

# THE TEXAS STAR

**Vol. 31, No. 2**

Neva Fairchild, Editor

**April 2023**

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[Note: Articles printed in The Texas Star are submitted by the subscribers and are not necessarily reflective of the membership as a whole. The articles express only the opinion of the author.]

## **Presidential Points**

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By Chris Prentice

Welcome to Springtime ACBT! Plans are underway for our annual conference in San Antonio which runs from August 24 – 27, 2023. Please make plans to attend in person. Prior to that great event, we will hold our Spring Board Meeting on May 6 at the conference hotel in San Antonio in person. Our meetings are open meetings and visitors are welcome to attend and listen to the proceedings. The meeting will begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 6 and conclude around 4:00 p.m. or so, depending on the length of reports and discussion of our agenda topics.

On another note, I would like to extend my gratitude to Paul Hunt who has been serving as our ACBT webmaster for the past several years. Paul has recently resigned from that post to focus on other important responsibilities in his life. Thank you, Paul, for your diligent work on our website! Now, this provides an opportunity for another person to serve as our webmaster. If you have training and experience in maintaining a website using word press, and you are interested in this opportunity, please contact me at your earliest convenience. My contact information is on the back of this publication.

I had the pleasure of participating in the biennial Carolyn Garrett Leadership Conference from March 25 – 27, 2023 in Austin. TWC-VR and ACBT hosted 13 young high school students with visual impairments for this weekend of training and fun. This was my first CGLC and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The weekend included a tour of our state capitol on Monday morning and a question-and-answer session with a Staffer for State Senator Borris Miles from Houston. I believe these students learned a great deal. Additionally, each student received a free one-year membership in ACBT. If one contacts you in your local chapter, please make them feel welcome and ask them to make a short presentation of what he or she learned at our conference. We appreciate the work of TWC staff in making this event a true success!

In closing, please make sure to mention ACBT to your friends whether they are people with visual impairments or not. Sighted folks can join our great organization as long as each chapter has a majority of members with visual impairments. Please contact me if you have any questions.

## **First Vice President's Report**

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By Michael Garrett

Too often members of a membership driven organization fail to take advantage of their influence and the other opportunities that a particular organization brings. For instance, if you missed the Informative Call on Thursday, March 30, sponsored by your Membership Committee, you missed a treat!. The call was entitled "Taking a Tour of ACBT Texas Style". We virtually toured the state, taking several of our interstate and Texas highways. Every chapter was represented and there were even representatives from some of our special interest groups. We were hoping some of our at large members would have also spoken up. But nonetheless, we learned some Texas history, points of interest along the way, and some unique features about the chapters and the cities where they're located.

Some of the take aways we drew from the call included that our chapters and special interest groups are vibrant, visible and have a view for the future in serving Texans who are blind or visually impaired. That is inspiring because we learned that each group is in tuned with the geographic area they serve and is tailoring their programs and activities to meet the needs where they are.

For those who are not active in your chapter, or if you know others who aren't, we urge you to get involved! In addition, don't hesitate to share with others about what's going on in your area. And, for those who may not be close to a chapter, let us know what's going on in your location, and we will gladly be willing to lend our support. We always want to stay true to our motto:

**ACBT-Advancing the Cause of Blind Texans!**

## **Second Vice president's Report**

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By Jan Gray

### What Floats Your Boat?

It's that time of year, time to start thinking about the ACBT Conference/Convention in San Antonio next August. The Fund-Raising Committee is busy planning a ton of fun for our Friday night entertainment. We are going to have a Carnival in the Dark! If you have some vision, you will need to wear an eye mask, so all players are competing on an even playing field. There will be games, prizes, and surprises for everyone. We have designed something that everyone should enjoy. Have you ever heard of an Escape Room? Well, ACBT will be hosting an escape room that is fully accessible for people who are blind or visually impaired. This is a creation of Freedom Scientific, and it will be the first time it has been brought to Texas. People will need to sign up for it by August 1, 2023. There will be a cost involved, but it will be well worth it. If you are interested or want more information please e-mail me at [jan.gray1950@gmail.com](mailto:jan.gray1950@gmail.com) We are excited about our events and hope you will be there to enjoy them.

## **Secretary Secrets**

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by Mary Alice Gary

Hey, Y'all! We've had some crazy weather these past few months, haven't we? It should have been blustery and cold but Mother Nature gave us sunny and warm. And all that back and forth between winter and spring! Seems like Mother Nature was off kilter a bit. Maybe she needed a V-8 to get her back on track. Hopefully she's gotten over whatever bug she had and it will be sunny and warm from now on, with an occasional shower or two.

Now, for some ACBT updates. The Spring Board Meeting is being held in person in San Antonio, at the DoubleTree Airport on May 6, 2023 at 8:30 AM CDT. Our 2023 ACBT Conference/Convention dates are August 24-27, 2023 and will also be in person at the DoubleTree Airport in San Antonio. Stay tuned to both the Texas Star and ACBT Groups list for further announcements about all things ACBT!

Need to sign up for the ACBT Groups List? Well just follow these few steps and you'll be done. Send an email to: [ACBT+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:ACBT+subscribe@groups.io), (that's the plus symbol after the ACBT). The announcements will arrive directly in your Inbox! All ACBT happenings, Committee events and activities are announced here. It will only take a few seconds. Remember, Keep Smiling!



## **Tales from the Treasurer**

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By Sheila Derrick

Hope this finds everyone enjoying a glorious spring. I want to thank all the treasurers and membership chairs who worked hard to send in accurate and timely membership lists. An extra big thanks to the chapters and special interest affiliates whose lists and dues arrived ahead of the deadline. Please remember, new and late renewing members cannot be sent to ACB until after May 1, 2023. Members added to ACB between May 1<sup>st</sup> and May 20<sup>th</sup> will not be counted toward the ACBT members when votes are allocated for the national convention. If a member added during that time, attends the ACB national convention then they may cast one individual vote. No new member additions can be made to ACB membership from May 20, 2023 until the end of the 2023 convention. Changes to existing members will be processed during that time. ACBT membership will remain open beginning April 1, 2023.

ACB certification was completed on March 30th. ACBT certified 276 members including 4 ACB Life Members. This is 17 more than last year.

I encourage everyone to read our Second VP's article in this issue. She has information on ACBT's "fun" fundraising projects planned for our annual conference/convention this August in San Antonio. For those who missed the notice on the group email list, Amazon has discontinued the AmazonSmile donation program. They will be concentrating their efforts on community-based projects. There will be both virtual and silent auctions this year during the 2023 conference/convention. The auctions are our single largest fund-raising event and everyone's participation is appreciated. Watch for more information on our website, [acbtexas.org](http://acbtexas.org), in the Auction article later in this newsletter, and in the next edition of the Texas Star.

SEE YOU IN SAN ANTONIO!!!

## **Making Art Accessible**

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By Chris Allen

One of the best things about living in Dallas is that we have a lot of great museums with a variety of art. Several of our local museums have made an effort the last few years to make art more accessible to those of us who are blind or visually impaired. This includes using descriptive audio, braille labels and tactile replicas.

I want to single out the Raymond Nasher sculpture Center for their commitment to making art more inclusive. For the last 7 years the Nasher has partnered with ENVISION DALLAS to bring art to people who are blind and visually impaired. I have been lucky enough to attend a couple of events that the Nasher has hosted.

In February of this year a group of us were invited to the Nasher sculpture Center for an accessible experience featuring the work of sculptor Mark di Suvero. He specializes in large abstract sculptures. Di Suvero suffered a major accident when he was working that left him confined to a wheelchair. That did not stop him from pursuing a career as an artist. The staff made us a replica of a hand that was part of 1 of his sculptures. Everyone had a chance to feel it. It was made of leather. What made it so unique was that the fingers were twisted almost as if they were arthritic. They also described 1 of his sculptures that was extremely tall and had multiple interconnected pieces two of the pieces were curved and stretched out on both the left and right sides with a bar at the top of the sculpture. Then they gave us pieces of paper and walked us through how to construct the sculpture they had described. After that they encouraged us to use the same pieces to make our own creation. This was a fun learning experience for all of us.

You probably have art museums where you live. Talk to them about creating inclusive programming for people who are blind or have low vision. The Dallas Museum of Modern Art, the Nasher Sculpture Center and the Kimball

Art Museum would be happy to talk to them about how they got started. Art can truly be accessible to all.

## **Braille Revival League of Texas (BRLT)**

By Michael Garrett

BRLT continues to promote the use and production of braille. We lend our support and encouragement to all those who want to learn and use braille in their daily lives. For example, to celebrate Louis Braille's birthday, we held a virtual session with students at the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in January. There were over 40 students in attendance and several expressed their enthusiasm about braille.

BRLT also sent letters of encouragement to the students who participated in the 2023 Braille Challenge. There were about 17 participants and it was reported that the words of encouragement gave them some incentive.

We are in the midst of planning our program for the upcoming ACBT State Conference/Convention. Stay tuned for more announcements. In the meantime,

READ MORE BRAILLE!

## **Library Users of America-Texas**

by Gayle Metoyer

Greetings LUAT members and friends:

It is Spring, time to get out and do something fun! If reading is fun for you, please continue to read this article. I want to give you some ideas about reading and how to make it fun!

March was International Women's Month and one of our members gave me some book suggestions by a woman author. The author's name is Carolyn Brown and she has several fiction books that you may enjoy. They are as follows: "Secrets in the Sand", "The Hope Chest", "The Ladies Room", "The Wedding Pearls". These books are all available on BARD.

Another fun event that is coming up for readers is National Library Week. It is April 23-28. Please check with your local library to see if they have any events planned. This week is designed to promote the library services and its workers. You can join a book club or check with your local reading services to see if they have any events planned. Whatever you decide to do, I hope that you enjoy reading! Afterall, reading is fun!!

Happy reading!!

## **2023 Carolyn Garrett Youth Leadership Conference**

By Michael Garrett

Each biennium since 1999, ACBT has been a cosponsor for the Carolyn Garrett Youth Leadership Conference with TWC. This is an event designed for high school students from around the state who are blind or visually impaired. The students participate in a number of activities related to self advocacy, education, community involvement and other sessions geared toward preparing them for the next stage of life. On Saturday March 25, the students had a training session on self advocacy, a technology presentation and they were treated to music spun by DJ, Kevin Ratliff.

On Sunday, there were presentations by Kenneth Semien Sr., ACB National Representative, Tammy Martin, Deputy Director of Field Services, TWC. There were break out sessions, a mock legislative session and a demonstration of voting machines. They were also given a group skills challenge where they were split into groups and had to make a presentation to a panel of three judges. They were mentored by Kenneth Semien and Chris Prentice, ACBT President.

This year's group of students was especially unique. They were bright and intelligent; they bonded well and seemingly made life long friends. This served them well when we went to the Capitol on Monday. After the Capitol tour, we met with a representative from Senator Borris Miles' office. The students asked very insightful questions which impressed our host, Sebastian Berry.

This conference is so named because it was literally the last desire that Carolyn had before she was tragically run over by a school bus in 1998.



She wanted blind and visually impaired students to be prepared for life and to know their rights and responsibilities. She would have been proud of this group.

## **Ride the Waves to Better Accessibility with ACBT**

By Peggy R. Garrett

Yes, we are getting closer to the 45<sup>th</sup> annual Conference/Convention of the American Council of the Blind of Texas!

It has been several years since we have held the event in San Antonio and we are looking forward to gathering there again this year! The location is the Doubletree by Hilton San Antonio Airport Hotel

There will be some exciting sessions this year including updates on eye diseases, investments, enhancing your employment skills and even line dancing! There will also be a “blind escape room” to challenge all of our “skills”!!!

The Conference/Convention dates are August 24-27, 2023. The room rate is \$102.00 plus tax (\$120.46). You may begin making reservations online at [ACBT 2023 Convention](#) or by calling the hotel at (210) 3406060.

Remember, if you are making your reservations by phone, you must tell them that you are with the American Council of the Blind of Texas in order to get the group room rate. The deadline to make reservations and get the group rate is July 23, 2023.

So, begin making plans now to join us in San Antonio in August!

## **Auction Committee Update**

by Sara Freeman Smith

The State Conference Auction Committee is off & running! All we need is your donation! The 45<sup>th</sup> annual state Conference & convention will be held in person in San Antonio, Texas at the Doubletree by Hilton San Antonio Airport

from August 24 - 27, 2023. We are off to a great start with some donations and actively now soliciting donations from our chapters, affiliates, members

and businesses. Thank you for making both the virtual and the silent Auctions very successful last year! this year's auction will use the same process.

The primary auction will be held virtually on Sunday, August 20 at 6pm CDT using the Zoom platform. A smaller group of auction items will be available for a Silent Auction held Saturday evening, August 26 at the hotel.

Look for your emails in April to the Chapter leaders, affiliates and vendors requesting donations for the auction. so don't wait for the last minute. Since our main auction will be virtual again, it will be just like last year with an auctioneer and pictures and descriptions of the items donated.

The committee encourages everyone to begin planning and soliciting early for donations within their local community. The committee has set a deadline of Friday, July 16, 2023, for confirmation details and/or receipt of all items by that date. Only handmade, new or items in their original packaging will be accepted for the auction along with their description and approximate value. Since the primary auction is virtual with a few items on display at the hotel for the Silent Auction, many donations may be kept by the donor until awarded to the highest bidder & can be sent direct to the winner. We look forward to having some great items and lots of fun this year as we welcome ACB members from across the US on the auction on Sunday, august 20th.

If you have any questions, please contact the Co-Chairs Gayle by email at [metoyer903@comcast.net](mailto:metoyer903@comcast.net) or by cell-281-794-2012 or Sara at email [sarafreemansmith@gmail.com](mailto:sarafreemansmith@gmail.com) or by cell- 713-882-3000.

## **Escape Room**

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By Jan Gray

The first time I heard of an escape room I was excited and wanted to participate. My daughter, who is accustomed to noticing if something is accessible or not, calmly said "Sorry Mom, but it is too visual". I was disappointed until I heard a podcast from Freedom Scientific about an accessible escape room for the blind. An escape room is set up for a team of people to solve multiple clues and puzzles to "escape the room". It

promotes teamwork and tickles your brain. This summer at the ACBT Conference in San Antonio we will have an escape room. The cost will be \$25. The average cost for the escape room experience is \$40. We will have a lot of fun and hope we have lots of participants. Watch for the conference info as the escape room will be on Friday August 25 and August 26. You will need to sign up to take part in this. Hope to see you there!

## **Constitution and Bylaws Committee**

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By Peggy R. Garrett

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee encourages all members to review the current Constitution and Bylaws and become familiar with the governing documents of our organization. You can obtain a copy of the document on the ACBT website at. [www.acbtexas.org](http://www.acbtexas.org).

Proposed Constitutional Amendments must be received no later than May 28, 2023 and will be included in the July 2023 issue of the Texas Star. These proposed amendments will be presented to the membership during the 2023 business meeting on Sunday morning August 27, 2023.

Proposed amendments to the Bylaws must be presented to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee by 9:00 AM Friday, August 25 to be presented to the membership for consideration on Sunday, August 27, 2023.

You may send proposed amendments to Committee Chair, Peggy Garrett at [prcgarrett@sbcglobal.net](mailto:prcgarrett@sbcglobal.net).

## **Member Morale Committee Report**

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By Jan Gray

Member Morale has the privilege each year of choosing our Who's Who Among Blind Texans from ACBT Members and non-members. Those who receive this award need to be a special person who has shown the public that blindness cannot stop them in their endeavors. We also look for candidates for the First Timer's Award. This award is for a member who has shown initiative and drive not only in their chapter, but on a state level too. They cannot have attended an in person conference before. We need

everyone's help to let us know about those special people, so we can make a selection. Please contact me at: [jan.gray1950@gmail.com](mailto:jan.gray1950@gmail.com)

## **Nominating Committee Update**

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By Michael Garrett

The 2023 ACBT elections will take place at our State Conference/Convention in San Antonio which will be held August 24 thru 27. Two board of directors positions will be up for election. Both incumbents are eligible for reelection. One of the positions is being held by appointment. That holder is eligible to run for a full term. The previous holder of that position was appointed to serve the vacant office of Second Vice President and must run to fulfill the unexpired term.

That being said, it's time for you or someone you know to step forward and take on a leadership position in ACBT. You may submit your name or the name of someone else to run as a candidate for an office. If you submit the name of someone else, please be sure that person is qualified and is willing to serve. Each candidate seeking a board position must submit a short biographical sketch. Of course, nominations can come from the floor, but again, those candidates must be qualified and be willing to fulfill the responsibilities of the office sought. He or she must also have a bio which can be read before the assembly during the elections process.

The candidate's bio must consist of a brief opening paragraph stating the office being sought and answers to the questions which have been prepared by the Nominating Committee. Please limit your responses to two pages Arial font, 16 point. It is imperative that each candidate be familiar with the office sought as stated in the ACBT Constitution and Bylaws. Below are the questions which must be completed and returned to the Nominating Committee.

1. What are your reasons for seeking this office?
2. What experience and expertise can you bring to this office and ACBT?
3. What actions would you take to help ACBT fulfill its mission and achieve its goals?

4. Fundraising is vital to assure any nonprofit stays alive. Therefore, name two fundraising projects and tell how you would help make each event successful.
5. When do you believe it is necessary for an organization to change its practices and procedures?
6. What do you see as the major challenges for ACBT over the next three years and how would you seek to help manage them?

All candidate bios and answers must be submitted electronically by email no later than May 31, 2023.

Send submissions to Michael Garrett, Nominating Committee Chairman at: [megarrett4443@sbcglobal.net](mailto:megarrett4443@sbcglobal.net)

Please keep in mind, we must elect leaders who are willing to work diligently to make ACBT an even more successful and effective organization and to help us fulfill our motto,

ACBT-Advancing the Cause of Blind Texans.

## **Alamo Council Update**

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By Shelley McMullen

Greetings All:

I, on behalf of the Alamo Council, take great pleasure in featuring one of our most cherished and loyal members.

Donna McBee was born and raised in St. Joseph Missouri.

She is totally blind due to retinitis pigmentosa. One of the things I have always respected and admired about her was the fact that she chose to enter rehabilitation training at what was then Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind (now WSB) well in advance of total vision loss.

Donna was married to Bob McBee who is now deceased. She and Bob had 5 children 4 daughters and 1 son.

She lived in Little Rock during and after rehab training for a number of years. She has a BA degree in gerontology as well as a Masters in social work from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

In 1980, she and her children relocated to San Antonio. Donna immediately got busy involving herself in Alamo chapter activities where she eventually served as local president as well as president of ACBT. She was one of the writers of our first Constitution and By Laws.

Despite a number of officer changes, minor exchanges of ideas and yes sometimes occasional conflict Donna remained steadfast with regard to her faithfulness to our chapter and to ACBT.

She was an employee of San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS) for 10 years. She then served as a casework supervisor until her eventual retirement at the Department of Health and Human Services of Texas.

She is a proud graduate of the Seeing Eye. She eagerly awaits being matched with her fifth Seeing Eye dog after she gets settled in Little Rock. Donna recently made a decision to return to Little Rock in order to be closer to family.

We of course are happy for her, but are sad to see her go.

We honored her with a surprise farewell party at our well attended March meeting.

So, with that said, Donna, this is not good-bye just see you later! Thanks so much for your kindness, friendship and dedication.

## **Beaumont Council Update**

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By Cynthia Julian

Happy Spring from the Beaumont Area Council of the Blind. We have utilized our time encouraging and providing our members with resources to protect themselves from being victimized by scam artist. Each meeting we attempt to have an inspirational segment, which includes a poem or song. Next, Clinon Kyle; who is one of our members provided us with a

presentation regarding his Community Based Agriculture project. It was very informative and he appears to be very passionate about his endeavor. We also discussed the importance of setting and achieving goals. A goal can be defined as a dream with a deadline. It has been determined that if a person follows the five characteristics of the Smart Goal setting method, they can successfully accomplish their goal. When using the SMART goal idea individuals must ensure the goal is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. While working on achieving your task, it is important to have a good support system. Get rid of distractions, remain focused, and do not become discouraged. Best wishes regarding setting and achieving your goals. Lastly, the chapter is preparing to give our first scholarship. It is entitled the Destiny scholarship. We are very excited about this endeavor.

## **Dallas Area Council Update**

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by Mary Witherspoon

Officers were installed in January. This year's officers are Ted Harper President, Chris Allen 1<sup>st</sup> VP, Linda Riddle Secretary and Larry Thacker Treasurer. The 2<sup>nd</sup> vice president slot remains vacant. Chris Hawkins, DART paratransit service manager, told us about the Go-Pass program, shared updates on paratransit and the Uber option for qualified participants. Our Scholarship and Technology Grant applications have been shared with TWC counselors and the TEA Region 10 Counselors Team as we seek qualified candidates. Plans are underway for our May 20 chapter picnic and fundraiser. And, we are exploring how best to capture volunteer hours from our members to potentially be eligible for future grants. The chapter meets the third Saturday of every month at Envision Dallas with the exception of May and December. Our 26 members are moving and shaking!

Congratulations to Al Rodriguez, Envision Dallas Assistive Technology Trainer, for winning the Patrick Van Geem Assistive Technology Award. Al is a member of the Dallas Area Council of the Blind. The Patrick Van Geem Award is presented to a teacher or team member who demonstrates outstanding instruction and support in an educational setting of students who are blind or visually impaired using Assistive Technology. This award is given by the Texas Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (TAER).

Congratulations to Al Rodriguez, Envision Dallas Assistive Technology Trainer, for winning the Patrick Van Geem Assistive Technology Award. Al is also a member of the Dallas Area Council of the Blind.

The Patrick Van Geem Award is presented to a teacher or team member who demonstrates outstanding instruction and support in an educational setting of students who are blind or visually impaired using Assistive Technology. This award is given by the Texas Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (TAER).

To learn more about the Patrick Van Geem award, visit this link:  
<http://www.txaer.org/patrick-van-geem-at.html>

## **Greater Fort Worth Council Update**

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By Jan Gray

The Fort Worth Chapter has been busy helping with Craft events for Blind students. We had tactile stickers and other tactile ornaments for the kids to make door hangers with. It was lots of fun for both the kids and for those of us who could attend. We are working on some fund raising ideas, and we have found a new place to meet in person. March 25 found us taking a trip on the train to Grapevine for an outing to dine and look around in Grapevine. April 1<sup>st</sup>, we helped other blindness organizations with a “Beep Easter Egg Hunt”. We will again do our door hangers, this time with Easter and Spring tactile Stickers. We are looking forward to all that the upcoming year will bring.

## **Houston Happenings**

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By Michael Garrett

The Houston Council of the Blind (HCB) has been on the move during the early part of 2023. We began the year by celebrating our 45<sup>th</sup> year of existence. Then we started appearing at events all over the greater Houston area. Some of the events we’ve participated in include: a group going to the Museum of Fine Arts “Art Beyond Sight” tour, (afterward, we had lunch at Xin Chao, restaurant owned by Christine Ha); a group attended the Reel Abilities Music Night; a group visited the Buffalo Soldiers Museum; A group of us was invited to take a back stage tour of the Broadway



production of Moulin Rouge. Lunch was provided by the company. The very next week, we attended a production of “Cowboy Bob” (taken from a true story) in which one of our members served as the consultant for one of the characters who played a blind woman.

During our meetings, we’ve held fundraisers, reported on advocacy efforts and witnessed a demonstration of the Blind Shell phone. We’re still heavily involved with our para-transit service which holds periodic Community Leaders meetings, on which we have very substantial representation. We continue to serve as a source of information and referral for an increasing volume of calls from people experiencing the onset of blindness. We conducted an in service blindness awareness training at a neurological clinic for about 16 OT and PT therapists. We also continue to reach out and recruit new members.

HCB-Helping, Caring, Building!



## **2023 Partners for Success Honor Society**

Honoring companies that have made a substantial contribution in support of ACBT achieving its annual goals and objectives.

### **Amerigroup (Excel Sponsor)**

Our affiliated health plans and our parent organization are leading a national effort to reduce social barriers, drive change and improve lives.

### **Vanda (Star Plus Sponsor)**

Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake Disorder

### **Democracy Live (Star Sponsor)**

Leading the way in secure digital balloting. Providing remote accessible balloting technologies to over 20 million voters.

Contact Kenneth Semien, Sr. for additional information regarding our Partners for Success Initiative:

[semien.k@outlook.com](mailto:semien.k@outlook.com)

409-866-5838

## **American Council of the Blind of Texas**

The ACBT Board of Directors is comprised of 5 elected Officers, 4 Directors, an Immediate Past President, and an appointed representative from each Chapter and Special Interest Affiliate. The appointed representatives are selected by their respective Chapters or Special Interest Affiliates. Directors are elected for staggered 4-year terms. Below is a listing of all the state officers and elected board members along with their contact information.

### **ACBT State Officers:**

#### **President:**

Chris D. Prentice (2022-2024, First Term)  
(806) 283-8227  
cprentice61@att.net  
Local Chapter: Austin Council

#### **First Vice President - Membership Chair:**

Michael E. Garrett (2022-2024, Third Term)  
(281) 438-9665  
megarrett4443@sbcglobal.net  
Local Chapter: Houston Council

#### **Second Vice President - Fundraising Chair:**

Jan Gray Appointed (2022, First Term)  
(817) 232-4295  
Jan.gray1950@gmail.com  
Local Chapter: Fort Worth Council

#### **Treasurer - Finance & Budget Chair:**

Sheila Derrick (2022-2024, No Term Limits)  
(817) 507-3964  
sjderrick212@hotmail.com  
Local Chapter: Fort Worth Council

**Secretary:**

Mary Alice Gary (2022-2024, No Term Limits)  
(915) 269-2119  
ma-gary@att.net  
Local Chapter: Alamo Council

**Immediate Past President - Constitution & Bylaws Chair:**

Peggy R. Garrett (2022-2024)  
(281) 438-9665  
prcgarrett@sbcglobal.net  
Local Chapter: Houston Council

**ACBT State Directors:**

**Board Member:**

Louann Williams - Director (2021-2025, Second Term)  
(210) 884-7778  
la.lozano.williams@gmail.com  
Local Chapter: Alamo Council

**Board Member:**

Foster Brown, Director (2019-2023, First Term)  
(832) 469-1817  
brownfoster@gmail.com  
Local Chapter: Houston Council

**Board Member:**

Catherine Perez, Director (2022 Appointed, First Term)  
(915) 224-9402  
Kperez@epcblind.org  
Local Chapter: El Paso Council

**Board Member:**

Steven Salas, Director (2021-2025, First Term)  
(210) 995-3021  
salasblack@gmail.com  
Local Chapter: Austin Council