

October 6, 2020

## Important Announcements:

The National Research & Training Center on Blindness & Low Vision (NRTC) is proud to announce that we were again awarded the *Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind Training and Technical Assistance Center (OIB-TAC) grant.* The OIB-TACis sponsored by the Rehabilitation Services Administration under the Department of Education. This 5-year grant began on October 1, 2020**.** Read our [news item](https://www.blind.msstate.edu/news/2020/10/nrtc-awarded-second-major-national-grant) to learn about our upcoming projects and activities for the next five years.

* Three major focus areas are related to this grant:
* Intensive Training and Technical Assistance: Three OIB programs per year will be selected to receive intensive training and technical assistance to improve operations and performance.
* Targeted and Universal Technical Assistance: OIB-TAC staff will continue to create and maintain free continuing education courses, provide regular webinars, and host the annual OIB-TAC conference.
* Collaboration: OIB-TAC staff will promote OIB services and engage in national partnerships through conferences, presentations, exhibits, journals, and other dissemination and collaborative methods.

## Upcoming Webinar:

* The OIB-TAC is hosting an Aging Consequences of Vision Loss Taking the Long View on Visual Impairment webinar on October 16 at 2:00 pm (Central) to discuss the long-term health and aging implications of vision loss. For more information or to register, visit the [events page](https://www.oib-tac.org/events) on the OIB-TAC Community of Practice. Registration is required.

## Course of the Month:

The NRTC has almost 50 courses available for free continuing education credit and professional development. The OIB-TAC has 18 courses specifically focused on working with older individuals with blindness or low vision. Visit our [course catalog](https://nrtc.catalog.instructure.com/) to enroll. This month, we recommend taking our course, [Basics of Blindness and Low Vision](https://nrtc.catalog.instructure.com/courses/blindness-basics) (1-hour). This introductory course targets individuals who are new to the field of blindness and low vision, providing them with foundational information on critical matters within this multidisciplinary field.

## OIB-TAC Connect 2020 Conference:

The OIB-TAC conference was a huge success. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had to move to a virtual conference. We believe it created an opportunity to bring together many more individuals to learn about and discuss best practices in the OIB program. We had over 220 attendees, and 48 states/territories were represented. The webinars and session summaries are posted [here](http://www.oib-tac.org/).

## **Resources**:

The OIB-TAC continues to create and promote remote training resources. Please visit the [Community of Practice](https://www.oib-tac.org/direct-service/remote-training-resources/) for virtual activities, tips for working remotely, and other resources.

Please share this information with your colleagues and be sure to sign up for the Chapter 2 list by emailing info@oib-tac.org. The Older Individuals who are Blind Technical Assistance Center is a part of the [National Research & Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision (NRTC)](http://www.blind.msstate.edu/) at Mississippi State University. Please consider connecting with us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/theNRTC) or [Twitter](https://twitter.com/MSU_NRTC).