# Focus On ACBI

A Publication of the American Council of the Blind of Indiana

January-March 2022

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Mary Stores edits this newsletter and can be contacted at [mstores@iu.edu](mailto:mstores@iu.edu) or 812-272-1876.

Edward Stahl narrates the Focus for cassette output. Don Koors is responsible for the printing and mailing of hard copies and cassette duplication and distribution.

## Ways to contribute to the American Council of the Blind of Indiana

Those much-needed contributions, which are tax-deductible, can be sent to ACBI, Attn: Cindy Brooking, 676 VFW Road, Mitchell, Indiana 47446 or through the [Donate page](http://acb-indiana.org/donate/) on our website (http://acb-indiana.org/donate/)

* [Shop Amazon and support ACBI](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-0958471) (https://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-0958471).
* Vehicle donations: 1-800-929-8659. You can donate cars, trucks, vans, and boats. Live operators are on hand 7 days a week and it includes free pick-up.
* Consider including a gift to ACBI in your Last Will and Testament.

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## From Your President

by Rita Kersh

Hello fellow ACBIers!

Wow, I’ve only been in office two months and it’s amazing what all has been going on with my duties.

I organized our committees for this year and am thrilled that some are very active at this time. The Investment Policy Statement committee finally turned over the document to the board for approval and it passed. There are a few little changes to be made then the board and our financial advisor will have the document in hand.

The Information Station committee has planned out topics for the next six months so you don’t want to miss out on these very informative calls. Keep checking the Indiana list for the Zoom info.

The Legislative & Advocacy committee is working hard on the bills ACB is advocating for in the House and Senate. The committee members will be taking part in the upcoming Leadership Conference to learn more about the imperatives ACB is supporting this year. One of our new ACBI members has included an article in this newsletter about these imperatives. I will be attending the President’s meeting prior to the Legislative Seminar. By the way, we’ll all be attending virtually. Hopefully next year we can be in DC in person.

The Convention committee has started work on this fall’s ACBI-ACBO convention in Bloomington. We have the hotel contract signed and the committee has started having their monthly planning calls. It will be a little different his year compared to other years so stay tuned for upcoming details as time draws closer.

Past president Barbara Salisbury is taking on the big job of organizing a virtual chapter for those ACBI members who do not belong to a physical chapter. If you are interested in joining the virtual chapter, call Barbara at 812-369-0355 or e-mail [Barbara.Salisbury@att.net](mailto:Barbara.Salisbury@att.net).

Our next open board meeting will be on April 30 at 10:00 a.m. ET. The Zoom info will be posted to our Indiana list if you’d like to sit in on this meeting.

I’m excited about this year and hope we can make ACBI grow and be an organization to be proud of.

Catch you in the next Focus!

## Circle City Chapter News

by Gerry Koors

Greetings:

It’s a sunny 48 degrees as I write, and the last snow has melted. Spring should be the way soon.

For our October, 2021 meeting we didn’t have a program but did set a date for our Christmas party in December. We didn’t meet in November but had our annual Christmas party at Shapiro’s Restaurant in downtown Indianapolis. It was enjoyed by all and has been the custom for several years individuals contributed money to be donated to the food pantry at the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

In January Bill Sparks and Pauline Ulrey gave us the history of the Lions Club and what they do throughout the world and the projects that the Indiana clubs support. They are both members of a local club.

In March Steve Stanton is going to share with us who is running for the US senate and house of representative. This will give individuals the opportunity to study the various candidates prior to the elections in May.

Our April Speaker is Norbert Krapf, Indiana Poet Laureate 2007-10, Emeritus Professor of English, C. W. Post Campus, Long Island University. He will be sharing some of his poetry with us. He has also written several books. He has also been involved in poetry and music. As an Indiana author, one of his books has been recorded by the Indiana project.

I leave you with this thought.

“A person who is severely impaired never knows his hidden source of strength until he is treated like a normal human being and encouraged to shape his own life.”

-Helen Keller

## SCAVI News

by Rich Vonderhaar

After we all enjoyed a nice Christmas holiday, our chapter started 2022 with plenty to do. Our policy is not to meet if our local schools close due to weather. There have been some winters where we had to cancel our meetings. Fortunately, that hasn’t happened this year.

At our January meeting, our speaker was Jennifer Stevens from the South-Central Indiana Center for Independent Living (SCICIL). She spoke to us about their various programs for the disabled such as housing, transportation, financial assistance and employment.

At our February meeting, our president, Regina Vonderhaar, lead a discussion on ideas for us to grow our membership. We decided to have 500 new brochures printed. Our brochures had not been updated since 2014. In addition, we planned to get a table at the Senior Fair; however, we since found out that the cost is prohibitive, so now we are looking for another project and are optimistic that we will find one.

At the time I am writing this, we are still looking for a March speaker. Remember, we meet the first Monday of every month and invite any visitors to come.

Have a nice spring.

## Heartland Chapter News

By Mary Stores

Our chapter met in December in person to celebrate the season. It was a nice change from all those Zoom meetings, although we did have Zoom available for those who couldn’t attend in person. We met at a clubhouse that Mary’s apartment complex has because it was conveniently located downtown. It also had a kitchenette, and the apartment complex provided us with doughnuts and coffee. They also had a lovely decorated Christmas tree. It was good to reconnect with people.

We met via Zoom in February and discussed ways to grow our chapter. We discussed in particular meeting at a restaurant and fundraising for the upcoming Indiana-Ohio convention, which will be in Bloomington this year.

Regarding the convention, we in the Heartland chapter are particularly excited because the convention will take place in downtown Bloomington. There will be lots of places for convention attendees to walk to, and the street crossings all have audible pedestrian signals.

We look forward to all the possibilities ahead in 2022!

## Voting in the Indiana Primary

Since December 2020, ACBI has been involved in a case challenging Indiana’s inaccessible absentee voting system, and advocating for private and independent absentee voting for Indiana voters. On March 9, 2022, a federal judge issued an order in that case changing procedures for absentee voting for voters with print disabilities for the upcoming May 3 primary election. Among other things, this order made a traveling board no longer required for absentee voters with print disabilities who wish to vote via paper absentee ballot.

Please join ACBI and lawyers from Indiana Disability Rights and Disability Rights Advocates on April 4th at 6pm ET and April 6th at noon ET to talk about how this order may affect how you vote for the May 3 primary.

Please reach out to Julia Robaidek ([jrobaidek@dralegal.org](mailto:jrobaidek@dralegal.org) or 510-292-2059) for more details on how to attend the meetings if you wish to join.

### April 4th Meeting Details

April 4, 2022

6:00 PM Eastern Time

5:00 PM Central Time

[April 4 Zoom](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87800052853?pwd=VGp1NTFYTTZYM09mMXh2T1Z3aXJDUT09) (https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87800052853?pwd=VGp1NTFYTTZYM09mMXh2T1Z3aXJDUT09)

Meeting ID: 878 0005 2853

Passcode: 960963

One tap mobile:

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Dial by your location

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+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

### April 6th Meeting Details

April 6, 2022

12:00 PM Eastern Time

11:00 PM Central Time

[April 6 Zoom](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84000798195?pwd=R0ZPME5Zb3djRXFkU1IwK0JOM0hTdz09) (https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84000798195?pwd=R0ZPME5Zb3djRXFkU1IwK0JOM0hTdz09)

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## 2022 Legislative Imperatives

by David Rosenkoetter

Once again, this year we will attend ACB’s Washington Seminar (March 12-15) online. Following these days, we plan to meet with our Senators Mike Braun and Todd Young, as well as with Indiana’s members of the House about the imperatives highlighted below.

As our nation emerges from COVID’s grip, we encourage ourselves and the greater blindness community to “Get up and get moving.” The bills and acts at hand have the unifying theme of access to exercise equipment, at-home medical testing, work and education online portals, and video streaming.

### The Exercise and Fitness for All Act (S. 2504/H.R. 4756)

The more digital our world becomes the fewer buttons we feel on everything from smart phone screens to household appliances. Walk into any gym or fitness center and you’ll have to ask for help setting treadmills, stair masters, and bikes. The last thing we want to feel is like we’re burdening staff with our needs. Sometimes labeling one or two machines with braille tags makes things easier.

What if such cardio machines had a “blind mode” activated by the push of a button so that a voice indicated the increase or decrease of speed, on and off, and could guide you through a pattern of level running or up and down inclines. If signed into law, this bill would direct manufacturers to include features that allow both blind and sighted alike equal access to fitness machines.

### The Medical Device Nonvisual Accessibility Act (H.R. 4853)

Try taking your blood pressure … monitoring your glucose level … managing your in-home chemotherapy treatments. You find yourself at a loss because often the devices are inaccessible to us who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. Sure, in-home support workers or friends can help manage our daily healthcare, but we long for the ability to support ourselves.

Besides giving us a greater sense of dignity, advancements in medical technology can further remove societal misconceptions about our capabilities. Yes, we can care for our body and life, eyes, ears and all our members, eager to embrace the gift of life to the full, even lending support to others in their physical needs as well.

### The Website and Application Accessibility Act

Have you tried selecting items on a supermarket’s site for home delivery? Or getting hired into a company after disclosing your blindness? What about downloading assignments from your school’s online platform? While some web applications make such tasks possible, many companies and schools remain on networks that by default prevent blind and visually impaired people’s access.

Section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) provide a great framework within which schools and businesses should work when serving both blind and sighted people. Yet, with society’s dependence on online and image-based software, the Department of Justice (DOJ) needs to be authorized to update standards for serving people who are blind or visually impaired. Recent court cases such as Payan v. Los Angeles Community College District have shown a systemic hurdle remains for our inclusion in educational and professional life. We look forward to encouraging our Congressional Representatives to craft legislation that will further open these doors for our participation.

### The Communications and Video Accessibility Amendments Act

Turn on your TV, go to your local movie theater, or try downloading a new podcast to your smart phone. Sometimes the audio feedback helps; at other times you need someone to be your eyes. Thanks to the long-standing audio description project, sponsored in part by the ACB, much progress has come to us in these venues. However, since the Communication and Video Accessibility Act’s signing (2010), software networks and platforms have made it more difficult for us to enjoy many movies and TV shows. Add to that, entangling copyrights held by film studios and producers have slowed the Federal Communication Commission’s ability to enforce their efforts for equal access for the disability community.

Amending the Communication and Video Accessibility Act would clear the way for the FCC to mandate standards by which film directors and producers must abide. As the previous imperative seeks to enrich our education and work, this imperative aims to open more options for our viewing pleasure.

I hope you will join us for this year’s Washington Seminar. For more information and to register, go to <https://acb.org/2022-leadership-meetings-registration> or call (800) 424-8666.

## Get Up and Get Moving

by Kari Goodman

Editor’s note: To kick off the new year and the national ACB Get Up and Get Moving campaign, Kari Goodman created a Facebook page for her friends and members of ACB chapters to begin their exercise journey. Her Facebook page is full of encouragement. One time she asked us to ask our Amazon devices to do a seven-minute workout, and report back on the exercises you had to do. Her Facebook page has become so popular, that she is branching out. Here is what she has to say:

Hey everyone! I’m so happy to see so many of you participating in our get up and get moving Facebook page. If you’re not on our page give it a like to get some motivation to get up and get moving! I’m excited to add in a monthly call just to chit chat, motivate and inspire each other to continue on our healthy journey starting in April. We will meet via zoom on the third Tuesday of each month starting April 19 at 7:00. Zoom info below! If anyone had any questions or need help finding the Facebook group let me know!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83176130246?pwd=SkNFT2dmQVBvcy9ITU55M2dGSkRadz09#success>

Meeting ID: 831 7613 0246

Passcode: 088315

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+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

## Planning a Virtual Chapter for Indiana

By Barbara Salisbury

We’ve talked about it over the past couple years, but now we are moving forward.

If you are interested in a virtual (zoom) chapter, please join me and others on Thursday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m. ET. Just so we know how many people are coming, please send an email to me at [Barbara.salisbury@att.net](mailto:Barbara.salisbury@att.net). The Zoom details for the meeting are:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81326668826?pwd=Q0MxVDNLZzBuYXplWTgyNjNmd3FBUT09#success>

So, put it on your calendar for a meet and chat about how and what we can do to make this become a reality!

## Penny Forward Launches Innovative Online Financial Education Platform for the Blind

By Chris Peterson

Editor’s Note: Chris Peterson is a member of ACB and lives with his family in Minnesota.

Minneapolis, MN – At a time of rising inflation and economic uncertainty for millions of Americans, and just as the 2022 tax season is kicking into high gear, a Minnesota-based non-profit corporation, [Penny Forward Inc](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpennyforward.com%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cmstores%40iu.edu%7Cad8c0dfa49c14176c19108da0c2154fe%7C1113be34aed14d00ab4bcdd02510be91%7C0%7C0%7C637835634547679283%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=SR1ycbEdc7S1NPSY8FiCQUq8vK5DHugTx8DoeZFlO80%3D&reserved=0), has launched a brand-new online platform designed to provide financial education, tools and coaching to more than seven million Americans who are blind or have low vision.

Founded in 2021 by Minnesota native [Christopher Peterson](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpennyforward.com%2Fabout-chris-peterson%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cmstores%40iu.edu%7Cad8c0dfa49c14176c19108da0c2154fe%7C1113be34aed14d00ab4bcdd02510be91%7C0%7C0%7C637835634547679283%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=TcIatkBqYoFkS%2FDwbCz%2F%2BQ2Rui5CgFUj8NqqTRgYOHs%3D&reserved=0), who is himself blind, Penny Forward exists to close the financial intelligence gap for people who are blind or who experience vision loss. By closing this gap, Peterson believes that poverty, unemployment and under-employment levels which are endemic for blind people can finally begin to be addressed. “We have been talking about the 70% unemployment rate within the blind community for decades,” says Peterson. “So far, progress to reduce that number has been slow. On the other hand, [studies have shown that financial education programs make a difference](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.finrafoundation.org%2Fsites%2Ffinrafoundation%2Ffiles%2FDoes-State-Mandated-Financial-Education-Affect-High-Cost-Borrowing_0_0_0.pdf&data=04%7C01%7Cmstores%40iu.edu%7Cad8c0dfa49c14176c19108da0c2154fe%7C1113be34aed14d00ab4bcdd02510be91%7C0%7C0%7C637835634547679283%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=1ycHSEqNOMaEij%2FeqGS4MAG27V6OP9AHpE3fIUAFjx4%3D&reserved=0), [especially when they focus on the unique needs of minority communities](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.possiblefinance.com%2Fblog%2Ffinancial-literacy-statistics%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cmstores%40iu.edu%7Cad8c0dfa49c14176c19108da0c2154fe%7C1113be34aed14d00ab4bcdd02510be91%7C0%7C0%7C637835634547679283%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=JsCtxgphfXzztf1WLAfuVlJ5f4sAkBaJUEFIDkYfH8I%3D&reserved=0), so this is our way of helping our community build the skills we need to improve our financial health ourselves. Once we do that, we will be able to eliminate debt, save money, and build the personal wealth that will give us the resilience to weather hard times, take advantage of rare opportunities, and generously support causes we deeply care about.”

Unlike most online education platforms, the Penny Forward platform was designed from the ground up to meet the unique needs of people who are blind or have low vision. Every webpage is optimized to be accessible for people who use assistive technologies such as screen magnification and software that reads text aloud and/or reproduces the text in tactile braille characters. Says Peterson, “Even as I was developing the curriculum for our first online course, I had to deal with many websites that were difficult or impossible to navigate with assistive technology. Our goal is to remove those barriers so our members can focus on their financial health rather than simply trying to navigate the screen.”

[Penny Forward](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpennyforward.com%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cmstores%40iu.edu%7Cad8c0dfa49c14176c19108da0c2154fe%7C1113be34aed14d00ab4bcdd02510be91%7C0%7C0%7C637835634547679283%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=SR1ycbEdc7S1NPSY8FiCQUq8vK5DHugTx8DoeZFlO80%3D&reserved=0) offers $9 monthly and $99 annual memberships, and members can take advantage of self-paced, online [financial education courses](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpennyforward.com%2Fcourses&data=04%7C01%7Cmstores%40iu.edu%7Cad8c0dfa49c14176c19108da0c2154fe%7C1113be34aed14d00ab4bcdd02510be91%7C0%7C0%7C637835634547679283%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=%2B31ff0%2FPUS178oZCh%2F1uTKC8crKlygrpbxrCcf6mofM%3D&reserved=0), regularly-scheduled group discussions held virtually, and access to one to one coaching services—all designed to help members improve their financial health.

In celebration of the current 2022 tax season, Penny Forward’s first online class, ["Taking On Taxes: A Beginner’s Guide To The Foreign Language Of Taxes"](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpennyforward.com%2Fcourses%2Ftaking-on-taxes-a-beginners-guide-to-the-foreign-language-of-taxes%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cmstores%40iu.edu%7Cad8c0dfa49c14176c19108da0c2154fe%7C1113be34aed14d00ab4bcdd02510be91%7C0%7C0%7C637835634547679283%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=OTzgzXG0Mc9o3B1GEgOTLt%2B6wsgIJKw4OBI4es6ar3E%3D&reserved=0), covers basic tax concepts and how to complete and file a tax return as a blind person. Classes on budgeting, wise credit usage, and saving and investing will be added by the end of the year, with more classes and membership benefits to follow.

### About Penny Forward

Founded in 2021, Penny Forward, Inc. is a Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation whose mission is to help blind people confidently navigate the landscape of personal finance through education, mentoring, and mutual support. They envision a world where blind people have the resources to weather hard times, take advantage of rare opportunities, and generously support causes they deeply care about. More information about Penny Forward’s mission, vision, and team is available at the [Penny Forward website](https://pennyforward.com/) (https://pennyforward.com/).

Contact Information for the 2022 Board of Directors

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SCAVI: Dolly Sowder, Bedford

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NOTE: Mention of products and services in this newsletter is for informational purposes only and does not imply endorsement of any such product of service by the American Council of the Blind of Indiana.

## Membership Application

Persons interested in becoming a member or renewing their membership can do so in two ways:

1. Join or renew membership through the [Annual Membership page](https://acb-indiana.org/membership/) on our website (https://acb-indiana.org/membership/)
2. Send the following application form with a check for $7, payable to ACBI, to Cindy Brooking, 676 VFW Road, Mitchell, Indiana 47446

Name:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

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City/State/Zip:

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Phone Number:

(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address:

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Occupation:

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Newsletter Format Preference:

\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_ Audiocassette\_\_\_\_ Large Print \_\_\_\_ Computer Disk

Blind or visually impaired? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_no

Free Matter for the Blind

ACB of Indiana

ATTN: Donald Koors

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