

REACHING OUT

NORTH DAKOTA VISION SERVICES/SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

#92

September 2019

Summer Program August 2019 “A Universe of Stories” by Cindy Williams

The students who attended NDVS/SB’s summer program, “A Universe of Stories” experienced days filled with wonderful learning opportunities and experiences that incorporated the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). The theme centered around space and the students read and listened to numerous stories and facts about space including a story titled

Mission to Cataria read by an astronaut! The story is about two cats who blast off to explore the alien world and includes thrilling action as Oskar, an astrocat who is blind, saves the mission! Check out that story and others at storytimefromspace.com.



The students showed off their creative side by making rockets and robots out of recyclables. They received instruction in **O & M** while venturing around campus for a Space Studies tour at UND and a field trip to Triple M Stables for horseback riding and interactions with other animals. **Independent Living Skills** were used while preparing their own snacks and while prepping food for our parent program. **Compensatory Skills** were part of writing thank-you’s to various organizations and during reading activities. **Recreation and Leisure** was covered along with **Sensory Efficiency** skills during our trip to the splash park and the ND Museum of Art to listen to the performers, Kwai-cian Traylor, who sounded similar to



Upcoming Events:

- SEPTEMBER 8-14**
ADULT STP
- SEPTEMBER 22-26**
TEEN STP/CAREERS (10TH-12TH)
- OCTOBER 6-10**
MIDDLE SCHOOL STP(6TH – 9TH)
- OCTOBER 17**
VISIONS FORUM
- OCTOBER 20-24**
ELEM STP(1ST – 5TH)
- NOVEMBER 3-7**
MIDDLE SCHOOL STP(6TH-9TH)
- NOVEMBER 17-21**
TEEN STP/CAREERS (10TH -12TH)
- DECEMBER 5-7**
MS JAM (6TH-9TH)
- DECEMBER 8-13**
ADULT STP
- JANUARY 12-16**
ELEM STP (1ST – 5TH)

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New to The Store by Ryan Torgerson

New to The Store are Eschenbach hand held digital magnifiers. We have 3 models for demonstration: the Smartlux Digital, Visolux Digital, and the Visolux Digital XL FHD.

The Smartlux has a large 5" LCD TFT display and provides 5x, 7x, 9x, or 12x magnification. A step up to the Visolux Digital gives you a 7" LCD screen with anti-glare coating and up to 22x magnification. Finally, the Visolux XL FHD gives you 22x magnification with a 12" TFT LCD display and touch screen interface. This model has HDMI input and output. This means you can hook it up to a larger monitor or you could hook a camcorder to it and use it as a monitor.

These items are here to try out, though we do not stock them. It takes usually a little over a



week to get them to you. Please call for prices. Our most recent catalog is available online at our website: www.ndvisionservices.com/services/store. Or a copy can be sent by contacting Ryan Torgerson at rltorger@nd.gov or by calling (701)795-2714.

Summer Program August 2019 continued

Ed Sheeran and Begonia who had a vibe like Adele. **Assistive Technology** skills were used while the students listened to stories on a talking book machine and while working on creative activities. **Career Education** took place during our tour of the Space Studies program at UND and while reading stories about astronauts and learning about what education is required to become an astronaut. And of course, **Social Skills** and **Self-Determination** skills were covered in our Social Skills class where the students partook in a role-playing game and were also worked on throughout our program!

Thank you for sending your child to learn and discover new experiences and independence while attending our program! We wish all of our students a successful new school year and look forward to working with them during our Short Term Program weeks!



Amy Osvold: Adult Vision Rehabilitation Specialist



I am Amy Brunner Osvold. I am a Vision Rehabilitation Specialist. I have been employed with North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind since October 2007. Prior to that, I worked as a Human Resources/Staff Trainer with REM, ND, a Financial

Services Specialist with the State of Washington, and as a Vision Rehabilitation Specialist with Vocational Rehabilitation in Jamestown and Minot. I graduated with a BS in Social Work from Augsburg University in Minneapolis, MN in 2000 and completed the vision coursework at the University of North Dakota in 2002.

Growing up with a progressive vision loss since the age of 5, I always knew that this was the kind of work I wanted to do. I originally began college with the intent of gaining an

education degree to work as a TVI, but once I took my first Social Work class, I was hooked! I love the individual, group, and community based approach that Social Work afforded me. I am a strong proponent of Systems Theory and the Strengths Perspective in Social Work. I believe that in order for an individual with vision loss to be truly successful, they must have supports in all systems – micro, mezzo, and macro. I love that the type of work I do allows me to team with professionals in many different areas including, Occupational Therapy, Optometry, Social Work, Education, etc. Every day is something new and different. It is this variety that allows me to maintain a consistent state of inspiration!

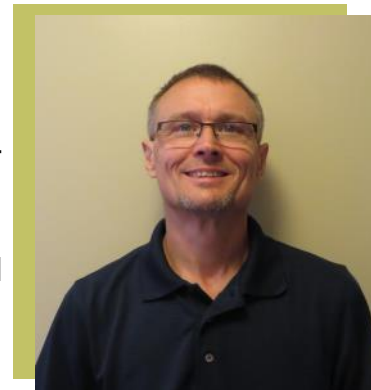
My specific areas of interest are: iDevice accessibility, lighting and it's effect on vision and visual functioning, and Daily Living Skills. Personally, I married Brian Osvold, a fellow Social Worker in 2010. I am the stepmother of three.



Superintendent's Scoop: Paul Olson

A Bill of Rights for All Children with Visual Impairment and their Families

The leaders of COSB and the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) have teamed up to develop a clear, concise 'Bill of Rights' as a resource to inform parents, professionals and legislators on the basic educational rights of all children who are blind or visually impaired. The authors hope that this resource will be widely distributed and endorsed (formally or informally) by interested individuals and organizations. It is not fully inclusive of all rights; it is a starting point for teams when planning individualized programs for children with visual impairments.



Preamble

In addition to numerous educational principles that have been proven to be beneficial for children with visual impairment, all the provisions of what constitutes a "Free and Appropriate Public Education" under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 shall be assumed along with this bill of rights.

Bill of Rights

1. Children with all levels of visual impairment (including those with multiple disabilities and those who are DeafBlind) have a right to early intervention/instruction provided by highly trained and qualified teachers of students with visual impairment and certified orientation and mobility specialists, that is timely, ambitious, and results in the highest possible achievement for each child.
2. Children with visual impairment have the right to a functional vision evaluation and a learning media assessment by highly trained and qualified teachers of students with visual impairment to determine appropriate services following the initial clinical eye exam.
3. Parents/guardians of children with visual impairment have the right to assistance in interpreting the educational implications of the diagnosed visual impairment that is provided by highly trained and qualified teachers of students with visual impairment and certified mobility specialists and the right to seek assistance from regional/national agencies (including consumer advocacy organizations) that can help them make informed decisions on behalf of their child.

Continued on following page

4. As required in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act “in the case of a child who is blind or visually impaired, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team must provide for instruction in braille and the use of braille unless the IEP Team determines, after an evaluation of the child’s reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the child’s future needs for instruction in braille or the use of braille), that instruction in braille or the use of braille is not appropriate for the child.” Appropriate reading and writing media are determined by conducting a learning media assessment.

5. Children and families have the right to be fully informed about the “Expanded Core Curriculum” of skills unique to students with visual impairment, which includes: compensatory skills, orientation and mobility, social interaction skills, independent living skills, recreation and leisure skills, career education, assistive technology, sensory efficiency skills, and self-determination.

6. Children have the right to assessment and instruction, in school and in their communities, in every area of the Expanded Core Curriculum that is deemed appropriate by the educational team and includes the parents/guardians as the primary decision makers and includes the student when appropriate. The Expanded Core Curriculum is equal in importance to the standard academic curriculum and will not be overlooked in the educational plan.

7. Children have the right to receive school materials that are accessible, in the preferred format and at the same time as their sighted peers. Children have an absolute right to testing procedures and instruments that are fair and accessible, that take into consideration the results of the functional vision evaluation, and include all accommodations identified in the IEP.

8. It is the right of children and families for a full range of educational placement settings to be discussed at IEP meetings, including the variety of unique programs and options offered in specialized schools/services for children who are visually impaired. A specialized school may offer the best opportunity for achievement and be the “least restrictive environment” for some children

9. All children with a visual impairment have the right to teams that enthusiastically assist them in preparing for transition to independence and adulthood.

10. Children with visual impairment, including those with multiple disabilities and DeafBlindness, have the right to be perceived and treated as equal, active, and contributing members of their communities, classrooms, and schools. As with all children, their engagement through belonging increases the collective value of each setting within which they participate.

Short Term Programming Updates by Cindy Williams

August 29, 2019

Dear Families and Teachers:

Welcome back to the 2019-2020 school year! I hope you are all adjusting well to your new school routine. We are looking forward to seeing your child/student this school year and are honored to be a part of your child's/student's educational team!

I would like to provide information on expectations and the process for attending our Short-Term Programs (STP). As a reminder, there will not be a mass mailing going out. We plan to communicate through email; however, information and forms can be mailed to families upon request. Forms and information will be sent through email and are available at our website in printable or fillable form at <https://www.ndvisionservices.com/programs/registration-forms>. Our goal is to conduct our registration electronically. Forms can be emailed or mailed back to us.

Our Elementary and Middle School Programs will typically run Sunday evening through Thursday, our reports will follow the format we created last year, and we will have a registration deadline. Specific information for each STP will be emailed out about a month prior to the STP occurring.

Student participation in our Short-Term Programs remains high in demand, as a result, we are very diligent in how we schedule to ensure that students with the most severe visual impairment and the highest need for instruction in the Expanded Core Curriculum areas receive priority in receiving instruction. This means that students with less severe vision impairment and perhaps fewer needs may be scheduled for fewer sessions during the school year. Since we are a ND state agency, we do have to prioritize ND student attendance; however, we will continue to work with out-of-state students and families to help meet educational needs on a case by case basis.

Please feel free to contact me via email or phone with any questions or concerns as we work together to schedule your child/student for our Short-Term Programs at NDVS/SB. Hope your school year is off to a great start and all of us at NDVS/SB look forward to being a part of student's educational team!

Sincerely,
Cindy Williams, TVI
Coordinator of Student Programs
701-795-2704
ckwillia@nd.gov

REACHING OUT

Congratulations Mary Verlinde! by Paul Olson



Congratulations to Mary Verlinde (Region 7 & 8) Regional Coordinator for NDVS/SB. She recently tested for the Perkins-Roman CVI Range Endorsement and is now among fewer than 150 professionals

nationwide with this credential. Mary also happens to be the first teacher of the visually impaired in North Dakota to attain the endorsement. CVI is the leading cause of visual impairment in the United States currently and happens to be associated with some of the most significant challenges for educators to understand. This is a nice step forward for North Dakota and we hope it leads to more people seeking this training and the endorsement.

Cortical visual impairment (CVI), also called cerebral visual impairment or cortical blindness, refers to vision loss that is caused by damage to the pathways between the eye and the brain and the specific parts of the brain responsible for vision. In many cases, people with CVI have completely normal eyes. The most common cause of CVI-related brain damage is hypoxia (when the brain does not get enough oxygen). The condition can also be caused by head injury, abnormalities in brain formation, hydrocephalus (increased fluid and pressure in the brain), seizures, metabolic diseases, infection, or neurologic disorders.

The incidence of CVI is increasing in part because advances in the ability to diagnose and treat complications in newborns have helped more babies survive when there is neurological damage.

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