

1National Federation of the Blind of Illinois Logo

National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

State Convention 2019

# “ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF LEADERSHIP”

# AGENDA

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

OF ILLINOIS

Annual Convention

October 18-20, 2019

Wyndam Springfield City Center

700 E. Adams Street

Springfield, IL 62701

217-789-1530, Ext. 4111.

# Members of NFBI wish to thank the following donors for their generous gifts:

Advanced Group

The Eileen S. Andrew Foundation

Sandra Atlas Bass and Edythe and Sol Atlas Fund

J. Milton Harris and Alice Chenault

Goldberg, T-W Max Foundation

Dr. and Mrs. Neal Hart of the Illinois Prairie Foundation

The Illinois Association of Blind Merchants

Invesco Inc.

Community Foundation Great River Bend - Mildred Crespin-Krogear Fund

Mr. Harold W. Knapheide III, in honor of his mother, the late Mary MacDill Knapheide

The Community Foundation of the Quincy Area from the Arthur O. and Lela B. Lindsay Fund

Gary Lindon

The Naperville Noon Lion’s Club

The Pangere Corporation

Trinity Fellowship

Richard Lansden, trustee, The Leona Stanford Vollintine Charitable Trust

Samuel Weinstein Family Foundation

# Logistics: Announcements, Registration, Information Desk, and Smoking Policy

Announcements that you wish to be made from the convention floor during sessions MUST be submitted to the information desk in the convention hall. Mary Grunewald is coordinating our information desk this year. Amber McKeag and Patricia Olson are handling the registration table at convention. Marilyn Green and Mary Grunwald are running our door prize table.

If you wish to reach President Denise R. Avant during sessions, please convey your requests to the information desk.

Smoking is not permitted in convention sessions.

# National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

Denise R. Avant, President

3410 N. Lake Shore Dr., Apt. 4L-M

Chicago, IL 60657 (773) 991-8050

National Federation of the Blind of Illinois (“NFBI”)

[NFBI Website](http://www.nfbofillinois.org)

[National Federation of the Blind Website](https://nfb.org/free-cane-program)

# 2019 Wyndham Springfield City Center Hotel Information

Here is some basic information about our convention hotel, the Wyndham Springfield City Center.

Address and Phone: The hotel is located at 700 E. Adams St., Springfield, IL, 62701. The phone number is 217-789-1530, Ext. 4111.

The Wyndham Springfield City Center, the site of our 2019 state convention, is conveniently located downtown, only about five blocks from the Springfield Amtrak station. It is close to many downtown restaurants, the State Capitol, and the Abraham Lincoln Museum. The hotel is a 30-story circular building, the tallest building in Springfield.

The rooms are standard size, king bed or two queen beds. To enter your room, you will insert your keycard into the slot. All rooms have a coffee maker, hair dryer and a television. Room service is from 6:30 am to 10:00 pm. There is complementary Wi-Fi in the guest rooms, the common areas and the meeting rooms. The room rate is $99 per night plus applicable taxes. Check-in is 4:00 pm and checkout is 11:00 am. You need to register for your hotel room by September 27, 2019.

The hotel is smoke free. There is a complementary shuttle that takes you to the Amtrak train station or the airport. Hotel parking is available at the Wyndham City Centre municipal lot on 7th Street, from which the hotel is accessible. The parking garage has various payment options, so please call the hotel to see what is right for you.

You enter the hotel off Adam Street. Straight ahead of the doors is a stairway going up to the Mezzanine Level or down to the Concourse Level. The Registration Desk is to the left of these door. There is a restaurant called “The Grill”, which serves burgers, sandwiches, salads and appetizers. It is to the left of the front desk as you face it and is open every day from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm. There is also a café called the “Rise and Grind” (like Starbucks) that is to the right of the front desk as you face it, and it is open from 6:00 am through 3:00 pm. There is a dog relief area that can be accessed from the 7th street exit. As you go out the door, turn left, and 50 feet ahead, next to the parking garage are grassy areas for your dog to use.

To the right of the Adams street door, and opposite the registration desk, are six elevators in two banks, next to one another. Elevators 4 through 6 reach only guest room floors 2 through 20, while 1 through 3 reach only 15 through 28. All elevators reach the meeting rooms, except that Elevator 6 does not reach the Vista Level on the 29th floor.

Restrooms are to the right of the elevators. The gym and pool are on the concourse level.

General session, banquet and other activities will be held in the Rendezvous Room on the Mezzanine Level. Registration will be in the foyer outside the Rendezvous Room. This level also has four numbered conference centers where our breakout sessions will be held. We will also have meetings in the Plaza Room located on the Plaza Level. The Scholarship Dinner will be in the Embassy Room on the Concourse Level, the same level on which the pool and the Fitness Center are located. Finally: an afternoon breakout session will be on the Vista Level on the 29th floor. Restrooms are to the left of the meeting rooms.

On the 30th floor of the hotel is a steak house, Nick and Ninos. Its hours are 5:30 am to 10:00 pm, Tuesday through Saturday. There is a lounge on the top floor called the Pinnacle, and is open Fridays and Saturdays, 5:00 pm to 1:00

# Braille is Beautiful - Sunday

Braille is Beautiful will take place on Sunday morning, October 20. Please feel free to reach out to Deborah Stein if you wish to participate. Her e-mail address is [dkent5817@att.net](mailto:dkent5817@att.net), and her phone is 773-203-1394.

# IABS, INFORMATION, PAC AND SALES TABLES

The information desk will be in the hotel main lobby on Friday October 18, from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m., and in our general session room during general sessions. Registration will be in the hallway outside of the Rendezvous Room on Friday from 4:00 through 7:00 p.m. as well as on Saturday from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. The sales table for IABS will be in the back during general sessions. The PAC plan table will also be in the back during general sessions.

# Announcement:

You can help build a future of opportunity for the blind by becoming a member of our Dream Makers Circle. Your legacy gift to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois can be made in the form of a will, or living trust, an income generating gift, or by naming us as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. For additional information, please contact Patti Chang at (773) 307-6440 or at pchang@nfb.org.

The PAC Plan allows members, affiliates, chapters, and others to give a regular and automatic donation to the Federation every month. All you need to provide is your checking or savings account identification information. Because of the costs associated with operating the program, the minimum donation is $5 a month and there is no restriction on how much you donate.

Please sign up at the PAC table during convention to begin a new PAC contribution or to make changes to your current contribution. Your donation will help the blind live the lives they want.

# IABS Raffle

IABS Raffle- the Illinois Association of Blind Students will hold a raffle with the winner to be drawn at the banquet on Saturday, October 19, 2019. Tickets are $2 or three for $5. All monies will go to help IABS. So please be generous. The coordinator of this event is Dustin Cather, IABS 1st Vice President.

# Free Aira Site Access

The National Federation of the Blind has partnered with Aira to provide free Aira Site Access to NFB members during our 2019 state convention. Aira subscribers who are National Federation of the Blind members can use the service at our convention for free without having minutes deducted from their plans. In addition, those interested in Aira have the unique opportunity to try out the service for free while at our convention. This convention-wide, free site access is available only at NFB state conventions, giving NFB members an exclusive opportunity to test-drive Aira in a convention setting.

Aira allows blind individuals to connect via live video to a trained agent through a mobile app or wearable glasses to get real-time visual information or assistance. Learn more about Aira and special pricing available for NFB members at go.aira.io/NFB.

How it Works

Before you head to convention or as soon as you get there, download the free Aira app from the App Store, and create a guest account if you are not already an Aira subscriber. Also, make sure your phone’s GPS feature is enabled. When you enter the convention Site Access location, your phone will receive a notification letting you know that the space you are in is part of the Aira Network. When you connect with an agent, he or she will also confirm that you are now covered by the network, and no minutes will be deducted from your account.

When you leave or enter convention areas that are covered by the Site Access network, you will be informed by the Aira agent.

To learn more about Aira and the special plan available exclusively to NFB members, visit go.aira.io/NFB.

**Welcome to the 2019 Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois**

# Friday, October 18, Afternoon

2:00-4:30 Information Table – Mary Grunwald, Hotel Lobby

2:00-3:00 Sculpting with Clay – Ralph Cossentino, Instructor of Figurative Sculpture at the Palette and Chisel in Chicago, Rendezvous Room

3:45-4:45 Resolutions ­-- Patti Chang, Chairperson, Rendezvous Room

4:00-7:00 Registration – Pat Olson, Coordinator and Amber McKeag Administrative Assistant, Hallway outside of Rendezvous Room

# Friday, October 18, Evening

4:00-7:00 Registration – Pat Olson, Coordinator and Amber McKeag Administrative Assistant

Hallway outside of Rendezvous Room

5:00 At Large Chapter Getting to Know You Pizza Social– Kira O’Bradovich and Libby Houston, Cost $10 Room TBA

5:00-7:00 Scholarship Dinner – (Finalists, Committee Members, and Invited Guests, Embassy Room)

7:00-11:00 IABS IDOL - Admission $5, includes your first performance

Dustin Cather, 1st Vice President, Illinois Association of Blind Students, Rendezvous Room

Join us for the Illinois Association of Blind Students IABS Idol

Based on the popular TV show, American Idol. IABS Idol invites everyone to participate as a soloist or group and perform a song of their choice. Bring an instrument and perform your favorite song. Each performance costs $5 per person. Don't forget our “Battle of the Chapters.” This year's theme is “movie soundtracks.”

# Saturday, October 19, Morning

## Parents Breakfast

Rendezvous Room

7:00-7:10 Introductions

7:10-7:30 Breakfast Served

7:30-7:45 The Path to Independence, - Dan S. Wenzel, Director of Wisconsin Center for the Visually Impaired

7:45-8:00 The Things That Worked for Me - Elizabeth Rouse, Senior, Pell College, Iowa and National Association of Blind Students Board member

8:00-8:15 BLIND Inc. - “My Summer of Adventure and Learning," Sara Luna, Parkland College, Chicago

## 8:00-9:00 Registration Patti Chang, Pat Olson and Amber McKeag

Hallway Outside of Rendezvous Room

For later registration, please see Patti Gregory-Chang during general sessions.

## Kid Camp Agenda 8:30 to 5:30 pm - Conference Room 4

Teacher – Brooklyn Geers

8:45-9:00 Registration ($10/child lunch)

9:00- 9:30 Introductions, Ice Breakers and Free Play

9:30-9:50 Mentor Read

9:50-10:00 Bathroom break if needed

10:00-10:45 Fall Crafts

10:45-11:10 Snack

11:10-12:00 Free Play

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-1:45 Scavenger Hunt

1:45-2:15 Mentor Read

2:15-3:45 Movie

3:45-4:00 Bathroom break if needed

4:00-4:15 Snack

4:15-4:40 Group Game

4:40-5:00 MY BELL Summer– Amy Lund, Brooklyn Geers, and BELL Kids

October 19, 2019 Morning continued

## 9:00-11:30 General Session

**Rendezvous Room**

9:00-9:10 Welcome and Announcements - Denise R. Avant, President National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

Pledge of Allegiance

Moment of Silence

Joseph Monti – October 12, 1937-June 8, 2019, Chicago

Mary Monti – April 24, 1943-June 16, 2019, Chicago

9:10-9:40 National Report – Dan S, Wenzel, National Representative of the National Federation of the Blind and Director of Wisconsin Center for the Visually Impaired

9:40-9:55 National Students Report – Elizabeth Rouse, Student Representative and Board of Directors of National Association of Blind Students, a Division of the National Federation of the Blind

9:55-10:05 My Internship: A Step toward Getting My First Job– Alisa Gray, National Federation of the Blind member

10:05-10:35 Employment Panel: What Success Looks Like on the Job –

Jennifer Kennedy, Executive Director of Blind Inc, Sarah Bennett, Assistant Director of Employment Services for Chicago Lighthouse for People who are Blind or Visually Impaired, and Patti Chang, Outreach Chair for the National Federation of the Blind

10:35-10:55 Building Better Financial Wellness Through the Illinois ABLE Program Rosemary Laudani, Manager of the Illinois ABLE Program

10:55-11:15 Eligibility and Accessing Blindness Services from the Illinois Bureau of Blind Services – Nancy Foster, Supervisor of Region 5 for Illinois Bureau of Blind Services

11:15-11:30 Advanced Blindness Skills Training – Jenifer Kennedy, Director of Blind Inc. and Jack Mendez, Director of Technology, Louisiana Center for the Blind

11:30-12:00pm Break

## 12:00 pm-1:45pm Student/Parent lunch - Rendezvous Room

12:00-12:15 Lunch

12:15-12:30 Teaching Excellence Awards – Dustin Cather, 1st Vice President, Illinois Association of Blind Students

12:30-12:45 2019 Scholarship Finalists – Deborah Stein, Scholarship Chair and 1st Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

12:45-12:55 Pushing Beyond Your Comfort Zone - Elizabeth Rouse, National Association of Blind Students

12:55-1:05 Getting Your Teen Ready for Life After High School – Dan S. Wenzel, Wisconsin Center for the Visually Impaired

1:05-1:45 Learning to Lead: Embracing Your Leadership Skills – Illinois Association of Blind Students

# October 19, 2019 Afternoon

## Breakouts 2:00-3:30 pm

**2:00-3:30 Parent Breakout**

Conference Room 2

2:00-2:45 Braille: The Key to Literacy for Blind and Low Vision Children - Morgan Forman Teacher of the Visually Impaired for Naperville Community School District 201 and Maura Warren, Teacher of the Visually Impaired and Orientation and Mobility Instructor, Naperville Community School District 201

2:45-3:30 Virtual Blindness: How Our Children Experience the World - Liza Jager, Parent, Oak Park, IL

**Legislative Advocacy Breakout**

Plaza 1

2:00-2:40 Navigating the Illinois State Legislative Process – Cheryl R. Jansen, Policy Director, Equip for Equality

**Technology Breakout**

Plaza 1

2:50-3:40 An Overview of Microsoft Office Suite: An Essential Tool in Employment and Education – Jack Mendez, Director of Technology for Louisiana Center for the Blind

**Breakout 3**

Vista 6

2:00-3:00 Yoga Flow Into Leadership – Marilyn Green, Certified Yoga Instructor, and 2d Vice President of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

(If You wish to participate, please bring your yoga mat or a towel from your room)

# October 19, 2019, Afternoon continued

## 3:45-5:00 General Session

Rendezvous Room

3:45-4:05 The 2020 Census: Make Sure You Are Counted – Kira O’Bradovich, Senior Partnership Specialist, U.S. Census Bureau

4:05-4:10 Midwest Student Spring Seminar – Dustin Cather, 1st Vice President, Illinois Association of Blind Students

4:10-4:15 2020 NFB State and National Scholarship Programs –Deborah Stein, 1st Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

4:15-4:20 Nationwide Braille Readers Are Leaders –Deborah Stein, 1st Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

4:20-4:30 Washington Seminar 2020 and the NFB Legislative Initiatives – Marilyn Green, 2d Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

4:30-4:40 Ways to Support the NFB – Patti Chang, Outreach Chair, National Federation of the Blind and National Federation of the Blind of Illinois Treasurer

4:00-5:00 Braille Enrichment Literacy and Learning (BELL) – Amy Lund, Brooklyn Geers, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, School Association of Special Education for DuPage County, and the BELL Kids

5:00 Adjourn

# Saturday, October 19, Evening

## 5:20-5:50 Scholarship Committee Meeting – President’s Room

## 6:00-7:00 Hospitality – Fourier Outside of Rendezvous Room

## 7:00 Annual Banquet -Rendezvous Room

MC - Marilyn Green, 2d Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

7:05-7:10 Welcome and Invocation – David Meyer, 2d Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

7:10-7:15 IABS Raffle Drawing – Dustin Cather, 1st Vice President, Illinois Association of Blind Students

7:15-7:25 Freedom Link Presentation – Deborah Stein 1st Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

7:25-7:55 Dinner

7:55 Annette R. Grove Legislative Award – Marilyn Green, Federal Legislative Coordinator

Video Presentation from Senator Tammy Duckworth – Randy Sikowski, Legislative Downstate Director

8:15-8:30 Fifteen for Funds – David Meyer, 1st Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

8:30-8:50 Banquet Speech – Dan S. Wenzel, NFB National Representative

8:50-9:00 Scholarship Awards –Deborah Stein, Scholarship Chair, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

9:00 Adjourned

## 9:00-11:00 Hospitality

# Sunday, October 20, 2019,

Rendezvous Room

## 7:00-8:30am Illinois Association of Blind Students Breakfast and Business Meeting

IABS 1St Vice President, Dustin Cather

Note: All are welcome who are interested in student issues but please note that only those who have paid IABS dues may vote in elections. Please see Glenn Moore or any IABS Board Member to pay dues. We will be collecting money at the registration table and at the IABS table during convention.

7:00-7:30 Breakfast

7:30-7:35 Treasurer’s Report - Glenn Moore, Illinois Association of Blind Students Treasurer

7:35-7:45 Presidents Report – Dustin Cather, 1st Vice President, Illinois Association of Blind Students

7:45-8:00 Elections

General Board Seat 8 Currently Held by Ayoub Zurikat

General Board Seat 9 Currently Held by Alex Gamino

8:00-8:10 Old Business

New Business

8:10-8:15 Illinois Association of Blind Students Board of Directors Photo Op

8:15 Meeting Adjourned

# October 20, 2019 Morning continued

# 9:00-12:00 General Session

Rendezvous Room

9:00-9:05 Call to Order

9:05-9:30 Braille Is Beautiful: A Dramatic Reading - Deborah Stein, Author and 1st Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

9:30-9:40 Closing Remarks – Elizabeth Rouse, NABS Student Representative

9:40-9:50 Closing Remarks – Dan S. Wenzel, NFB National Representative

9:50-10:30 State Reports

Treasury Report – Patti Chang, Treasurer, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

Presidents Report – Denise Avant, President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

10:30-11:00 Chapter Reports

Illinois Association of Blind Merchants – Mary Grunwald

Illinois Association of Blind Students – Dustin Cather

Chicago Chapter – David Meyer

At LargeChapter – Marilyn Green

Blackhawk Chapter – Pat Olson

Four Rivers Chapter – Brian Sumner

Ferris Wheel Chapter – Bill Reif

11:00-11:30 Resolutions – Patti Chang, Chairperson

11:30-12:00 Elections

General Board Seats

Board Seat 1 Currently Held by Bill Reif

Board Seat 2 Currently Held by Mary Grunwald

Board Seat 3 Currently held by Steve Hastalis

Board Seat 4 Currently Held by Adrienne Falconer

12:00 Adjourned

# Thank You for All You Do

Thanks to the Special Events Committee, the Sound committee, and all others who have served on committees, worked registration and information tables, secured door prizes, and appeared on the agenda. You have helped make this convention a tremendous success.

# NFB PLEDGE

I pledge to participate actively in the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality, opportunity, and security for the blind; to support the policies and programs of the Federation; and to abide by its constitution.

# One-Minute Message

The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back.