and stress.

HOW TO SUPPORT STUDENTS' MENTAL WELLBEING?

Ensuring the educational programs of students with visual impairments align not only with the Common Core State Standards but also with the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) may help with their overall wellbeing. Knowledge is power. Learning the skills covered by the ECC (i.e., compensatory access, sensory efficiency, assistive technology, orientation and mobility, independent living, social interaction, recreation and leisure, career education, and self-determination) helps students to become independent and competent (Allman, 2014). Elsmann et al. (2019) indicated that students with visual impairments "require access to early intervention and low vision rehabilitation services, which aim to improve functioning in daily life and social participation, and possibly more general aspects of well-being such as quality of life and psychosocial functioning" (p. 513). As with other disabilities, the earlier intervention can be implemented the better. Learning alternative ways to accomplish daily tasks can be empowering and boost students' sense of confidence and

self-image. Services from Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments, Orientation & Mobility Specialists,

"Academics are important; however, students' brains may not be in an optimal headspace to learn if they are experiencing stress or anxiety."

Adaptive Physical Education Specialists, and Assistive Technology Specialists can be critical for students to feel comfortable and ready to learn in their in-person, hybrid, or at home learning environments. In a COVID-19 impact study, Rosenblum et al. (2020) indicated the use of mainstream and assistive technology and learning platforms that are reliable and accessible is crucial for students with visual impairments.

During the shifts in learning environments, some might focus primarily on academics to prevent a COVID-19 slide in learning given the limited time with educators while learning in a hybrid or at home setting. Academics are important; however, students' brains may not be in an optimal headspace to learn if they are experiencing stress or anxiety. Stress or anxiety can be expressed in children in various ways, including worry, body aches, tenseness, headaches, sleep disturbances, irritability, appetite changes, and trouble concentrating.

Students are more open and ready to learn content when they feel connected to educators. Relationship building routines and mindfulness or movement breaks may increase rapport and student engagement. Greeting and checking in with students during the first 5 minutes of a session and closing a session with intention takes little time but may have significant effects. Having at least one positive, caring adult in their lives promotes students' resilience. Create opportunities for genuine connection, and let students know that they matter. For instance, educators can ask about students' weekend or favorite activities. If the group size is large, educators can greet students individually and have them unmute to say hello upon joining a video call. Educators simply acknowledging students by name and stating positive feelings about seeing and teaching them can strengthen students' sense of belonging.

Augestad (2017) found that "friendships, leisure-time activities, and independence in mobility seemed important to promote good mental health in all children" (p. 423). Social relationships, recreation, and mobility practice may look different



now, but families, children, educators, and organizations are finding creative ways to connect, maintain social routines, and obtain support while complying with the current restrictions mandated by public health officials and local government agencies. Providing opportunities for social interaction and leisure may promote children's sense of wellbeing. In addition, finding a peer or adult to mentor students can help them feel connected and provide opportunities to share problem solving strategies.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT CHILDREN WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH TO CONNECT FOR LEISURE OR SUPPORT

[American Council of the Blind](#)

[Community Events](#): ACB provides online community events that are open to anyone to join in and connect with others. The following are some of their offerings.

- **Crafty Chat**: Every Sunday at 11 AM PST, a new craft is introduced in a 90-minute event.
- **Apps We Like and How to Use Them**: Every Sunday at 1 PM PST, apps for the iPhone or computer are shared and demonstrated.
- **Gender and Transitioning**: Every other Monday at 6 PM PST, individuals who have questions about gender identity or are transitioning can join in an honest conversation and have questions answered. Disclaimer: The purpose of this group is for peer support only. It is not a therapy group nor will it be facilitated by a health care professional serving in a professional capacity and does not purport to provide mental health services. Parent permission may be requested for youth under 18.
- **Games to Play with Lady A!**: Every other Tuesday at 11 AM PST, join in for a discussion about games that can be played with an Amazon Echo Device.
- **Open Mic Night**: Every Wednesday at 5 PM PST, individuals can join in to enjoy or share music, poetry, stories, or other talents. Performances are up to 10 minutes and are family appropriate.
- **Magic Mac**: On the first and third Wednesdays at 6 PM PST, explore the use of Mac with VoiceOver.
- **Vispero Presentation**: Every Thursday at 9 AM PST, a team from Vispero shares information about the use of their products and services.
- **Tips and Tricks for Around the House**: Every other Thursday at 12 PM PST, join in for an opportunity to ask others how to accomplish certain tasks and share tried and true techniques with one another.
- **Four Legged Friends and More**: Every other Thursday at 3 PM PST, come to discuss pets. A new topic related to pets is introduced each session.

- **Technology Learning Lab:** Every Thursday at 4 PM PST, join in a discussion about a vast range of technology topics, and find answers about how to use assistive technology
- **Basic iPhone Class:** On the first Thursday of each month at 4:30 PM PST, come to discuss iPhones, and find answers to questions about how to use them.
- **Career Exploration Series:** Every third Thursday of the month at 4:30 PM PST, participate in conversations sponsored by the ACB Employment Committee.
- **Albright Knox Art Gallery Descriptive Teleconference Tour:** Every third Friday of the month at 11 AM PST, learn about artworks in the collection. Detailed verbal descriptions are given, and different themes are explored each month. Participants have the opportunity to join a group discussion over the phone.
- **Apple Presentation:** Every Friday at 12 PM PST, learn about various topics related to iProducts; this event is sponsored by The Tech Juggernaut.
- **Blind Health & Beauty:** Every Friday at 3 PM PST, learn non-visual skills for beauty and grooming to increase independence and positive personal and professional self-image.
- **It's Play Time:** Every Friday at 6 PM PST, come to play trivia and other games, and enjoy a fun time together.

- **Exploring NVDA:** Every Saturday at 12 PM PST, learn tips and tricks around the use of this free screen reader.
- **Karaoke Night:** Every Saturday at 6 PM PST, come to a fun, supportive environment for singing whether with a karaoke track or a cappella or playing an instrument.

American Printing House's Virtual ExCEL Academy: The Virtual ExCEL Academy offers free engaging lessons for students with a variety of abilities. Beginning January 12, 2021, the APH Virtual ExCEL Academy will be held at 12 PM PST (3 PM EST), on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

- **Tuesday:** Topics and activities focus on children from birth to 6th grade.
- **Wednesday:** Topics and activities focus on students from 7th to 12th grade.
- **Thursday:** Topics and activities focus on students with multiple impairments.

Audiojack: Audiojacks are audio-based movies that are 100% sound design. Two free live Audiojack sessions are presented via Zoom every Tuesday at 11 AM PST and Thursday at 8 PM PST. After participants listen to the Audiojack, they can imagine and share stories created from the recording. Individuals of all ages can connect, engage, and enjoy.

[Braille Institute Child & Youth](#)

Services: Braille Institute offers programs for blind and visually impaired youth, such as the [Braille Challenge](#) and [Cane Quest](#). [Braille Institute Online Events](#) include free webinars that older students may be interested in such as skincare and makeup application tips for individuals with low vision and use of the Braille Institute Library.

[Lighthouse Guild Tele-Support for](#)

Teens: Lighthouse Guild provides free teen telephone support groups to connect high school students with others across the nation who successfully transitioned to life after high school. Two groups are available: [one for freshmen and sophomores](#) and [one for juniors and seniors](#). The groups connect over a toll-free phone line twice a month on Mondays at 3 PM PST (6 PM EST) and provide a space to discuss academic, emotional, social, and practical concerns about living with visual impairment. Licensed Social Worker, Daria Zawadzki, JD, LMSW leads the groups, and guest speakers engage in a conversation about their experiences and disseminate their knowledge.

[Lighthouse San Francisco Calendar:](#)

Currently, Lighthouse San Francisco services are closed for in-person services but have numerous online classes available. Most of the events are free or are asking for a small donation. Different classes and events may be targeted towards different age groups.

The following are a sample of recurring events. To sign up for any of the youth offerings, please contact Jamey Gump by email at Gump@lighthouse-sf.org or by phone at 415-694-7372.

- **Monthly Mentor Mondays:** On the second Monday each month from 7 PM to 8 PM PST, a panel of young blind leaders discuss a wide range of topics important to youth's success and share their perspectives and advice about everything from technology to connecting with others.
- **Not So Bored Night:** Each Tuesday from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM PST, students 18 and under from the Lighthouse Youth Program meet virtually over Zoom to play games and make friends. Guest mentors also join in the group to talk about their life, education, and career as people with visual impairments.
- **Reel Escape Audio Description Movie Club:** Each Thursday at 4 PM PST, students 18 and under enjoy a family-friendly movie with audio descriptions enabled via Zoom.
- **Harry Potter Club:** On the first Saturday of each month at 1 PM PST, this student driven club meets via Zoom for all sorts of Harry Potter awesomeness including house sorting and house competitions. Students under 18 or who are still in high school can join in the Harry Potter fun and have opportunities to learn how to access the Harry Potter series through the Talking Books and Braille Center at the [San Francisco Public Library](#),

[National Library Service's](#) free braille and talking book library service, and [Learning Ally](#).

- **Eco-friendly Arts and Crafts Club:** On every second Sunday of the month from 1 PM to 2 PM PST, elementary and middle school students can enjoy arts and crafts lessons over Zoom that utilize recycled materials from around the house or that can be placed into nature without a negative impact on the world.

[National Homework Hotline for Blind/Visually Impaired Students \(NHH-BVI\)](#)

This free service is for students in kindergarten to college in the United States. NHH-BVI responders are experienced TVIs, tutors, mentors, STEM professionals, and college students who are eager to assist students with visual impairments.

[Northwest Association for Blind Athletes](#)

NWABA hosts free virtual game nights to connect with youth who are 18 and younger on Tuesdays from 5 PM to 6 PM PST with different games for each event.

[Society for the Blind CareersPLUS Youth Program](#)

The CareersPlus Youth Program online events are free for students ages 13 to 22 to attend. Topics vary but are geared towards supporting

students to succeed in middle school, high school, college, and their career of choice. CareersPLUS focuses much of its curriculum on career exploration and career education. Many of the Zoom calls bring together working age blind professionals to talk with blind students from across the state.

[Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired Youth Services](#)

- **Vista Voyagers:** This program's events support youth to develop independence through learning the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) and provide networking opportunities for families. Email Bethany Small at bsmall@vistacenter.org for more information.
- **Youth of Tomorrow:** Join group discussions for students ages 14 to 24 about a variety of topics relating to transitioning to adulthood including higher education, career, and independent living. Contact Amy Jine at ajine@vistacenter.org or 415-886-7049 for more information.
- **When I Grow Up:** This mentorship program is a part of the Youth of Tomorrow offerings. Adults with visual impairments provide guidance and mentorship by sharing their experiences and advice with youth. Contact Amy Jine at ajine@vistacenter.org or 415-886-7049 for more information.

FAMILY SUPPORT & RESOURCES

[American Council of the Blind](#)

Community Events: ACB provides online community events that are open to anyone to join in and connect with others. The following are a few of their recurring events for families.

- **ACB Families Presentation:** On the first and third Sunday each month at 6 PM PST, ACB Families present various topics.
- **What's the Matter With Kids Today!** Every first and third Wednesday at 12 PM PST, family members and caregivers participate in a chat about raising children from birth to post-secondary education. Disclaimer: The purpose of this group is for peer support only. It is not a therapy group, nor will it be facilitated by a health care professional and does not purport to provide mental health services.
- **Tips and Tricks for Around the House:** Every other Thursday at 12 PM PST, join in for an opportunity to ask others how to accomplish certain tasks and share tried and true techniques with one another.

[American Printing House's](#)

ConnectCalendar: The Connect-Calendar lists webinars presented by APH and other organizations across the county for the visually impaired and blind community, including webinars for families. This is a wonderful hub to check out upcoming events.

[Lighthouse Guild Support Services](#)

for Parents: Lighthouse Guild offers an acclaimed national tele-support network and a wealth of support services for parents to help their children to become the best they can be.

[LightHouse San Francisco Calendar:](#)

LightHouse services currently are closed for in-person services but have numerous online classes available including En Comunidad, a program to support families of students ages 14 to 22 in Spanish by providing information, resources, and opportunities to connect with other families and blind mentors over Zoom.

[Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired - San Jose Branch Family](#)

Support Group: On the second Saturday of each month from 10 AM to 12 PM PST, join in a free family support group for caregivers and family members taking care of someone with vision loss. Contact Vivian at 408-966-9299 for more information.

The National Association of School Psychologists and **National Association of School Nurses** created guidance documents about [helping children to cope](#) and [talking to children about COVID-19](#).

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

American Council of the Blind

Community Events: ACB provides online community events that are open to anyone to join in and connect with others. They offer a variety of recurring exercise options for the mind and body, including cardio, resistance, yoga, and mediation. An age range is not specified on some events; students under 18 might benefit from an adult joining the workouts with them. The following are some of their offerings.

- **Easy Chair Yoga:** Every Monday at 1 PM PST, relax and practice yoga while seated in a chair.
- **Resistance 101:** Every Tuesday and Thursday at 12:30 PM PST, grab resistance bands, weights, or any household items that can substitute for hand weights to engage in resistance exercises that can be done while sitting or standing.
- **Full FlexiBility Yoga:** Every Wednesday at 1 PM PST, wear comfy clothes, take off any footwear, and pull out a mat to join in a yoga practice that moves from the chair to the floor focusing on a full range of body poses.
- **Angel Eyes:** Every Saturday at 9 AM PST, join in for an hour workout sponsored by Angel Eyes Fitness and Nutrition.

Bay Area Outreach & Recreation

Program (BORP): BORP is offering free online fitness studio classes. Students under 18 might benefit from an adult joining the workout with them. The following are a few offerings.

- **Adaptive Chair Yoga:** On Wednesdays at 2 PM PST, participate in a gentle seated yoga practice involving stretching, conscious breathing, laughing, chanting, and mediating.
- **Mindful Movement:** On Thursdays at 11 AM PST, grab a tennis ball or rolled up sock, and join in this low impact seated class that will include stretching, strengthening, and aligning the body.
- **Rumba:** On Saturdays at 11 AM PST, participate in a fun seated dance workout appropriate for all ages and abilities.

Eyes-Free Fitness: This YouTube channel provides accessible audio only exercise programs, including yoga, Pilates, cardio, weightlifting, stability ball, Barre Method, stretching, and meditations.

[Northwest Association for Blind Athletes Virtual Workouts](#):

NWABA has a variety of free workouts that are accessible and audio-described via Zoom. Although classes are open to individuals of all ages who are blind or visually impaired, an adult is encouraged to join in with youth under 18. If unavailable during the virtual workout time, the described version can be accessed on [YouTube](#).

- **Zumba Class:** On Mondays at 1 PM PST, join a Zumba class, which is an energetic dance style of workout.
- **Full Body Circuit Workout:** On Tuesdays at 12 PM PST, come to do exercises that workout the whole body.
- **Rise and Shine Yoga Class:** On Wednesdays at 7 AM PST, join in for an early morning yoga session.
- **Virtual Physical Education for Secondary Students:** On

Wednesdays at 3 PM PST, middle school and high school students are welcome to participate in a Zumba workout.

- **Virtual PE (Pre-K to Elementary):** On Wednesdays at 4 PM PST, preschool and elementary school students can join in a session to practice locomotor skills and games.
- **Core & Glutes Workout:** On Thursdays at 12 PM PST, come to workout sessions that target the glutes and core muscles.
- **Evening Yoga Flow:** On Thursdays at 5:30 PM, wind down the evening with a flowing yoga practice.
- **Cardio Power Hour:** On Fridays at 12 PM PST, join in for exercises that get the heart rate pumping.
- **Daytime Yoga Flow:** On Saturdays at 11:30 AM PST, start the weekend right with a flowing yoga practice.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT & RESOURCES

[Earle Baum Center](#) is a nonprofit regional community center that serves people with sight loss in Sonoma, Napa, Lake, and Mendocino Counties. The center also accepts requests for online training and appointments for individuals living in other counties. If students 14 and up are experiencing challenges adjusting to their vision loss or other disabilities, families can contact the Earle

Baum Center at ebc@earlebaum.org or 707-523-3222 to schedule an intake session to explore possible supports. Clinical Psychologist [Dr. Susan Hirshfield](#) has an online group called Coping with Vision Loss and provides services through the Earle Baum Center and Department of Rehabilitation as well as her private practice.

Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired - San Jose: The San Jose branch of the Vista Center provides individual and family counseling services, which have a fee. Call 408-295-4016 ext 204 for more information.

California State University, East Bay's Community Counseling Clinic is providing free counseling services through telehealth for individuals of all ages. Although the practitioners are training in school psychology, school counseling, and marriage and family therapy and are not specialized in visual impairments, they can provide counseling support for the emotional distress that many are experiencing currently. Call 510-885-3007 for more information.

InsightTimer has free [Sleep Meditations](#) and [Meditation for Parents](#) to practice with children to help calm the body and mind and boost self-confidence and sleep.

California Youth Crisis Line operates 24/7 as the statewide emergency response system for youth ages 12 to 24 and families who are in crisis and can connect callers to the more than 5,500 free or low-cost resources across California. Youth always can call or text 800-843-5200 for help.

Crisis Text Line is a free, 24/7 support for those in crisis. Text "HOME" to 741741 from anywhere in the United States, any time.

Boys Town National Hotline is a crisis, resource, and referral number that operates 24/7 for children, teenagers, and families who need help with any sort of problem. Call 800-448-300 or text "VOICE" to 20121 any time to get help.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline provides free, 24/7 support for anyone in distress. Anyone can call 1-800-273-8255 any time they or a loved one needs help. For TTY users, please dial 711 then 1-800-273-8255.

Teen Line provides peer support for any issue. Youth can call 800-852-8336 from 6 PM to 10 PM PST any night or text "teen" to 839863 from 6 PM to 9 PM PST any night.

The Trevor Project operates 24/7 and provides support for LGBTQ youth under 25 who are in crisis, need immediate help, or just need to talk. Youth can call the TrevorLifeLine at 1-866-488-7386 anytime or text "START" to 678678.

WANT TO SHARE MORE RESOURCES?

As a Licensed Educational Psychologist and Nationally Certified School Psychologist working on the State Assessment Team at the California School for the Blind, I love to learn about more resources to support children and their families. If you would like to share free or low-cost resources, please email me at mnguyen@csb-cde.ca.gov.

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CTEBVI SPECIALISTS

The following individuals have agreed to serve CTEBVI in varying fields of specialization within education and braille transcribing. These specialists have been recognized for their expertise in their field and their ability to communicate effectively. Please feel free to contact these volunteers with your questions. They are available year-round, not just at our conference. Click on each name to learn more about the specialist. Click on the e-mail address to ask a question.

You will note that two positions are currently open, Braille Formats and Mathematics. Please contact Jonn Paris-Salb (jonnps@gmail.com) with your suggestions or questions regarding the responsibilities of a specialist and remuneration for the work done in support of CTEBVI. You may also nominate a person or persons to fill the openings, including yourself!

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CTEBVI SPECIALISTS



**Maurice Belote, M.A.,
Special Education,
California Deafblind
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State University, Project
Coordinator**

Maurice Belote has 36 years of experience teaching children who are deafblind and providing technical assistance to families, schools, and public and private agencies. He currently serves as Project Coordinator for California Deafblind Services, the statewide, federally funded technical assistance and training project specific to deafblindness. He also serves as Co-Chair of the National Coalition on Deafblindness and is active in numerous national initiatives to improve services to children and youth who are deafblind. He is inspired everyday by the courage, resilience and determination of the students he serves.



**Jon Crawley, Certified
Braille Transcriber**

Jon Crawley is a Nemeth, Literary, and Formats certified transcriber. Jon has trained a number of transcribers and is knowledgeable about 'special circumstances'.



**Diana Dennis, Infant –
Preschool Teacher**

Diana Dennis has served as an Early Childhood Special Educator, Vision Impairment Specialist, Program Director and TVI during her career in the field of early childhood and special education. She is currently teaching an early intervention series as part of coursework at Cal State, L.A., and Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments with Azusa Unified School District.



**Amy Furman, LOC
Certified in Literary Braille
and Proofreading, UEB
Online Certificates; Hope
Braille, Reno, NV, Owner**

Amy began her career as a school transcriber. She held that position for five years, before moving into an independent contractor position. She has been specialized in higher-level math and sciences for the last nine years. She is experienced in the Nemeth Code, UEB with embedded Nemeth, and UEB Technical codes. Throughout her 14 year career, she has worked in all grades from K-12 up through college. She is excited to be a part of CTEBVI, and hopes to utilize her vast experience in the industry to be a resource for other transcribers.

CTEBVI SPECIALISTS



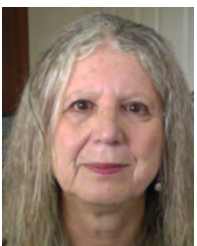
**Tracy Gaines,
Independent Certified
Transcriber**

Past President of CTEBVI, currently on CTEBVI JOURNAL Committee, BANA Representative, Website and Registration. Tracy, a long time transcriber, can answer questions regarding BANA decisions and current revisions in codes.



**Jacob Lesner-Buxton,
M.S.W., Advocate for
Disability Rights**

Jacob Lesner-Buxton is a person with cerebral palsy and low vision who is a community organizer in Santa Barbara. In his job, Jacob helps communities on the Central Coast advocate for disability rights. Jacob also enjoys writing articles, doing yoga, traveling and going to movies.



**Amanda Leuck, Ph.D.,
Emerita Professor at the
Department of Special
Education, San Francisco
State University.**

Dr. Lueck has been in the field of visual impairments for over 40 years providing direct service, training educational pro-

fessionals, and conducting research and development activities related to individuals with visual impairments in the US and abroad. Her numerous publications related to visual impairments include *Vision and the Brain: Understanding Cerebral Visual Impairment in Children* with co-editor, Gordon Dutton, MD; *Functional Vision: A Practitioner's Guide to Evaluation and Intervention*; *Developmental Guidelines for Infants Birth to 2 Years*; *A Manual for Early Intervention* with co-authors Drs. Deborah Chen, Linda Kekelis, and Elizabeth Hartmann; the *CVI Companion Guide* with Drs. Chen and Hartmann coordinated with their earlier developmental manual.



**Jessica McDowell,
Teacher for the Visually
Impaired and O&M
Specialist working for
Marin County Office of
Education.**

VI teachers are constantly trying to keep up with new technology and tools. Jessica appreciates being part of CTEBVI and a community of teachers who share ideas. She always tries to work toward finding efficient solutions for her students, whether the answer is high tech or low tech. She believes that assessment of student's skills and needs, learning tasks, and supports are key to finding the right tools.

CTEBVI SPECIALISTS



Sheryl Schmidt, M.A. San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, TVI

Sheryl Schmidt received her B.A. in Liberal Studies from the University of La Verne. After two years of teaching third grade she began course work to become a VI teacher at Cal State LA. She has been a TVI for 23 years. Sheryl also holds a M.A. in Early Childhood Low Incidence Disabilities.

established in 1971). He is also the founder of the Music Education Network for The Visually Impaired - MENVI (1997). He authored “An Introduction to Music for the Blind Student” series and “A Blind Music Student’s College Survival Guide,” (www.menvi.org). Richard is a NLS certified music transcriber and has been a music educator since 1961. He has been listed in “Who’s Who in America” since 2003, and was recognized as a Recipient for the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017.



Eric Sticken, Orientation and Mobility Specialist

Orientation & Mobility Specialist / Special Education Advocate

for Students with Visual Impairment, currently an O&M Instructor for the Mt. Diablo Unified School District.



Joan Treptow, Braille Transcriber, Treps Consulting & Braille Service

Joan Treptow has been a braille transcriber for 29 years, working six years as an independent contractor. She has served CTEBVI as president 1999-2000, past Tactile Graphics Specialist, and is currently the Large Print Specialist.



Richard Taesch, CTEBVI Music Specialist since 1993

Richard is the founder and retired chair of Braille Music Division at Southern California Conservatory of Music (SCCM)

CTEBVI BOARD

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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