

Hawaii Association of the Blind Newsletter

December 1, 2023

Upcoming Events

Jingle Bells Jingle bells Holo Holo we will go

Announcing the next Holoholo event on December 15. We are meeting at Foodland Farms at Kamakana Ali'i. Handivan drop off and pick up is 91-5431 Kapolei Parkway Suite 1704, which is in front of the Foodland Farms. We are meeting 4:00-7:00

pm Anyone is welcome to shop at Foodland Farms and the mall. More details about the mall will be provided later. Encouraging everyone to attend and get

familiar with new places, practice mobility skills, learn about accessible apps that may help your shopping and mobility experience. For more information

or to RSVP please contact Sherrie (808)5615968 or Anthony Akamine (808)372-2225.

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RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD VENDORS OF AMERICA

SAGEBRUSH 2024 NATIONAL BEP TRAINING CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

With the Theme "Sagebrush 2024: Teaming up to Tackle the ins and outs of Randolph-Sheppard business", the RSVA® Sagebrush National BEP Training Conference

begins on Monday, February 12 with Sagebrush registration at 5 pm and the welcome reception at 7 PM. The conference ends on Friday, February 16 with our

special "You don't have to see it to tee it" golf outing.

The seminar sessions cover topics from business and entrepreneur related topics, technology updates, using AI for business, as well as specific Randolph-Sheppard facility information and updates. Registrants have the opportunity again to earn Continuing Education credits - please spread the word.

With so many unique events and conversations, expect to enjoy the conference!!! The conference will be held at the Golden Nugget Hotel in downtown Las

Vegas, a Four-Star Conference Center. Room reservations must be made directly with the hotel. NOTE: Special Sagebrush room rates apply Monday, February

12, 2024, through Saturday, February 17, 2024. Since Monday is overflow from the Super Bowl, the rate is slightly higher that night. There are much higher

rates if you wish to stay at the Golden Nugget before Monday, February 12. Rates differ from tower to tower. A fee for one night's stay will be charged

when you register for your room. For hotel reservations, please call 1-800-331-5731. When booking reservations over the phone, it is essential to give

the group code:

GSRSV24 to ensure the group rates and other amenities are applied. To book online: go to

<https://goldennugget.reztrip.com/ext/promoRate?property=1115mode=bpm=truesr=843490&vr=3>

All who attend the event in person and register by January 1 will have their name entered into a drawing for a free in person registration for the 2025

event. Conference updates will be placed on the RSV[®] website:

www.randolph-sheppard.org.

For further information or to receive the registration form for the conference, contact RSV[®] by email:

rsva@randolph-sheppard.org

or call 303-963-5153.

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A Life Transplant

(Not Just a Kidney)

By Sharon Ige

It all started with prayers for a new kidney for James and now here we are!

He was finally on the kidney active list so we decided to take the leap of faith that it would happen sooner than later. He moved in with me to Pearl

City in May as I would be his caregiver after the surgery. One requirement is that he have a clean place to stay after the transplant as well as someone

to watch over him 24 hours a day for the first few months. We were glad that we had a chance to go to the national convention in Illinois since we will

not be allowed to travel for at least a year. God is so good!

Fast forward to present...

James got his new kidney on October 18th and so far, he is doing well. As the nurse put it he has "choke shi shi" which is a good sign. He is walking around and Cooking (thank goodness).

Here is how two blind people are doing what needs to be done post-transplant.

James takes his weight everyday with our talking scale. He takes his temperature with our talking thermometer and monitors his blood pressure at least

five times a day with our talking machine. No wonder he can't handle my talking...blah, blah, blah. With his little eyesight, he is able to read the glucose

numbers every time he eats. We are keeping track of the medications with our pen friend. The transplant pharmacist said we are doing better than the sighted folk (Ha ha). We punch in James' data 5 times a day in a excel log using JAWS which we can forward directly to James' doctors. We use our phones to stay connected with the transplant team and to record notes and reminders as needed.

Transportation was going to be one of our biggest challenges since we would be heading out to the kidney transplant center for follow-up appointments possibly

three times a week. Not to mention the twice a week blood draws. The transplant team asked that we do not ride the Han divan because it is a shared ride

and possibility of germs. We assessed the situation and decided that Uber was the best choice. Of course, we also have family and friends who offer rides

and we take them up on it! However, it would be a financial hardship. We are so thankful for a grant we applied for through HAB to assist us with this

huge expense. It has taken so much stress off us financially but also because we do not have to coordinate and ask for rides 4 times a week and double

that since we have to come home too. Thank you HAB!!!

We will not be able to be at in person functions being that we have to avoid crowds because of James' lowered immune system. It is almost nonexistent

as this is necessary so the body does not reject the new kidney. Isn't our body amazing? Of course, we can still sell chili tickets and help with Thanksmas

from home, right?

When we went to the orientation the transplant team was skeptical about two blind people being able to handle all that needed to be done after the kidney

transplant. We didn't blame them as these donated kidneys are precious. To be truthful I was overwhelmed at times just thinking about it.

We are slowly getting into a rhythm and learning to be flexible as nothing ever stays the same...medication and vital readings

James is enjoying all your calls and cards. It is good for his healing. He is loved!

We just wanted to let you know that it is possible to handle a major surgery with visual impairment. All our training and technology are being put to good use. Of course, we are thankful that sighted help is just a phone call away. We are appreciating everyone God has put in our lives. That means you!

We are blessed!

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HAB Event Recaps

Thanksmas was held on November 25th, 2023, at 801 South Street. There were 64 members in attendance. The evening started with everyone checking out raffle items to bid. Next, dinner that was catered by Da Spot and entertainment provided by Gensen and Mike. After dinner we had some fun and games to play with 3 different table games. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. The raffle was drawn at the end of the night and all proceeds (\$1,215) were donated to those impacted by the Maui devastation. Thank you to all who put this event together and those who attended. The success of the event would not be possible without everyone.

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**HAB HOLO HOLO SHOPPERS EVENT:
PEARL CITY FOODLAND FARMS
November 10, 2023**

HAB Holo Holo Shoppers had a great turnout of 15 attendees on Friday, November 10th. As expected, we had a great time! There was a lot of socializing and talk about upcoming events. It was nice to see new faces, too! Some people verified their items with the Seeing AI app to be sure they had the correct item. Always a good time learning and growing. For more information contact Sherrie (808)561-5968 or Anthony (808) 372-2225.

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Special thank-yous go out to the donators of HAB's Thanksmas 2023 raffle prizes.

Dr. Meal Kubo for the Maui Jim Sunglasses.

Okome Hawaii for the \$60 Gift Card.

Ron Ige and Ige's Lunchwagon and Catering for the andagi.

Red Pineapple for the basket.

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Come Holoholo with Us.

By Terri lynn Higashi

We have had several Holoholo events this year. A Holoholo event is an event that provides an opportunity for those who are blind and visually impaired to get out and adventure into new places. The event encourages those that may be coping with vision loss to start to explore the community outside with

a little more confidence. These events are put together by orientation and mobility instructors, so it also provides people an opportunity to try new

mobility apps and practice their mobility skills with an orientation and mobility instructor. In addition, it is a time to gather with new and old friends

grabbing a bite to eat or just talking story. It is a great time and personally I find it to be a time to connect with people. We live in such a world

where people are always on the go, we forget to connect. These Holoholo events provide numerous opportunities to connect and be refreshed Mahalo to the

Orientation and Mobility professionals and other sighted friends that help out at the event. I look forward to the events ahead.

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ACB Media Holiday Auction Mahalo Hawaii

By Leslie Spoon and Terri-lynn Higashi

The ACB Media Holiday continues to be a fun and engaging event. The auction provides people an opportunity to go early Christmas shopping for themselves

or others. In addition,

it raises funds for ACB Media that puts on an abundance of programming. Many of us enjoy participating in the different interactive ACB community calls

that come out regularly put on by ACB Media team.

The ACB Media Holiday Auction is a thrilling experience that takes months to prepare. It is always fun to see many people from Hawaii taking part in the

auction whether

they are donating an auction item, reading auction descriptions, or bidding on items up for bids. There are times the excitement is so intense people end

up bidding against each other. The back and forth of the bids are quite comical. Everyone seems to have a good time.

The ACB Media Holiday Auction Committee would like to extend a BIG Thank you to The Hawaii Association of The Blind and its members for your continued support of the ACB Holiday Auction. The unique collection of items that Hawaii provides truly helps share the Aloha spirit and adds to the fun of the event. Leslie Spooner is always so appreciative of our support through the years. A special mahalo (thank you) to all those who assisted with helping to put together the items and create the engaging descriptions for the Hawaii Association Of The Blind auction items. In closing as Dan Spooner often says "HIP, HIP, HIP Hooray" for it takes a village to build a community.

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From Dr. Brett Oppegaard

After a vigorous competition, with more than 100 votes being cast from across North America and the UK, The UniDescription Project now has a new synthetic voice:
CMU EEY (yes, we will be changing her name to The UniD Voice, sample is attached). ...

Thank you everyone for your votes and comments; this open-source, open-access voice was a clear winner, named on almost every ballot. Thank you to Mimic for creating and sharing this voice openly.

We have updated www.unidescription.org, so the voice is already operational, and you can use it right away.

We're very excited about this update for a number of reasons; first of all, for the past ~7-8 years, since we adopted our first machine voice (which we had kept in place until this month), I would say at least 75 percent of the complaints we have received about UniD descriptions were from people who did not like the machine voice. That feedback shows just how important the vocal performance of a description is, and why we should care about it. But I am

eager to mitigate that specific concern, with our new voice, and to put more of our focus going forward on the descriptions we provide.

For those who voted for another voice, and like that one better, I have another surprise in store, which will debut during Descriptathon 10. That is our

UniD Guidedog feature, which will bring back these other voices for additional performances. More on that later. ... Thanks, again, for the help in picking

the new voice, and I hope you enjoy listening to it!

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Lights, Camera, Description!

The American Council of the Blind's Audio Description Project (ADP) and the Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) are now accepting entries for BADIE,

or the Benefits of Audio Description in Education, an essay contest for young people (ages 7 to 21) who are blind or have low vision. It's a great chance

for students to engage with accessible learning materials, unleash their inner film critic, and compete for fun prizes.

How Students Can Enter:

4. Browse the free DCMP library at

<https://dcmp.org/>.

2. Watch any audio-described film (there are more than 6,000 educational titles to choose from!).

3. Write an evaluation of the of film's audio description, commenting on the ways the audio description enhanced or detracted from your experience.

4. Visit

<http://badiecontest.org>

to submit your entry. There you'll also find guidelines and prize details, tips on writing a good review, and information about how audio description is created.

Go to

<http://badiecontest.org>

for complete details and to submit your entry!

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Help Make National Park Brochures Accessible

Join the 2024 Descriptathon and help make national parks more accessible! ACB, the National Park Service, and UniDescription (UniD) are recruiting volunteers

to create audio descriptions for selected national park brochures. Teams are composed of people who are sighted and people on the blindness spectrum, all of whom will collaborate to describe maps, paintings, and visual images within park brochures. All meetings are held remotely, so you might find yourself learning

about a park in your state or across the continent.

The Descriptathon will take place February 6 - 8, 2024 (volunteers are expected to attend all three days). Participants will likely spend 10 hours of prep

time in the five weeks before the kick-off on February 6 (approximately two hours a week). During this prep time, team members will learn about audio description,

how to use the UniD tool to describe their brochure, and get to know their teammates. Four to six hours might be needed to finalize the brochure description

after the three-day event. Volunteers should have solid computer skills and be comfortable learning new technology.

For more about UniD and to download the free app, visit

<https://unidescription.org/>.

If you'd like to participate in the tenth Descriptathon in February 2024, contact Tabitha Kenlon at tkenlon@acb.org and Brett Oppegaard at brett.oppegaard@hawaii.edu.

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MEMBER ON THE MIC: ANTHONY AKAMINE

November 13, 2023

By Katie Frederick

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Aloha. The Board of Publications is pleased to present Hawaii's own Anthony! From his perspective on blindness, his views on leadership and service — Anthony shares his journey with blindness and ACB in a vulnerable and memorable way. We challenge you to listen to his story and sage words without leaving with something inspired inside.

While his journey may have been hard, his heart is so soft and open. Anthony shares with his ACB friends the simple ways of finding joy and balance.

Listen to Anthony in his own words or click on the transcript for a text version.

<https://acbvoices.wordpress.com/2023/11/13/member-on-the-mic-anthony-akamine/>

Special thanks to the Member on the Mic team: Anthony Corona, Tim Cumings and Lisa Brooks.

The ACB Board of Publications invites you to nominate someone to “Member on the Mic.”

For the last year, we have been featuring ACB Members who may not be known well by the membership; members who inspire, have interesting stories or are doing the good work. We take an Associated Press-style approach and hear from them in their own words, feature their projects and a photo, as well as a transcript of the interview.

“Member on the Mic” is a highlight of the ACB Voices blog, where you can find the members who have had their turn at the microphone by clicking ACBVoices.org.

If you would like to nominate someone who would be great for “Member on the Mic,” please send an email to slovering@acb.org.

Please send full name of member, state or special-interest affiliate, contact email and/or phone number.

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The Role Of Humility In Confident Leadership

Janine Schindler, MCC

Forbes Councils Member

Feb 13, 2023, 07:45am EST

“The doubts that pop up in your head as a leader can be completely normal. In fact, they can make you a better leader because they force you to ask questions

and examine issues that an overconfident person might overlook or ignore”.

Note: Terms such as executive leader or manager are interchangeable for the purposes of relating this article to officers and other titles used within our organization.

During the length of your career as an executive leader, you will most likely have seasons of extreme confidence when you seem to be cruising along and doing everything right. Then suddenly, you’ll encounter some rocky ground that puts you on unsure footing, and you won’t know where it’s safe to step or in which direction to move.

Those moments are very normal, but more than that, they're crucial. Being a confident leader actually requires having a little bit of humility.

Confident Leadership Is A Balancing Act

Naturally, confidence is fundamental in management. A confident executive presence, which involves having a clear vision and certainty about goals, can create trust and boost credibility. Once a manager has a well-defined objective, they can assemble the team and communicate those objectives to everyone involved. After all, a group will follow their leader on a journey with more optimism if they know there's a clear destination in mind.

However, some leaders put too high a value on their own opinion. They can then fall into the pit of arrogance, which is detrimental to the success of their team. That's why humility is a necessary quality for strong leaders. In my experience, some of the best leaders aren’t the smartest people in the room.

They are, however, wise enough to harness the brainpower of their collective teams.

For example, perhaps you have a rough plan to achieve your goals, but there are some gray areas you aren't sure how to navigate. If you show humility and ask for advice and input from your team, you'll receive the proper information to make better choices.

Being modest and encouraging input will lead to your team feeling honored and respected. Being a humble leader will show you believe in your team and that their opinions and knowledge matter. This creates a highly productive and supportive workplace (or work environment). In fact, a survey conducted by Harvard Business Review found that employees (or members) who felt respected were 55% more engaged.

How To Be More Humble

Leaders can show humility in several different ways. Of course, asking for advice or help is a major step. Another way to be humble is to

master the art of listening.

When in meetings, put your phone or other potential distractions away so you can dedicate 100% of your focus to the conversation. Make eye contact with speakers and focus on what they're communicating. Once you've absorbed the information, ask follow-up questions that demonstrate you're interested in knowing more. Do not interrupt unless necessary.

Be mindful of how you communicate. Use polite, courteous language when assigning projects or discussing your team's performance. Show appreciation for an employee's effort, even when edits need to be made. Give credit where it's due, and acknowledge the contributions of everyone involved at the end of a project.

The doubts that pop up in your head as a leader can be completely normal. In fact, they can make you a better leader because they force you to ask questions

and examine issues that an overconfident person might overlook or ignore. Humility in day-to-day interactions with your team will garner better interpersonal relationships, teamwork and decision-making. It will also help you achieve the end goals in which you are most confident.

Source:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2023/02/13/the-role-of-humility-in-confident-leadership/?sh=6967af702cc4>