

AR-AER
Annual Business Meeting Minutes
September 23-24, 2021

I. Call to Order:

A. President Whitney Musick called the meeting to order at 2:45 PM at the AR AER annual virtual conference.

B. Attendees included:

Current Board Members: Whitney Musick, Chelsea Williams, Sandee Pinkstaff, Eric Yarberry, Stephanie Smith, Lori Cole, Alisha Kindrick, Latasha Mays, Tiffany Moore, Marieda Priest, LaTasha Age, Pam Ashley-Williams, Calvin Churchwell, Christie Dixon, Darwin Moore

Members of AR Chapter of AER

- Other annual conference attendees who were not AR-AER members
- Absent Board Members:

II. Award Presentation

- ***Milestone Membership:***
- 5 years- Brent Dozier, LaTasha Mays and Chelsea Williams
- 15 years- Michele Smith and Marsha Holder
- 20 years- John McAllister,
- 25 years- Karen Wallace and Angyln Young
- 30 years-Nancy Elmore, Phyllis Gunderman and June Richardson

Awards Recipients

Previous Passed President: Sandee Pinkstaff

Past president: Whitney Musick

Bill Tomlin Scholarship: Macy James

- Arkansas Distinguished Advocate award: Catherine Johnson

APH Tribute Brick: Jo Ellen Croft

APH Tribute Brick: Angyln Young

Joyce Ogburn Memorial Award: Cecilia Bates

- Tom Phifer Award: Latasha Mays

III. Board Elections: Latasha Mays

- Codes were emailed and Google Forms were used for electing new members for this virtual conference.
- A call for nominations for the president elect position took place. Cecilia Bates was nominated. There were no other nominations from the floor. The nominations closed.

- A call for nominations for the treasurer position took place. Stephanie Smith was nominated for the treasure position. There were no other nominations from the floor. The nominations closed. There were no other nominations from the floor. The nominations closed.
- Nominations for board members took place..

**Meeting was adjourned and reconvened the next day at 9:15 AM.

IV. Reading of the Minutes:

- A motion to accept the minutes from the September 17, 2020, meeting as presented was made by Sharon Neimzyk. The motion was seconded by Tiffany Moore.
- The motion was approved by unanimous vote with no abstentions.

V. Treasurer's Report:

- Current balance as of September 23, 2020: \$17868.36
- Previous balance as of January 1, 2020:, \$19,727.25
- A motion to accept the treasurer's report as submitted was made by Michelle Smith and seconded by Eric Yarberrry. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. Committee Reports:

Awards Committee

Chair: Eric Yarberrry

Members: Stephanie Smith, Tiffany Moore

Awards are back this year! Although our conference is virtual, we couldn't miss an opportunity to shine a light on individuals who have not only gone above and beyond their everyday responsibilities but have continued to serve selflessly during a pandemic. Honorees had their awards presented to them prior to the conference. Tiffany Moore organized presentations and oversaw the creation of a video montage, revealed at the conference, spotlighting each award presentation. Though we are still facing the pandemic, we couldn't go without recognizing the strongest pillars of the education and rehabilitation for the blind and visually impaired community!

Conference Committee

Chair: Whitney Musick

Members: Stephanie Smith, Lori Cole, Chelsea Williams, Cecilia Bates

I am so appreciative and proud of this year's conference committee! The team put their knowledge, strengths, and passion together in an extraordinary manner. Despite our disappointment that we could not reunite for an in-person conference, we are grateful for the opportunity to share through Zoom. We have worked hard to keep costs minimal and pass that on to our membership in reduced conference fees, including the new conference referral program that we imagined this year. Chelsea worked hard on

our accreditation through ACVREP and deciphered the new regulations from CRCC so that everyone can receive credit for the conference. We also want to express our gratitude for you joining us on this virtual adventure.

Fundraising and Social Committee

Co-chairs: Michele Smith, Lori Cole

Members: Cary Smith, Teresa Doan, Alisha Kindrick

The Fundraising/Social Committees were joined this past year. Our fundraisers were online sales of Visionary masks and Visionary t-shirts and hoodies. We are also having the Bidding Owl auction in conjunction with this year's Conference. Please don't forget to bid on your favorite items. The auction ends at 3:30. There were no social events held last year due to social distancing for Covid, but we hope to hold a Social Distanced Social in the Spring. Thanks for your continued support, without your help fundraising would not be possible! We had the fortunate opportunity to support the World Services for the Blind's Independent Skills lab which was really exciting...

Membership Committee

Chair: Latasha Mays

Members: Michele Smith, Pam Williams

The membership committee began sending out membership blast emails. The emails were scheduled to go out every three months. The membership blast emails went out to the AR-AER board members and the board members in turn sent the email out to their co-workers and others to encourage them to become AER members. The membership committee also received the long standing members certificates for members who have been committed AR-AER members. Those long standing members include: 5 years- Brent Dozier, LaTasha Mays and Chelsea Williams, 15 years- Michele Smith and Marsha Holder, 20 years- John McAllister, 25 years- Karen Wallace and Angyln Young and 30 years-Nancy Elmore, Phyllis Gunderman and June Richardson.

Nominations Committee

Chair: Latasha Mays

Members: Latasha Age

The nominations committee has been reaching out to AR-AER members about the need for board members. The committee has also been reaching out to non-members to become AR-AER members in order to be nominated for the board. The committee has been able to recruit the following AR-AER members to be nominated as board members: Cecilia Bates with Springdale School District, Teresa Doan

with Arkansas School for the Blind and Sharon Niemczyk with Educational Services for the Visually Impaired.

2021 Board:

President: Chelsea Williams

President Elect: Cecilia Bates

Past President: Whitney Musick

Secretary: Eric Yarberry

Treasurer: Stephanie Smith

Members-at-Large:

2020-2022:

LaTasha Age

Pam Ashley-Williams

Calvin Churchwell

Christie Dixon

Darwin Moore

2021-2023:

Michele Smith

Sharon Niemczyk

Tamara McNabb

Teresa Doan

Melanie Birthright:

Political Action Committee

Chair: Tiffany Moore

Members: Marieda Priest, Christi Dixon, Cecilia Bates, Cynthia White

Tiffany, committee chair, and the team of Marieda Priest, Christi Dixon, Cecilia Bates, and Cynthia White have all kept their ears open this year for issues of interest for political action.

Professional Development Committee

Chair: Cecilia Bates

Members: Calvin Churchwell, Misty Cates, Debbie Darrough, and Jacob Grace

As a committee, we provided a summer workshop titled A Roundtable Discussion on Transitioning to College and Technology. We had 3 students who attend the University of Arkansas discuss their transition from high school to college and the technology they find most useful. We had 23 people register, 5 of which were from out of state. We also sent out a poll to ask the professionals in the state to get a better understanding of what they wanted to most learn more about and had a great response to that.

Media Committee

Chair: Whitney Musick

Members: Darwin Moore, LaTasha Age, Stephanie Smith

Our website has been reimagined, and Stephanie's tech knowledge made it possible to implement our vision. A new mailing distribution was created to disperse content to those interested in chapter news. The link to sign-up is under the "Chapter Info" tab, on the page "Connect with Us". Please note that we have been having trouble with ASBVI's @asb.k12.ar.us accounts bouncing back. Please sign up with your @arkansaschoolfortheblind.org or a personal email account. Our Facebook is another source for chapter updates. Please email us anything you would like us to share!

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VII. Old Business: None

VIII. New Business: None

IX. Date of next AR-AER meeting:

- The next meeting of AR-AER as a whole will be at the 2022 AR AER conference.

X. Date of next AR-AER Board meeting:

- To be determined.

XI. Adjourned

Respectfully submitted by AR AER Secretary, Eric Yarberry