



Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter

Conference Copy

At-a-Glance

2026 Penn-Del AER Conference
Magnifying Our Voices: Maximizing Our Impact
April 15 – 17, 2026



Wednesday, April 15, 2026

11:00 am, Registration, Central Hallway

Session 1 – Wednesday 1:00–2:30 pm – General Session

Welcome

Greg Lazur, Penn-Del AER Chapter President

Maria Lepore-Stevens, Penn-Del AER Chapter Conference Committee Chair

Keynote Address — From Losing Sight to Finding Voice: The People, Purpose, and Possibility Behind Rehabilitation

Steve Baskis, Founder and President, Blind Endeavors Foundation

Penn-Del AER Chapter Meeting Part One

Memorial Ceremony

Room: Central A & B

Beverage Break – 2:30–2:50 pm

Central Hallway

Session 2 – Wednesday 2:50–4:05 pm – Concurrent Sessions

A Specialized Roundtable — Strengthening Continuity Between TVI, O&M, VRT Services — Davis, Central A

When Behavior Is Communication: What Educators of Students with CHARGE Need to Know — Kutzura and Berger, Central B

Blind Sports Changes Lives. Period — Schneider, Central C

Building a Foundation for the Tactile Journey — Weaver, Central D & E

Practical Instruction, Tools, and Strategies: Visual Access for Learners with Cortical/Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI) — Ramella and Perkins, Keystone

Session 3 — Wednesday 4:15–5:30 pm — Concurrent Sessions

Who's on First, Rules or Understanding? Best Practices for Teaching Uncontrolled Crossings — Sauerburger and Troisi, Central A

Studying the Neural Basis of Braille Literacy and Numeracy — McCarthy and D'Andrea, Central B

ADA Title II: Your Role in Digital Accessibility — Gerhart and Knaub, Central C

Techniques and Adaptations to Increase Participation in Physical Education and Sport for Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired — Fagan and Stringfellow, Central D & E

Teaching Low Vision Computer Accessibility Tools to Resistant Learners — Laplante, Keystone

Wednesday Evening, April 15, 2026

Dinner on your own

4:30–7:00 pm — Silent Auction, Cameron

Browse items available in the Silent Auction. Bidding starts at 4:30 pm on Wednesday and ends at 5:30 pm on Thursday.

5:30–7:00 pm — University Socials

Drexel University, Elkins Park Campus (formerly Salus University), Atrium
University of Pittsburgh, McClay Room

7:30–9:00 pm — Meet and Greet Reception, Central D & E

Thursday Morning, April 16, 2026

7:00 am — Registration, Central Hallway

7:00–8:15 am — Early Bird Breakfast Buffet, Central Hallway

9:00 am–5:30 pm — Silent Auction, Cameron. Bid on the tempting wares that are up for grabs! Bidding ends promptly at 5:30 pm.

9:00 am–5:00 pm — Exhibitor Hall, Heritage (Exhibitor Hall closed during lunch)

8:15 am–5:00 pm — All-Day Coffee Station sponsored by Alpha Sensory, Hallway by Heritage

Session 4 – Thursday 8:15–9:30 am – Concurrent Sessions

Pre-Service Professional Roundtable Including TVI, O&M, VRT, and CATIS —
Moderator: Love, Central A

Section 504 Or IEP? BOTH; and the ADA Makes Three! — Cook Walker, Central B

Wiggle Seats, Fidgets, and Chewies—Oh My! A Discussion Regarding Sensory
Processing and Efficiency in Children with Complex Medical Needs — DiLeo,
DiVito, and Stoyanoff, Central C

Smart Cooking: Integrating Alexa-Powered Appliances into Vision Rehabilitation
Training — Ginter and Lilly, Central D & E

Enhancing Water Safety and Participation for Individuals with Visual Impairments:
Strategies for Inclusive Aquatic Instruction — Rawlins and Lepore-Stevens,
Keystone Room then Move to Hotel Swimming Pool Area

Beverage Break – 9:30–10:00 am

Central Hallway

Session 5 – Thursday 10:00 am–12:00 pm – General Session

Gold Level Sponsorship Spotlights Featuring: AlphaSensory, Dancing Dots, and
Touchable

Mid-Note Address — Advancements in Vision Restoration: Clinical Insights and
Expert Q&A

Dr. Will Smith III, OD

Assistant Professor in the Department of Ophthalmology and Director of Low
Vision / Vision Rehabilitation Services at UPMC

Penn-Del AER Chapter Meeting Part Two

Room: Central A & B

Thursday Afternoon, April 16, 2026

Lunch and Dessert – Thursday 12:00–1:00 pm

Lunch Buffet, Central C, D, & E (Exhibitor Hall closed during lunch)

Coffee and Dessert will be served in the Exhibitor Hall in Heritage and in the Poster
Session in Central A

Session 6 – Thursday 1:00–2:15 pm – Exhibitor and Poster Session

Poster Session – Central A

Exhibitor Session – Heritage

Session 7 – Thursday 2:25–3:40 pm – Concurrent Sessions

O&M Roundtable – Moderator: Williams, Central A

Using the ECC to Create Meaningful Learning Opportunities for Learners Who Are Deafblind – Miller and Petry, Central B

The Growing Pains of Adulthood: Empowering Young Adults with Visual Impairments Through Lifelong Health and Wellness – Searfass and Binck, Central C

Beyond the Curriculum: Addressing the Emotional Reality of Vision Loss – Tellis, Aschenbrenner, and Stacherski, Central D & E

Going Beyond Board Games: Building Social Skills, Communication, and Relationships in Group Game Play – Przybyla and Wilson, Harris Room

Beverage Break – 3:40–4:00 pm

Central Hallway

Session 8 – Thursday 4:00–5:15 pm – Concurrent Sessions

Educators' Roundtable – Moderators: Cacchio Henry and Pedrick, Central A

NSITE's Building Professional Behaviors (BPS) Program: Investing in Professional and Personal Development for Adult Clients to Achieve Lasting Career Success – Vasile, Haegeli, and Leathers, Central B

The Things You Find in Your Student's Braille – Weber and Weaver, Central C

Bridging the Gap Between Camper/Athlete and Leader as a Tool for Transition – Musgrove, Rearick, and Lepore, Central D & E

Enhancing Independence: Meta Glasses in O&M Instruction – Bass and McGeachy, Harris Room

Thursday Evening, April 16, 2026

5:15–6:15 pm – Kutztown University Social, O'Reilly's Pub Patio

Penn-Del AER Awards Banquet and Ceremony, Central C, D, & E

Doors open at 6:15 pm; Banquet at 6:30 pm; and Ceremony follows dinner.

Awards Reception, following the Awards Banquet until 10:00 pm, Cash Bar in Lobby Bar. Join us as we toast our 2026 award recipients!

Friday, April 17, 2026

7:00 am — Registration, Central Hallway

7:00–8:15 am — Early Bird Breakfast Buffet, Central Hallway

Session 9 — Friday 8:15–9:30 am — Concurrent Sessions

I-M-ABLE: Sharing Our Teaching and Our Learners' Experiences — Wormsley, Perdziola, Petry, and Barnes, Central A

Voices Amplified: AI Strategies for Inclusive Education — Cacchio Henry and Pedrick, Room: Central B

The Loss of a Guide Dog—Adjusting Your Independence, Emotion, Healing — Army, Central C

Supporting Vulnerable Populations in School Emergencies: Practical Strategies for Inclusive Preparedness — Vanatta, Central D & E

Braille Literacy for VRTs: Supporting Adult Braille Learners with Confidence — Davis, Heritage

Break — 9:30–9:45 am

Central Hallway

Session 10 — Friday 9:45–11:00 am — Concurrent Sessions

Creating Mini-Museums and Adapting Tactile Art Exhibits Using 3D Technology and Non-Traditional Materials for Blind and Visually Impaired Children — Demchuk, Central A

APH Tactile Communications: Symbols for Communication Beyond the Schedule Board — Vargas and Whelan, Central B

Wearable Tech: Clinical Applications of Ray-Ban Meta Smart Glasses — Ciccarone and Krueemling, Central C

Perspectives on Digital Content Access: Amplifying the Voices of Key Stakeholders to Maximize the Education of Blind and Low Vision Students — Lueders, Central D & E

Break — 11:00–11:15 am

Central Hallway

Session 11 — Friday 11:15 am–12:30 pm — General Session

Closing Session — Heritage Room

Footnote Address — The State of the Field Today

Facilitator: Dr. Rebecca Renshaw

Panel Members: Lee Nasehi, Mark Richert, Paul Schroeder

Penn-Del AER Chapter Meeting Part Three and Conference Wrap-Up

Gregory Lazur, Penn-Del AER Chapter President

Maria Lepore-Stevens, Penn-Del AER Chapter Conference Committee Chair

Session Evaluation Form QR Code and Link



Penn-Del AER asks that you take a minute or two of your time after each session to complete a session evaluation for each session using the [Session Evaluation Form](#). This feedback informs both the presenters and Penn-Del AER Conference Planning Committee so that all may continue to offer valuable and meaningful professional development.

The Pennsylvania-Delaware Chapter of the Association for Education & Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (Penn-Del AER) supports professionals who provide education & rehabilitation services to people with visual impairments.

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