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The AMESVI board members for the 2005-2006 year beginning July 1st are:

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chasandmeg@aol.com

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nancymuldrew@comcast.net

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[road39@comcast.net](mailto:road39@comcast.net)

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[Katrina.savino@sharon.us.ma](mailto:Katrina.savino@sharon.us.ma)

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lynarddm@yahoo.com

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  - Mary Chevalier [Moli3@char](mailto:Moli3@char)
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[@aol.com](mailto:@aol.com)
- Northeast**
  - Ann Barber  
[ABarber626@aol.com](mailto:ABarber626@aol.com)
- South Shore:**
  - South** Jean Shea:  
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# AMESVIEW

Dec., 2005

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members, Best wishes during this frantic season! I would like to thank all the AMESVI members who have been actively involved in the organization and hope new faces will help us along our way. For being such a small organization AMESVI has made it's mark with the current and past boards and the members who have participated in the different projects throughout the years. My wish for the New Year is that every AMESVI member will be able to participate in one of the different AMESVI activities/projects. I know, I know, you might say, "I'm too busy with family duties, work, church, community, etc.", and you would be right. We are all too busy. (My concept of time is, as I grow older, "Time seems to zoom by even faster than it did the year before!") As a mom & step mom, wife, daughter to aging parents, sister to a lot of siblings, in-law, 2 full time jobs (outside the home and the one at home!), Girl Scout Leader, on 2 town committees, etc. , I do know what it is to be busy. And if you poll every member of our board you would find this to be true of each one of us. Believe me, I am not holding myself up as an example but I realized that life is always going to be busy so I better be busy in things that do matter. Please realize that the board members and those who have been able to assist on the different projects are no less busy then anyone else. I was one of those folks who used to think anyone on a board or who was active in an organization or on a committee had a lot of free time, no family commitments and probably worked part-time (if at all outside the home) and was a whole lot smarter then me. What I have found out is that when I did finally get involved (usually by accident these folks were a whole lot busier then me in all aspects of their lives, and although some were a lot smarter then me, I knew a lot more than I thought I did. As most organizations, AMESVI is an organization run by volunteers, who

don't have the extra time but still do what they can to improve services for students who are visually impaired. I hope that when a call is sent out for help that those who have felt unable to participate will give it a try. For AMESVI will only be as strong as its membership and that membership is you! So if your situation dictates that you can't work on a large project then try to do something in a small way to help AMESVI's mission. Participation is not just working on a committee or project but it could be getting brochures out to encourage others in the field to join AMESVI, (to make us stronger) or attend a regional meeting, or participate on the list serve, send something for the newsletter, etc. These are just a few of the different ways you can participate in AMESVI. We have a lot of things to be thankful for and one of the things I am thankful for is all AMESVI members!

Best wishes for a Wonderful New Year! Meg Robertson

Updates from Nancy Muldrew President – Elect

The AT Loaner Program is finalizing the process. We hope to have information on the AMESVI website in the future. Meetings have taken place to offer specific products on loan for a specified period of time on trial for children and teachers to determine their appropriateness for educational purposes. Stay tuned.

The DOE Ten Step Guide is being revised by a great group of professionals and will be completed by Spring of 2006 if all goes as planned.

## REGIONAL REPORTS

**Greater Boston Region News:** On November 28, 2005 Diane and Mel ran a meeting with Tom Miller, Beth Caruso, Nancy Muldrew and Aida Savas at Diane Redmond's house. Among the topics discussed were the AT Loaner Program, the parent involvement in AMESVI and the progress on the Ten Step guide. Mel brought up questions involving the difficulties facing teachers with regard to the multiply impaired children with motor challenges and communication difficulties and how to find resources for instruction as well as consultation. The next meeting will be in January so watch for the emails from Diane and Mel.

**Central Ma Region Update** Laura Koester [ljkoester@comcast.net](mailto:ljkoester@comcast.net)  
On Sunday October 30, five members gathered for a delicious potluck supper meeting at the beautiful home of Lenore Martin. Also present were: Barbara Bing, Cheryl Dougherty, Maria Tessier, and Laura Koester. At the request of the members, we kept the topic open-ended for general discussion and a great time was had by all! Hopefully we'll have another potluck meeting in the early part of 2006.

Kudos to Central Region member Maria Tessier for the time and effort she put into updating a list of Low Vision Specialists in Massachusetts. The Board is

currently reviewing the list and it will be posted to the AMESVI website in the near future. Thanks again Maria - great work!

**South Shore Region Update:** Jean Shea: jshea411@adelphia.net /South Shore Rep. On November 9, 2005, a group of TVIs from the South Shore met at the home of Jean Shea for a potluck dinner. Carrie Brasier attended and shared information relative to what is currently happening at the VRL as well as information about the APH conference and AFB Solutions Forum. She arrived loaded down with great old and new items from APH which we all perused, played with, discussed and took home! There was only one small box of materials left for Carrie to take back to the VRL. Tom Miller had planned to attend but got called to replace someone who became ill and could not present at the NE/AER conference.

Over dinner we discussed AMESVI happenings, the Listserve and the status of other professionals in the South Shore region. There have been a number of retirements and changes in our area. One of the biggest losses to our region is that of Flo Peck who moved to Rocklin, California the last week of October. Flo has been an early intervention specialist in our region for many years as well as working in Rhode Island and being a part of many of the training teams at Perkins. She is a consummate professional as well as a supportive team member who will be difficult to replace.

Mara Evans has organized a group of Cape Cod professionals who are meeting on their own as an AMESVI group. They have considered whether to ask to establish a new region which would be separate from the South Shore group. This is a fantastic idea though one difficulty would be finding people to run for a board position every two years. Historically, it has been very difficult to find people who are willing to run for the current positions so that instituting a new region might cause just one more stumbling block as the election time of year runs around. Mara has written a summary of what the Cape TVI group has been doing. This is printed below.

The South Shore group will meet again in the spring.

**AMESVI -Cape Cod:** On Oct. 4, 2005 a group of TVI's from Cape Cod and one TVI from the South Shore area held our first meeting. There were a total of seven people in attendance. This smaller group developed as a sub-group of the South Shore Region in an effort to support each other and share resources. Most TVI's in this sub-group reported that the South Shore meetings were too far to travel.

We had Tom Miller from Perkins School Educational Partnerships Program in attendance. He offered support and assistance with coordinating some possible projects which we discussed. We would like to extend out thanks to Tom for traveling and participating with us despite his not feeling well.

Our group came up with several ideas for this school year. We have not worked out a lot of details yet, but agreed that the following topics would interest us:

Technology:

- Share ideas, successes, and failures amongst ourselves
- Possible ½ day workshop with Gayle Yarnell?

Assessment:

- Share what tools we use, with whom, etc.

### Family Event:

- Develop survey to disseminate to Cape families re: topics of interest
- Conduct an evening gathering for families on the Cape

### Sharing:

- Successes, and failures with our students
- Ideas for teaching strategies

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, Dec. 8 at 3PM. Contact Mara Evans for more details.  
maraevans@adelphia.net

***Northeast Region Update:*** Ann Barber, Regional Rep. There was a regional get together at Ann Barber's home on Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 1, from 3:15 to 5:00. Diane Blier, Carol Pierce and Martha Gale attended. Several others had planned to attend, but, unfortunately there were several last minute cancellations. We mainly had a "Cracker Barrel" session, with each of us asking for assistance with specific cases we had. Carol Pierce mentioned a need for a full time TVI in Georgetown. Martha was having major difficulty brailleing (by hand on a manual **Perkins brailier**) a Latin textbook for a high school student - and she doesn't even know Latin! It's not available from VRL, due to the old date. And the cost is prohibitive from another source. So, she's brailleing it by hand - constantly! We offered some technology resources, and hope she's found a solution to this dilemma by now! Diane had questions regarding differences of opinion between her recommendations and those of the SPED Director's. Ann went over the recent changes at Perkins with the reorganization of two community programs (Outreach and Infant/Toddler) into one - Educational Partnerships, with Tom Miller as the Director and Ann Barber as the Assistant Director. Perkins is looking for a full-time replacement for Ann's caseload before she takes over full time. Ann also went over, briefly, an update of the DOE's progress on the revised edition of the Ten Step Guide to Assessment for Students with Visual Impairment and Deafblindness. A lot of good work has been done, and a review panel has gone over it once, but there are still portions to be completed. It will eventually be posted to the DOE's website and Hilton Perkins will publish a print copy of it. Since there were so few of there, no date was set for the next get together, but it will be sometime after the holidays.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

December 1, - December 3, 2005 ***Getting In Touch with Literacy***, Denver Colorado  
Sponsored by University of Northern Colorado

December 13-15, 2005: ***Workshop on Techniques for Creating and Instructing with Tactile Graphics***, Carroll Center, Newton MA. The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) National Literacy Center is sponsoring this two-and-a-half day workshop. This workshop is designed for teachers of adults or youth who are blind or visually impaired, braille transcribers, and other service providers producing tactile graphics.

March 3 – 5, 2006: ***AFB 2006 Josephine L. Taylor Leadership Institute*** Atlanta, Georgia

March 8<sup>th</sup> 2006, Taunton MA ***“Focus” on Vision Impairment & Blindness Conference: Meeting the Needs of Individuals with Cognitive Disability & Vision Loss***. For more information contact Lisa DiBonaventura at 508-384-5539 or [Lisa.DiBonaventura@state.ma.us](mailto:Lisa.DiBonaventura@state.ma.us)

March 8-12, 2006: ***Guiding Eyes for the Blind Orientation and Mobility Seminar*** Yorktown Heights, NY

May 2006 –***AMESVI Spring Conference on Transition*** Date, Location and Time to be announced on the Listserv

June 30-July 4, 2006 ***International Loins Clubs Convention*** Boston MA go to <http://www.lionsclubs.org/>

July 14-19, 2006 ***AER 2006 International Conference*** Snowbird Utah [www.aer.org](http://www.aer.org)

July 16, - July 21, 2006 ***12<sup>th</sup> World Conference of the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairments (ICEVI)*** Kuala, Malaysia

Nov. 27-Dec.1, 2006 ***International Mobility Conference*** Hong Kong for more information go to <http://www.hksb.org.hk/imc/hongkong.htm>

## RESOURCES

**Links:** AFB Comparing the Treatment of Instructional Materials in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as amended in 1997 and the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act 2004

<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=3&TopicID=138&DocumentID=2702>

**The Assistive Technology Act:** The House and the Senate passed H.R. 4278 and it was signed into law by President Bush on October 25, 2004. To read the bill as signed into law, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?108:H.R.4278.ENR:>.

NFB: Good Toys For Blind Children <http://www.nfb.org/nopbc/nopbctoys.htm>

**Cooking with Feel** Deborah DeBord, an experienced blind cook, shares 180 adaptive culinary techniques for the visually impaired. Not only does this cookbook contain favorite recipes from such renowned cookbooks as The New Basics Cookbook, Moosewood Cookbook, and Country Gourmet Cookbook, it also describes in detail a variety of adaptive techniques you will need as a blind cook. You've never had this much fun in the kitchen! Find at the National Braille Press website: [www.braille.com](http://www.braille.com)

**APH Flea Market Clearance: Braille N Speak for \$900.00 and lots more**  
<http://www.aph.org/products/fleamarket.html>

**To Join AER Divisions Refer to the website below**  
<http://aerbvi.org/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=8>

**Winter Safety for Drivers:** Be Prepared! Have car tuned up before the winter months. For more information go to the National Safety Council Web site:  
[www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)

Items one should have in your car or Driver's car: A properly inflated spare tire (and the ability to be able to change it), a shovel, a cell phone, jumper cables (even with a new car!), tow or tire chains, a bag of salt or cat litter, tool kit, working flashlight & extra batteries, reflective triangles & brightly-colored cloth, compass, first aid kit, exterior windshield cleaner, ice scraper & snow brush, a blanket, scissors and string/cord.

Some Car Emergency Kits Web addresses or Google to get additional resources.

<http://www.areyouprepared.com/survival-kits-car.html>

<http://www.homelandpreparedness.com/>

<http://preparedness.com/delemroadsaf.html>

[http://www.lifesafety.com/shop/product\\_info.php/product](http://www.lifesafety.com/shop/product_info.php/product)

**November 2005**

**AMESVI**

**Association of Massachusetts Educators of Students with Visual Impairments**

Summary of Survey on Services to Students

with Visual Impairment and Blindness

Directors of Special Education in Massachusetts

**Purpose:** The survey was designed to examine the availability of **Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs)** and **Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMSs)** in Massachusetts. Students with blindness and visual impairment are a low incidence population, and service delivery systems and availability of qualified personnel can vary greatly from town to town.

**Audience:** The survey was sent out on February 26, 2005 to 405 Special Education Directors throughout the state of Massachusetts by US Postal Mail. On April 15, 2005 a second copy was sent via email to Special Education Directors and Collaboratives who had not yet responded. The responses received were compiled and results are as follows. Thank you to those of you who responded to the survey.

**Survey Results:** Out of 405 surveys sent, 98 completed surveys were received (**24.10%**). The respondents broken down by area were as follows:

- **35** replies from the **rural** areas
- **12** replies from the **urban** areas
- **51** replies from the **suburban** areas

See the Website for complete details of the survey. <http://amesvi.tripod.com>

### **The Summary**

- The respondents indicated that they experienced **difficulty recruiting a Certified Teacher of Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Specialist over fifty percent of the time.**
- The majority of respondents indicated that additional support in the form of lists of resources for services and materials as well as a loan center for assistive technology would be beneficial. In addition, almost half of the respondents expressed a desire for a state consultant for education of students with visual impairment and blindness.

- The respondents would like to have a **process to locate** a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments and/or a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist.
- There is a **shortage** of Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists throughout the country and that is reflective in Massachusetts as well.
- The majority of respondents reported that they would look to a collaborative or private agency to contract for services. Only 8% of responding school districts reported that they hired TVIs or COMs in full time positions with benefits.

### **RESOURCES FOR LOCATING SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN AREA OF VISION OR DEAFBLINDNESS**

Below are some state and national resources for locating services for children who are visually impaired and blind. Some provide direct service. This list is for information purposes only, and should not be taken as an endorsement or preference of individuals or agencies.

**Vision Resources Library** Source of large print and braille books for students in Massachusetts, as well as other free educational materials available through American Printing House for the Blind's Quota Funds. No direct services are provided, but can be an informational resource.

Contact: Director  
3 Randolph Street, Baylies Lower Cottage  
Canton, MA 02021

E-mail: [cbrasier@mavisionlib.org](mailto:cbrasier@mavisionlib.org)  
Phone: 800-827-7772  
Website: [www.mavisionlib.org](http://www.mavisionlib.org)

**Massachusetts Commission for the Blind** - Mostly an adult vocational rehabilitation agency, but some technical assistance available to high school students. Children's Caseworkers provide consultation to families and schools. No direct services are provided, but can be an informational resource.

Contact: Supervisor of Children's Services  
[Sandra.daly@state.ma.us](mailto:Sandra.daly@state.ma.us)

48 Boylston St.  
Boston, MA 02116

Phone: 800-392-6450  
Website: [www.mass.gov/mcb](http://www.mass.gov/mcb)

**Perkins School for the Blind - Educational Partnerships Program-** Direct and consultative services to children from birth through age 22 throughout the state. Also an informational resource.

Contact: Director of Educational Partnerships Program  
175 N. Beacon St.  
Watertown, MA 01472

E-mail: [tom.miller@perkins.org](mailto:tom.miller@perkins.org)  
Phone: 617-972-7331  
Website: [www.perkins.org](http://www.perkins.org)

**Carroll Center for the Blind-** Direct and consultative services to children and adults throughout the state. Also an informational resource.

Contact: Director of Educational Programs E-mail: [karen.ross@carroll.org](mailto:karen.ross@carroll.org)  
770 Centre St. Phone: 800-852-3131  
Newton, MA 02158 Website: [www.carroll.org](http://www.carroll.org)

**Massachusetts Association for the Blind (MAB) Community Services-**Direct and consultative services to school aged children, adults, elders and individuals with multiple impairments including vision loss

Contact: Director  
200 Ivy Phone: 617-738-5110  
Brookline, MA Website: [www.mablind.org](http://www.mablind.org)

**Northeast Vision Consultants-**Direct and consultative services to school aged children throughout the state. Also an informational resource

Contact: Tim Traut-Savino  
38 Morse St. Phone: 781-784-8622  
Sharon, MA 02067 E-mail: [k\\_traut-savino@sharon.k12.ma.us](mailto:k_traut-savino@sharon.k12.ma.us)

**AMESVI - Association of Massachusetts Educators of Students with Visual Impairment-** A professional organization of educators of students with visual impairment in Massachusetts dedicated to improving services of students and teachers. No direct services, but a source of information. Also, has a List serve for members to publicize information on jobs, etc.

Contact: Current President (rotates annually)  
Web-site: <http://amevi.tripod.com> for contact information on current president

**UMASS Boston, Special Education Program, Vision Rehabilitation -** No direct services, but trains Teachers of the Visually Impaired, and Orientation and Mobility Specialists, including setting up internships, student teaching positions. Also an informational resource.

Contact: Vision Rehabilitation Program E-mail: [robert.mcculley@umb.edu](mailto:robert.mcculley@umb.edu)  
Graduate School of Education  
UMASS Boston  
100 Morrissey Blvd. Phone: 617-287-7623  
Boston, MA 02125 Website: [www.nercve.umb.edu](http://www.nercve.umb.edu)

**ACVREP - Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals -** A national professional organization which administers testing and awards national certification to Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMSs), Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (CVRTs), and Certified Low

Vision Therapists (CLVTs). They maintain a regular on-line newsletter with job listings for a nation-wide viewing of members

Contact: President

330 N. Commerce Park Loop, Suite 200

Tucson, AZ 85745

E-mail: [info@acvrep.org](mailto:info@acvrep.org)

Phone: 520-887-6816

Website: [www.acvrep.org](http://www.acvrep.org)

**AER – Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Visually Impaired and Blind**

– A national, comprehensive organization of all professionals involved in the field of blindness and visual impairment. Continuing Education offer at national and regional conferences.

Contact Information:

1703 N. Beauregard St., Suite 440 Phone: (703) – 671-4500

Alexandria, VA 22311

Website: [www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org)

**MOEC – Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives** -

Professional organization of Educational Collaboratives, some of whom provide direct and consultative services to students with visual impairment and blindness. MOEC provides no direct services, but may be an informational resource.

President – go to the website to locate current president

Website: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/moec/>

**NEC – New England Center for Deafblind Services** Providing technical assistance to children and families in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. No direct services are provided, but consultation, training and referral services are available.

Contact: Director, NEC Center

Perkins School for the Blind

Watertown, MA 02472

E-mail: [nec@perkins.org](mailto:nec@perkins.org)

175 N. Beacon St.

Phone: 617-972-7515

Website: [www.necdbp.org](http://www.necdbp.org)

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## Orientation and Mobility

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MBTA Updates: MBTA Stations and bus routes continue to be updated with the new Card System. As you may know all legally blind MBTA passengers can access the MBTA system for free but now they will need the “Blind Access Card” to get into the stations or ride on buses once the different routes switch over to this new system. To get a Blind Access Card one must have a current MCB ID card. Passengers can apply for the MBTA Blind Access Card at the Office for Transportation Access at the Back Bay Station or at the Downtown Crossing Station Chauncy Concourse office between the Red & Orange line entrances. Call 617-222-5976 or go to [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com) for additional locations to apply for the cards. The next stations will begin switching over in January at Fields Corner station/Red Line and Silver Line

Bus route to the World Trade Building/Airport stations. It is expected that all MBTA stations and bus routes will be switched over to the new system by July 2006.

## **ACVREP Certification Information**

Why should I bother to get certified?

It supports your profession and demonstrates a level of competence.

The DOE Ten Step Guide will be referencing Certified Vision Specialists.

If the Medicare bill is passed it specifically allows COMS, CVRT and CLVT's to bill their services as professionals. For the demonstration project already approved by the government, only these certifications will be allowed to bill. It is very specific about having current ACVREP certification. This may be a future funding resource for your agencies or school systems.

**ACVREP Continuing Education Certification Information:** [www.acvrep.org](http://www.acvrep.org)

**HOW DO I OBTAIN THE 25 CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) HOURS I NEED FOR ACVREP RECERTIFICATION?**

**What is the CE hour requirement under the new ACVREP recertification criteria?**

Under the new recertification criteria, you are required to earn 100 recertification points every 5 years. A minimum of 25 of these points must be ACVREP approved continuing education (CE) hours. That amounts to an average of five (5) CE hours a year. You can obtain all 100 points in "Category 1 – Continuing Education" (see Category 1 in the new recertification application under the "Download" page at [www.acvrep.org](http://www.acvrep.org)).

**How do I obtain CE hours?** CE hours can be obtained by attending ACVREP approved presentations at conferences, workshops or in-service trainings, and by taking ACVREP approved online courses, distance education programs, etc. Often by attending just one of the many ACVREP approved state, regional or international professional conferences, certificants can satisfy and even exceed the minimum CE hour requirement.

**Do all CE hours have to be ACVREP approved?** Yes. However, there is one exception to this rule. If you take a university/college course that meets one or more of the 13 approved content areas, you simply have to submit a transcript(s) from the

respective college or university; the transcript(s) will indicate where and when you took the course as well as the number of semester/quarter hours that were granted.

**How can ACVREP approval be obtained for a CE program/activity?** There are two ways in which ACVREP approval can be obtained for a specific CE program/activity:

1. **Contact the CE provider.** Providers may include the chair/co-chair/member of a conference/workshop planning committee, an agency training coordinator, a marketing representative of a for profit organization, etc. Let the CE provider know that you and your certified colleagues are required to obtain all of your CE hours through ACVREP approved CE programs/activities. Inform them that they can download the CE application from the ACVREP website at [www.acvrep.org](http://www.acvrep.org) (see the “Downloads” page). If they have any questions or need assistance in completing the application, have them contact the ACVREP office at 520-887-6816 or they can go to the “Continuing Education Provider Information” page at [www.acvrep.org](http://www.acvrep.org) that will answers many of the basic questions CE providers have regarding how to apply for ACVREP approval and application fees.

Another resource is if member of AER contact Kim Stump who is the NEAER Continuing Ed Coordinator at [KStump@sightlosscenter.com](mailto:KStump@sightlosscenter.com) or Bob McCulley at UMass.

2. **Get a group of certificants to submit a CE application.** CE applications don't necessarily have to be submitted by a CE provider. You and your colleagues can also submit a CE application to seek ACVREP approval for a specific upcoming CE program/activity and cover the application and offering fee(s).
3. **How do I know which CE programs/activities have been ACVREP approved?** Go to the “Continuing Education Opportunities” page which provides a current listing of all ACVREP approved CE programs/activities.

**How much does it cost to apply for ACVREP approval?** Go to the “Continuing Education Provider Information” page at [www.acvrep.org](http://www.acvrep.org).

**What if I'm not sure that I can meet the 25 CE hour requirement?** Call the ACVREP office at 520-887-6816. We are often able to help certificants realize that they do have the 25 CE hours required for recertification.