



AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF
ELECTRONIC
REPORTERS AND
TRANSCRIBERS

SOUNDBYTES

*Your Glimpse of Everything You Need to Know About
What's Happening at AAERT*

[Visit our Website](#)

New AAERT Committee Structure and Leadership Announced for 2020-21

At its August 2020 meeting, the AAERT Board of Directors finalized a restructuring of AAERT's committees for the program year.



The group formerly called the Conference Committee was renamed "Professional Development" in recognition of their expanded role in planning and producing year-round programming, including our new webinar series "Navigating the Seas of Change."

As approval of courses/programs for CEUs and approval of schools and programs that prepare students for the profession are directly related to AAERT certification programs, the work of the group formerly known as the Education Committee has been incorporated into the Certification Committee under two new subcommittees.

The newly named Leadership Development Committee (previously called Nominations) was given that moniker in recognition of the committee's expanded role. This committee will continue the work of vetting and nominating candidates for board service. It will play a larger role in the ongoing development of opportunities for AAERT members to serve and lead within the organization.

President Janet Harris has appointed the following individuals to lead these restructured committees:

Certification Committee

Chair K. C. Corbin, CER, CET

Subcommittee on School Approvals – Chair Mary Ann Lutz

Communications Committee

Chair Benjamin Jaffe, CER

Government Relations Committee

Chair Rick Russell

Membership Committee

Chair Victoria O'Connor, CET

Leadership Development Committee (aka Nominations)

Chair Jay Gross, CER

Professional Development Committee (formerly Conference)

Chair Ilene Watson, CER, CET

We invite you to help us start the work of our new Leadership Development Committee by expressing your interest in becoming involved! **If you would like to be active in the growth and development of AAERT through service on a committee or subcommittee, please send us an email expressing your interest at aaert@aaert.org.**

AAERT Provides New Tool for Tracking Certification Requirements by State

from AAERT Government Relations Committee Chair Rick Russell

AAERT's Government Relations Committee is pleased to provide our members with a new tool for keeping apprised of certification requirements and the status of digital reporting/transcribing in each state. The status of our industry in every state is in flux as needs, rules, and technologies evolve. The Government Relations Committee has created a spreadsheet of known rules for each state and made it available to members on our website. We invite you to use it, and we are asking for your help to ensure that it remains current and accurate.



You can view the Certifications by State spreadsheet by visiting our website, logging into your account, clicking on the Government Relations tab, and selecting "[Certification Requirements](#)." Please lend a hand by reviewing the information displayed for your state and sending any updates/corrections to us at aaert@aaert.org. Include links and/or attachments to relevant rules, information, etc. These updates will be verified and the database will be updated.

You know the rules in your state best, and we appreciate you sharing your expertise with us. Thank you very much for your help!

From the President's Desk



Dear Members,

As we work through the sixth month of the pandemic, we are seeing more changes to allow remote notarizations, virtual hearings, and new technologies for managing virtual content, and there is no end in sight for conducting virtual proceedings. Acceptance of change and the likelihood that remote and virtual proceedings will continue long after the pandemic are becoming generally accepted by all in the legal world.

To keep pace with these changes, AAERT's new board has several initiatives in place to make sure we too are prepared for the future.

The Certification Committee has recommended pursuing **development of three new certifications** for members. We anticipate the development of these exams to be well underway by the end of the year.

Corporate and vendor members now have a series of **sponsorship packages to choose from to engage more frequently with and directly to our members**. Through the association's webinar platform, both **CEU credit courses and content on best practices and standards** are being offered on a monthly basis. This quick pivot from live to virtual events has created a platform for AAERT to disseminate information to our members in an interactive way.

The board has decided to hold **virtual conventions** for both the Executive Forum in March and the June 2021 annual conference for the safety of our members, and due to the uncertainty of our ability to hold a larger event. We recognize that one of the most important benefits of attending conferences is the ability to network. Virtual networking is challenging at best, and we will work hard to find creative ways to achieve this goal.

Our **new Members-Only Facebook group** is a safe and collaborative space for our members to connect with one another and discuss current issues. We encourage your participation in this virtual space to build relationships with peers, share news and tips, and discuss current happenings in our industry. This is another way to expand your network.

Digital reporting and transcription programs are taking off, and we anticipate significant growth over the next few years. This is a very exciting time for us. Despite the backlash we often experience in periods of growth, there is a strong wave of support coming right behind it. Recent press releases have announced traditional court reporting vendors expanding into the digital market. Educators and leaders within the industry are advocating for multiple reporting methods. We see **a trend towards inclusion and respect for all methods**. These are changes I wasn't sure I would ever see in my lifetime. But here we are. I guess you could say, "It's the best

of times; it's the worst of times..." Best for exponential growth and opportunity and worst for the pandemic and backlash of including digital in the freelance market. I'm going to focus on the positive signs for the future of our organization. I invite you to join me, stay positive, stay healthy, and stay safe!

Janet Harris, CER, CET, CDVS
President

AAERT Webinars Provide Professional Development and CEU Opportunities

AAERT's Professional Development Committee continues to roll out outstanding online learning opportunities in our "Navigating the Seas of Change" webinar series. Register now for our September and October webinars, and [visit the series page on the AAERT website](#) next week for details on additional webinars planned for the remainder of the year. Each webinar offers AAERT Certified Members credit to apply toward recertification through live participation or later viewing via [our LMS system](#). Here's what's coming up in this month and next.



Navigating the Seas of Change
A webinar series brought to you by AAERT

Communication Skills for Supporting Others in Managing Stress and Solving Problems

presented by Amy Nitza, Ph.D.
*Director, Institute for Disaster Mental Health
State University of New York at New Paltz*

Tuesday, September 15, 2020
2:00-3:30pm ET

"Communication Skills for Supporting Others in Managing Stress and Solving Problems," presented by Amy Nitza, Ph.D. on Tuesday, September 15 from 2 - 3:30 pm EDT, will address skills and strategies for communicating effectively with others during times of heightened stress. The first part of the session will involve communication strategies for supporting others who are struggling. The second part will address communicating to solve problems during times of heightened emotions, including dealing with anger. Certified members can earn 0.15 CEUs by attending live or viewing later on our LMS system.

Register for September's Webinar

What's in your Tool Kit: Microsoft Word Best Practices

presented by Karon Mason-Etienne

Tuesday, October 6, 2020
2:00pm ET

In "What's in your Tool Kit: Microsoft Word Best Practices," presented by Karon Mason-Etienne on Tuesday, October 6 from 2 - 3 pm EDT, participants will learn ways to streamline the transcript production process using various Word shortcuts, tips and tricks.

Register for October's Webinar

Do You Know AAERT's Professional of the Year?

from AAERT Membership Committee Chair Victoria O'Connor, CET

When you think of the same attributes Fido is thinking about, who comes to mind? OK, you've got a name. . . Act now! Nominate someone who meets or exceeds these same attributes for AAERT 2020 Professional of the Year. The lucky winner will receive a commemorative plaque and complimentary registration for the 2021 conference.



Deadline for nominations is December 31, 2020. Write a brief essay outlining your nominee's qualifications and why you think they should be our Professional of the Year, and email it to aaert@aaert.org. Our winner will be notified no later than March 15, 2021. So what are you waiting for? This year will be over before we know it!

AAERT Approved Schools Expand Nationwide

Two [AAERT Approved Schools](#) have new program announcements. Read the

announcements in the links below.

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) in Ohio has [launched its digital reporting and transcription program](#). The program is online and open for enrollment.

Online training center [BlueLedge recently announced partnership with Ed2Go](#). The new partnership will make BlueLedge's programs available through more than 2,000 outlets.

The curriculum at AAERT Approved Schools has been vetted by the association to ensure it is adequately robust to prepare students for AAERT's certification examinations.

AAERT Launches New Sponsorship Program



AAERT has launched a new Annual Sponsorship Program and added opportunities for companies to underwrite our webinars and advertise in SoundBytes.

The new Annual Sponsor Program year runs from July 1 to June 30 and companies are invited to sign up as Platinum or Gold Annual Sponsors to **receive a full year of outstanding benefits**. To celebrate the launch of the new program and sweeten the benefits, companies who enroll as Platinum or Gold Annual Sponsors by December 31 **receive a special discounted rate and will be known as "Charter Sponsors."** Charter Sponsors will be provided with a special badge they can use in their marketing and will be identified by AAERT as Charter Sponsors for as long as they maintain their Annual Sponsorship at their introductory level or higher.

Platinum Sponsor (\$1,500 for Charter Sponsors, \$1,750 after December 31) benefits include:

- (1) Company Showcase webinar - opportunity to have your company present (20-30 minutes) as part of an online industry-related company showcase;
- (1) Company feature article in AAERT's newsletter;
- Opportunity to send (2) email blasts to AAERT's member base (copy to be approved and sent by AAERT);
- (1) "Shout-out" each month on AAERT's social media platform;
- (1) Article/Page/Blog share link placement on AAERT's corporate social media ;
- A large company logo on AAERT's home page sponsor scroll identifying your company as a platinum sponsor, with link to company's website;
- A large company logo in AAERT's quarterly SoundBytes newsletter;
- Recognition on AAERT's sponsor page, with a large company logo and description; and
- Recognition as a Platinum sponsor at next AAERT Annual Conference and Executive Forum (signage, electronic or hard copy, ribbons on name badges, listing in any print or electronic program)

Gold Sponsor (\$1250 for Charter Sponsors, \$1000 after December 31) benefits include:

- A medium company logo on AAERT's newsletter (sent out 6 times a year);
- Opportunity to send (1) email blast to AAERT's member base (copy to be approved and sent by AAERT);
- (6) "Shout-outs" on AAERT social media;
- A medium company logo on AAERT's home page sponsor scroll, with link to company's website;
- Recognition on AAERT's sponsor page, with medium-size company logo and

description;

- Recognition as a Gold Sponsor at next AAERT Annual Conference and Executive Forum; and
- Logo and recognition as webinar underwriter in all marketing communications leading up to event and post-conference communication

Webinar Underwriters may choose to underwrite one of our very popular education programs for \$750. Benefits include:

- Logo recognition in all pre-event marketing, including the website, registration page, emails and *SoundBytes*, and
- An appearance of the company logo and recognition at the beginning and end of the live webinar, which is also recorded and available on AAERT's LMS system.

The following **a la carte advertising opportunities** have also been created at a cost of \$500 each:

- **Banner advertisement** in (1) AAERT *SoundBytes* newsletter with link to company's website; or
- **Article/Blog link on AAERT's social media** platforms with link to company sponsored website content

Sign up for these opportunities online, or learn more by reaching out to us at AAERT headquarters at aaert@aaert.org or 518-432-9973.

Welcome New

AAERT Members!

Eric Axt of Alexandria VA
Carson Axtman of Spokane WA
Amanda Bowman of Adams Run SC
Courtney Busick of Louisville KY
Debra Carmichael
of Royal Palm Beach FL
Catherine McElrath Carr of Cordova MD
John Cordi of Myrtle Beach SC
Donna DelValle of Manahawkin NJ
Rebecca Diemer of Fargo ND
Michael Ford of Austin TX
Andrea Foy of Hamilton NJ
Janelle Freeman of Salt Lake City UT
McCall Gardner of Louisville KY
Katie Jo Glesing of Floyds Knobs IN
Jaime Godinez of Long Beach CA
Brandon Greenblatt of New York NY
Carlot Hall of Yachats OR
Brooke Hall-Lartigue of Rosenberg TX
LaJon Irving of Van Nuys CA
Gwen Jividen of Natchitoches LA
Kelly Johns of Kingsport TN
Tris Johnson of Winder GA
Jinho Kwak of Redmond WA
Patricia LaMonica of Shepherdstown WV
Sarah Longazel of Louisville KY

Our Newly

Certified Members

Kiara Almaral, CER of Miami FL
Carson Axtman, CER of Portland OR
Danielle Barone, CER
of Royal Palm Beach FL
Paige Beckham, CER of Gainesville FL
Samantha Browne, CER
of Los Angeles CA
Colleen Callahan-Poley, CET
of Kingston NH
Debra Carmichael, CER
of Royal Palm Beach FL
Lisa Contreras, CET of Cheltenham MD
John Cordi, CER of Myrtle Beach SC
Spencer Jarret. CET of Highland UT
Caitlin Garces, CER of Houston TX
Katie Jo Glesing, CER of Louisville KY
Jaime Godinez, CER of Long Beach CA
Talia Horn, CER of Louisville KY
LaJon Irving, CER of Van Nuys CA
Spencer Jarret. CET of Highland UT
Kelly Johns, CER of Kingsport TN
Allie Knodel, CET of Bismarck ND
Nitra Latta, CET of Minot ND
Amber Loyd, CER of Portland OR
Sarah Luke, CER of Columbia SC
Reginald Mangone, CER

Julie Lord of Englewood CO
Eliza Lowell of Westfield MA
Amber Loyd of Portland OR
Reginald Mangone of Long Beach CA
Hallie Moran of Longmont CO
Joanne Morrison of Wisconsin Rapids WI
Toulonne Newhouse of Lancaster CA
Vicki Parent of San Diego CA
Ashley Parise of Pollok TX
Alexandra Patrick of San Diego CA
Marsha Perkins of Lawrenceville GA
Stephanie Petersen of Dallas OR
Jennifer Price of Kenosha WI
Thomas Runfola of Sarasota FL
Greg Salina of Spokane WA
Kiara Schmidt of Las Vegas NV
Kelsey Serge of Lexington KY
Leyhbert Sharp of San Antonio TX
Leah Sharp of Louisville KY
Heather Smith of Lexington NE
Rachael Stivers of Portland OR
Heidi Syed of Palm Springs FL
Lee Ann Tardieu of Alexandria VA
Claire True of Lexington KY
Sarah Veach of Woodford VA
Carol Vega of Livingston TX
Linda Vestal of Riverview FL
Alyssa Ward of Parrish FL
Andrew Wert of Lynchburg VA
David Wieczorek of Grafton WI

of Long Beach CA
Amber Martin, CER of Crete NE
Steve Owen, CER of Austin TX
Vicki Parent, CER of San Diego CA
Alexandra Patrick, CER of San Diego CA
Marsha Perkins, CER
of Lawrenceville GA
Madison Peterson, CER of Adrian GA
Taiesha Potter, CER of Milwaukee WI
Rebecca Roberts, CER
of Rancho Cucamonga CA
Heather Smith, CER of Lexington NE
Rachel Stivers, CER of Portland OR
Heidi Syed, CER of Palm Springs FL
Kathleen Varanese, CER of Houston TX
Misty Watkins, CER of London KY
Valori Weber, CER of Milwaukee WI
Megan Wunsch, CET of Mequon WI
Stephen Zinone, CER of Denver CO

CONGRATULATIONS!



Tech Corner

Headphones: The Better to Hear You With, My Dear!

from AAERT Communications Committee Chair Benjamin Jaffe



As digital court reporters and transcribers headphones are one of our most important pieces of equipment. Yet they are not always the first thing that comes to mind when we think of ways to improve the quality of our recordings, transcripts and workflow processes. Digital court reporters use headphones to monitor the recording process by listening to actual recorded audio. This is called confidence monitoring. A good set of headphones allows the court reporter to hear extraneous sounds such as buzzes in the background, the whispering of parties, or the rustling of papers. This provides the court reporter the opportunity to address those interferences. Transcribers, on the other hand, transcribe verbatim from the previously recorded proceeding. Poor quality headphones may distort the sound of the recording and this could cause something to be missed. Let's

look at what you should consider when selecting a pair of headphones.

TYPE

There are three distinct types of headphones: in-ear, on-ear and over-ear. For this article we are not going to delve into earbuds due to the differences in characteristics that make for good earbuds.

In-Ear Headphones

In-ear headphones place the small headphone speakers, known as a driver, directly into the ear canal. This is great because it allows for a high degree of sound isolation, and if the sound canal is blocked or closed then other sounds have a harder time coming in. Many times, these headphones have the connecting piece going under the chin rather than over the head.

On-Ear Headphones

As the name implies these headphones sit on top of the ear and, generally, have a foam pad that separates the headphone from the ear. These headphones are often seen as a good compromise between comfort and quality. Because they are physically bigger, they can accommodate a larger driver, but they do not have the same level of isolation as the other headphone types allowing for the introduction of extraneous background sounds.



Over-Ear Headphones

These studio-style headphones are often depicted in music videos, in films or on TV by someone listening to music or in a sound booth. Sometimes nicknamed cans, these headphones have the ability to have the biggest drivers and the softest padding that covers the entire ear. Since they are the bulkiest and heaviest, they can be harder to carry with you.

Connection

Whether in the courtroom or in your office your headphones need a reliable connection to get the best sound.

AUX Port or Phone Port

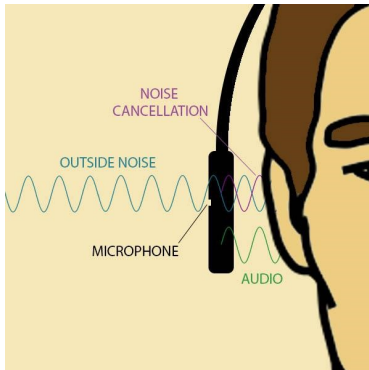
Traditionally headphones have connected to devices through an AUX port sometimes called a phone, headphone, 1/4", 1/8", 3.5mm, TRS or TRRS. On a computer, this analog connection gets its audio from the computer's sound card. The sound card is turning the digital information of the audio into an analog signal, so a better sound card leads to better quality of audio.

USB

A lot of newer headphones specifically designed for computers use USB connections. These headphones take the digital information from the computer and then internally convert that to analog sound for your ears to hear. Quality of the headphone plays a bigger role in what you hear with these headphones. An advantage of USB headsets is that they provide similar quality of sound no matter what computer you plug them into.

Wireless/Bluetooth

Most wireless headphones today use Bluetooth technology although some still use more traditional 2.4Ghz connections. Bluetooth has evolved a lot over the last few years, and this has created better products but also a lot of incompatibility issues. So make sure your device and computer use the same version of Bluetooth or can be upgraded. Remember that any wireless signal is susceptible to interference. If the signal gets interrupted, distorted or overridden between the computer and the headphones, you won't hear it.



Noise Cancellation or Not

Noise cancellation works by having a small microphone on the outside of the headphones that picks up the noise and then inverses that noise into your headphones, so you do not hear it. This is often done through a process called phase cancellation. An example of this is if the A/C is loud in the room at 60hz the headphones will produce a sound to cancel this out. Effectiveness is key, so test your new headphones for how well they work but also how they alter

other sounds to make it work. Please remember noise cancelling is different from sound isolation. They have the same goal, but one is an active practice that changes the sound while the other is a passive practice that blocks the sound.

Features to Understand

Driver Size

As mentioned earlier, the driver is basically the speaker of the headphones, so the bigger it is then the better the sound should be reproduced. Like any manufactured product, quality is key and you can have large drivers that are poorly designed and/or constructed.

Frequency Response

This is the range of sounds the drivers can produce. Most people hear sounds between 60hz and 16,000hz. As you get older that can be reduced. Most headphones are rated from 20hz to 20,000hz but it is always good to read the specifications to make sure.

Flat vs. Boosted Sound

Some sellers of headphones cater to the youth audience who like to manipulate their sound especially by adding bass. This is not good for our industry because it increases unwanted lower tones like A/C, traffic and room noise. You want to look for headphones that have flat, neutral or natural frequency response.

Other Features

Many of the other features offered for headphones today are superfluous to our industry and are often just marketing techniques. Things like what the headphone pads are made of, if it has a microphone or battery life are user preferences.

Remember there is no substitute for a high-quality recording, good microphones and a quiet room. A good pair of headphones allows the digital court reporter to monitor the recording process to ensure an accurate recording of the proceeding, and they allow the transcriber to produce an accurate transcript from a clear recording.



The Nature of Words

from Laurel H. Stoddard, CET

I've always liked the word **alacrity**. One of its definitions is cheerful readiness, which makes me smile, not only to be ready but to be cheerful about it. It comes from the Latin *alacer*, which means lively, and it had been in use for a century before Shakespeare wrote in Richard III: "Give me a bowl of wine. I have not that alacrity of spirit nor cheer of mind that I was wont to have." A synonym of a similar age is **celerity**, from the Latin *celer*, meaning swift.

I hope that I am not the only one who sees **celerity** and also thinks of **celery**. There is no etymological relationship between the two. Celery, from the French *céleri*, first used in the middle of the 17th century, is a cultivated vegetable (or herb); in binomial nomenclature, *Apium graveolens*. Celery is a *sine qua non*, according to many cooks, in the production of a **mirepoix**, the most basic of which is a combination of diced carrots, onions, and celery, which are sautéed and slowly cooked, used as an aromatic base. According to both Merriam-Webster and Gordon Ramsey, the word mirepoix comes from the name of a French aristocrat, the duc de Mirepoix, whose cook is credited with this particular marvelous combination and treatment of vegetables.

The first known use of the word **vegetable** was in the 15th century; it came from Middle English by way of the Medieval Latin *vegetabilis* and going back to the Late Latin *vegetare*, to grow. A much later addition to our language is the word **vegetarian**, from the mid-19th century, describing those who don't eat meat. It was a century later, toward the end of World War II, that those vegetarians who eat solely vegetable products began calling themselves *vegans*.

Words are the very building blocks of our profession. Continue, with alacrity, to read and listen and learn, adding depth and breadth to your treasure trove of words throughout a lifetime. Read things which bring you joy.

Pandemic Style Jury Trials: Learn more in our October webinar

by Gillian Lawrence, CER-255, CET-255

I started to write to the tune of "Gangnam Style," but let's stick to "Pandemic Style," shall we? Margaret Morgan is an official electronic court reporter for Judge Joseph Chase in the Olmsted County District Court, Rochester, Minnesota. In October, as part of the AAERT 2020 webinar series, Margaret will be presenting on this subject, providing a peak into one Minnesota court's pilot project for jury trials. Here's a few interesting facts to whet your appetite for her presentation:

- Margaret reported the first pandemic style jury trial in the Third Judicial District in June 2020.
- At that time only a handful of Minnesota's 87 counties were approved to conduct a jury trial during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- With the information learned from Minnesota's pilot pandemic style trials, there are now counties approved for petit juries, civil juries, and grand jury proceedings.
- Strict pandemic style jury trial guidelines were established for the Minnesota Judicial

Branch by Chief Justice Lori Gildea and State Court Administrator Jeff Shorba. (from [an article in Minnesota's Star Tribune](#))

- The "Other Side" Workgroup was established to address issues resulting from the pandemic. With the information provided, Judge Chase created a 15-page plan regarding the pilot jury trial project. The plan included: how jurors were to be summoned, timing of their arrival, description of jury assembly areas, face mask and sanitizing requirements, how jury selection was to be conducted, seating arrangements, and where jurors would deliberate.

Watch the AAERT website and your email for registration to open for Margaret's October webinar where she will describe her experience as the digital court reporter in the courtroom. She will describe the juror summoning process, the details of the juror questionnaires, the manner by which jurors were seated and questioned, and the physical additions to the courtroom – including the "addition" of a spectator courtroom.

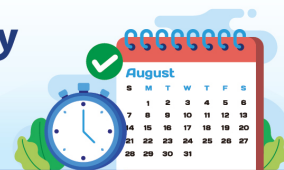
As we brave this new frontier together, we will develop new processes and operation styles much faster by sharing our experiences jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

Don't Forget to Join AAERT's New Members-Only Facebook Group

AAERT has established a new Members-Only Facebook Group to facilitate open member-to-member networking and dialogue and serve as a true benefit of AAERT membership. Members who are active in the open group that has existed on Facebook for several years are encouraged to

join the AAERT Members-Only Group by October 31, as the old group will be closed and shut down thereafter. We will continue to share information about AAERT activities and events for the general public and advocate and educate about our profession on AAERT's organization page.

**Countdown
to the new
members-only
group**



Follow these steps below to join the AAERT Members-Only Facebook Group:

1. Navigate to the AAERT Organization Facebook Page.
2. "Like" the AAERT page.
3. On the top bar of the AAERT page you will see a "Group" heading. Click the "Group" heading.
4. Click "Join."

We are looking forward to our new member-only group where all our members can freely share and discuss their ideas as well as ask fellow members questions.

Stay Safe

