

**WBU E-BULLETIN**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

[CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE E-BULLETIN 3](#_Toc433802811)

[PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE 3](#_Toc433802812)

[UPDATES ON THE UN AND THE CRPD 4](#_Toc433802813)

[Update on the Marrakesh Treaty 5](#_Toc433802814)

[Accessible Book Consortium’s New Twitter Handle: @ABCBooks4ALL 5](#_Toc433802815)

[Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the SDGs 5](#_Toc433802816)

[New IDDC and IDA Advocacy Toolkit and Policy Paper for the SDGs 6](#_Toc433802817)

[New OHCHR Independent Expert on Albinism 7](#_Toc433802818)

[Update on September’s Sustainable Development Summit from IDA 7](#_Toc433802819)

[UN Enable August 2015 Newsletter 9](#_Toc433802820)

[NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD 9](#_Toc433802821)

[Open Society Foundations` Disability rights Scholarship Program 9](#_Toc433802822)

[Maryanne Diamond’s New Appointment and CNIB Award 10](#_Toc433802823)

[Retirement of Carl Augusto, President and CEO of the American Foundation for the Blind 10](#_Toc433802824)

[Chief Executive of RNIB Wins Prestigious 3rd Sector Award 11](#_Toc433802825)

[Hadley School for the Blind Wins Oculus Award 11](#_Toc433802826)

[Tiflolibros wins major award from the Organization of American States 12](#_Toc433802827)

[Dr. Penny Hartin`s Radio Interview with Radio Udaan Available on YouTube 13](#_Toc433802828)

[Celebrating International Albinism Awareness Day in Mauritania 13](#_Toc433802829)

[Blind and Visual Impairment Community Tourism in Sri Lanka 14](#_Toc433802830)

[The Hadley School for the Blind’s BEPLT program 14](#_Toc433802831)

[Updates from the kanthari Program 15](#_Toc433802832)

[Audiobook on Blind Journalist’s attempt to live without the Internet 16](#_Toc433802833)

[The Iki-Boutique: An initiative of the Design for All Foundation and Cathy Caroff 16](#_Toc433802834)

[2016 GENERAL WBU/ICEVI GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATE 17](#_Toc433802835)

[RESOURCES 18](#_Toc433802836)

[American Leprosy Missions Publishes Ten Step Guide on Neglected Tropical Diseases 18](#_Toc433802837)

[3Doodler 3D Pen 18](#_Toc433802838)

[VisionConnect™ App 19](#_Toc433802839)

[Blindalive`s Accessible Workout Videos 19](#_Toc433802840)

[2015/2016 IMPORTANT DATES/CONFERENCES/EVENTS 19](#_Toc433802841)

[THE REGIONS 22](#_Toc433802842)

[AFRICA 22](#_Toc433802843)

[AFUB General Assembly 22](#_Toc433802844)

[AFUB Newsletter 23](#_Toc433802845)

[Southern Africa AFUB Executive Committee Meeting 23](#_Toc433802846)

[An Update from AFUB’s Human Rights Project 24](#_Toc433802847)

[ASIA 24](#_Toc433802848)

[ASIA-PACIFIC 24](#_Toc433802849)

[EUROPE 24](#_Toc433802850)

[LATIN AMERICA 24](#_Toc433802851)

[NORTH AMERICA/THE CARIBBEAN 24](#_Toc433802852)

[WBU OFFICERS 25](#_Toc433802853)

[REGIONAL PRESIDENTS 25](#_Toc433802854)

[WBU STAFF 25](#_Toc433802855)

[Our Platinum Sponsors 26](#_Toc433802856)

[Our Diamond Sponsors 26](#_Toc433802857)

[Our Gold Sponsors 26](#_Toc433802858)

# CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE E-BULLETIN

We welcome articles from the regions and from members who wish to share their good news with the rest of the world. Our next deadline for content isJanuary 6, 2016.We accept submissions in English, French, and Spanish in electronic format. Please note that we retain the right to edit submissions for space limitations. Send your news to:

caitlin.reid@wbu.ngo

**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

Dear members,

I had the opportunity to participate in the Africa Forum, which took place in Kampala, Uganda, from the 4th to the 8th of October. About 400 participants, representing most African countries and other countries outside of the region as well, met during these days. The Africa Forum is organized by Institutional Development Program (IDP), which is supported by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, SightSavers International, Perkins School for the Blind, the World Blind Union and the Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted. This event is important not only for our members in Africa, but it also gives us an opportunity to exchange views and experiences between our regions.

During the Africa Forum, the African Union of the Blind held its General Assembly. I will take this opportunity to congratulate the incoming President, Mr. Yaw Ofori Debra from Ghana. I would also like to thank Mr. Jace Nair, from South Africa, for his wonderful job as AFUB President over the last term. On Monday, the 25th of October, EBU will start its General Assembly. I am looking forward to participating in this regional assembly as well, and to the many fruitful discussions.

As you can see, the regions have started to prepare for the upcoming term. I would like to take this opportunity to stress the importance of paying the membership fees to the regions and to WBU. I know that members are planning to apply for support to participate in our General Assembly in Orlando in August 2016, and to obtain support you have to have paid your fees.

Lastly, I wanted to discuss the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were adopted by the UN in September. Through hard work from WBU and other organizations, we managed to influence the process of creating and debating these important goals. We are now visible and mentioned. Now we must work to ensure the goals will be implemented at the national level, and also link this work back to the CRPD.

Arnt Holte,

WBU President

# UPDATES ON THE UN AND THE CRPD

## Update on the Marrakesh Treaty

We are pleased to announce several positive developments related to the Marrakesh Treaty and our Right to Read Campaign. Firstly, the number of official ratifications of the Marrakesh Treaty has reach 11, with Mexico, Mongolia and the Republic of Korea ratifying the Treaty in the time since our last e-Bulletin. We also understand that there are still a number of countries close to ratification so we do expect for there to be several more ratifications before the end of 2015. Our Implementation Guide project is also progressing along well, with a first draft of the guide expected by the end November and for the finalized version of the guide to be completed in early 2016. Lastly, a number of sessions and workshops related to the Marrakesh Treaty were included in the IDP Africa Forum, which took place in Uganda earlier this month. We were pleased with the level of interest in the Marrakesh Treaty during these sessions.

## Accessible Book Consortium’s New Twitter Handle: @ABCBooks4ALL

The Accessible Books Consortium has launched its own twitter account. The World Blind Union is happy to announce we are now following the @ABCBooks4All twitter handle and we encourage everyone to do the same. Follow this link to the ABC twitter page: <https://twitter.com/ABCbooks4all>

## Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the SDGs

*By: Victor Cordeiro, WBU Advocacy Coordinator*

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) made up a development framework designed by UN Member States to combat extreme poverty and developmental issues, in order to achieve equality between developing and developed countries. Unfortunately, the 8 goals did not include persons with disabilities in general, and blind and partially sighted persons in particular, despite the overwhelming evidence that these groups are among the most excluded and poorest groups in society. The MDGs have now been replaced with the Sustainable Development Goals, which will last until 2030, and will hopefully be more successful than the MDGs. As a result of sustained advocacy campaigns by persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, and boosted by references in the Secretary General’s and various committee reports, the new SDGs include several references to persons with disabilities.

The 2030 Agenda brings a fundamental shift for all people and the planet, and seeks to promote, protect and fulfil human rights for all. The disability-inclusive 2030 Agenda includes 11 explicit references to persons with disabilities. In addition, persons with disabilities were largely included throughout the Sustainable Development Summit speeches. Persons with disabilities were mentioned by many high profile dignitaries and organizations, including by His Holiness Pope Francis, the High Commissioner of Human Rights, Zeid Ra’ad Al-Hussein, Amnesty International, and many others. To watch the summit and its related events, follow this link: <http://webtv.un.org/search?term=sustainable+development>.

While we are celebrating a disability-inclusive agenda, it is important to note that gaps still remain and the real work lies ahead. We must continue to advocate for the development of an inclusive indicator framework linked to the SDGs and targets of Agenda 2030. Furthermore, we must carry out effective implementation at the national and regional levels with linkages to the global level. The road to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda has been truly collaborative, and we offer a thank you to all of those who have tirelessly worked for this outcome. Let’s continue the momentum!

## New IDDC and IDA Advocacy Toolkit and Policy Paper for the SDGs

Following the successful adoption of the SDGs this past September, the International Disability and Development Consortium and the International Disability Alliance have created an SDG Indicators Advocacy Toolkit. The Toolkit will help organizations advocate for the disaggregation of all relevant indicators, including those on employment and education, and for the use of the mentioned indicators in the measurement of the SDG’s targets. IDA and IDDC also streamlined the toolkit and put together a Policy Paper, designed to target governments ahead of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on the SDGs meeting in Thailand on October 26-28. The final global indicator framework was decided upon at this meeting and we will provide you with the outcome in the January e-Bulletin. The Policy Paper and Toolkit can be found on our website, under the “Resources> Useful Links” tab, or by clicking on the following link: <http://www.worldblindunion.org/English/resources/Pages/Useful-Links.aspx>

## New OHCHR Independent Expert on Albinism

The UN Human Rights Council has appointed a new Independent Expert on Albinism, Ms. Ikponwosa Ero, from Nigeria. The position will cover a wide-range of duties, including: identifying, exchanging and promoting good practices; engaging in dialogue and consulting with States and stakeholders regarding the issue; and gathering information on violations of the rights of people living with albinism. For more information, follow this link to the OHCHR page: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/IndependentExpertOnAlbinism.aspx>

## Update on September’s Sustainable Development Summit from IDA

Below is an update we received from Orsolya Bartha, from the International Disability Alliance:

The last week of September, 2015 was truly historical as leaders across the globe committed to transform the world, and to help persons with disabilities be lifted out of poverty and become empowered. The level of commitments made is already measurable by the unprecedented high number of Heads of States and Governments, attending the Summit. Out of these dignitaries, many included persons with disabilities in their speeches. On the adoption day of the 2030 Agenda (this is the new name); His Holiness Pope Francis addressed the General Assembly. He included persons with disabilities in his speech and emphasized that social and economic exclusion must end now and it is the responsibility of the world that urgent steps are taken. Also at the Summit, Barack Obama delivered a people-centered speech in which he called for the reduction of inequalities, particularly for persons with disabilities, as they face discrimination and cannot access education. He said inequality threatens development and pointed out that development is not charity, it is an investment in our future and the greatest resources are people. He also emphasised that true sustainable and inclusive development depends on governments that care about their people.

Governments celebrated, called the 2030 Agenda a collective action and applauded the world for coming together in an unprecedented effort to agree on the SDGs. There is hope, willingness and commitment that the adoption of 2030 Agenda means that the cycle of poverty can be broken, millions of lives can be saved. It is time that the world acts and doesn’t leave the people behind!

Despite the positive spirit, all recognized that there are and will be challenges in the implementation. The real work is nowhere near done, and it starts now. Many elaborated on the how: there was an understanding that resources, coordination and focus on results is needed to achieve economic growth and inclusiveness. Many emphasized that there is no more developed and developing countries, no more divide we all have to work together to realize what Member States committed to by adopting the 2030 Agenda.

We have difficult task and challenges ahead of us but we can be proud what we have accomplished because persons with disabilities have been part of the process, have contributed and were genuinely named by the leaders of the world in the commitment speeches of the Summit.

IDA, together with Inclusion International and Change, has created a “SDGs in Plain Language” pdf guide in English, which is also accessible. To download the guide, follow this link: <http://inclusion-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/CBM-Sustainable-Development-Goals-2.pdf>.

IDA, together with the Permanent Mission of Japan, UN DESA and the Nippon Foundation, hosted a side event to the General Assembly on September 24th, titled “Towards full Inclusion of Disabled Persons in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and Global Governance Processes.” The event can be watched on the UN Web TV, by following this link: <http://webtv.un.org/meetings-events/watch/participation-of-disabled-persons-in-the-post-2015-development-and-global-governance-processes/4508899522001>

## UN Enable August 2015 Newsletter

The Secretariat for the Convention of the Right of Persons with Disabilities’ website, UN Enable bi-monthly newsletter is out. The August edition features relevant articles and updates on disability issues being discussed at the UN; UN events related to the International Day of Persons with Disabilities; the UN Enable Film Festival; and updates and event submissions from disability NGOs, including the World Blind Union. To read the newsletter in full and to subscribe to it, follow this link: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>

# NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

## Open Society Foundations` Disability rights Scholarship Program

The Open Society Foundations is currently accepting applications for their Disability Rights Scholarship program, which provides awards for master’s degree study for people from the following countries: Argentina, China, Colombia, Malawi, Mexico, Mozambique, Peru, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, or Zambia, that are disability rights advocates, lawyers, and educators to develop new legislation, jurisprudence, policy, research, and scholarship to harness the innovations and opportunities offered by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

#### Inclusive Education Scholarships

For 2016–2017, in addition to awards in law, we will offer two awards for master’s degrees in education, focusing on inclusive education. Participants will build a foundation in the principles, values, and practices of inclusive education, and upon completion of the program will be equipped to lead reform of education policy and practice in their home countries. We welcome applicants from various professional backgrounds. For more information and the eligibility criteria, follow this link to the OSF Disability Rights Scholarship page: <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/grants/disability-rights-scholarship-program-20150820>

## Maryanne Diamond’s New Appointment and CNIB Award

WBU offers congratulations to our Immediate Past President, Maryanne Diamond, on her new appointment as General Manager – Media, Communications and Engagement at the National Disability Insurance Agency. This agency is responsible for the delivery of all disability services in Australia. It is outstanding that a person with a disability has gotten this very important position, and no one is more deserving than Maryanne Diamond. Maryanne will be able to finish her terms with WBU and as Chair of the International Disability Alliance.

Additionally, we are happy to announce that Maryanne has been chosen as the winner of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind’s Dayton Forman Award for 2015. The award, established by the CNIB Library Board, recognizes outstanding leadership in the advancement of library and information services for Canadians living with vision loss or print disabilities. Maryanne was chosen for her tireless efforts advocating for the Marrakesh Treaty, and for leading WBU’s Right to Read Campaign and the global effort to end the book famine. WBU CEO, Dr. Penny Hartin will accept the award at the CNIB Braille Conference on October 29th in Toronto on Maryanne’s behalf. To read more about the award and its past recipients, follow this link: <http://www.cnib.ca/en/about/awards/achievement/dmfm/pages/default.aspx>

## Retirement of Carl Augusto, President and CEO of the American Foundation for the Blind

The WBU’s dear friend and one of our strongest supporters, Carl Augusto, is set to retire in the Spring of 2016. Serving 25 years as the President and CEO of the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), Carl oversaw many accomplishments during his leadership of the AFB, and his tireless efforts to improve the lives of blind and low vision will continue to inspire people for years to come. AFB is currently working to identify his successor. Carl has been a delegate to the WBU for many years, serving as President of WBU North America/Caribbean region from 2008-2012, and he currently chairs the WBU Rehabilitation network. To read his full retirement announcement on the AFB website, follow this link: <http://www.afb.org/info/about-us/press-room/press-release-archive/-afb-president-andceo-carl-augusto-to-retire-in-spring-2016-/1245>

## Chief Executive of RNIB Wins Prestigious 3rd Sector Award

Lesley-Anne Alexander, the Chief Executive of the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), has won the 3rd Sector award for Most Admired Chief Executive. This esteemed award, chosen by industry peers, was given to Lesley-Anne for her strong stewardship of the RNIB, ensuring they are a strong and relevant voice in the disabilities sector, as well as for her pioneering work to partner with and help other charities. WBU wholeheartedly offers congratulations to Lesley-Anne for this well-deserved recognition of her remarkable leadership. To read more about Lesley-Anne Alexander’s inspiring work and the third sector awards, follow this link to the RNIB page: <http://www.rnib.org.uk/rnib-ceo-wins-%E2%80%98most-admired-chief-executive-industry-awards-event>.

## Hadley School for the Blind Wins Oculus Award

In its 10th annual conference on low vision, Envision,the Wichita, Kansas-based not-for-profit organization that supports those who are blind and visually impaired, awarded The Hadley School for the Blind, the largest provider of distance education for people who are blind and visually impaired worldwide and an international member of WBU, providing nearly 10,000 students each year from more than 100 countries with tuition-free programs, with its prestigious Oculus Award.

The award is presented annually to individuals or organizations, nominated by their peers in vision rehabilitation and research, whose careers or programs have had a significant impact on people who are blind or visually impaired through professional collaboration, advocacy, research or education.

“We are proud to honor an institution… that gives[s] so much to the BVI community,” said Envision’s President/CEO Michael J. Monteferrante in presenting the award. “By dedicating their efforts to the discovery and dissemination of information, The Hadley School…break[s] down barriers that might otherwise prevent those who are blind and visually impaired, their families and others from achieving all that they can in the world…”

Held each September, the Envision Conference (this year in Denver, Colo.) offers more than 90 hours of clinical education and research sessions pertaining to low vision. To learn more about Envision, follow this link to their website: [www.envisionus.com](http://www.envisionus.com). Follow this link to learn more about the Hadley School for the Blind: [www.hadley.edu](http://www.hadley.edu)

## Tiflolibros wins major award from the Organization of American States

The non-profit organization, Tiflonexos, has created the Tiflolibros program, the first digital library for Spanish speaking blind people. 7,500 blind or visually impaired and more than 300 institutions that work with visually impaired people directly access this library that has over 50,000 books. Tiflolibros won the prestigious first prize from the Foundation Vidanta awards 2015. Tiflolibros was borne out of the 2007 Argentine Law 26285, which established exceptions to copyright law to increase the production of accessible books. Its founder, Pablo Lecuona, has led WBU’s Marrakesh Treaty efforts in Latin America, which has resulted in half of the total ratifications to date.

The Foundation Vidanta Award was created through a joint initiative of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB) and Fundacion Vidanta. The purpose of the Award is to recognize and support outstanding, original projects carried out in Latin America and the Caribbean to reduce poverty and inequality and combat discrimination. The awards ceremony will be on November 18 in the Hall of the Americas at the OAS in Washington DC. For more information on the Tiflolibros, follow this link to their website: [http://www.tiflolibros.com.ar](http://www.tiflolibros.com.ar/)

## Dr. Penny Hartin`s Radio Interview with Radio Udaan Available on YouTube

WBU CEO, Dr. Penny Hartin, participated in a radio interview on the WBU with Radio Udaan in July and the interview is now available on YouTube. Radio Udaan is an online radio station produced and broadcasted to 100 countries and over 10,000 listeners every month, and it is produced and broadcasted by persons with visual impairments. Its purpose it to inform listeners while also providing entertainment through radio programmes by the Radio Jockeys of Radio Udaan. To listen to the full interview on YouTube, follow this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6PuzEk_lEk>

## Celebrating International Albinism Awareness Day in Mauritania

There was a ceremony celebrating International Albinism Awareness Day, Saturday June 13th, in Mauritania. The event was hosted by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Social Affairs, Childhood and the Family, WHO and the *Syndicat des Journalistes,* and it brought together many civil society representatives. WHO representative, Dr. Batiste Jean Pierre, remarked at the importance of using this day to “celebrate the talents and achievements of people with albinism, and to join in the fight against challenges they face,” and the Chairman of the *Syndicat des Journalistes*, called on everyone present to get involved with awareness-raising campaigns concerning albinism and the removal of the many societal barriers that people living with albinism face, including bullying, vision loss, stereotyping, violence and even death. There was also a discussion regarding the appointment of the new UN independent expert on Albinism and the importance of improving education opportunities for children with albinism in Mauritania.

## Blind and Visual Impairment Community Tourism in Sri Lanka

The Sri Lanka Catholic Council for the Blind is happy to announce a new fact-finding study to be done for the creation of a guided Sri Lankan tour for the blind and visually impaired. They are looking to have international blind and visually impaired tourists to take part in the study tour, planned to be in April or May, 2016, and then offer their views and experiences at the symposium, to be held at the end of the tour. Academics and professionals are also welcome to produce technical papers for the symposium. The findings from the symposium will be documented and used for future blind and visual impairment tourism research. The cost of the tour is affordable for the average Western tourist and they expect to receive contributions to subsidize the costs as well, including from Sri Lankan hoteliers. If you are interested in learning more about this study tour and/or participating, please email slccb20100@gmail.com.

## The Hadley School for the Blind’s BEPLT program

*By: Sheryl Bass, The Hadley School for the Blind*

For those not in the know, the acronym sounds like a popular sandwich. However, for Louisville, Kentucky, USA resident, George Bouquet, The Hadley School for the Blind’s and the National Association of Blind Merchants’ joint “BEPLT” program (Business Enterprise Program Licensee Training) is more like a dream come true. Hadley is the largest provider of distance education for people who are blind and visually impaired worldwide and the BEPLT program is part of the school’s Forsythe Center for Employment (FCE) and Entrepreneurship. Under the Randolph-Sheppard Act, legally blind adults are given first right of refusal on operating state and federal government vending facilities including cafeterias, snack bars, convenience stores, micro markets, and vending machines and rest stop vending areas nationwide. In February 2014, Hadley’s FCE partnered with the National Association of Blind Merchants (NABM) and the National Federation of the Blind Entrepreneurs’ Initiative (NFBEI) to bring the academic portion of training to would-be blind vendors. Individual state Business Enterprise Programs provide the hands-on component of the blind vendor training. Bouquet is Hadley’s first graduate from the school’s new BEPLT program.

There are only so many blind vendor licensee training slots available and many more people compete for them than such programs can accommodate. The first time Bouquet applied to receive the training was in February 2014. Unfortunately, he was not accepted into a program. However, he was fortunate to gain some blind vendor experience by working under friends who already held the license. In early 2015, Bouquet’s counselor told him of another opportunity to apply for vendor training. This time he was accepted and Bouquet began Hadley’s BEPLT program in April 2015. Bouquet was so motivated to graduate from the program that he completed approximately two modules (one-lesson online courses) per week. Hadley’s BEPLT students complete a 10-module program and then take their state’s physical training component. After passing both elements, graduates are eligible to bid for the opportunity to become a blind vendor in their community.

“The [Hadley BEPLT] program offers a lot of useful information. It will really help anyone wanting to undertake vending,” he said. Bouquet then acknowledged that the material about food borne illnesses helped him to realize the tremendous responsibility he would be accepting by running a government food service area. “As a manager, you need to decide what you are willing to delegate to other people,” he added. This training is Bouquet’s first step toward creating a legacy of financial independence. To learn more about the Hadley School for the Blind and their programs, follow this link: <http://www.hadley.edu/AboutHadley.asp>

## Updates from the kanthari Program

**Offering Assistance for the Homeless**

The 7.6 magnitude earthquake in April brought thousands of homeless Tibetans to Shigatse. The government supports them with food and shelter in a large site reserved for them near town. The kanthari students volunteered and prepared a variety entertainment of songs and dance to 'take their minds off' their trauma for a moment. One refugee woman who was very touched said; "The courage of these blind children has given us strength. We know we will eventually have homes again but they, knowing they will never see, yet have thought of us." To learn of more updates, visit the kanthari website at <http://www.kanthari.org/>.

**New Book by Sabriye Tenberken**

The new book by Sabriye Tenberken, one of the founders of the kanthari program, is titled "Die Traumwerkstatt von Kerala, die Welt verändern - das kann man lernen", roughly translated: “The dream-workshop of Kerala, Learning to Change the World”. It was published on the 10th of September 2015 in Germany. You can find more information about the book in English here: <http://www.kiwi-verlag.de/rights/buch/the-dream-workshop-of-kerala-learning-to-change-the-world/978-3-462-04717-2/>

## Audiobook on Blind Journalist’s attempt to live without the Internet

A new audiobook, titled “Off the Grid: Living Blind without the Internet,” is the account of Journalist Robert Kingett’s attempt to adapt to his blindness without the Internet. The book describes his experiences firsthand, including battling with an FM radio, hooking up a landline phone, and the journey of adapting to a brand new way of living from someone who has never disconnected from the World Wide Web. To purchase/listen to the audiobook, follow this link:

[http://www.audible.com/pd/Science-Technology/Off-the-Grid-Audiobook/B013GRWW5E/ref=a\_search\_c4\_1\_1\_srTtl?qid=1439097721&sr=1-1&utm\_content=buffercee5f&utm\_medium=social&utm\_source=twitter.com&utm\_campaign=buffer](http://www.audible.com/pd/Science-Technology/Off-the-Grid-Audiobook/B013GRWW5E/ref%3Da_search_c4_1_1_srTtl?qid=1439097721&sr=1-1&utm_content=buffercee5f&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

To learn more about Robert Kingett, visit his website: <https://www.patreon.com/blindwriter?ty=h>

## The Iki-Boutique: An initiative of the Design for All Foundation and Cathy Caroff

A new online site, [www.Iki-boutique.com](http://www.Iki-boutique.com) features accessible products that are inspired by beauty and simplicity. (Note: the site is currently only available in French but there will soon be an English site as well.)

The Iki-boutique is looking for designers or craftsmen who would be interested to sell their products through their site. To contact them, follow this link: <http://iki-boutique.com/contact-us>

# 2016 GENERAL WBU/ICEVI GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATE

Planning is well underway for the 2016 WBU- ICEVI General Assembly scheduled for August 2016 in Orlando, Florida. Here are a few reminders and updates:

* A separate email address has been set up for all matters related to the General Assembly. It is: GA2016@wbu.ngo
* Please welcome Maggie Leung, who has just joined our team as Administrative Assistant to the General Assembly, assisting both WBU and ICEVI, with respect to our planning of the Assembly. Maggie is based in the WBU office in Toronto and her direct email address is: Maggie.leung@wbu.ngo
* A reminder that Delegate support applications are due by November 30th. These have been sent to all members and are also posted on the WBU website at: <http://www.worldblindunion.org/English/general-assembly/Pages/Forms.aspx>. Please remember that members must be fully financial in order to be considered for delegate sponsorship support.
* We have posted the Delegate Support Guidelines in Arabic, on our English and French sites. Following is the link to the English page: <http://www.worldblindunion.org/English/general-assembly/Pages/Forms.aspx> and following is the link to the French page: <http://www.worldblindunion.org/French/general-assembly/Pages/Assemblee-documents.aspx>
* Membership fees for 2016 will be due by March 31, 2016.
* Please remember to inform the WBU office of any changes in the leadership of organizations or those who have been designated as delegates to the General Assembly as this information is used in the preparation of the official delegate listing.
* The International Organizing Committee for the GA will be meeting in Orlando at the beginning of November and we will be able to provide you with additional updates after that, including information about the registration process, when registration will open and so forth. You can expect to receive a more complete and detailed update in the January issue of the E-bulletin.

# RESOURCES

## American Leprosy Missions Publishes Ten Step Guide on Neglected Tropical Diseases

American Leprosy Missions has published a new guide, titled “Ten Steps: A guide for health promotion and empowerment of people affected by Neglected Tropical Diseases.” The 4th Step is on eye health, and it offers basic hygienic advice, preventive actions and a quick supervisory checklist for assessing potential eye problems. To read Step 4 – Care for eyes, follow this link: <http://cdn.leprosy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ALM-10Steps-Step4.pdf?9869dd> . To read the whole guide and/or its summary card, follow this link: <http://www.leprosy.org/ten-steps/> .

American Leprosy Missions is also looking for individuals or groups interested in partnering with American Leprosy Missions to pilot the implementation of the “Ten Steps” materials. Interested organizations should email Jim Oehrig, Chief Program Officer, American Leprosy Missions, at tensteps@leprosy.org

## 3Doodler 3D Pen

The[**3Doodler**](http://www.the3doodler.com/), which is a three-dimensional printing pen device, can be used within minutes, without needing any technical knowledge, software or computers. It uses melted plastic, similar to a hot glue gun, to make 3D shapes and designs. The pen can be used for printing in braille as well, which opens up endless possibilities for the educational applications for people who are blind or visually impaired. To learn more, follow the link to the Path of Literacy description: <http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/technology/3doodler-worlds-first-3d-printing-pen>.

## VisionConnect™ App

Last month, the American Foundation of the Blind released a free accessible app for iPhones and iPads that allows users to search for local services, save email lists and explore AFB’s web resources on living with vision loss. We are hoping that doctors and other health care professionals will use the app when talking with patients. You can find out more about the app at [AFB VisionConnect™ App](http://www.afb.org/info/living-with-vision-loss/using-technology/download-afbs-apps/visionconnecttm-app/1235) and download it at [afb.org/apps](http://www.afb.org/info/living-with-vision-loss/using-technology/download-afbs-apps/123).

## Blindalive`s Accessible Workout Videos

Home workout videos are often not designed for the visually impaired. The mission of BlindAlive is to create top-quality, well-designed fitness programs for the blind and visually impaired community that are completely accessible. Instructors describe each exercise so that blind people can follow along easily. The entire BlindAlive team, including blind and low vision people, is motivated by a driving passion to deliver fitness products for the blind to everyone who wants to be healthy and strong. BlindAlive creates more choices for more people. For more information, visit <http://www.blindalive.com>

# 2015/2016 IMPORTANT DATES/CONFERENCES/EVENTS

Please remember to send us details of your annual conferences and other major event so we can promote them.

**November 4 to 6 -** **AER Conference on Vision Loss in Older Adults & Veterans**

The event will take place in Norfolk, VA, USA and the theme is “Leveraging our Collective Wisdom.” There will be over 2 days of discussions of important issues facing vision rehabilitation therapists, low vision therapists, orientation & mobility specialists, occupational therapists and others in the vision medical field who work with blinded veterans and older persons with vision loss. For more information, please contact angela@aerbvi.org.

**November 12 to 14** - 2nd Lions World Song Festival for the Blind **- Sounds from the Heart**

It will take place in Krakow, Poland. This is a music competition for non-professional blind and visually impaired musicians and singers, sponsored by Lions clubs in Poland and around the world. For more information, follow this link: <http://lionsfestival.org/>

**November 23-27 - 3rd Central American Meeting and 6th Latin American Forum of Visually Impaired Women**

With the 30th anniversary of ULAC, the launch of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform, ULAC, through its Department of Equity and Gender, and thanks to the efforts undertaken jointly with the member organizations of Panama, invites women of the region to participate in the events of reference. The emphasis on gender is to give a central role to the political participation of women in the areas of decision making, as ULAC continues to strengthen empowerment processes to ensure effective exercise of rights by all.

Panama will host both events taking place 23 - 27 November and coinciding with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. Local Organizations are working tirelessly to ensure the success of such important events.

You can find program details, nomination requirements and other relevant data in [www.ulacdigital.org/genero](http://www.ulacdigital.org/genero).

**March 3-5, 2016 and March 2-4, 2017 - AFB Leadership Conferences**

Please mark your calendars now for the 2016 and 2017 American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conferences, which will both be held at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Alexandria, VA: March 3-5, 2016, and March 2-4, 2017. The 2015 conference in Phoenix attracted 415 attendees from 39 states and eight different countries for sessions on a wide range of topics, including accessible technology, education and transition, advocacy, and leadership. For more information, please visit [www.afb.org/afblc](http://www.afb.org/afblc). If you are interested in sponsorship, advertising, or exhibiting opportunities, please contact Amanda Kolling (akolling@afb.net).

**April 24-29, 2016 - ULAC 9th General Assembly**

The ULAC General Assembly will take place in Montevideo, Uruguay at the Radisson Montevideo Victoria Plaza Hotel. ULAC invite individuals and institutions from across the Latin American region to visit their website, [www.ulacdigital.org/montevideo2016](file:///U%3A%5CComms%20Materials%5CE-Bulletin%5CJuly%202015%5Cwww.ulacdigital.org%5Cmontevideo2016) to find more information regarding the city, the venue, fees, and other important information. Additionally, ULAC will soon send its affiliates guidelines for national delegations as well as details on EXPOULAC. ULAC is committed to inclusion for the collective construction of a more just society and they hope to have active participation in their 2016 events.

**May 4 – 6, 2016 - WBUAP 13th Regional Massage Seminar**

The Philippine Blind Union Inc. and the National Council on Disability Affairs - Philippines are hosting the WBUAP 13th Regional Massage Seminar to be held in Manila, Philippines on May 4-6, 2016. The

theme of the seminar is "Maximizing Skills, Technologies and Opportunities for Economic Empowerment." The seminar aims to push for the inclusion of massage in the regional economic framework.

The registration fee is US$265 per participant and US$ 220 for accompanying persons or personal assistants. Participants will get a discounted rate of US$ 250 if registration fee is paid on or before January 31 2016. The deadline for registration will be on March 31 2016.All participants are enjoined to arrive on May 3. For more details on the seminar, registration and payment procedures, please visit their website at [www.wbuap13thrms.org](http://www.wbuap13thrms.org/)

**July 13-15, 2016 - 15th International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs (Preconference July 11-12)**

The 15th International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs will be held at the University of Linz, Austria. A broad range of topics including eAccessiblity, Assistive Technology (AT), educational / vocational inclusion, mobility support, service provision, ageing and disability rights are openly discussed at ICCHP in an inclusive and agreeable framework. You are invited to organize targeted Special Thematic Sessions (STS) leading to well-structured chapters in the proceedings as a recognised key reference for your specific domain of research and application. There is a call for papers and contributions for the conference and the deadline for submission is February 1, 2016. See the ICCHP website (link following) for more information: <http://www.icchp.org>

# THE REGIONS

Our regions are the bridge between the international level of work and the local level. Policies and treaties constructed at global levels are then carried out by our members in their own countries. Most of the regions have their own websites where they post updates of their work, member activities, and upcoming events in their area.

##

## AFRICA

<http://www.afub-uafa.org>

### AFUB General Assembly

AFUB recently conducted its 8th General Assembly from October 6 to 8th in Kampala Uganda in conjunction with the IDP Africa Forum. In addition to the business sessions of the GA, a Women’s Forum and a Youth Forum were held.

Our sincerest congratulations go to Yaw Ofori Debra from Ghana, whom was elected President of AFUB for the next quadrennial, and to Ms. Cathy Donaldson from South Africa, whom was elected Women’s Chair and Vice President of the Region. Our sincere thanks and appreciation go to Mr. Jace Nair, retiring AFUB President, for his commitment and leadership as AFUB President since 2012.

### AFUB Newsletter

The AFUB newsletter is back. To view their latest issue, July 2015, follow this link: <http://afub.createsend1.com/t/ViewEmail/i/4302FA8CAB7967A0>. If you have contributions for the newsletter, or would like to subscribe to it, please email **info@afub-uafa.org** **for more details.**

### ****Southern Africa AFUB Executive Committee Meeting****

Southern Africa AFUB held its Executive Committee meeting from the 12th – 13th, June 2015 in Pretoria, South Africa. Representatives from Namibia, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and South Africa, as well as three youth representatives from Namibia, Lesotho and South Africa, attended the meeting. Various pertinent issues were discussed at this meeting, including logistics and membership fees, the Women’s Forum, the need for countries to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty and the Southern Africa Strategic Plan was also discussed and finalized. The International Blind Sports Association was represented at the meeting, discussing their plans for research on visually impaired activities and competitors in the region and level of participation. ICEVI also participated, discussing their open membership to all organisations of visually impaired persons and individuals in different countries. ICEVI plans to establish branches in Africa, including the southern region. The youth representatives were encouraged to contact the organizations in the Southern Africa region to find out whether they have a youth structure in their country.

### An Update from AFUB’s Human Rights Project

The AFUB/Synskadades Riksforbund (SRF) three year Human Rights Project for the Visually Impaired in Africa has just begun in Ghana with the Ghana Blind Union (GBU) and in Namibia with the Namibian Federation of the Visually Impaired (NFVI). The overall goals of the project are: to increase the capacity of AFUB, GBU and NFVI to promote the human rights of persons with visual impairment in Africa using the CRPD as an advocacy tool; and to increase our engagements with the Africa Union to prioritise issues of blind and partially sighted persons in the agenda of African Governments.

## ASIA

<http://www.abunion.org>

## ASIA-PACIFIC

<http://wbuap.org/index/>

## EUROPE

<http://www.euroblind.org>

## LATIN AMERICA

<http://ulacdigital.org>

## NORTH AMERICA/THE CARIBBEAN

**Regional Office**: CNIB - <http://www.cnib.ca/>

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The World Blind Union is registered in Canada as a charitable organization in order to raise funds for our work. Donations from individuals or groups are always appreciated and can be made via the “Donate Now” button on our website: [www.wbu.ngo](http://www.wbu.ngo).

**OUR SPONSO****RS**

The members listed below provide funds beyond their membership fees to support the work of the World Blind Union. We are grateful to these members for their valued contributions.

# Our Platinum Sponsors

* CBM International <http://www.cbm.org/>
* Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) [www.cnib.ca](http://www.cnib.ca)
* Organización Nacional de Ciegos Españoles (ONCE) [www.once.es](http://www.once.es)
* Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted (NABP) <https://www.blindeforbundet.no>
* Royal National Institute of Blind Persons (RNIB) [www.rnib.org](http://www.rnib.org/)
* SightSavers International [http://www.sightsavers.org](http://www.sightsavers.org/)
* Vision Australia <http://www.visionaustralia.org/>

# Our Diamond Sponsors

* Royal New Zealand Foundation of the Blind
* Swiss Federation of the Blind and Sight Impaired (SFB)

# Our Gold Sponsors

* National Industries for the Blind (NIB)
* Danish Association of the Blind (DAB)
* German Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted (DBSV)