

# Stronger Together

**2021 Joint GVEST & GaAER  
Virtual Conference Program**

**October 15, 2021 & March 11, 2022**



## **Welcome to our first ever joint Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Training (GVEST) & Georgia Chapter of AER (GaAER) Virtual Conference**

The Georgia Chapter of AER and the GVEST Conference Planning Committee are excited to join together to offer our first joint vision conference! Our conference for the 2021-2022 school year will be virtual using the Zoom platform. We hope to resume in person conferences during subsequent years. While we will miss seeing everyone in person, this means you will continue to be able to attend from the comfort of your office by logging onto our virtual platform! Our goal is to meet the professional development needs of all professionals in the field of visual impairments.

### **About GVEST**

In 2000, the Georgia Department of Education introduced a new conference and called it Georgia Vision Educators Statewide Training, or GVEST. In 2021, GVEST and the Georgia Chapter of AER joined forces to provide statewide trainings to meet the needs of all stakeholders. Now, GVEST continues as multiple agencies dedicated to serving students with sensory impairments collaborate to offer professional development training focused on the needs of this population. GVEST provides an opportunity for Georgia's educators who serve individuals with visual impairments to have specialized training and to share effective practices and strategies specific to the needs of students and clients with visual impairments. The annual GVEST conference typically takes place in Macon Georgia each October and provides workshops led by experts in the field of blindness.

### **About GaAER**

The Georgia Chapter of the Association of Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (GaAER) is dedicated to bringing together rehabilitation and education experts to share ideas, information, professional practices, and experiences. Although our jobs, ideas, practices and experiences may be different we have a shared goal of supporting individuals who are blind or visually impaired and preparing them for each transition. The Georgia Chapter of AER strives to provide strong professional development opportunities to rehabilitation professionals and educators serving individuals of all ages that are blind or visually impaired.

We would like to welcome you to this virtual conference and thank you for joining us.

Learn more about GVEST at our website [www.gvest.org](http://www.gvest.org)

Learn more about GaAER at our website [www.gaaer.org](http://www.gaaer.org)

## **2021 GVEST Conference Planning Committee**

Tara Bowie, GVEST Committee Chair

Sarah Bussey

Dawn Day

Heidi Evans

Tracy Fitch

Sharon Lyttle

Zel Murray

Johan Rempel

Shirley Robinson

Martha Veto

Carmen Willings

## **2021 Georgia AER Officers & Board Members**

### **Officers**

Carmen Willings, President

Sarah Bussey, President Elect

Wendy Mons, Immediate Past President

John Rempel, Treasurer

Stephanie Hardwick, Secretary

### **At Large Board Members**

Nancy Parkin-Bashizi, 2018-2022

Katie Proctor, 2018-2022

Tracy Fitch, 2018-2022

Linda Williams, 2020-2024

Deborah Lovell, 2020-2024

Jamie Marks, 2020-2024

## **Conference Information**

### **Location**

All sessions during the GVEST/GaAER conference will be delivered via Zoom. A link to the Zoom meeting will be sent to participants.

### **Continuing Education**

Certificates of attendance reflecting contact hours will be available for participants.

At the end of the conference, please complete the conference Google Form to document your attendance. This Google Form contains all the information necessary for ACVREP or CRCC to award your continuing education credit hours. The session moderator will announce the opening and closing session codes during the session. Write down both codes and enter them on the Google Form.

GVEST and GaAER will compile your CE hours and provide you with a certificate of attendance at the close of the conference.

We also ask that you complete the session evaluation.

## GaAER Stronger Together Conference Schedule at a Glance

### Day 1: Tools to Move Forward

Friday, October 15, 2021 12:00-3:30

Time	Title	Presenter	CEU
11:45	Main room opens		
12:00 – 1:00	Welcome and Keynote Address	Tara Bowie & Karen Blankenship	1.0
	Transition		
1:00 – 2:00	Concurrent Sessions 1		
main room	Literacy for all Students who are blind or visually impaired	Dr. Karen Blankenship	1.0
side room 1	Meet the APH Connect Center Programs and Sites	Richard Rueda & APH Career Connect Team	1.0
side room 2	Cortical Visual Impairment: Considerations for Augmentative & Alternative Communication Part 1	Christopher Russell	1.0
side room 3	Process of Obtaining Bioptics Panel Discussion	Dr. Jon Forche, Nancy Parkin-Bashizi, Nathan's Driving School	1.0
	Transition		
2:00 – 3:00	Concurrent Sessions 2		
main room	ECC: A Collaborative Approach to Ensuring Positive Adult Outcomes	Dr. Karen Blankenship	1.0
side room 1	Gaining a Career Advantage: A Practitioners Perspective	Cantrice Moffitt	1.0
side room 2	Cortical Visual Impairment: Considerations for Augmentative & Alternative Communication Part 2	Christopher Russell	1.0
side room 3	Assisting Clients to Achieve Readiness for Guide Dog Mobility	Marc Gillard	1.0
3:00 – 3:30	Closing and Raffle	Tara Bowie	

**Day 2: Where Am I Going and How Do I Get There?**  
**Monday, March 11, 2022 12:00-3:30**

Time	Title	Presenter	CEU
11:45	Main room opens		
12:00 – 1:00	Welcome and Keynote Address	Tara Bowie & Dr. Cindy Bachofer	1.0
	Transition		
1:00 – 2:00	Concurrent Sessions 1		
main room	General Principles & Activities to teach low vision near devices	Dr. Cindy Bachofer	1.0
side room 1	Blind & Low Vision AT Solutions	Danny Housley	1.0
side room 2	Personal Experiences with Transition	Richard Rueda	1.0
side room 3	Learning Through Touch	Christine Spratling & Kate Beals	1.0
side room 4	O&M wheelchair User Assessment	Scott Crawford	1.0
	Transition		
2:00 – 3:00	Concurrent Sessions 2		
main room	General Principles & Activities to teach low vision distance devices	Dr. Cindy Bachofer	1.0
side room 1	Adapting home for independent living	Ben Jakobs	1.0
side room 2	EdTrade: Georgia's K-12 Assistive Technology Reuse Program – Rethink, Reuse, Share, & Save	Gina Gelinas	1.0
side room 3	Implementing Active Learning in the Classroom	Martha Veto	1.0
side room 4	O&M Assessments: A Team Approach	Dr. Justin Kaiser & Dr. Tina Hertzberg	1.0
side room 5	O&M for Wheelchair Users	Scott Crawford	1.0
3:00 – 3:30	Closing and Raffle	Tara Bowie	

Thank you for Attending our Conference!

## Conference Schedule Details

### Day 1, Friday, October 15, 2021

**12:00 to 1:00**      **Welcome & Keynote Address featuring Dr. Karen Blankenship**

Begin with the End in Mind: What does it mean to increase the employment rate for all students who are blind or visually impaired?

**1:00 to 2:00**      **1<sup>st</sup> Concurrent Sessions**

Choose one session to attend live. All sessions will be recorded and available to watch to earn additional ACVREP or CRC credits!

**Literacy for all students who are blind or visually impaired with Karen Blankenship.**

Literacy is a critical skill for all post-secondary options and should be available for all students no matter the ability level. Participants will explore the constructs of literacy, research-based strategies, and how these apply to ALL students who are blind or visually impaired.

**Meet the APH ConnectCenter Programs and Sites with Richard Rueda and the APH Career Connect Team.**

This session will introduce professionals and practitioners to the all-new APH ConnectCenter including an overview of VisionAware, FamilyConnect, CareerConnect, and the all new Transition Hub. Additionally, we'll explore the operations and functions of our sites and services. Attendees will be able to hear directly from and ask questions of the experts from the APH ConnectCenter team. There is something for everyone, from the young blind child, to the active job seeker, to the person learning to adjust to life with vision loss at the APH ConnectCenter.

**Cortical Visual Impairment: Considerations for Augmentative & Alternative Communication Part 1 with Christopher Russell.**

Students with cortical visual impairment and complex communication needs including those who have additional/multiple disabilities often require the development of individualized, multimodal communication programs to support their expressive communication and access to information and interactions throughout the day. Professionals working with these students

require a holistic understanding of communication development and assessment, and knowledge of unique techniques and approaches that apply to this diverse group of students. This session will focus on an overview of CVI adaptations to multi-modal AAC including no-tech, light-tech, and high-tech communication systems. A new resource for supporting teams in developing appropriate communication systems for students with CVI will be shared with participants, The AAC/CVI Matrix (Russell & Willis, 2020).

**Process of Obtaining Bioptics Panel Discussion with Dr. Jon Forche, Nancy Parkin-Bashizi, and Nathan's Driving School.**

Roundtable/ panel discussion outlining the process of Bioptic evaluation, dispensing, training and driver education. We will also cover what are skills TVI/ OM can be providing students in school to prepare them to be good bioptic candidates, as well as the eligibility criteria for an initial evaluation.

**Transition to next Zoom Room**

**2:00 to 3:00**

2nd Concurrent Sessions

Choose one session to attend live. All sessions will be recorded and available to watch to earn additional ACVREP or CRC credits!

**ECC: A Collaborative Approach to Ensuring Positive Adult Outcomes with Karen Blankenship.**

In this session, participants will explore how ECC instruction effects positive adult outcomes, including employment and post-secondary educational opportunities.

**Gaining a Career Advantage: A Practitioners Perspective with Cantrice Moffitt.**

In this presentation, learners will explore the Career Advantage for VIPs program in-depth and learn how various rehabilitation professionals can use it to help their consumers gain a career advantage.

**Cortical Visual Impairment: Considerations for Augmentative & Alternative Communication Part 2 with Christopher Russell.**

Students with cortical visual impairment and complex communication needs including those who have additional/multiple disabilities often require the development of individualized,



multimodal communication programs to support their expressive communication and access to information and interactions throughout the day. Professionals working with these students require a holistic understanding of communication development and assessment, and knowledge of unique techniques and approaches that apply to this diverse group of students. This session will focus on an overview of CVI adaptations to multi-modal AAC including no-tech, light-tech, and high-tech communication systems. A new resource for supporting teams in developing appropriate communication systems for students with CVI will be shared with participants, The AAC/CVI Matrix (Russell & Willis, 2020).

**Assisting Clients to Achieve Readiness for Guide Dog Mobility with Marc Gillard.**

There are many areas a client needs to work on to be ready for guide dog mobility besides their O&M skills. This presentation will educate participants how to assist their clients to achieve 'guide dog readiness' by presenting a 'readiness checklist'. The checklist has nine areas of readiness which are broken down into readiness indicators. The checklist can be used as a tool by blindness professionals to subjectively measure a client's readiness for a guide dog and to help identify areas requiring further development.

**Transition to main Zoom Room**

**3:00 to 3:30**

**Wrap Up and Door Prize Presentation**

## Day 2, Friday, March 11, 2022

**12:00 to 1:00**      **Welcome & Keynote Address featuring Dr. Cindy Bachofer**

**1:00 to 2:00**      **1<sup>st</sup> Concurrent Sessions**

Choose one session to attend live. All sessions will be recorded and available to watch to earn additional ACVREP or CRC credits!

**Blind and Low Vision AT Solutions with Danny Housley.**

This session will cover high, medium and low-tech solutions that people with visual disabilities can use to provide visual and non-visual access in a variety of settings. This session will cover both hardware and software solutions and provide resources for finding demonstrations and educational materials.

**Personal Experiences with Transition with Richard Rueda.**

Meet Richard Rueda, Digital Content Manager with the APH ConnectCenter. Richard will take us through the trying, challenging, and ultimately successful path he pursued as a low-vision high school student who transitioned to college, career exploration and the world of work. Richard will share biases his own IEP team had in regards to introducing Braille to him in elementary school, the advocacy skills he learned from that initial disappointment; and how he works side by side with practitioners like us to listen, learn and motivate families and transition-age youth to become and remain empowered.

**Learning Through Touch: Early Hand Skills and the Tactile Developmental Rating Scale for Infants and Young Children with Christine Spratling and Kate Beals.**

Learning through touch is crucial for young children with visual impairment but often our focus on developing hand skills begins with grasp and release when, in fact, there are several early skills we need to support. In this session, we'll discuss the development of early hand skills and introduce a tool from the Anchor Center to identify areas where the child needs intervention.

**General Principles and Activities for Using Optical Devices for Near Tasks with Cindy Bachofer.**

If you had 20/200 vision, what devices for near tasks would you most want to carry in your bag? The presenter will summarize general principles of device use, provide rationale for low tech tools in a screen-rich world and describe a variety of activities for increasing visual access across settings.

**O&M Wheelchair Use with Scott Crawford**

Session will discuss how assessment process differs between ambulatory consumers and those with orthopedic impairments, including basic chair propulsion and emergency stopping.

**Transition to next Zoom Room**

**2:00 to 3:00**

**2nd Concurrent Sessions**

Choose one session to attend live. All sessions will be recorded and available to watch to earn additional ACVREP or CRC credits!

**General Principles and Activities for Using Optical Devices for Distance Tasks with Cindy Bachofer.**

If you had 20/200 vision, what devices for distance tasks would you most want to carry in your bag? The presenter will summarize general principles of device use, provide rationale for low tech tools in a screen-rich world and describe a variety of activities for increasing visual access across settings.

**Independent Living Through Smart Home Technology with Ben Jacobs.**

Join Ben Jacobs as he introduces you to the commercially available and affordable smart home products that individuals can use to regain or maintain independence in their home. Product options for accessing lights, security, thermostat and other devices in the home will be covered.

**EdTrade: Georgia's K-12 Assistive Technology Reuse Program – Rethink, Reuse, Share, & Save with Gina Gelinias.**

EdTrade is Georgia Tools for Life assistive technology (AT) reuse and inventory asset management program offered in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Education. Each

year, Georgia school districts purchase assistive technology for students to use. In some cases, this assistive technology ends up never being used, being gently used, or just not a right fit for the student. It may be that the student graduates, moves away, or needs another type of technology, leaving the custom technology sitting unused in the district. Sometimes the assistive technology can easily be reused by another student in the district. Other times, the assistive technology simply does not fit the needs of any other student within the district, leaving costly, unused AT equipment sitting in the district. With EdTrade, once a device is no longer relevant for student needs in one district, the device can be listed and paired with a student who would truly benefit from the device's use in another district. Come learn more about how Georgia districts can swap, loan, donate, or sell assistive technology to one another to keep assistive technology in the hands of Georgia students and off the shelves in our schools!

### **Implementing Active Learning in the Classroom with Martha Veto.**

Lilli Nielsen's Active Learning is an approach that was developed for children with visual impairments and additional disabilities that keep them from engaging with the world in meaningful ways. Many people know Active Learning because of the Little Room, or the HOPSA dress; but Active Learning is more than equipment. When implemented with fidelity, it is an approach that can be used to teach motor skills, concepts about the world, and the general education curriculum. In this session, we'll talk to teachers who have worked on implementing Active Learning in their classrooms and see what it takes to start using the approach in the classroom.

### **O&M Assessments: A Team Approach with Dr. Justin Kaiser and Dr. Tina Hertzberg.**

Teachers of students with visual impairments and O&M specialists can work together to ensure appropriate referrals and in-depth assessments. The presenters will share what they have learned through their research and practical strategies for collaboration.

**O&M for VI Wheelchair users: Navigating tight spaces, doorways, etc.**

Session will discuss strategies for blind students in wheelchairs to safely navigate doorways, ramps, lifts, narrow sidewalks and other narrow passages.

**Transition to main Zoom Room**

**3:00 to 3:30**

**Wrap Up and Door Prize Presentation**

## **Presenter Bios**

### **Dr. Cindy Bachofer**

Cindy Bachofer, PhD, CLVT, is the low vision consultant at the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Austin, TX. She completed her doctorate at Vanderbilt University in 2013. The title of her dissertation is Long-Term Use of Optical Devices by Young Adults with Low Vision. She is also a Certified Low Vision Therapist. Her teaching interests include use of optical devices, print reading strategies, and psychosocial issues for students with low vision. She previously served as a teacher of students with visual impairments and as a consultant with Project Providing Access to the Visual Environment (PAVE), from 2001-2008, at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. Ms. Bachofer has also served as a literacy project leader with VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) in Nashville and as an English instructor at both the secondary and post-secondary level in Kansas.

### **Kate Beals**

Kate Beals is a retired Occupational Therapist with over 20 years of experience working with children at sites including the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind, and Perkins School for the Blind. She worked with the South Carolina Interagency Deaf-Blind Project, providing training and support for the families and educational teams of children who have combined vision and hearing challenges, often with multiple and complex disabilities. Kate's areas of special interest include sensory integration, deaf-blindness, early communication development, and of course CHARGE Syndrome. Kate credits her adult son, who has autism, with being her best teacher.

### **Dr. Kathryn D Botsford**

Dr. Kathryn Botsford, is an ACVREP certified O&M specialist and a National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certified teacher for children with visual impairments. She is the APH ConnectCenter's Digital Content Strategist, and supports website content. In her free time, she is also an adjunct professor for San Francisco State University and Dominican College where she prepares future teachers for children with visual impairments.

### **Dr. Karen Blankenship**

Dr. Karen Blankenship has been a teacher of students who are blind and visually impaired since 1976. Her professional journey includes being both an itinerant and resource room teacher, Iowa State Vision Consultant, Vanderbilt Professor in the Visual Disabilities Program, and finally an instructional coach at a special school for the blind. She is currently the director of Quality Programs for Students with Visual Impairments and consults in North America. Her expertise includes assessments, ECC instruction, literacy, and transition.

## **James Scott Crawford**

James Scott Crawford is a nationally renowned speaker and author. He is certified as an Orientation and Mobility Instructor (COMS), Certified Low Vision Therapist (CLVT), and as a Certified Assistive Technology Instructional Specialist (CATIS). His Master's Degree is from the University of Arkansas - Little Rock. He is the author of Orientation and Mobility for Wheelchair Users with Vision Impairments, an electronic book from the American Printing House for the Blind. He wrote a chapter for the textbook O&M for Life and co-authored a chapter with Dr. Sandra Rosen for the Foundations of Orientation and Mobility textbook. He has been working with people with vision impairments for over 30 years. As an employee of the Affiliated Blind of Louisiana Training Center, in addition to teaching O&M with the Lafayette Parish Schools, providing assessments and training for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services; he currently coordinates the Louisiana portion of the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (ICANCONNECT). AER awarded Mr. Crawford the "Orientation and Mobility Citation of Excellence for Direct Services".

## **Jon Forche**

Dr. Jon Forché is a graduate of Miami University where he graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.A. in Biological Sciences. He received his Doctorate in Optometry from the Ohio State University College of Optometry. He completed a residency in Low Vision Rehabilitation/Ocular Disease at the Birmingham Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Dr. Forché is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry and a Diplomate of the American Board of Optometry. He is a vision rehabilitation consultant with the following organizations: Vision Rehabilitation Services (Smyrna, Ga), The Center for the Visually Impaired (Atlanta, GA), VISTAS (Athens, Georgia), The Smokey Powell Low Vision Clinic (Macon, Ga) and Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency.

## **Gina Gelinas**

Gina Gelinas, MEd, CCC-SLP, holds a Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) and is licensed by Georgia in Speech-Language Pathology. Ms. Gelinas is the Educational Outreach Manager at the Center for Inclusive Design and Innovation (CIDI) and is responsible for assisting students, teachers, administrators, and others within the K-12 setting in finding effective assistive technology (AT) solutions to improve student achievement, productivity, and independence. Ms. Gelinas has over 30 years' experience working in K-12 education as a practitioner and in leadership. She has vast experience providing diagnostic and therapeutic services for children and adolescents with a wide variety of physical, intellectual, emotional, and developmental disabilities as well as receptive and expressive language disorders and other speech and language disorders. Ms. Gelinas specializes in Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC) and working with individuals who exhibit complex communication needs. She also collaborates with and

trains teams regarding language development and implementation of AAC in home and school environments. She has experience presenting locally and regionally to SLPs, teachers, related service providers and other assistive technology professionals. Prior to joining the Tools for Life team at CIDI, Ms. Gelinis served as the Program Manager for the Georgia Project for Assistive Technology (GPAT), a statewide initiative of the Georgia Department of Education, which supported local school districts in their efforts to provide assistive technology devices and services to students with disabilities. Ms. Gelinis has worked on numerous assistive technology guides, resources and toolkits that have been recognized nationally.

### **Marc Gillard**

Marc Gillard is the Director of Rehabilitation Services at Guide Dogs for the Blind. Marc began his career with the Royal Guide Dogs Associations of Australia in 1992. He received a Graduate Diploma in Orientation and Mobility from La Trobe University in 1993 and became a Guide Dog Mobility Instructor in 1995. Marc is a Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist here in the USA. Marc has worked in various roles throughout his career including Guide Dog Mobility Instructor, Field Service Manager for the San Francisco Bay Area and Guide Dog Services Manager. In his current position as Director of Rehabilitation Services at Guide Dogs for the Blind he is responsible for managing the GDB O&M Immersion Program which provides a six-day O&M program to assist clients to obtain O&M skills essential for guide dog travel. Marc was an Assessor for the International Guide Dog Federation and has given presentations throughout the world. In 2015 Marc received the Sue Sullivan Award which is given in appreciation of a Guide Dogs for the Blind staff member who has made extraordinary contributions to the GDB community.

### **Tina Herzberg, Ph.D.**

Dr. Tina Herzberg is a Professor and Coordinator of the Visual Impairment Program at the University of South Carolina Upstate. She is a certified teacher of student with visual impairments and an ACVREP certified O&M specialist. She also currently serves as the principal investigator of the federally funded braille training grant, Project INSPIRE: Increasing the STEM Potential of Individuals Who Read Braille. Previously, she served as a general education math and English teacher, an itinerant teacher of students with visual impairment, an O&M specialist, and specialist/team leader for a regional service center in Texas. Her research interests include braille literacy, assessment of students with visual impairments, tactile graphics, and efficacy of continuing professional development.



## **Danny Housley**

Danny is the Assistive Technology Case Manager for Shepherd's Assistive Technology Center. He coordinates supports and services for people that come in for the seating, driving and assistive technology clinics. Danny is also an active advocate in the disability community serving as the board chair for disability link, the secretary for the Atlanta National Federation of the Blind and sitting as a board member for the Statewide Independent Living Council, CAC for the Center for Leadership in Disability and the National Disability Finance Coalition.

## **Ben Jacobs**

Ben Jacobs is a thought leader and national level speaker whose expertise revolves around the use of technologies to help individuals with disabilities to regain or maintain their personal independence. Ben is a retired United States Air Force Staff Sergeant. He served as a Tech Controller, overseeing the design, installation, and maintenance of various information technologies. His experience, in combining these technologies to achieve a mission they would not be able to accomplish on their own, made moving into the civilian sector and finding technology solutions for people with disabilities a seamless transition. Ben's primary areas of focus include smart home technologies and accessible gaming.

## **Justin Kaiser, Ph.D.**

Dr. Kaiser is a Clinical Associate Professor and teaches in the programs to prepare orientation and mobility (O&M) specialists, and teachers of students with visual impairments. Dr. Kaiser is certified as a teacher of students with visual impairments and as a Certified O&M Specialist. Dr. Kaiser is currently a Board Member of the Orientation and Mobility Specialists Association. Dr. Kaiser has been involved in many research projects and conference presentations.

## **Olaya Landa-Vialard**

Olaya Landa-Vialard, Ph.D. is a National Leadership Consortium in Sensory Disabilities Fellow and Graduate of Texas Tech University. She is President-Elect for AERBVI. She has been a Bilingual Educational Diagnostician for Students with Visual Impairment/Blindness/Deafblindness/Multiple Disabilities, TVI, University Professor, Bilingual Family Engagement Coordinator for the Illinois State Deafblind Project, Project Reach, currently serves as an Adjunct Instructor for multiple university VI programs, and is currently the Director of APH ConnectCenter Programs.

## **Alan Lovell**

Alan Lovell is the Information and Referral Services Coordinator for the American Printing House (APH) ConnectCenter. During his time at APH he has worked in marketing, sales, and customer service. Alan's background in the field of blindness and his own experiences as a person who is blind help him in his current role where he connects people with disabilities with needed resources.

## **Cantrice Moffitt**

Cantrice Moffitt, CRC, CPRP, is the Rehabilitation Training and Outreach Specialist at the National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision. She is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor and Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Practitioner. Cantrice earned her M.S. in Rehabilitation Counseling from Southern University, a graduate certificate in Forensic Vocational Rehabilitation from the University of Florida, and a Vision Specialist Graduate Certificate from Mississippi State University. She worked as a vocational rehabilitation counselor for nine years and enjoys using her knowledge and experience to provide training, outreach, and technical assistance.

## **Nancy Parkin-Bashizi**

Nancy Parkin-Bashizi received her Master's Degree in Orientation and Mobility and Rehabilitation Teaching for the Blind from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 1995. This year she celebrates her 22th anniversary of employment at Vision Rehabilitation Services of Georgia (formally known as Blind and Low Vision Services of North Georgia). For the majority of her time with VRS she has worked as an itinerant teacher, providing O&M, VRT and Access Technology Training services to clients of all ages. She has taught O&M and RT to school children, provides support to university students, works with people who have lost their vision as adults and helps her older clients maintain their independence.

## **Pris Rogers**

Pris Rogers consults with the American Printing House for the Blind on the VisionAware website for people new to vision loss, is a special advisor to the American Foundation for the Blind on aging and vision loss, and is a steering committee member of the National Aging and Vision Loss Coalition. She has her master's in gerontology and Ph.D. in aging and vision loss.

## **Richard Rueda**

Richard Rueda has worked in the field of Human and Social Services specializing in Blindness and Low Vision since 1992. He has worked with the Intercommunity Blind Center in Whittier, the Junior Blind of America in Los Angeles, Department of Rehabilitation as the statewide Transition Coordinator (2001 – 2010), served as Director of Community Services at the LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired in San

Francisco (2010 – 2011). In the autumn of 2011, Richard returned to Junior Blind serving as their new Director of Transition Services for northern and Central California. Richard has facilitated professional workshops and seminars for California Transcribers & Educators of the Blind & Visually Impaired (CTEBVI) for over a decade. Since 2016, Richard works as Program Coordinator with Society for the Blind, based in Sacramento California, overseeing CareersPLUS, a career exploration program for teens and young adults. Richard continues to work with various agencies in consulting on Transition best practices in serving blind and low vision youth, including the Earl Baum Center in Santa Rosa, Vista Center for the Blind based in Palo Alto and Center of Visual Enhancement (COVE) in Merced. Richard also contributes and collaborates with the APH Connect Center and CareerConnect projects supporting the continued expansion and development of these rich critical resources. Richard is a 2001 graduate of California State University of Los Angeles where he holds his Bachelor's Degree in Vocational Counseling. Richard also serves as Past President of the Northern California Chapter of AERBVI, serves on the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for the California School for the Blind, serves on the Department of Rehabilitation's Transition Forum on blindness and low vision., Co-Authored "Insights Into Low Vision" a book coauthored with Dr. Bill Takeshita. Appointed to the Braille & Talking Book Library User Advisory Committee (BTBL) by the California Braille & Talking Book Library Director in 2017. Richard is an active member of his local community involved engaged working with blind and low vision youth and young adults to aiding in career exploration and employment readiness.

### **Christopher Russell**

Chris Russell is the Project Coordinator for the New York Deaf-Blind Collaborative, and has experience as a classroom teacher and Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI) working with children who have visual impairments and additional disabilities including deaf-blindness. Chris specializes in severe and multiple disabilities including deaf-blindness, cortical visual impairment, curriculum adaptations for children with visual impairments and additional disabilities, and instructional strategies supporting communication development for children with pre-symbolic communication. He has the Perkins-Roman CVI Range Endorsement, and conducts training in CVI Characteristics, Phases, Assessment and Intervention across NY state and nationally for professionals and families. He also serves as co-instructor for Perkins E-Learning's online course, Cortical Visual Impairment, and is adjunct faculty at Hunter College, CUNY, in the graduate programs for Blindness/Visual Impairment, and Childhood Special Education: Severe/Multiple Disabilities.

## **Christine Spratling**

Christine has 35 years of experience as an educator in the fields of Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Special Education. Christine served for 6 years as an Education Specialist with the Georgia Sensory Assistance Project (GSAP), which is a birth-to-age-22 federal program that serves students with combined hearing and vision loss, and is the new INSITE/VIISA Coordinator for Georgia PINES. She holds a Specialist's degree in Educational Leadership; a Master's degree in Interrelated Special Education, a Bachelor's degree in Deaf Education, and the Perkins-Roman CVI Endorsement.

## **Martha Veto**

Martha Veto is a certified TVI who received her M.Ed in Special Education, Visual Impairment from the University of Pittsburgh before the dawn of the computer, and worked as a TVI/O&M in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South Carolina before moving to Georgia in 2008 to work for the Georgia Sensory Assistance Project at GSU and UGA. Over the past five years, she has spent lots of time learning more about CVI and Active Learning.