



The  
AERial View



Newsletter of the Northern California Chapter,  
Association for  
Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind  
and Visually Impaired

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Tony Candela, Editor

In This Issue...

Welcome to the Winter 2010 AERial View. In this issue, please enjoy Liz Barclay's honoring of Sally Mangold and introduction of keynote speaker Ray Reutzler at the Getting In Touch With Literacy conference; a blind person's (Hizuru Cruz) own story; a brief history of the California School for the Blind; tips on how to inform and motivate employers to hire people with disabilities; and more.

Your chapter Board wants to hear from you. We would like to know the problems you face in doing your jobs and also what makes doing your jobs a joy. What would you like your chapter to do for you?

We would also like your help in recruiting new members to NCAER. There are incentives for those who help us get new members and find old ones who have dropped off our roster. You can help us by drawing newcomers to our rolls. Tell your colleagues about AER and get them to sign up and join the division that best represents their professional specialties. Read in this issue about AER's membership recruitment program.

We need your contributions of articles or tidbits of information for this newsletter. Please feel free to send me your thoughts on any subject of interest to you as a blindness professional in northern California. If your organization has undergone a change, added a service, or plans to host a special event, let me know. If you believe there is room for improvement in any area of the business we are about, send me your editorial. Don't worry about the writing; we'll get it ready for publication for you.

Issues of this newsletter are archived on the NCAER web site, so, if you've missed an issue, go there and read to your heart's content. The address is

<http://ncaer.aerbvi.org/>

Enjoy the issue. Happy Holidays!

Anthony R. Candela  
Editor

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From the President's Desk .

The news from AER's national office is slightly improved since the last issue. Membership recruitment which was on the rise for more than a year and recently dropped off, has shown improvement, but the recession has taken its toll. As mentioned in the summer issue, AER's Board was forced to take steps it wished it did not have to in order to foster AER's financial recovery including dropping the JVIB reduced subscription benefit to members—and with it a large expenditure of funds. In its place is an offer from AFB directly to AER members to re-start their subscription directly with JVIB.

Revenues from AER's regional conference, held this past November in Cleveland, have not been fully tallied at this writing, but Executive Director Jim Gandorf continues to project breaking even or a slight gain, this despite the fact that the Getting In Touch With Literacy (GITWL) conference took place at the same time.

Speaking of GITWL, NCAER's Sally Mangold conference merged with GITWL this fall and our annual celebration of the "Mother of Braille" as we have called Sally Mangold on the stone NCAER purchased in her behalf for the APH Wall of Tribute, continued. (See Liz Barclay's article below.)

Your NCAER Board does a great deal for you, but a dozen people can only do so much. If you are interested in helping your Board expand our chapter's services, please write me. We need a web master. Visit the NCAER web site and contact me if you would like the job.

NCAER members work and participate in programs ranging from early childhood development to assisting students in school, adult rehabilitation, job placement, and services to older blind persons. This newsletter and two conferences each year are ways our Chapter supports its members. NCAER also participates in events such as CTEVH scheduled in February and alternating between northern and southern California, and the annual Lowenfeld-Akeson Early Years Symposium.

Your Chapter is here to represent the professions in which you work and to preserve specialized services for blind and visually impaired persons. To that end, please feel free to call or write any of us should you need advice or assistance on any matter concerning your profession. It is our mission to be of value to you. We want to provide you the kind of service that makes a difference in your everyday working lives.

Membership in AER confers automatic membership in NCAER. It offers you a means to provide input and to shape the direction our field is moving. Please consider running for an NCAER office or participating on our committees. Of course, attending our workshops and conferences and encouraging others to enter our field is a lifetime responsibility we all carry.

If you would like to attend meetings of the NCAER Board, you have a standing invitation. We announce meeting times and places on the NCAER web site.

Anthony R. Candela  
December 2009

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#### NCAER Board Roster

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\*Many thanks to Kathleen Anderson and Liz Hartman who left the Board in August. Both served NCAER with distinction. Liz, who served as the Board's student representative, now has her doctorate and Kathleen is planning to move to the east coast. Welcome two new Board members. Allison Hughes recently joined as the Board's student representative. Allison hails from San Francisco State University and is interested in transportation access for people with disabilities including the blind. Also joining the Board is Colleen Doermann, MA, COMS, Teacher of the Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Specialist from the Vista Center for the Blind.

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Introduction: Dr. Ray Reutzel

Editor's Note: Presented by former Board member, Liz Barclay at the Getting In Touch With Literacy conference, November 2009

I have the honor this morning of introducing our esteemed keynote speaker, Dr. Ray Reutzel. But first I would just like to take a moment to talk about someone else who is very much on our minds during the literacy conference, Dr. Sally Mangold.

Sally Mangold was our extraordinary mentor, friend and treasure. Sally was a person whose ideas about Braille literacy evolved and deepened throughout her long and distinguished career. It is in her spirit of creativity and inquiry that NCAER is co-sponsoring this presentation by Dr. Reutzel.

I first heard Dr. Reutzel speak at the International Reading Association Conference in fall of 2007, and you're in for a treat. His accomplishments in the field of education are too numerous to mention, but I will highlight a few. He is recognized internationally for his research on the complexities of literacy development and instruction. Since 2001 Dr. Reutzel has been the Emma Eccles Jones Distinguished professor and endowed chair of Early Childhood Education at Utah State University. As endowed chair he actively participates in teaching, performing research, and mentoring faculty and graduate students. His research focuses on evidence-based reading and writing instruction and teacher knowledge assessment.

Dr. Reutzel has served as co-editor of one of my favorite journals, "The Reading Teacher," and he has written many books and publications about the most important topics relating to teaching children to read. This morning Dr. Ray Reutzel, will speak about the findings of the National Reading Panel and Research on Evidence-based Fluency Instruction.

This topic has heightened importance for teachers of students with visual impairments since the ABC Alphabetic and Contracted Braille Study found that the study participants lost ground with their print reading peers as they became older (third and fourth grades) with regard to Braille reading fluency. Dr. Reutzel's comments about

general reading fluency will be pertinent throughout the conference because Sally would agree with Cay Holbrook that “We teach reading!”  
With that thought in mind, I’d like to introduce, Dr. Ray Reutzel.....

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Meet Hizuru Cruz

Editor’s Note: Published in Vision Access, Volume 16, Number 3, fall, 2009

Council of Citizens with Low Vision International,  
[www.cclvi.org](http://www.cclvi.org)  
[info@cclvi.org](mailto:info@cclvi.org)

I am a proud recipient of the CCLVI Fred Scheigert Scholarship and I have Stargardt's disease (also known as fundus flavimaculatus and Stargardt's macular dystrophy). It is the most common form of Inherited juvenile macular degeneration and is symptomatically similar to age-related macular degeneration ([www.mdsupport.org](http://www.mdsupport.org)). It affects my central vision in that my eyes are constantly trying to focus but never do. In the simplest terms, my world is blurry.

I started noticing my vision loss in elementary school but because my family did not have health insurance, I was not diagnosed with the disease until high school. In class, I sat at the front but still could not follow what was written on the blackboard. I often got in trouble for not paying attention. I received good grades because I read my textbooks at home and took notes on what I read. I heard somewhere that if I rewrote what I read in my own words, it would confirm that I understood the subject. It worked. For my calculus class, I filled up 5 notebooks.

In college, I didn't have the time to study the way I had studied in high school and I really struggled. At that point in my life, I thought my vision would come back just as inexplicably as it had deteriorated and learning that I had Stargardt's didn't quite fit into the picture. I remember seeking support from my teachers but what they had to say was akin to "I'm sure you'll be fine" or "I'm sorry." Neither of these reactions was helpful.

Fortunately, I met a fantastic California Department of Rehabilitation counselor named Gonzalo Manzo. He is no longer with us but I still remember the day he pointed out that I could adapt to my vision loss and succeed in college because he was sure that I had already started. He then asked me to think of aspects of my daily life that I modified for my vision. He gave examples such as being organized or having specific routines. I immediately recalled the ridiculous yoga-like pose I got into in order to see my toenails when I needed to cut them. I am lucky to have met Gonzalo because he put things in perspective, he taught me how to get into a problem-solving

mind set when faced with a challenge, and his support was invaluable because he was blind and could relate to my experiences.

I am working on my second undergraduate degree in graphic design. I am an avid drawer and I do many creative things but I used to think it was unreasonable to pursue an artistic career because I had low vision. I have since learned to gain strength in my identity as a person with a disability and that pursuing my passion is the best thing I can do for myself. I remind myself often that Edgar Degas, Claude Monet, and Georgia O'Keefe had vision problems. Interestingly, the impetus to return for a second under-graduate degree was just as much my work experience as art itself.

After graduating with a degree in sociology, I worked as an administrative/legal secretary at Disability Rights California, a non-profit legal services agency. I learned about the variety of issues people with disabilities face through the advocacy work of the agency and by working with many people with disabilities. On a personal level, I found a supportive community that understood and shared many of my own experiences. It became hard not to pursue a dream after meeting people who pursued their own dreams under harder circumstances.

Now that I am back in school, I am constantly developing strategies to succeed with my vision. When people want to know, I am very open to describing my visual impairment. Being pro-active about communicating with professors and students makes my life easier because there is less confusion - people understand why I don't see them when they walk by me or when I need something read out loud. One of my classmates once told me, "So it's like you are super-super-near-sighted!" and I now use this description if people are uncomfortable talking about disability but I need to express that I have low vision.

The other ways I manage my school work include the technology I use. San Jose State University has an Alternative Technology Center (ATC) where books are converted to digital files so that I can use a screen reader when I need to. My laptop has built-in accessible technology and it goes everywhere with me. Generally, my design classes focus mostly on computer work, so I am very independent. I take my other classes one at a time. For instance, if the camera we are using in a photography class does not have auto-focus, I ask a classmate to help me out. In art history courses, I get to know people so that I can choose a reliable notetaker.

I am interested in publication and web design. I hope to one day be a part of a design studio that works with socially-responsible businesses and is conscientious about accessibility in all types of media.

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

By Alysa Chadow

(AUTHOR'S NOTE: The following information is based on the booklet CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND: 1860-1986 by Lynne Laird, written in honor of the 125th anniversary of the school's founding.)

May 13th, 2009 marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of the California School for the Blind. A celebration, including a short play about our school's history, in honor of this event is being planned by CSB faculty and staff members. Below is the time line that marks the school's beginnings to its present location in Fremont.

1860: The House on Tehama Street

Mrs. Francis Augusta Clark, along with other socially prominent women, founds the school in order to educate blind children who would otherwise be begging on the streets of San Francisco or isolated from the outside world by their families.

1867: The Move to Berkeley

Dr. Warring Wilkinson, the school's first superintendent, moves the school to Berkeley, which was then a mostly rural area. The school is now called the Asylum for the Deaf, Dumb, and Blind.

1875-1877: fire and Re-building

Fire destroys the buildings, which are later re-built.

1906: The Big Quake

The San Francisco Earthquake creates a crack in the bell tower, but otherwise there is no serious damage to the school. It is now called the California Institute for the Deaf and Blind.

1914: Another New Name

The California legislature changes the school's name to the California School for the Deaf and Blind.

1921: Yet Another New Name

The school is now named the California School for the Blind, although deaf and blind students are still being educated together.

1924: Separation

Deaf and blind students are finally formally separated.

#### 1929: New Buildings

The newly-formed school has some new facilities, including a typing room, classrooms, library, music facilities, and auditorium as well as administrative offices.

#### 1943: A New Population

Then Superintendent Richard B. French, along with Maria Clisham, admits deaf-blind students to CSB.

#### 1960s and 1970s: More Changes, More Challenges

Counseling, pre-vocational skills, and O & M instruction are developed at CSB, as multi-impaired blind students are admitted more and more.

#### 1973: A Shakeup Bigger than the '06 quake

The controversial decision to move the school from its Berkeley site is announced.

#### 1980: Another Big Move

The school moves to its present site at a former truck farm in Fremont.

#### 1986-2010 and Beyond: The Future

The California School for the Blind was, and continues to be, an important resource for blind children and their families throughout the state of California via its on-campus, outreach, and summer programs. Current budget issues do not curtail the school's ability to perform these functions.

An awful lot can happen in 150 years.



#### Ten Things Every Employer Should Know About Job Accommodation

By Rob McInnes, Trainer and Consultant on disability and workforce diversity.

Reprinted with permission from Diversity World - InclusionRX - Your Monthly Dose  
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2009

Employers in North America were not given a great introduction to the concept of "Job Accommodation". Prior to the passing of Employment Equity legislation



in Canada and the Americans with Disabilities Act in the United States, most employers had probably gone about their business pretty much oblivious to the term. However, those legislative initiatives thrust “Job Accommodation” into the employers’ spotlight – as something conceptually new to them, something that was now a “duty” they had to comply with, something rumored to be excessively expensive, and something that, if not done and done well, would put them at the risk of prosecution. When they asked what a reasonable limit might be on the cost of making an accommodation they were told “Anything that doesn’t cause you to lose your business.”

That introduction did little to inspire employers to warm up to the notion of job accommodation. It was the legislative equivalent of throwing employers and job accommodation into the ring together – introducing them, and telling them to shake hands and come out fighting. Sadly, the bells that would begin each round were job seekers or employees with disabilities.

Wrapped in a cloak of “duty to accommodate” and synonymous with unwanted government interference and legal risk/liability for their business, many employers despise and fear the notion of job accommodation. This is compounded by the erroneous perception that every employee with a disability requires an accommodation and the belief that the cost of every accommodation is exorbitant. Obviously, the easiest way to avoid job accommodation obligations (and their potential liability) is to avoid people with disabilities.

This is the “stuff” of many workplace attitudes that are encountered by people with disabilities as they seek to carve out their own careers and productive roles in our workforces. The welcoming smiles of recruiters and hiring managers are belied by the flustered paper shuffling, frenetic eye movements, and frequent watch-glancing that too often accompany them.

I would like to take this opportunity to clear the air and re-introduce employers to the notion of job accommodation. With the following ten points, I am attempting to outline a much more accurate accounting of the nature, frequency, cost, and benefits of effective job accommodations for people with disabilities.

## Ten Things Every Employer Should Know About Job Accommodation

list of 10 items

1. Accommodations are productivity enhancers.

Perspective is everything. The key to making effective accommodations is to understand them for what they really are - tools and working conditions that enable employees to give their best and to be their most productive on the job.

2. Most employees with disabilities do not require accommodations.

Surveys show that many employers shy away from recruiting or hiring any people with disabilities because they fear the cost of possible accommodations.

They assume that every person with a disability, or at least most of them, will require an accommodation. While numbers vary slightly, most studies indicate that the vast majority, somewhere between 70 - 80%, of employees with disabilities (roughly 3 out of 4) require no accommodation at all.

3. Even when accommodations are required, half of them cost nothing.

According to the Job Accommodation Network's 2009 report, Workplace Accommodation: Low Cost. High Impact, when accommodations are needed, approximately

56% cost nothing. This figure, combined with estimates for employees who require no accommodations suggests that 9 out of 10 people with disabilities are employed with absolutely no associated job accommodation costs.

4. When accommodations do cost money, they are typically a minimal expense.

Only one in ten employees with a disability needs an accommodation that is an expense to their employer and, again according to the Job Accommodation Network's 2009 report, Workplace Accommodation: Low Cost. High Impact, employers report a typical expense of only \$600.

5. People with disabilities who require job accommodation tools frequently come with their own.

Particularly when it is an equipment need, many people with disabilities already own what they need or can have it provided through other sources (community organizations or government programs).

6. Accommodating an employee should be an ongoing process.

Attention to accommodation strategies should be an ongoing process. Circumstances constantly change and accommodations need to keep in step with them.

Changes in the employee's environment, routines, job duties, and/or tools may require adjustments to accommodations previously in place. Changes in the employee's abilities may require different approaches or enhancements to existing accommodations. Because adaptive technology is constantly being invented and improved upon, it is only prudent to keep abreast of the latest developments.

7. Accommodations can have a positive impact on overall workplace productivity.

Job accommodations often approach and/or organize job tasks in new ways – frequently introducing new tools and methods. These new approaches, when used by people without disabilities who are performing similar jobs, can sometimes increase the overall safety, and productivity in the workplace. In the Job Accommodation Network's 2009 report, Workplace Accommodation: Low Cost. High Impact, 57% of surveyed employers reported that making an accommodation for an employee with a disability had improved overall company productivity.

8. The best accommodations come from open and ongoing dialogue.

Bearing in mind that the purpose of accommodations is to enhance a given employee's productivity, accommodation strategies need to be selected through open and productive dialogue between the employee and the employer. Care must be taken to be certain that the accommodation is the best "fit" with the employee's circumstance and preferences while still enabling them to fulfill the responsibilities of their job. Creativity, flexibility and honesty are the best ingredients for a selecting a successful accommodation.

9. Employees may be reluctant to bring up their accommodation needs. Companies need to foster a workplace culture that affirms the uniqueness of each employee and that welcomes suggestions that will sustain or enhance their productivity. Anything less will cause employees to hide their disabilities and not request needed accommodations. This will be true for new applicants, new employees, and existing employees who begin to acquire disabilities (think "aging workforce"). In those circumstances, companies will lose the productivity and spirit of employees who struggle to fulfill their responsibilities while masking their needs. Conversely, the productivity of each employee will be maximized by companies that are flexible, that openly value difference, and that respectfully welcome requests for accommodations.

10. There are many sources of expertise for determining, selecting and/or procuring any needed accommodations.

They may be private consultants or staff of non-profit organizations, but you should be able to draw on the expertise of many folks in your local community who have proven expertise in various job accommodations. In addition, the Job Accommodation Network ([www.jan.wvu.edu](http://www.jan.wvu.edu)) has a wealth of information on its website and offers free nation-wide consultation through online chat, email, and telephone. The DBTAC Network ([www.dbtac.vcu.edu](http://www.dbtac.vcu.edu)) has a regional network of ADA centers that provide an array of free accommodation-related services.

list end

Job accommodations for employees with disabilities are simply exciting ways of reconfiguring jobs, working environments and/or schedules in order to maximize the productive contribution that any given employee can make to their employer's business. Smart companies are already making similar adaptations for other employees – retuning their job descriptions to match their employees' unique personality types, elder care needs, parental responsibilities, etc. That kind of unique tuning is essentially what job accommodation for people with disabilities is all about – giving them the tools and circumstances that they need to thrive in their careers and to make their most valuable contribution to the company's success.

~ Rob McInnes

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Calendar of Events

## February

**Feb. 19, 2009: Manitoba Chapter - Workshop - "Working with Students Who are Visually Impaired: Building Social and Independent Living Skills,"** Dr. Kevin Stewart, York Board of Education. Viscount Gort Hotel, Winnipeg. [Click here for more information and registration form](#)

## March 2010

**March 11 -12: Pacific Northwest Chapter Spring Conference -** March 11th the conference will be held in the greater Tacoma area and in Spokane on March 12th. Exact locations to be announced Jan. 2010!

**March 24-26: Kentucky AER Conference -** Barren River Lake State Resort Park in Lucas, KY. If you would like to be considered being a presenter, coming to the conference, exhibitor, or showcase something new in the field contact: Burt Boyer at [bboyer@aph.org](mailto:bboyer@aph.org) and Lisa Macpherson at [lisa.macpherson@jefferson.kyschools.us](mailto:lisa.macpherson@jefferson.kyschools.us) OR check out the [Kentucky AER website](#).

**March 25-27: Texas AER - TAER Conference -** El Tropicano Hotel, San Antonio, TX. More details to come!

## April 2010

**April 16-18: 2010 AER-Lift Leadership Training Seminar - Who should attend?** All AER Chapter and Division Leadership including President, Chair, President-elect, Chair-Elect, Immediate Past Presidents, Immediate Past Chairs, Secretary's, Treasurer's, Chapter Board Members-at-large, Chapter and Division Newsletter Editors, Chapter and Division Membership Chairs, and any members who would like to participate in future chapter or division leadership!

**April 21-23, 2010: 2010 Penn-Del AER Spring Vision Conference -** Holiday Inn - Grantville, PA; Chapter of Champions: Excellence in Action. For more information please contact Sister Meg Fleming [aplucy01@nni.com](mailto:aplucy01@nni.com)

**April 29-30: Michigan Chapter Annual Conference** - Marriott at Laurel Park, Livonia, MI. For more information, visit their website at [maerbvi.org](http://maerbvi.org)

**July 2010**

**AER International Conference - July 20-25, 2010** – Little Rock, Arkansas. For more information visit our site at [www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org).

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As you think about talking with your colleagues about membership in AER, consider the following:

**Benefits of Membership in AERBVI**

The Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AERBVI) is the professional organization of the blindness field.

- Continuing Education opportunities: Professional Conferences, custom-designed Division Workshops, Lighthouse courses, etc.
- Awards—Peer recognition of outstanding contributions to the vision field.
- Discounted certification fees through ACVREP
- International and state-to-state connections and perspectives
- Leadership opportunities at many levels
- Legislative support - AER is our voice in Washington
- Life-long contacts with other AER members
- Opportunities to network with a diversity of professionals in the blindness field
- Ongoing exchange of ideas and knowledge
- You're not alone; you're part of the bigger picture of the vision field
- "Listservs" help keep members informed and in contact with other professionals
- Member discounts on publications through AER
- AERial View keeps members informed of chapter activities and news
- Partnerships with other blindness organizations for more effective advocacy
- Professional Liability Insurance is available to members

- Publications included in membership:
- AER Journal: Research and Practice in Visual Impairment and Blindness
- AER Report
- Reasonable Membership Fees: One Year Regular Professional membership:
- AERBVI: \$155 US/Canada/International, plus optional division fees (\$0-15)

Compared to:

American Physical Therapy Association: \$265

American Occupational Therapy Association: \$225

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: \$200

- Reduced registration rates for NCAER conferences and workshops
- Scholarships and Stipends
- Supporting AER adds to our feeling that we are investing in our goals for the future of the vision field.
- And finally, being an AER member looks good on your resume!!

For submissions to the AERial View, contact Tony Candela, [acandela@dor.ca.gov](mailto:acandela@dor.ca.gov), or call 916-558-5822. Next newsletter will be published in Spring of 2010.

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#### Advertisements

AER International Conference 2010

July 20-25, 2010 – Little Rock, Arkansas

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SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY Department of Special Education

Early Childhood Visual Impairments Project (ECVI)

PROGRAM IS LOCATED IN BURK HALL, SFSU CAMPUS

ECVI Project

Personnel preparation grant funds awarded under the

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to the Department of Special Education, San Francisco State University.

1600 Holloway Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94132

For program information contact:

- Amanda Hall Lueck, Ph.D., Professor, Coordinator

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For program related information, please visit:

- Visual Impairments Program

<http://www.sfsu.edu/~spedcd/vi.html>

- Early Childhood Special Education Program  
<http://www.sfsu.edu/~spedcd/ecse.html>
  - Students can apply to either program based on interest and career goals
- A Collaborative Training Program for Personnel Working with Young Children with Visual Impairment  
This ECVI  
Project  
Prepares you to...  
Helps you to...  
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Project participants, upon exiting the program, must maintain employment on a full-time or full-time equivalent basis for a period of at least two years for each academic year for which assistance was received.

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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES  
Division of Special Education & Counseling  
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For more information about the TVI Programs go to the following: SFSU:

<http://online.sfsu.edu/~amandal/viwelcome.htm>

CSLA: <http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/ccoe/>

Personnel preparation grant funds were awarded under the Individuals with Disabilities Education ACT (IDEA). Project Participants, upon exiting the program, must maintain employment on a full-time or full-time equivalent basis for a period of at least two years for each academic year, for which assistance was received.