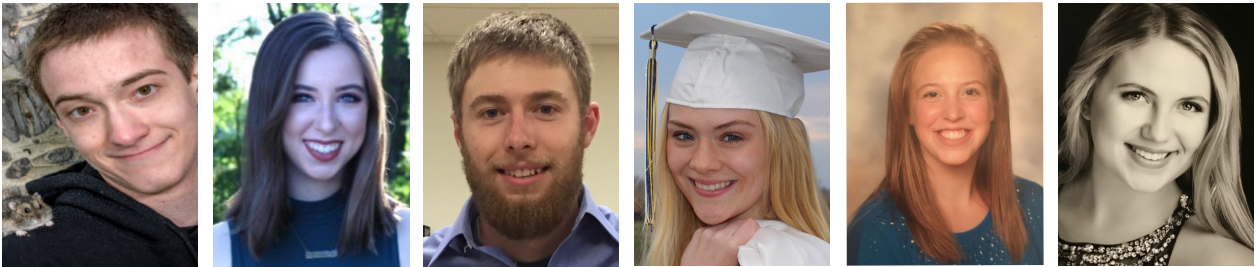


# Dyslexic Advantage

## NEWSLETTER



*Karina Eide Memorial  
College Scholarship*

# CONGRATULATIONS!

## Karina Eide Scholars 2020

- DYSLEXIA AND THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC
- DYSLEXIA NEWS



Dear Dyslexic Advantage Friends,



In this most difficult of times, we're thankful to be announcing this year's amazing Karina Eide Memoria Scholars of 2020.

We thought that we would have to sharply reduce our college scholarships this year, but thanks to some very generous donors, we were able to award 25 college students.

We hope you read these stories and cheer these young people on as they find their purpose and different ways of giving back to the world.

We are indebted to the donors and sponsors who made this program possible; dyslexic students are often excluded from many scholarship programs because of various exclusionary practices - but we know that with your help we're able to help these students finish their degrees and bring their gifts and talents to the world.

Thanks to sponsors **Winsor Sondag Systems** (check out their special free professional training programs), **Summit Centers**, **Touch Type, Reading and Spell**, **All About Learning Press**, **The Writers Studio**, **ReciteMe**, and **Churchill Center and School in Missouri**.



Also in this issue, we at Dyslexic Advantage would like to thank students Nicole Ramenda and Dylan Chalcraft for volunteering to serve as student reports and podcast editors to cover the potential impact of changes in the midst of this viral pandemic to students as well as adults. Check out their stories on pages [38-41](#).

\*\* If your students have free time at home, encourage them to enter our STEM Ingenuity Awards by May 1st [HERE](#). There's still time and we're giving away over \$1000!

Thanks to heroic volunteers, Trish Seres, Shelley Wear, Dayna Russell Freudenthal, and Michelle Williams for their critique and proofing. Thanks to Claudio Limongi, for web support, Lady Grace Belarmino for layout and design, and Sarah Macapobre for administration.





**BRANDON**  
Colorado State  
University

## Major: Engineering

Animal care attendant, Literacy Council, Meals on Wheels and Food Bank Pantry, Nebraska State Fair Sculpture, Scholastic Art Gold and Silver awards, Nebraska Eastern Stars, Academy of Special Dreams, Grand Island Good Will, Hornady Manufacturing, Colorado State University scholarships

...I didn't get extra help with reading until my fifth-grade year. I went from doing poor in elementary to honor roll in Junior High and High School at Grand Island Central Catholic. I got extra help by seeing the teachers after school when I needed too, and I was put in the front of the class most of the time, and given more time to complete tests due to my slow reading.

For as long as I can remember, I have dreamed of building things. Even as a kid, I felt a pull to make things. That pull was something that came naturally. I enjoyed the peace of mind that comes from building a finished product. My artwork has influenced my decision to pursue an educational path where I can create and build things, helpful, assistive items....

When I was young, I used to play with a toy called K'nex; you can create. I once made a K'nex prosthetic that would allow one to paint by pushing a button. I was able to see the unlimited possibilities it could offer, and I developed an intense interest in pursuing a career as a prosthetist.

I want to help injured animals by make prosthetics for animals. When I worked a part-time job as a kennel attendant at a veterinary hospital, I wanted to provide a disability assistance type of care and services for injured animals.

The future is mine to work hard and to achieve my goals and not become what my dad calls a Millennial that can't even measure!

Dyslexia is a diagnosable disability and getting help as soon as you can helps you to succeed and graduate!



**BROOKE**  
Univ. of Alabama  
Birmingham

## Major: Pre-Med

Honor college service committee, Presidential List (4.0), UAB Teach, Discipleship Now leader, UAB campus ministry, certified patient care technician, babysitting, trumpet, piano, poetry

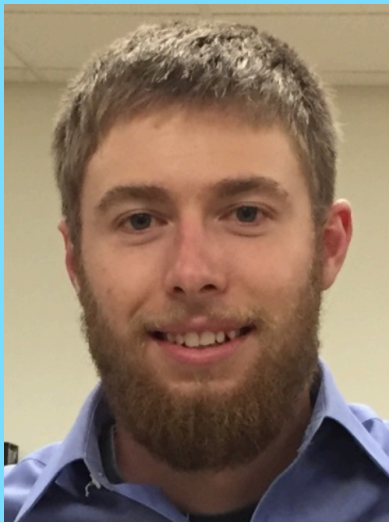
My strength is my work ethic; however, in many ways my strength is my dyslexia. I have big goals and dreams, and my dyslexia pushes me beyond what I thought my limits were out of necessity. Because of my dyslexia, failing is inevitable, and I'm not afraid of it but instead push through the fails until I get a win. I remember being tested for dyslexia for the first time in elementary school. I was home-schooled at the time. The educational psychologist expressed to my parents that it would be in my best interest to never go into the public-school system. Against the limits set before me, I enrolled in public school my eighth-

grade year. It didn't take long for me to realize that the standard classroom was not made for my way of learning. I have a funny memory of my English teacher going to the board and writing one word, "bad", and walking away. My classmate had to stop me from staring at the board because I zoned out trying to figure out what the word was.

That year, I met with my teachers and faculty to discuss the best plan going forward. The consensus was this: no honors classes. Against their sincere worries, I enrolled in all the honors classes I could freshman year. That year on awards day, I wore a medal for the top GPA in my freshman class. For this, I am thankful for my dyslexia. I am okay with hard roads now. I had to become okay with taking tests in janitor's closets because it was the only quiet room in the school. I had to become okay with staying up most nights while I re-read the same paragraph seven times, and I had to be okay with everyone knowing I was a little different. I apply my work ethic to everything: my relationships, my school, my hobbies, and my beliefs...

My advice to younger students would be to see your dyslexia as a strength because it is the ones who see things differently, the ones who have to work harder, and the ones who have to walk a slightly different path who are the change makers in this world. Students who take the doubts and turn them into fuel are the students who are unstoppable. On a more practical level, I would advise younger students to take care of their bodies and sleep well. I always knew that if I didn't sleep at night, I couldn't read the next day. Find the hours during the day that your dyslexia is most under control, and work those in as your main study hours. Lastly, be your own advocate! No one knows your needs like you do, especially when dyslexia can look different from person to person. Smile! You can do this!





**CONNOR**  
Fort Hays State  
University

## Major: Construction Management

Wind Technician, construction, wind turbine rescue and evacuation training, installed solar panels on family farm, skid loader operator, cattle and pasture management, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, Future Farmers of America, intramural basketball, Eco team, Church server, Honor Society, Volunteer service painting homes, snow removal, farm labor

I believe my best strength is being caring and being accurate. I like things to be done right. I also am good at working with my hands at school and on the job rather than reading about something since I am a slower reader. I take lots of pride in my actions and in everything I do. I expect a lot of myself and push to reach my goals by never giving up. There is not just a single way to achieve a goal so if one way fails I try another until I succeed.

My future includes earning a bachelor's degree in 2021 and then I plan to go back to working as a wind turbine technician. Before I transferred to the university as a Junior, I worked on a wind farm and really enjoyed being able to get a feel and understanding of what a career in wind energy includes. I continued in college because a bachelor's degree will help me move up to become a lead technician and then a wind farm manager. I want to help others achieve their goals also.

My advice to the other dyslexic students is to never forget your goals and dreams and most importantly never give up on reaching them. There is so much satisfaction in figuring out what you need to do to reach each step towards your goals and realizing your success even if it is minor. Make adjustments and don't listen to negative comments. Sometimes dyslexic students and employees need to take a different approach or take more time to complete a task. I am more successful if I listen better, concentrate harder, take notes, and study in a quiet environment.



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**ELIZABETH**  
Chatham  
University

## Major: History and Pre-Law

Senior dancer, Varsity Tennis and Swim, Volunteering - Veterans and 9/11 Remembrance, Women's Shelter, Food Kitchen, Blood Donation, Lifeguard, Nanny, Amusement Park employment

My world has been shaped by my love of history. I feel that we can learn from the past, so we won't make the same mistakes, over and over again. I've learned that we must stand up for what we believe in and that's why I plan on being a Lawyer.

As a second grader, I had the worst reading ability in the entire class. Thankfully, with support and encouragement, by the end of fourth grade, I had finished the entire Wilson Program, won awards, and had the highest reading score in the whole school. Once I learned how to read, there was always a book in my hand. I was constantly going on adventures through books.

Dyslexia used to be a scary word to me, I was ashamed and it made my life difficult. Finally, I accepted that Dyslexia is a part of me. I would not be the student I am today, if I never had to prove myself when I was younger. I am thankful for being dyslexic, because it brought me closer to my family, made me a better student, and made me learn to love reading. What I have learned from having dyslexia is to never give up, always have faith, and that you can achieve any goal you set your mind to...

I would encourage a young person with Dyslexia to believe in themselves. Trust those who are close to you and want to love and support you. They are smart, they just learn differently and they can do anything in life as long as you are willing to work for it. Do not ever quit trying!



**EMILY**  
Geneva College

## Major: Business

Summer bible camp counselor, waitress, cashier, tennis team, youth ministry, short term missions

Some are more talented or more gifted than I am, but my sheer determination and work ethic has helped me flourish when others have failed. I am also known for being organized. I love to organize things. Organization is another secret to success in my education. Finally, I am known for my friendliness. I am able to talk to anyone. Young, old, friends, or strangers, I have the confidence to initiate conversations and quickly build positive relationships with people...

My hope is to earn a degree that will help me start my own business. I would like to combine my organization skills and work ethic with my love for senior citizens. My desire is to have a business that cares for the needs of the elderly as they transition through life's most challenging times. I would like to help the elderly by organizing their stuff after the loss of a loved one. I would also like to help them transition from their homes to a facility that better meets their needs. Downsizing can be an emotionally traumatic experience. This situation needs to be handled with love, care, compassion, and skill. I want to use my gifts and talents to help those who can no longer help themselves.

For those with dyslexia, I have four words for you. You can do it! Life will be tough, but you can never give up. School will be more challenging for you, so you will have to work harder. Never feel sorry for yourself or have a pity party. You can do it! You will have to work long and hard to achieve your dreams, but you can do it! Don't get emotional! Don't quit! Don't give up! Be determined because you can do it. How do I know? Because if I can do it, so can you!...





**FAITH**  
The Master's  
University

## Major: Vocal Performance

Selected awards, performances, and scholarships: Music performance scholarships, First place Black Hills Young Vocal Artist, NATS Classical Voice competition, Miss Dakota Miss America Outstanding Teen, Charity Founder -Dream Your Destiny to provide dyslexia evaluations for undiagnosed children, Student Ambassador for South Dakota's Decoding Dyslexia

Performing classical voice music and public speaking are two of my strengths. Although dyslexia has made school and life overall more challenging, it has also prompted me to cultivate my ability to communicate through song and speech, bringing me into situations I think I would have never done otherwise.

As my mom saw the problems in school starting in kindergarten and the seeming mystery as to why I couldn't catch on to reading, and the lack of answers in the school

system, she recognized in me a singing voice, which she thought was beyond my years. At age five, I tried out for our church play, "Joseph: From the Pit to the Palace," and landed a role with duets and a solo, performing before 500 people. That experience so early in life gave me a sense of confidence, which I badly needed after having had such a rough year in kindergarten.

I started homeschooling after that and began voice lessons in the fifth grade, performing regularly on stage with group ensembles and as a soloist. I began dedicating much of my time to practicing singing, and studying German and Italian diction to help extend my repertoire...I have contributed to school plays, musicals, state choir events, sung the National Anthem, and have been privileged to sing in a leadership role in my church's worship team.

Through singing, the Lord led me to participate in other opportunities. I won pageants in the South Dakota Miss America Outstanding Teen Program, including many first-place talent awards, and giving me a chance to practice my speaking skills during interviews with the judges. As I became visible in speaking about my platform of dyslexia awareness,

I would tell younger kids who have gotten a diagnosis from a qualified professional to study the science behind how your dyslexic brain works and find different technologies that help with reading and writing. Put your efforts into tutoring with a specialized teacher using an Orton-Gillingham method, and above all, become your own advocate. There is no reason to be ashamed of dyslexia, so know what works for you in the classroom and have the confidence to approach your teachers. Identify your main strength, and put your focus on disciplining yourself to achieving mastery in it.



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**HARRY**

Greenville Technical  
Community College

## Major: Mechanical Engineering

Robot club, missions trips to do home construction, leader of church camp boys group, baseball league, hired yard work, fast food

I would like to go into mechanical engineering and continue my career in STEM type fields. In high school, I was part of a robotics team and was able to use my interpersonal skills and leadership skills in helping me team. I was able to help with minimizing conflict and making everyone feel happy and to understand everyone else's position as well as helping direct the group and make goals.

At my church, I've had opportunities to use my leadership skills with fellow students as well as manage younger children, which also has helped build my leadership skills and interpersonal relationships.

In the future, I plan to become a mechanical engineer and follow my passion to design products with a team and fulfill my wish to create useful things.



**HILTON**  
Samford University

## Major: Business Marketing and Management

Samford Ambassador, Golf Club, Study Abroad Israel, Young Life Leader, Habitat for Humanity

Determination is one of my personal strengths, which most certainly stems from my dyslexia because it created in me a personal discipline and drive to work hard. Being determined to do well while remaining positive and confident helped me during high school when others would often ask me why I took extra time on tests or why I would take my exams in a separate room. At first, I was embarrassed about it, but later as I gained inner confidence about my dyslexia, I was secure enough to explain my situation to them. I believe determination has become the foundation of my character and belief in what I am able to accomplish.

As I began to embrace all my strengths and weaknesses and be more confident in them, my ability to lead others began to surface. I consider leadership a personal strength as I desire to lead others well. Recently, I was chosen to join the Ambassador team for Samford University. In this leadership role, I will represent the school, students, faculty, staff and alumni, acting as a liaison between the university and its constituents.

Off campus, I serve the community through my involvement with the Christian organization, Young Life, by serving as a leader at a local high school. I engage with high school sophomore boys helping them to grow their faith. I invest in them, lead them in weekly Bible study, and simply have fun with them and other high school students during our large weekly club meeting.

...Marketing allows me to tap into the creative side of my brain, while management encourages me as a leader. Although classes can be difficult at times...

My advice to younger students with dyslexia is to never give up when things seem hard, you get discouraged, or feel embarrassed. Know you have something special that others don't. Just because you think differently doesn't mean you are at a disadvantage. Honestly, it is just the opposite. Dyslexia will reveal in you attributes you will eventually come to love and enjoy...



**ISAIAH**  
Houghton College

## Major: History / Philosophy

History Day Award, Swim team, Lifeguard, Lawn Mowing, Church Volunteer, missions, Houghton College Scholarship

My strongest strengths as a dyslexic learner are "interconnected reasoning" and "dynamic reasoning." I believe because of this, I have been able to excel in history and wish to pursue philosophy. I am able to see a wholistic view of historical events and what led up to them. I can often relate past events to what is currently relevant and think through solutions.

I have used this strength to win 3rd place in the NY National History Day on my paper on the history of animal rights and accountability. I have also used this strength to work with EPIC, a ministry on campus to other college students from China. I have been on several mission trips where we ministered to both the permanent missionaries and the "forgotten" of the island or city.

If I were to give younger dyslexic students advice, the first thing I would say is, "Believe in yourself. You are a unique individual and have so much to contribute to this exciting world." No one sees the world through their eyes, but they can! I would encourage them to find someone to engage with to better facilitate learning, find their best learning modality, and use it, not only to learn, but to teach others.

My strongest strengths as a dyslexic learner are "interconnected reasoning" and "dynamic reasoning." I believe because of this, I have been able to excel in history and wish to pursue philosophy. I am able to see a wholistic view of historical events and what led up to them. I can often relate past events to what is currently relevant and think through solutions.

I hope this will lead to either a career or hobby in apologetics or museum studies. I am most interested in studying ancient civilizations and religions, particularly Zoroastrianism and why it caught on so quickly in the early Persian Empire and Anatolia, modern-day Turkey.





**JACK**  
University of  
San Diego

## Major: Music Education / Chemistry

Freshman, Sophomore, Junior of the Year, Student Conductor, Musical Arranger, Instrumental Musician, Choral Music Scholar, National Honor Society Ensemble and Chamber Orchestra, Cross Country Team Captain, Lions Heart Service Organization - 203 hours of service.

I was always told that my words come from space, but I never knew that going to the moon could fix that. Communication has never been a strong suit for me. I have always struggled in spelling and in presenting my words through writing. My dyslexia has always hindered me in this way. I could never read or write as well as the other kids, but through music, I found my voice. Now, in perspective, my past has led me to my future goal- to become a Music Teacher and help others find their voices!

It was just a normal day in the band room when Mr. David Amrien (my most inspirational teacher) gave me the musical score to A Trip to the Moon. I was intrigued- not just by the title, but the funky meter and its weird scale drew me closer to the music. It attracted me because it was different with unique instrumentation with boomwackers and melodicas. I was fascinated to know how it worked and all the ins and outs of the piece. Mr. Amrien taught me everything about the piece even though it would take me till Junior year, to understand some of the music theory parts of it. I finally could see how things were communicated and it made sense. I no longer worried if I spelled this or that wrong or if I could read things right because I could understand music. I took what I had learned from my lowest moments in school and the skills I learned helped me find a way to communicate through music. I wasn't afraid to ask for help understanding the music, I was eager because I wanted to be able to communicate with people. I wasn't hindered by my spelling or reading because in music all I needed was my saxophone and my ears. I would tell my younger self- follow your instincts, follow your ears and you will succeed. Music and my struggles with dyslexia showed me that I didn't need words and writing for people to understand me and for me to understand them. I used my trip to the moon to learn how to communicate with others and soar.

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**JACOB**  
Eastern Wyoming  
College

## Major: Mechanical Engineering

Heavy equipment operator, greenhouse manage, report writing ad technical communication, sales, ranch hand, YMCA and science conference volunteer

I am a mechanical engineering student and I can see that my dyslexia has helped me visualize my schoolwork easier. I also feel like I understand the core underlying beliefs of the concepts instead of just memorizing the surface material. This is especially the case when I took multivariable calculus. I really feel like I was able to visualize the vectors and different dimensions because of my dyslexia. In the future, I would like to get a job as an aerospace engineer. I've always had a dream and passion for all things that fly going to school has only compounded my interest in this field.

The best piece of advice that I could give to the next generation of students that are struggling with dyslexia is, this is a gift sometimes it does not seem like it. I remember as I grew up always being told that dyslexia would help me in the long run. When you're right in the middle of trying to read the same sentence for the 15th time in a row and still not understanding it. This seems like there's nothing worse than not being able to do something that the average person can do without thinking, but just remember you are smart and there's nothing you can't do if you only put your mind to it.





**JENNA**  
**UCLA**

## Major: Costume Design

Costume Design Assistant for Love's Labor's Lost, Heathers, Costume Design lead Mary Poppins Merry Wives, Hair, Internships Eastern Costume, Ivan Bitton Style House, Young Artist's Ensemble, Performing Arts Camps, Awards International Thespian Society, Chapman Shakespeare Festival

For many years in elementary school, before my family and I knew I was dyslexic. I had a really hard time identifying my strengths because all I could see was my weaknesses in the eyes of the school. I remember very vividly how frustrated I would get because I knew I was working so hard to maintain my grades, but I still wasn't reaching the standards I had set for myself. Once we realized I was dyslexic, I did some research and realized how I could use what my school saw as a weakness to help me in life. I just started to translate

what I was learning into something my brain was more wired to understand. I became incredibly organized in my agenda and note taking for my class work by using color codes, special fonts and drawings so that my eyes could track the words and understand the material on a different level. I learned how to use creativity to work with my brain and problem solve with solutions that others might not have been able to see. In many ways, I think that being dyslexic is my greatest strength because it made me resilient. It made me advocate for myself and always look for new ways to reach my goals.

When I was in high school, I decided that I wanted to be a costume designer. The resilience I learned as a kid has helped me in so many ways in this career path. I have learned how to never give up on a project. When everything on set is going on, I find a new way to fix it and keep going. I use my creativity to understand the characters on a level so deep enough to translate into what they would wear. When I have to read scripts, I use text to speech on my phone. In the future, I would love to become a costume designer for Film, TV and Theater, however, I always tell people that my life long goal is to someday see my own children come running into the house on Halloween dressed as characters that I helped create because then I will know that I helped inspire a new generation to do great things.

My younger cousin is dyslexic and I have spent a good majority of my life helping her to navigate her primary schooling. The advice I always give her is that being dyslexic is not a disability, it just means that our brains are wired to do things that other people struggle with. It is true that we struggle with many things ourselves, but if we keep being patient with ourselves, asking for the help we need and keep learning how to work with our brains and not against them, there is nothing that is going to hold us back.





**JENNA**  
Bryan College of  
Health Sciences

## Major: Cardiovascular Sonography

Certified Nursing Assistant, Cake decorator, Vineyard Manager, Daycare Assistant

One of my strengths is my gift of dyslexia. Dyslexia has taught me the value of hard work, effort and how to advocate for myself. All through my school career I have had to study harder and longer than most of my peers. Now that I am in college and a young adult I'm finding that hard work and effort is an admired strength. When faced with challenges I work to overcome them instead of giving up. I've also learned to advocate for myself by working to help my teachers, peers, friends and family understand dyslexia and how it affects me. Most people are very willing to listen and understand what a day in my shoes can look like and feel like. I love sharing my story with others and showing

them despite the struggles of dyslexia, it truly is a gift. This strength helps me everyday with my college classes, my job and life in general.

My future plans include becoming an cardiovascular sonographer. When I started applying for colleges, my dream was to attend Bryan College of Health Sciences in Lincoln. Bryan is one of the top 15 sonography schools in the nation and they only accept 10-12 cardiovascular students each year. The process included an application, interview process and then a final selection process. In February of 2019, I received a call that I was selected for the interview process. I couldn't have been more excited! Later that Spring I was accepted as one of the 10 students to begin the program in 2019-2020. This was one of the biggest accomplishments of my life. This year has been challenging, but I continue to work hard everyday and am looking forward to seeing my dream come true.

The advice I would give to younger students with dyslexia is to pursue getting a 504 plan and using the accommodations that work best for them. Be willing to work hard, never make excuses and share their dyslexia story with teachers. It will take being brave, learning what works best and remembering that you have been assigned this mountain to show others it can be moved.



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**LAUREN**  
Pennsylvania State  
University

## Major: Architecture

Sales associate, farm hand, babysitter, Assistant Cheer Coach, Varsity Cheerleading, Lead Flyer, Tumbler, Penn State Equestrian Club, JV Soccer, Special Olympics Soccer partner, Math Teaching Assistant, Advocate for Assistive Technology

I would have to say that my greatest strengths are my ability to persevere and to believe in myself. My dyslexia is extremely severe. Initially, I didn't receive the proper instruction, and therefore I got further and further behind in every subject each year. By 5th grade I could not read a 1st grade book and I was officially classified as a non-reader by Massachusetts Education laws. I also had no friends, all my classmates thought I was stupid. One even told me, "You are short. You can't read. You can't write. You can't do math. You can't do anything. You are a kid that no parent would

to have." School was miserable for me. Not only did I feel like a complete failure, I felt all alone. However, I never gave up.

In 5th grade, I was moved to a different school system that provided the instruction that I needed, and I finally began to make progress. It was a long and slow journey, as I had many years to make up, however I kept pushing on. I would spend hours doing homework every night, willing myself to understand. Each day, I continuously strived towards my goal, which was to attend college. Without this perseverance, I wouldn't be where I am today....

My career goal is to become an Architect specializing in green architecture, marrying beautifully designed buildings with environmentally-friendly concepts. I hope to be able to look back on my life and see that I created something tangible that society will be able to use for years to come...

The advice I would give younger students with dyslexia is to give yourself a goal and never give up on yourself. The road will be bumpy, particularly in the early schooling years, but don't get discouraged because you will find ways to do all the things that seem impossible.

As you get older you start realizing the amazing gifts that also come with dyslexia. Mine happen to be creativity, out-of-the-box thinking, and strong STEM skills. You may not see your specific gifts right away, but there will be a turning point where you will realize that dyslexia is not merely a dis-ability it is a differ-ability. In the meantime, work hard, don't give up on yourself, and find an enjoyable hobby as an outlet. You will find the road you should be on.





**MADISON**  
University of Mary  
Hardin Baylor

## Major: Nursing

Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Powerlifting, Student Council, Volleyball, Cheerleading, Honor Society, Trainer, Softball, MVP, Volunteer Book Fair, Little Girl Cheer Camp, Little Olympics, Softball Camp, Church nursery, Lifeguard, Founders and Crusaders Scholarship

As a little girl in the second grade, I struggled to read. I spent many afternoons working on reading kindergarten level books and crying because I just didn't get it. I would ask for help from my parents and my teachers and still I struggled. Finally after the first semester of second grade was finished my teacher had enough evidence to have me tested for dyslexia and sure enough I qualified. It was a sad and happy day. I was sad that I had a disability. A disability that would have no cure and I would have to live with the rest of my life. At the same time I was so very happy that I

finally had a reason why I struggled so much harder than my classmates. I had an explanation for why it was so hard for me while everybody else around me acted like it was so easy. I wasn't dumb, I had hope.

Last year I had the opportunity to work with other kids that struggle in school, in particular dyslexic students. I was not only able to share my story of hope, but also to help teach them some of the tricks I have learned along the way to make studying and learning so much easier. This experience was meant for me to help others, however I have been blessed by seeing other students accomplish things they never thought were possible. I would always tell younger dyslexic students to never give up, even though it is gonna get hard but you will make it. Never stop!!!

My grandmother always told me that I could do anything I wanted and that my dyslexia would not hold me back. She was always my biggest fan and number one supporter in everything I did. Two years ago she was diagnosed with stage four lung cancer and only lived two weeks after her diagnosis. During that time I spent many hours with her in the hospital and I met and talked with many different nurses. After seeing how wonderful they were with my Nanny, I have now decided that I want to be a nurse...

My ultimate goal is to be a trauma nurse on a care flight team. I hope to use my strengths to help people who are hurt and to give them the comfort they will need during such a scary time in their life.





**NATHAN**  
North Greenville  
University

## Major: Business

President of 4-H, Public Speaking Award (state), AWANA awards, mission trips, Relay for Life volunteer (cancer), mission trips, yard work, fast food.

Founders Scholarship, Family scholarship, SC Life, others.

I can talk with anyone. This has helped me make friends easily. It also helps me to approach professors when I require assistance. Many students have difficulty talking with adults, but I have never had trouble with that. I am an auditory learner with a good memory. If I can hear a professor explain something in a way that I understand, I will remember it and be able to apply it. I have made good grades with this strength when professors test from their

lectures. It also helps me be a good friend to others. I have another strength I like to call grit. When I set my sights on a goal, I will do all within my power to accomplish said goal. This strength more than any other has helped me the most in my life.

I was in the fifth grade when we finally realized I had Dyslexia. I was homeschooled and my mom and I tried every reading program and even saw a psychologist that told me I had ADHD. I thought I was crazy and my mom felt defeated. However, she pushed on to make sure I would get the best help possible. I would encourage younger students to take start working on their learning differences sooner rather than later...

I would inform younger students to understand that no one is perfect. That having a learning difference does not make you unintelligent or less than someone else. I would advise them to hold their head high and always give their best, but most importantly to be willing to laugh at themselves for sometimes it does get rather funny! I would encourage students not to give up or listen to people who tell them they can not accomplish their goals. It wasn't until my first semester of college that my mom let slip that several psychologists told her I would probably never go to college. Fortunately for me, I had a mom who shielded me from the negative....

It has been a struggle and I have had to work harder than my peers who do not struggle with Dyslexia, but I am grateful because it has made me who I am today.



**PETER**  
Hilbert College

## Major: Criminal Justice

Volunteer firefighter and NYS certified Emergency Medical Technology Assistant, Property Assistant, Eagle Scout.

NY Office of Attorney General Triple C (Character, Courage, Commitment) Award, Outstanding Freshman, T. Wesselmann Memorial Scholarship, American Legion Post 362 Scholarship, Erie County Fire Chiefs Mutual Aid Scholarship

My strongest personal trait is resiliency. After years of struggling in school, enduring large noisy classrooms filled with distractions, and expecting to conform to standardized learning, resiliency has attributed me to conquer my challenges. I was fortunate to attend a school near my home that specializes in educating students with dyslexia and similar language-based learning differences....

I plan to work in law enforcement after completing my Bachelor's degree. I am striving to become a New York State Trooper. I am fascinated by the teamwork required of first responders and law enforcement. The problem-solving techniques and demanding situations law enforcement deal with regularly are challenging and intriguing.

The advice I have for younger students who struggle academically is to have grit. There will be challenges ahead in school, college, and future jobs. Possessing grit will enable you to overcome demanding times and difficult situations. Your true character will be evident and allow you to deal with any obstacle.

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**RACHEL**  
Middle Tennessee  
University

## Major: Physical Education

Volleyball team, childcare worker, Bible school volunteer, choir

During high school, I honestly didn't see many strengths in myself. Most of the time, I felt like other students were smarter than me. Every day of school was challenging, and teachers didn't seem to know how to help me – especially in high school. As I transitioned into college, I learned that one of my most important strengths is perseverance. I've had to work harder than others in order to get the grades I wanted. In college, I've had great support from the Disability Access Center, which has helped me tremendously. Most of my professors have been wonderful to give me the needed accommodations. With a lot of hard work and the necessary supports, I've been on the Dean's List every semester so far!

In the future, I plan to be a physical education teacher for elementary students. During high school, some of my favorite memories were made as part of the volleyball team. It was a place where I could feel successful despite my academic challenges. I want to teach PE so that I can show children that having an active lifestyle is important. I also realize that some students will excel with physical activities when they might not feel as successful with academics....

If I could give advice to younger people with dyslexia, I would encourage them to be open with others about having dyslexia, and learn to be an advocate for yourself. For years, I didn't want my peers to know that I learned differently, and it wasn't until I was in college that I finally felt comfortable enough with myself to speak up about what I needed in order to be a successful learner. Having dyslexia has made my academic road a bit more difficult to travel, but it's made me a better listener and "noticer" of those around me who have their own struggles.





**SAMUEL**  
North Dakota State  
University

## Major: Computer Engineering

Technology Service Technician, Lifeguard, Farm hand,  
Team Captain FIRST Robotics, Bison Robotics, Volunteer  
Minnesota Robotics Invitational

One of my strengths is persistence, the ability to struggle but always get back up and do better. As a computer engineering student I struggle quite often in my classes, but I continue to push myself harder to do better. After graduation, I would like to obtain a career as either an Electrical Design Engineer or Embedded Systems Engineer. I'm currently working toward a potential co-op at Collins Aerospace for an Electrical Design Engineering position.

Advice I would give younger students is to keep pushing and believing in yourself. I didn't know I was dyslexic until my freshman year of college, so growing up I felt dumb and behind on a lot of things in school. I also had big dreams of becoming an Electrical/Computer Engineer. I knew I needed to work hard to achieve good grades so I could accomplish my goal. My persistence paid off. I graduated high school as an Honor Student and was accepted to my first choice college!



**STERLING**  
Mercer University

## Major: Industrial Management

National Youth Leadership Mentor, Riverwood  
Hovercraft team, Venture crew, Boy Scout Senior Patrol  
Leader, Eagle Scout, Soccer Referee, Engineering Intern

I have learned that I am good at leadership and have a skill for organizing groups of people. I also am good in math and science. That is a strength that I am continuing trying to grow. My leadership style includes motivating others.

As an Eagle Scout, I lead my scout troop, community and in school. I was selected to lead a weeklong scout leadership camp for high schoolers using my leadership skills in managing both staff and participants. I also have a student job at Mercer leading the outdoor activities club. This is the best of both worlds getting paid to organize and lead students in outdoor activities, that I used to do for free as a scout.

Because written schoolwork was difficult for me, I would feel like I was not as smart as the others. But once I started focusing on improving my strengths my confidence and belief in myself improved. After reading a biography of Richard Branson, a dyslexic billionaire entrepreneur, I have been inspired to start my own engineering consulting firm after graduation from college. I have worked as an intern for one summer and will be returning this summer to build on these skills.

I would tell younger dyslexic students to keep challenging yourself and not give up when school is hard. Your learning disability is not a reflection on your intelligence, take advantage of opportunities outside of school, get involved in organizations. Real-world experience can help overcome learning disabilities give you experience that college admissions and employers look for to get your foot in the door. And once you have your foot in the door, they will see what skills you can offer. Reading may be difficult, but I can solve complex problems quickly from a unique perspective, because math and abstract reasoning is a strength and hopefully the world appreciates that, more than focusing on my reading and spelling difficulties.



**TALON**  
Utah State  
University

## Major: Industrial Hygiene / Premed

Cancer survivor, Aggie Health Club Chairman (led bone marrow drive), class B commercial driver, ACI Field technician, lifeguard, volunteer service and missions, Ulman Cancer Fund, engineering technician, materials testing technician, shuttle driver

One strength I have identified in myself that I believe has helped me reach this point in my education is resilience. There are several obstacles and disappointments I have had to face and overcome in order to continue progressing through life including the twice exceptional diagnosis with the written language learning disability (dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia), a disappointing injury in sports that limited play my senior year of high school after several years of concentrated effort and work to obtain a starting position, and recovery from stage IV Burkitt's lymphoma

cancer diagnosis three years ago. In each case, I simply pick myself up, redirect and refocus my efforts, and start anew putting one foot in front of the other....

I am now enrolled at Utah State University where I am a junior majoring in industrial hygiene. That is my path to medical school. It isn't easy. The learning disability means I study three to four times more than my roommates. I work a part-time job driving a bus to pay for living expenses. I am not on academic scholarship...I work all summer, sacrificing travel and entertainment to save money for tuition, books, and housing, then work during the school year to augment those funds. I budget my money. I forego many activities. I get by with what I have. I have a roof over my head, food in the cupboard, and clothes on my back.

In my future, I want to finish this degree, apply and attend medical school (where I will need to incur student debt), study to be an oncologist, become a doctor that can help others overcome their own obstacles and pursue their dreams... After three months of intensive medical care, I realized that only one of my attending physicians had any personal experience with cancer. When he spoke to me, he spoke from a perspective of empathetic experience...Maybe I could do something with the second life I had been given and help some other chap that perhaps felt no hope for the future.

I would advise younger students to accept their diagnosis but not accept the limitations others impose because of that learning disability. You do not have to accept those limitations. Yes, you will be singled out at times based on your performance, you will be belittled, even if inadvertently or ignorantly, and you will be embarrassed at times. However, you can succeed.



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PREMIUM ISSUE FIFTY-THREE MAY 2020

## Dyslexic Advantage

PREMIUM MAGAZINE



**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT COVID-19
- ONLINE LEARNING AND VIDEO CONFERENCING
- DYSLEXIA AT HOME
- SWITCHING TO REMOTE TUTORING
- ONLINE MATH OPTIONS

## PREMIUM UPCOMING ISSUE



- HEROES ON THE FRONT LINES
- DYSLEXIA AT HOME
- ONLINE LEARNING & VIDEO CONFERENCING
- SWITCHING TO REMOTE TUTORING
- TALKING TO YOUR KIDS ABOUT COVID-19
- ONLINE MATH OPTIONS

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**THORSON**  
University of  
Georgia

## Major: Atmospheric Sciences

Lifeguard, Assistant Manager, Mover / Seller, Zell Miller Scholarship

My friendly demeanor leads to people wanting to work with me. Then we can work together as teammates and friends to get the best results. I would say I am good at thinking through situations. I always run through different options in my head when making a decision. I try to consider how my choice will affect my group or the people that are around me and I want to make as many people happy as possible. I know I can not always please everyone, but always try to think of everyone. My way of thinking makes me a good problem solver.

Since I am an atmospheric science major, I obviously would like a job in that field. I do not have my heart set on one job as of right now, but I am leaning more towards the private sector. The top of my list would have to be working at an airline, monitoring weather around the globe. There I would watch for potentially dangerous situations that planes would need to avoid and I would be on the team of people that decides when flights need to be delayed. I could also work for one of the many weather agencies around the country. There I could monitor local weather phenomena and inform the public. There are also agencies that exclusively watch for severe weather such as hurricanes. Alternatively, I could go into broadcast meteorology. There I would be on the news, or more likely a website, forecasting for the public. On a completely different note, I would also love to be a voice actor on a cartoon show. I think that would be something awesome to be able to do.

The obvious advice is to use your school's resources whether in high school or college. I downloaded Grammarly onto my computer which is good for school and personal use. It has spell check and helps form more coherent sentences. When it comes to taking notes for class, find out if the professor can post their notes online or if getting a note taker is an option. Either way, it makes listening to the professor easier and notes are still provided when it is time to study.



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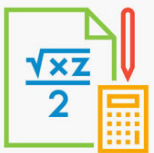
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**TUYISHIMIRE**  
Nashville State  
Community College

## Major: Social Work

Homeless volunteer, church teacher, ESL Ambassador

One of my strengths is that I am a good self-advocate. For example, I did not know that I had dyslexia until I went to college and asked for help. After several semesters of struggling in my classes, a former ESL professor of mine that I went to for help, suggested I might be dyslexic and that my disability might have been missed because I was a second language speaker. She helped me find a place that would test me as an adult. The test not only showed I am dyslexic, but it also showed I have a processing disorder. Once I had those results, I was able to get help from the disability office, and I started doing much better in my classes.

I learned how hard it is to find the right services and how much you have to be your own advocate. That's what made me decide to become a social worker. I've learned so much about how to find and get help that I want to spend my career helping other people find and get the help they need. My advice for younger students with dyslexia is to keep working hard even when it seems impossible. The struggles should not stop you from going further and pursuing an education. Your dyslexia does not define you, it's the effort that you put into what you do that defines who you are...

# DYSLEXIA FOR TEACHERS ONLINE

CLOCK HOURS &  
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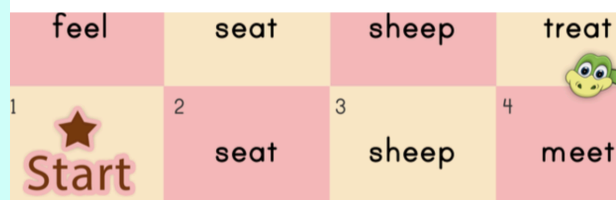


## Dyslexic Advantage PREMIUM MAGAZINE

PREMIUM ISSUE FIFTY-TWO APRIL 2020



### Orton-Gillingham GAMES



#### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Multi-Level Reading Online
- Dyslexia and Humor
- Dyslexia and Note-Taking
- DYSLEXIA & CORONAVIRUS CLOSINGS
- 'Doing' Math
- Dyslexia, Music, and Empathy

## PREMIUM RECENT ISSUE



- DIY ORTON-GILLINGHAM GAMES
- MULTI-LEVEL READING ONLINE
- DYSLEXIA AND NOTE-TAKING
- DYSLEXIA & CORONAVIRUS CLOSINGS
- 'DOING' MATH
- DYSLEXIA, MUSIC, and EMPATHY

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**WILLIAM**  
Virginia Tech

## Major: Mechanical Engineering

Wilson Scholarship, Autonomous Car Internship, designed and Built a Satellite that launched in low earth orbit (Virginia Space), designed and built wind turbines (awards at regional, state, and world), wrote code for controlling robotic mechanical arm (awards at regional and state levels)

Proficient CAD (Solidworks, Sketchup, Fusion360), Programmig (C++, VPython, Matlab), 3d printers, aser cutes, CNC, power tools

Rocketry, RC airplanes, scratch-built projects like 2000 degree foundry, hot air balloon, underwater drone, military history and equipment, computers

For a long time, I rejected the notion that my dyslexia had any bearing on the person I am today. I always assumed it was just something I was born with, the same way some people are naturally taller than others, some people read better than others. However, after some introspection I have come to realize that my dyslexia have deeply shaped my life experiences and by extension my identity. Even at a young age, I demonstrated an incredible proclivity for engineering. Any free time was spent taking apart the families washing machine or lawn mower to figure out how they work or studying diagrams of medieval war machines at the library when I was supposed to be 'reading.' This changed the way I learn, I have always been more curious and persistent in how to find the answer, than what the answer is. When I was a little older and joined design teams, I was able to carve out my own unique way of abstracting the problem-solving process. I am an independent thinker, often finding myself making deep interdisciplinary connections, which can be vital when faced with a design problem. For example, I was on a build team designing an underwater drone and the control system wasn't working, my teammates thought it was a wiring problem (which would set the project back weeks). I commented that it reminded me of a classic case of Complexity Bias, this led me to discover the real problem was with the alligator clips we were using to test the control system. I can't underestimate the value of this type of thinking in my own life, and I see my thought process as a direct product of my unconventional learning style. I am now in college earning a degree in Mechanical Engineering with a Social Science minor...

Never listen to anyone who tells you that you can't do something because they have no idea what you are capable of. All too often, I heard from school administrators "You can't take that class" or "You can't go to college." I didn't listen to them and neither should you. I would also say, don't be afraid to ask for help, there are a lot of great people out there more than willing to help, all you have to do is ask.



# DYSLEXIA FOR TEACHERS ONLINE COURSE

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**Michelle Lucas, M.Ed., AT**



**Neurolearning.com**



**ZACHARY**  
Warner University

## Major: Biology

NAIA All-Academic Athlete, Fellowship Christian Athletes Character Award, Anne Frank Humanitarian Award - FL Holocaust Museum, Certified Nursing Assistant, Camp leader and drummer, FUGE Camp, Varsity Baseball and Soccer, Swim team, Reading with Youth missions, Dominican Republic and Bahamas missions, Summer camp volunteer, Homeless volunteer, over 660 volunteer service hours in high school

Some of my biggest strengths are my time management skills, people skills, and leadership skills. I am also very visual and I feel like it makes me excel in the area of Science.

I have been a captain on some of my teams and currently, organize study groups for all of my science classes at the college. I have spoken for several events at the college including the ribbon cutting for a large athletic building that was just dedicated. Last summer I worked at a large camp in California where I taught and mentored over 100 campers a week. I organized and taught a Bible Study group of 30 students, a percussion track time, and an outdoor recreation track time. I did this for 8 weeks. It was high energy and exhausting work, but I loved every minute of it!

I absolutely love Science. It is visual and I am a visual learner. It is easier for me to understand than any other subject. I tend to do the best in the classes that my peers really struggle in. This has been a positive in my life, because I get asked to tutor other college students. It's almost comical since I have such a hard time reading and writing. Honestly, I struggle in so many areas academically it's nice to be able to excel at something that other students find so difficult.

In the future I would like to go to medical school and pursue my doctorate degree. I aspire to be a Family Physician. I want to be doctor to help people here in the states, but I would also like to go out of the country for medical missions and humanitarian trips.

If I could give advice to younger dyslexic students it would be to not put so much pressure on yourself! You will fail sometimes, but fail forward. Accept your failures and shortcomings, but always keep moving forward. You should embrace your dyslexia as a gift, not a disability. Never accept negative interpretations about you as truth. Instead, look for your strengths and gifts and be determined to develop them, despite the things you struggle with.

# REMOTE LEARNING IN THE MIDST OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

With the drastic changes in education, workplace, and general living due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of challenges face this community.

Because of the hasty closures of schools and colleges, students often found themselves suddenly sent home with varying levels of chaos how school was supposed to look, what school expectations were reasonable, and how students can continue to learn without the classroom and supports they had gotten used to.

Two student volunteers offered to interview members of this community to find out what their experiences are with remote learning and in particular what they can ask for in this new era of remote learning and distancing:



From reporter Nicole Ramenda:

There are both pros and cons that come with remote learning and different platforms and classes can vary a lot in terms of how much text they require to read and how much information is supported visually. I interviewed a high school student and adult about their experiences working remotely.

### Pros of Online Learning:

- Allows for tools for learning disabilities like text enlargement, recording, rewinding, voice-to-text, and text-to-voice features
- Uses a flexible schedule
- Provides a wide variety of courses and levels



- Does not restrict participation in local extracurricular activities
- Eliminates commute time

### **Cons of Online Learning:**

- Lacks face-to-face communication that prevents fluid class discussions
- Inhibits dyslexic students' abilities to learn (if the visual aspects are only text and lack images)
- Prevents personal and face-to-face conversations about learning disabilities between students and teachers

With visual media like video, this student shared that he discovered it was helpful adding close captions while watching. If a transcript was provided with the media, it was especially helpful, and he could use the Find function to look for parts that he needed to review.

If you need something to learn better, then ask. Advocate for yourself.

The adult I interviewed, told me that his work hacks included printing out information on screen and using people to help him if he needed another person to proof his work. He also said self-advocacy was very important.



From Dylan Chalcraft:

I reported on an interview with Dr. Fernette Eide and Jamie Martin, an assistive technology specialist at the NEAT Center in Hartford Connecticut.

### **What Sudden Shifts to Remote Learning During COVID-19 Means for Students**

- The school systems and support systems change when moving to online, and while the schools are figuring out how to support their special education students

# DYSLEXIA AND REMOTE LEARNING

- Many families may not have stable internet or suitable technology
- Students need accessible materials and teachers need training to make their learning materials and assignments accessible
- Documents with OCR (character recognized) properties are necessary for accessibility programs to read the documents to dyslexic students.
- Special education teachers still need to continue checking in with their students online to work out issues in the remote system to make everything better for all students who require additional support.
- Use accessibility features on your device - whether Mac, Windows, or Chromebook.
- Many companies are offering free resources or trial subscriptions during this period of school closings; this is a great time to try out technology
- This crisis has forced school districts reluctant to use technology to change.
- The radical situation for all kids is going to accelerate the idea of distance learning into the mainstream, so we could see online learning make its way into possible weather cancellation days. As the schools get more comfortable and understand the benefits this will probably become much more respected and utilized.
- For college students a lot of colleges use the [Microsoft 365](#) suite. [Google Classroom](#) is also easy to use. Colleges have been doing more online classes already so the schools themselves are better equipped to handle the situation and provide support. 365 as a platform has been getting much better with accessibility features in Microsoft Word and [One Note](#) as well.
- Nothing beats human contact though, and moral support is huge.
- Faculty needs to be shown how to make things visible for students instead of making things hard to find in folders and tabs.

- Teachers should check in with students to make sure that their methods are working and the students are understanding what they need to be doing.
- Chill out with assignments for a bit to let everyone acclimate to the new environment! Kids and teachers are both under a lot of stress, both from school and the fact that there is a pandemic going on.
- There are a lot of places to remove inefficiencies from the normal school day, there is no need to replicate the entire school day at home!
- Starting slow and letting faculty acclimate to the online system is good, don't rush into a messy situation.
- Meetings moving to twice a week discussions into a college/university flipped classroom model may be better for students.
- Look for Facebook groups for support and sharing materials if you are a tutor or a teacher trying to learn. People can support each other!
- Create flashcards online with [Google Slides](#). Slides are great for online classes.
- Handwriting and multisensory spelling suffers, but creative workarounds are possible.
- Tutors may be nervous about remote learning, it increases their reach, rather than limiting it.
- There are definitely net positives for the whole education system down the line. A lot of progress has been seen in Connecticut in just one week.
- Distance learning will become much less scary for tutors and schools in the future as a result of this whole situation.

**LISTEN TO DR. EIDE and  
JAMIE MARTIN's interview:**



# DYSLEXIA NEWS - CORONAVIRUS ERA

With millions of schools closed perhaps through the end of the school year, many schools are trying to come to grips with what schooling at home should look like.

Seattle Public Schools (and many others) initially abandoned ideas about remote schooling because of state guidance about equity and concerns that not all students could access lessons on the Internet. The Department of Education told local school districts, that they must ensure that learning continues through remote options, so non-tech savvy districts are scrambling to get devices and connections for all.

- **Free Internet Service During the COVID-19 Outbreak**
- **Companies Opening Up Wifi Hotspots and Waiving Fees (including rural) use the drop down to see companies**
- **COVID resources for teachers and parents at Sonday System**
- **COVID resources from All About Reading and Spelling**
- **COVID resources from the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators**
- **Nessy Virtual School for school closings**
- **Don Johnston Tools**



✱ **FREE EBOOKS FOR DYSLEXICS:** For dyslexic students or adults who need individual access to the over 800,000 free ebooks through [Bookshare](https://bookshare.org/), our partner [Neurolearning.com](https://neurolearning.com) is teaming up with Bookshare to certify online using their iPad, iPhone, or Android app. The cost for dyslexia screening is currently 50% off!



## MISINFORMATION ON TEACHER'S BLOG

Nancy Bailey is an influential education author and former teacher. In a recent **post** mourning the loss of school libraries and librarians, she inaccurately accused Decoding Dyslexia of "lauding unproven online programs like Waterford UpStart and Amplify." N.B. from Fernette: I have never heard of Decoding Dyslexia

Upstart or Amplify. Bailey hasn't removed the accusation, but recently added: "(I have been notified by two Decoding Dyslexia administrators that they do not promote any tech programs over other tech programs, and do not support Waterford UpStart. I am happy to hear that. I am hoping they will remove the ad from the Decoding Dyslexia-AK Facebook page.)" There is no such ad on the page that I am currently able to view. Beware that in the tension of school changes, dyslexia advocates can become a target.

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Practical and in-depth stories about dyslexia, especially in this era of COVID-19 and remote learning and working from home.

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"I started realizing that I wasn't dumb; rather, most people simply didn't know the questions that I was interested in - or they didn't care."

- Dean Kamen

