Webinar Series Supported by the John P. McGovern Foundation

Date and Time: Wednesday, November 8, 2023, from 12:00-1:00 pm CDT
Location: Virtual webinar (Zoom)
Title: White Canes and Wheelchairs: How Medical Communicators Can Overcome Implicit Bias Toward People With Disabilities

Description:
People with disabilities make up a significant proportion of the population. Medical communicators, therefore, need to address the topic of disability in their work. But talk of "disability" activates unconscious beliefs that underlie implicit bias. Implicit bias involves automatic thoughts and emotions that influence judgments, decisions, and actions. For example, if an interviewer of a blind job applicant believes unconsciously that people who are blind cannot perform the job, their nonverbal behavior may bring about the expected outcome. Given the power of implicit bias, we must develop strategies for reducing its negative effects in our work.

Biosketch:
Jeffry Ricker, Ph.D.
Freelance Medical/Science Writer

Dr. Jeffry Ricker was a professor of psychology for 26 years. He has a Ph.D. degree in cognitive/experimental psychology, with a research specialization in behavioral genetics. His early research focused on the evolution of genetic systems in invertebrates and on factors important for the development of schizophrenia. He received postdoctoral training in clinical psychology. Currently, he studies the effects of implicit bias on the educational and employment opportunities available to people with disabilities. Dr. Ricker started to lose his sight in 2017 and "gained his blindness" in 2020. He advocates for creating accessible technology and websites.