

Welcome to the Association of Visual Rehabilitation Therapists (AVRT) Newsletter

We are a professional organization primarily made up of Visual Rehabilitation Therapists across the nation. We have an annual conference where one can earn credits toward re-certification through ACVREP.

The 2019 conference will be in Jacksonville, Florida on December 5, 6, 7. More information can be found in the pages of this newsletter or at www.avrt.org.

**Pam Holloway, CVRT
Newsletter editor**



AVRT



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*Association of Vision
Rehabilitation Therapists*

Summer 2019 Edition *July 31, 2019*

Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists

Newsletter

Summer 2019

Visit our Website at www.avrt.org

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Editor's Note

Dear Fellow Rehab Professionals:

Wow, here it is near the time for school to begin in many parts of the country. It seems as though summer is going by quickly. I am enjoying the nice weather with the beautiful flowers and shrubs all around town. In a couple of months, the weather will change and the beautiful colors of fall will paint the landscape. I guess what I am trying to say is that there is continuous change around us.

As the seasons continue to change, the annual AVRT conference is quickly approaching! It is December 4th through the 6th. It is in beautiful Jacksonville, Florida! While much of the country will be dealing with snow and cold weather, you will be enjoying the ocean and beaches while learning new topics on blindness and networking with other professionals! An added benefit is CEU credits for ACVREP credit!

This issue of the AVRT newsletter is the annual conference edition. It includes an agenda at a glance, information concerning registration, and information about the hotel and surrounding attractions.

Mark your calendar! You will not want to miss this wonderful conference!

Remember, you can also find additional information and register on www.avrt.org. I am looking forward to seeing you in Jacksonville!

Just as a reminder:

The deadline for the fall issue is October 15, 2019. Please consider submitting articles dealing with eye research, teaching techniques,

new products, announcements, news from the field, technology news and updates, recipes, etc.

**Sincerely,
Pam Holloway, CVRT, Newsletter Editor**

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President's Message

“What a Conference Means To Me”

Hello. I hope you are doing well and enjoying your summer. I am very excited that registration for the 2019 AVRT Professional Development Conference in Jacksonville, FL, December 5-7 recently opened. Plans are underway to provide outstanding opportunities to enhance your knowledge and resources as well as connect with fellow professionals in the field of vision rehabilitation therapy. Jane Thompson, AVRT Vice President and Conference Chair, along with her conference planning team, is hard at work on finalizing the many details which go into making a conference a success. This issue of the newsletter provides information on registration and highlights the conference.

I think back to 1992 when I attended my first conference of the Mid-America Conference of Rehabilitation Teachers (one of the two organizations which joined to become the Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists). I was a student at Northern Illinois University and not very familiar with other professionals in the field. I was blown away by the valuable information presented in the sessions and the kindness of those attending to welcome upcoming VRTs. There was a real sense of camaraderie and a desire to learn about resources and techniques to better serve those who are blind or visually impaired. It also let me know there was a network of professionals across the country who were there for support and encouragement. I learned that the leaders in the field were very kind, personable and approachable. I also learned that anyone has the potential to become a leader. It energized me and my enthusiasm for the profession.

Over the years, the conference has continued to give me a sense of rejuvenation and helped me further develop my understanding and skills in a variety of areas. The information, which all focuses

on the work of VRTs, is very practical and can be put to use immediately.

The connections I have made throughout the years have also been wonderful. Whether it was knowing who to contact with a question about a certain topic, knowing someone to collaborate with on a project, having someone to bounce ideas off of, or knowing who to talk with for creative inspiration and encouragement, I have gotten to know some extremely talented, dedicated folks. I also remember lots of fun times getting together for meals during the after-conference hours.

The AVRT conference is truly a highlight of my year. I look forward to learning what other agencies and professionals are doing, brainstorming about how to address the critical issues facing our profession and the work we do, and building connections with familiar friends as well as new ones. I hope you will join us in Jacksonville and will encourage others to attend. It is an experience you will cherish for many years to come!

Kind regards,
Jennifer Ottowitz, CVRT
President, AVRT

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2019 AVRT Professional Development Conference **in Jacksonville, FL**

The city of Jacksonville, Florida began to grow in the late 18th century as Cow Ford, settled by British colonists. ... Since 1940, Jacksonville has also been a major port for the United States Navy. The city is a thriving metropolis with over a million citizens. During December 5-7, 2019, there will be a lot more hustle and bustle in Jacksonville, thanks to the AVRT Professional Development Conference attendees!

Our conference this year is going to be full of informative, educational and entertaining content. The conference will not disappoint, as you will leave Jacksonville with tools that you can put to use the day you get back to your consumers. This year we will start each day off with an inspiring, motivational, educational and informative session to set the tone for your day. Please take a few minutes to review the Agenda at a Glance to see what is in store for you and your colleagues. We hope you get as excited as we are!

Located in the vibrant downtown area on south bank of St. John's River, Doubletree by Hilton Jacksonville Riverfront offers a modern experience for the discerning business or leisure traveler. This top pick among hotels in Jacksonville, FL has 293 upscale accommodations; multiple dining options, including Ruth's Chris Steak House; a new connectivity zone to keep business travelers linked in; Hilton Honors Digital Key technology; an expanded Precor fitness studio, and large riverfront pool and sundeck.

Highlights

- Riverfront hotel in downtown Jacksonville, near shops, dining and historic attractions
- Beautiful guest rooms and suites with walk-out balconies offering exceptional views

- Two restaurants and a lounge, including [Ruth's Chris Steak House](#)
- 24-hour fitness center, outdoor swimming pool and terrace with loungers and tables

What to Do Around Here

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Jacksonville Riverfront's central location makes it easy to discover the best of what downtown Jacksonville has to offer. View exhibits at the Museum of Science and History, before stopping at Friendship Fountain to take in great city views. Visit downtown Jacksonville on the first Wednesday of the month to experience the Art Walk – a regular event which spans a 15 block radius, and features live music, arts markets and food vendors.

Treat the kids to a fun day out at Jacksonville Zoo or Sweet Pete's, Jacksonville's only all-natural candy store, in the heart of historic Springfield. Discover shopping, dining and entertainment opportunities right on the edge of St. John's River at Jacksonville Landing. Learn about Jacksonville's naval history at the Jacksonville Maritime Heritage Center, or spend the day at a beautiful local beach. Enjoy easy access to premier sports and entertainment venues like EverBank Field and Jacksonville Memorial Arena.

Conference Registration is Open!

You can register for the conference starting now! We have special rates this year for early bird, AVRT Member rates, and student and retiree rates. We are doing all we can to make this an affordable educational experience for our attendees. Conference registration includes two meals!

Go to www.avrt.org to register now!

Hotel Reservation Information

Lodging for this year's conference has been secured at the DoubleTree Jacksonville Riverfront, 1201 Riverplace Boulevard, Jacksonville, Florida 32207.

Room rates:

\$129/night single/double occupancy plus tax

\$149/night triple occupancy plus tax

\$169/night quad occupancy plus tax

To make reservations:

By phone (available 24 hours a day) to 1-800-222-8733 (and be sure to ask for "AVRT Assoc Vision Rehabilitation" or Group Code AVR).

By Internet—Copy and paste the Booking Link below into your preferred browser:

https://secure3.hilton.com/en_US/dt/reservation/book.htm?inputModule=HOTEL&ctyhocn=JAXJRDT&spec_plan=CDTAVR&arrival=20191203&departure=20191208&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT

*****Be sure to copy and paste the entire link (it may be multiple lines long) in order for it to work properly*****

Reservation Cut-off Date – Reservations must be made before midnight on 11/4/2019 to get special conference rates.

For more information about this hotel, please visit

www.doubletreejax.com.

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Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists

Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (AVRT)

AGENDA AT A GLANCE

Wednesday, December 4, 2019

6:00 PM – 9:00 PM **AVRT Board Meeting
(AVRT Board Members Only)**

Thursday, December 5, 2019

8:00 AM – 3:00 PM **Registration Open**

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM **Welcome**

9:00 AM – 10:30 AM **Keynote Address: Resources
+Knowledge = Independence,
Joy Bieder and Sue Dalton**

10:45 AM – 11:45 PM **Break Out Sessions (3)**
**VRT and Low Vision “What you Need to Know,” Amy
Katherine Wolff**
**Functional Barriers Associated with Hand and Upper
Extremity Conditions, Margaret Beckley**
Alexa the VRT, Steven Kelley

12:00 PM – 1:15 PM **Lunch – Business Meeting**

AER Town Hall – Janie Blome

- 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM** **Break Out Sessions (2)**
One Touch Self-Defense Training for the Blind and VI, Annette Jakse
Adjustment to Blindness, Carolyn Harris
- 2:45 PM – 3:45 PM** **Break Out Sessions (2)**
Hadley 2.0, Jennifer Ottowitz and Marc Arneson
How Contrast , Lighting and Filters can Help in the Learning Environment, Justine Taylor
- 4:00 PM – 4:50 PM** **General Session**
Predictors of Employment of Adults with Deaf Blindness, Ian Shadrack
- 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM** **Presidents Reception**

Friday, December 6, 2019

- 8:00 AM** **Exhibits Open**
- 8:30 AM – 9:15 AM** **Morning Updates**
Exhibit Reviews
- 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM** **University Programs Update and Offerings Moderator, Lachelle Smith**
- 10:45 AM – 11:45 AM** **Exhibit Visits**
- 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM** **Lunch Awards Banquet**
- 1:45 PM – 2:15 PM** **Exhibit Visits and Review, Linda Fugate**

development opportunity—which is also a perfect way to obtain continuing education credits! We encourage you to share this information with your colleagues. Please feel free to contact me with any questions. We look forward to seeing you in Florida!

For more information, please contact:

Jane E. Thompson, VP

AVRT Conference Coordinator

800-223-1839 Ext. 370 / jthompson@aph.org

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Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists

The Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (AVRT) is pleased to offer the following three grants:

- \$250 stipend to a first-time attendee to the 2019 AVRT conference which will be held December 5 – 7, 2019 in Jacksonville, Florida.
- \$300 stipend for someone obtaining their certification or recertification as a vision rehabilitation therapist from ACVREP. This stipend is awarded to someone who will obtain certification/recertification between the dates of September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020.
- \$500 scholarship to a student in a university training program studying to become a vision rehabilitation therapist.

Applications for the above are attached. The deadlines for submitting applications are as follows:

- Stipend for first-time conference attendee = August 15, 2019
- Stipend for certification/recertification = August 15, 2019
- Scholarship for university training program = August 15, 2019

Applications for the stipends and the scholarship must be postmarked or received electronically by August 15, 2019.

Please share this information with others. We are pleased to help support the efforts for continued professional development in the field. Please direct any questions to Dr. Linda Fugate, Scholarship Chair at: linda.fugate@rehab.alabama.gov.

Thank you,
Dr. Linda Fugate, CVRT, 2019 Scholarship Chair

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2019 Annual Training Conference

STIPEND APPLICATION

Assistance to attend the 2019 AVRT Conference

Members, Students or other professionals may apply for a stipend of \$250.00. This stipend applies to persons wishing to attend the Annual AVRT Conference for the **FIRST TIME**. The conference will be held December 5 – 7, 2019 in Jacksonville, Florida. Deadline for application is August 15, 2019.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

Tell us about yourself and your current situation.

Provide a brief description or explanation of your experience in the field of blindness. Include information outlining your current job activities.

Please explain how attending the AVRT conference will help you in your career in vision rehabilitation therapy or an associated profession and how this stipend will help.

Application must be postmarked or received electronically by August 15, 2019. The recipient will be notified on or before September 1, 2019.

**Address application to:
The Scholarship Committee
c/o Dr. Linda Fugate
ADRS
2419 Gordon Smith Dr.
Mobile, AL 36617**

**Or email to:
linda.fugate@rehab.alabama.gov**

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2019 Annual Training Conference

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

The Associations of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists is pleased to announce the 2019 Scholarship. Students working towards a degree in vision rehabilitation therapy at a university program may apply for a \$500.00 scholarship. The scholarship will be presented at the 2019 Annual Training conference to be held in December 2019 in Jacksonville, Florida. Please note the deadline of August 15, 2019.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

1. What school are you attending?

2. Degree sought:

3. How did you become aware of the scholarship?

__ School Administration

__ Website

__ Teacher

__ Friend

__ Other (specify)

4. AVRT member? ___Yes ___No

5. AER member? ___Yes ___No

6. List schools attended or special training programs in which you have been enrolled; include dates of attendance.

Do you have another a degree?

B.A.:

Masters:

PhD:

Other:

7. Write a brief autobiographical sketch about yourself (approximately 200 to 300 words)

8. Describe how you became interested in working with persons who are blind or visually impaired. (Approximately 200 to 300 words)

9. Do you have other related experiences that you feel will help you in your work as a VRT? List any volunteer work or job experiences related to work as a VRT.

10. Describe your financial needs.

Previous or Current Grants:

Previous Awards:

Previous or Current Stipends:

Previous or Current Loans:

Vocational Rehabilitation Funds:

Other Scholarships:

***Additional pages may be attached, for questions 6-10, for complete responses to the questions.**

Applications for the scholarship must be postmarked or received electronically by August 15, 2019.

AVRT committee members will review all applications. The scholarship recipient will be notified on or before September 15, 2019 and will be announced at the 2019 AVRT Training Conference.

Submit completed application with two (2) letters of reference to:

The Scholarship Committee

C/o Dr. Linda Fugate

ADRS

2419 Gordon Smith Dr.

Mobile, AL 36617

Or email to:

linda.fugate@rehab.alabama.gov

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The Charlyn Allen Award

Charlyn Allen worked in the field of rehabilitation teaching for the state of Missouri for approximately 35 years. The last 10 years she was supervisor for the Missouri Bureau for the Blind. Mrs. Allen was president of MACRT, then MCHT, in the late 1950s; she then assumed a leadership role in all of MACRT's conferences as well as other groups relative to rehabilitation teaching of persons with visual impairment.

MACRT named this award in honor of Charlyn Allen, a remarkable woman who happened to be blind, who exemplified dedication and service to the rehabilitation of persons who are blind. This award is presented annually at our training conference awards lunch.

Criteria:

A nominee shall be an ACVREP-certified vision rehabilitation therapist.

A nominee should demonstrate outstanding professionalism and service to the field.

A nominee shall be a member of AVRT.

Nominations for the Charlyn Allen Award should be sent to Pam Holloway, CVRT committee chair at pholloway@okdrs.gov. The deadline is October 25, 2019.

Alice Raftary Emerging Leader Award

This award was named in honor of Alice Raftary in recognition of her continuous mentoring and support of new professionals to the VRT profession, and her years of dedicated work both within the field and the organization. Alice was a true legend, a wonderful

mentor and an inspiration to many professionals. Her story can be found in the APH Hall of Fame.

Purpose:

The award shall be presented to an individual who has potential for exceptional leadership and is expected to provide a unique and lasting contribution to the field of Vision Rehabilitation Therapy.

Criteria:

- A nominee shall be an ACREVP-certified vision rehabilitation therapist.
- A nominee should have no more than three years of VRT direct professional service.
- A nominee should demonstrate outstanding professionalism and service to the field.
- A nominee shall be a member of AVRT.

Nominating Procedures:

- All nominations should include biographical information, education and training, employment, leadership qualities, contributions and achievements.
- A supervisor or professional mentor should submit the nomination.
- If possible, a copy of the nominee's curriculum vitae or resume should be included.
- The Awards Committee shall select the award recipient based on nominations provided.
- Nominations must be submitted to the Awards Committee Chair.

Nominations for the Alice Raftary award should be sent to Pamela Holloway CVRT, awards chair, at pholloway@okdrs.gov. The deadline is October 25, 2019.

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AVRT Academic Excellence Award Presented to Salus Student
By Jennifer Ottowitz, CVRT

AVRT has long been committed to supporting the efforts to expand the field of vision rehabilitation therapy. In addition to presenting a scholarship to a student pursuing education in the field of vision rehabilitation therapy through a university training program, we are excited to offer a new award, the AVRT Academic Excellence Award, to the graduating student with the highest grade point average in the vision rehabilitation therapy program at Salus University.

We are pleased to work with the Salus University College of Education and Rehabilitation to present the 2019 AVRT Academic Excellence Award in Vision Rehabilitation Therapy to Theresa Marie Tarantino. Teri received a \$100 cash award along with a one-year membership to AVRT. She is from New Jersey and received her degree in May, 2019. She is now employed full-time as a VRT with the New Jersey Commission for the Blind. Our congratulations to Teri for all her hard work and best wishes with her new position.

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Setting Boundaries
Submitted by Elyse Heinrich

I hope you know that it's ok to choose yourself.
It's ok to walk away from those who do not value your worth.
It's ok to be intentional with your energy and what you invest it in.
It's ok to say "no."
It's ok to say, "this is enough, because I am enough."
You are allowed to protect your peace.
You are allowed to create a safe space for yourself.
You are allowed to create boundaries.
Please do not be afraid of creating boundaries in fear of forming walls.
Walls keep everyone out — boundaries allow the right ones in.
The people who belong in your life will inherently strengthen the lines you draw instead of intentionally crossing them.
Do not bend your circle for those who continue to break it.
Do not change the rhythm of your heart in order to feel their love.
Do not compromise what's important to you in order to feel important to them.
Be brave enough to set clear boundaries and love yourself enough to honor them.

elyseh@hadley.edu

Learning Expert

Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI)

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“TECH IT OUT”
Helen Hahn, CTVI/CVRT
Braille and Academics Instructor
Alphapointe, Kansas City

A colleague of mine introduced me to the link for these wonderful monthly discussion podcasts, sponsored by the Hadley Institute for the Blind. “Tech It Out” is a monthly discussion podcast, and it covers a myriad of subjects, from online shopping, restaurant delivery, health and wellness, and so much more!

Each of the discussions from the past are archived, and they are easily retrievable. There is an audio file for each one, as well as a complete text transcription for each podcast. I love the text component. I was able to emboss parts of a podcast, and I read it to a group of clients.

It sparked discussion, and many ideas and opinions were shared. We all learned so much because there is so much valuable information, and consumers may use what they have learned, immediately. I also like the ability to emboss because it gives my braille students an excellent opportunity to learn relevant information while practicing their braille skills.

I am grateful that my colleague shared this fantastic resource with me. Yes, I am really jazzed about it, so I encourage you to check out the link below to learn for yourself! I guarantee, you will be glad you did!!!

<https://hadley.edu/discussions/techtitout.asp>

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From the Editor's Kitchen

Funyun Fried Chicken Submitted by Helen Hahn

Our students made this recipe during Cooking Club at Alphapointe, and they were a HUGE hit. Warning: They are messy to prepare, and they leave the air fryer a mess, too. However, they are so yummy that you won't mind the cleaning.

Ingredients

About six to eight chicken tenderloins—full-sized chicken strips
1 bag of Fynyuns
1 small container of seasoned mayonnaise

Directions

Preheat Air Fryer to 400 degrees.
Put Fynyuns in a plastic zip lock bag and crush to a fine powder.
Coat chicken tenderloins with seasoned mayonnaise.
Dip chicken into Fynyuns, coating both sides.
Place chicken in Air Fryer in one layer.
Cook for thirty minutes until chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 degrees.
Remove chicken from fryer with tongs. Let cool slightly before eating.

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Crispy Baked Chicken Tenders
Submitted by Pam Holloway, CVRT

Ingredients

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken tenders
1/2 cup plain yogurt (I used 2% Fage)
1/2 tablespoon harissa (or other hot sauce of your choice; certified gluten-free if necessary)
1 1/2 cups unsweetened brown rice cereal (certified gluten-free if necessary)
1 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted
1/2 teaspoon dried parsley
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1/4 teaspoon ground pepper

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet or stone with parchment and a wire rack.

In a shallow medium bowl, stir together the yogurt and harissa until well-blended.

Place the brown rice cereal in a plastic baggie and pound/smash to crush. Once your cereal is crushed, add it to a shallow bowl with the sesame seeds, parsley, garlic powder, sea salt and pepper. Dredge the chicken tenders in the yogurt mixture, wiping off any excess and then dip them into the brown rice cereal mixture. Roll until tender is covered completely. Place the cereal-coated tenders on the wire rack on the baking sheet.

Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown and chicken is completely cooked through. Remove tenders from the oven and allow to cool slightly before serving.

Nutrition Information

Serves: 4 | Serving Size: 4 tenders

**Per serving: Calories: 172; Total Fat: 2g; Saturated Fat: 0g;
Monounsaturated Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 47mg; Sodium: 585mg;
Carbohydrate: 12g; Dietary**

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