**RAISING EXPECTATIONS AND TRANSFORMING LIVES**

**WELCOME TO THE 46th ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE**

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF LOUISIANA!**

**REGISTRATION & INFORMATION** **– *Atrium Lobby***

The NFBL Registration Desk will open at 3:00pm on Friday, April 6, 2018, and will remain open at scheduled intervals throughout the convention. All convention participants must register to be eligible for convention meals, door prizes, hotel convention rates, and to participate in all activities. Name badges should be worn throughout the convention. Both print and Braille agendas are available at the Registration Desk. For those who have pre-registered, a separate table will also be located in the Atrium where packets, including meal tickets, name badges, and agendas, may be obtained. The onsite registration fee is $35 for adults. Registration for children six years and under is free. Registration for children between the ages of seven and ten is $20, and children who are eleven and older are $35. Banquet tickets are $30 and may be purchased at the NFBL Registration Desk. Tickets for complimentary meals will be issued to each convention attendee upon registration, and meal tickets must be presented at each meal. A light complimentary continental breakfast will be served to registered convention attendees between 7:30am and 8:45am on Saturday and Sunday in the Atrium. All registered, first-time convention participants should sign up at the NFBL Registration Desk to participate in a special drawing on Sunday morning. The first-time attendee, the individual who invited the new member, and the chapter to which the new member belongs will each receive $100. Attendees must register for the convention in order to receive conference rates at the Crowne Plaza.

**CANE TRAVEL INSTRUCTION – *Atrium Lobby***

Instructors will be available at the NFBL Registration Desk on Friday from 3:00pm to 7:00pm and on Saturday morning from 8:00am to 8:45am to provide orientation to the Crowne Plaza and to offer basic instruction in cane travel skills.

**EXHIBITS – *Chairman’s Library***

Exhibits will be open on Friday from 2:00pm to 9:00pm. Exhibits will also be open from 8:00am to 9:00am and from 11:00am to 2:00pm on Saturday.

**NFB LITERATURE AND SUPPLIES – *Cypress II***

On Saturday and Sunday, there will be an exhibit area at the back of Cypress II. Canes, cane tips, slates, and styluses will be available for purchase. NFB literature and information from agencies and service providers will also be available. We will have t-shirts and other braille-themed items for sale in the back of general session in order to raise money for the NFBL BELL Academy and other youth activities. Information about State Library services will also be available in the general session room.

**MASSAGE THERAPY** - Let your worries melt away! Jewel Ardoin, LCB staff member and licensed massage therapist, will be offering five minute (shoulder and neck) massages for a donation of $5. The massages will be conducted throughout the convention at your request in the back of Cypress II.

**SENSORY SAFARI – *Creole***

8:00am to 2:00pm Saturday

Touch and learn about exotic wildlife.

**DOOR PRIZES**

Shake 'em up! You may be the lucky winner of a fabulous door prize. Names will be drawn throughout the convention general sessions and banquet. To be eligible to win, you must be registered for convention and be present in the room when your name is drawn. All donations of door prizes should be turned in at the NFBL Registration Desk. The door prize chairpersons are Bre Brown and Treva Olivero.

**CHILD CARE SERVICE** - Room number will be provided at NFBL Registration Desk. Free child care will be provided during convention sessions and the banquet for those children registered for the convention. Please note the following schedule:

Friday 6:45pm to 9:15pm

Saturday 8:45am to 12:15pm; 1:45pm to 5:00pm;

and 6:30pm to 9:30pm

Parents are responsible for their children at all other times and during meals. (Please be sure to complete child care information form available in the Child Care suite.)

**NOTE: Please be courteous and turn off all cell phones during convention meetings and the banquet.**

**CONVENTION AGENDA**

***FRIDAY, April 6, 2018***

**1:00 – 5:00pm Interactive Seminars for educators and parents of blind children**

***Samuel Clemens, Natchez, and Room 253***

**Come learn from the experts!**

**2:00 - 9:00pm EXHIBITS**

***Chairman’s Library***

**3:00 - 7:00pm REGISTRATION – *Atrium***

**3:00 - 7:00pm CANE TRAVEL INSTRUCTION**

*NFBL Registration Desk – Atrium*

**5:00 - 7:00pm HOSPITALITY DINNER – *Cypress II***

Complimentary to convention registrants. Come enjoy a delicious buffet featuring jambalaya. Hosted by the Greater Baton Rouge Chapter. Must have ticket.

**6:00 - 7:00pm RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

*Natchez*

Eric Guillory, Chairperson

**7:00 - 7:30pm REGISTRATION FOR LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF BLIND STUDENTS**

*Samuel Clemens*

**7:30 - 9:00pm LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF BLIND STUDENTS MEETING**

*Samuel Clemens*

Sophie Trist, President

All high school, college, and graduate students are invited to attend this exciting and informative meeting. Share your experiences and get ideas from other successful students.

**7:00 - 9:00pm NFBL MERCHANTS' DIVISION MEETING**

*Room 253*

All Randolph-Sheppard vendors and persons interested in business enterprises are welcome.

**7:00 - 9:00pm SENIOR BLIND MEETING**

*Natchez*

Wendy Ortego, Coordinator, Louisiana Center for the Blind, Techniques for Living Confidently Program

Come join us and learn tips and tricks for seniors experiencing vision loss. Losing your vision does not have to mean losing your independence.

**7:00 - 9:00pm LOUISIANA PARENTS OF BLIND CHILDREN DIVISION**

*Cypress I*

Mindy Lavern, Vice-President

Eric Guillory, Director of Youth Services, Louisiana Center for the Blind

Krystal Guillory, NFBL BELL Academy Coordinator

If you are a parent, grandparent, teacher, or individual interested in educational issues facing blind children, please join us. Introductory remarks will be followed by a f**amily movie night.** Let’senjoy a descriptive movie together. (Snacks available for purchase. All monies go toward LPOBC.)

**9:00pm until… NFBL AUCTION**

*Cypress II*

Chapter gift baskets, homemade goods, and collectibles along with other surprises. Join us for an entertaining way to raise money for our affiliate. (Auction items can be dropped off at the *Executive Boardroom* from 3:00pm to 8:00pm.)

**SATURDAY, April 7, 2018**

**7:00 - 8:00am NFBL STATE BOARD MEETING**

*Bayou Levy*

**7:30 - 8:30am Scholarship Breakfast**

(for 2018 NFBL scholarship finalists and committee members)

*Riverboat*

7:30 - 8:45am COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST

Free for convention registrants

*Atrium*

**8:00 - 8:45am REGISTRATION**

*Atrium*

**8:00 - 8:45am CANE TRAVEL INSTRUCTION**

*NFBL Registration Desk, Atrium*

**8:00 - 8:45am EXHIBITS**

*Chairman’s Library*

**8:00 - 8:45am NFB LITERATURE AND SUPPLIES**

*Cypress II*

8:00 – 2:00pm SENSORY SAFARI

*Creole*

**GENERAL SESSION**

**Saturday, April 7, 2018**

***Cypress II***

**9:00am - 12:00 Noon**

**9:00am CALL TO ORDER**

**Pamela Allen, President, NFBL**

**"HAVE GAVEL WILL TRAVEL"**

**INVOCATION**

**Eric Guillory, NFBL Treasurer**

**“THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER”**

**Will Sturgell, LCB Student**

**WELCOME AND NFB PLEDGE**

**Diane Legendre, President**

**Greater Baton Rouge Chapter, NFBL**

**9:15 - 10:00am Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Discover the Difference**

**Anil Lewis, Executive Director, NFB Jernigan Institute**

**10:00 - 10:20am Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Promoting Independence and Employment**

**Kevin Monk, Executive Director, Blind Services, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, Louisiana Workforce Commission, Baton Rouge**

**10:20 - 10:35am Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: You Are Never Too Old to Learn**

**Wendy Ortego, Coordinator, Techniques for Living Confidently**

**Clarence Hawkins, TLC Senior Retreat graduate**

**10:35-10:45am Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Increasing Access to Information and Literacy**

**Shelia Coleman, Coordinator of Special Services, State Library of Louisiana, Talking Books and Braille Library, Baton Rouge**

**10:45 – 2:00pm Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Parent Power Track**

***Cypress I***

**Parents and teachers of blind children are encouraged to participate in this interactive seminar. Lunch provided to registrants. Business meeting and elections will be held during lunch.**

***\*\*\****

***The following concurrent sessions will provide excellent information and a chance for participants to share ideas and learn from blind people about tools and techniques that increase independence and confidence. Blindness does not hold you back from living the life you want! Come find out what is possible...***

***\*\*\****

**10:45 - 11:30am Concurrent Sessions**

Session 1: **Technology Q & A**

**Jack Mendez, Director of Technology, LCB**

***Cypress II***

If you have general questions about technology, please join us to share information and learn about the latest developments.

Session 2: Get a Move On

Roland Allen, Cane Travel Instructor, LCB

*Natchez*

Learn how to get fit and have fun! Learn tips and share ideas. **[This session will repeat at 11:35 in the same location.]**

Session 3: Making a Positive Impression

**Paul Phillips, Dale Carnegie Institute, New Orleans**

***Samuel Clemens***

**Learn how to network and to showcase your strengths. [This session will repeat at 11:35 in the same location.]**

**Session 4: Marketing Yourself for the Job of Your Dreams**

**Daphne Mitchell, Manager of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Unit, New Mexico Commission for the Blind, Albuquerque**

***Bayou Levy***

**Discover what employers are seeking in job candidates. Learn strategies for marketing your skills and strengths to make you the best potential employee. [This session will repeat at 11:35 in the same location.]**

**11:35-12:15pm Concurrent Sessions**

Session 1: All about iOS

Jewel Ardoin, Technology Instructor, LCB

*Cypress II*

Learn about the latest apps and updates to make you efficient and productive.

Session 2: Get a Move On

*Natchez*

Session 3: Making a Positive Impression

***Samuel Clemens***

Session 4: **Marketing Yourself for the Job of Your Dreams**

***Bayou Levy***

\* \* \*

**11:00 - 2:00pm EXHIBITS**

***Chairman’s Library***

**12:15 - 1:30pm COMPLIMENTARY BOX LUNCH**

***Atrium***

**Hosted by the North Central Chapter**

**(Must have ticket)**

**12:15 - 2:00pm PARENT POWER TRACK**

***Continues in Cypress I***

**12:30 - 1:30pm LOUISIANA CENTER FOR THE BLIND ALUMNI GATHERING**

***Bayou Levy***

**All LCB alumni are invited. We will be sharing memories and reflections about training and the people who made a difference in our lives. Please bring your box lunch.**

**12:30 – 1:30pm Deaf-Blind Division**

**Cathy Miller, Coordinator**

***Room 253***

**Meeting for those interested in learning about and discussing issues affecting deaf-blind individuals. Information will be presented about the iCanConnect program and other services available in Louisiana. All** are welcome. **Please bring your box lunch.**

**12:30 - 1:30pm REGISTRATION – *Atrium***

\* \* \*

**GENERAL SESSION**

**Saturday, April 6, 2018**

***Cypress II***

**2:00 - 5:00pm**

**2:00 - 2:30pm Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Programs and Research that Create Positive Change**

**Edward Bell, Ph.D., Director, Professional Development and Research Institute on Blindness, Louisiana Tech University**

**2:30 – 2:55pm Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Here’s to Our Future**

**Krystal Guillory, NFBL BELL Academy Coordinator, Ruston**

**NFBL BELL Academy participants and**

**volunteers**

**2:55 – 3:30pm Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Sharing our Stories**

**Sophie Trist, President, Louisiana Association of Blind Students**

**Daphne Mitchell, Secretary, LCB Board; 2nd Vice President, NFB of New Mexico**

**3:30 – 4:45pm “Eloquence of Courage**”

An original play by Jerry Whittle.

Presented by the LCB Players. Director, Bre Brown; Sound Director, **Jerry Darnell.**

**4:45pm ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**5:00pm ADJOURNMENT**

**5:00pm NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

***Private Dining***

**7:00pm BANQUET**

***Cypress II***

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF LOUISIANA**

**Annual Banquet**

**Cypress II – Crowne Plaza, Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

**7:00 PM**

**MASTER OF CEREMONIES……............................................... Treva Olivero**

**President, North Central Chapter, NFBL**

**INVOCATION ................................................................ Sherman Stevens**

**President, Greater St. Landry Chapter and Board Member, NFBL**

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS ................................................................... Anil Lewis**

**Executive Director, NFB Jernigan Institute**

**AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATIONS**

**Immediately following the banquet, there will be several activities for your enjoyment:**

**DANCE – *Cypress II***

**Music provided by DJ W (President, Greater Ouachita Chapter)**

**GOSPEL EXPLOSION – *Mississippi Delta***

**BINGO – *Bayou Levy***

**SUNDAY – April 8, 2018**

**7:00 – 8:00am CATHOLIC MASS**

***Riverboat***

**7:30 – 8:45am COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST**

***Atrium***

**8:00 – 8:30am DEVOTIONS**

***Samuel Clemens***

**8:00 - 8:45am EXHIBITS and NFB LITERATURE**

***Cypress II***

**\* \* \***

**GENERAL BUSINESS SESSION**

**Sunday, April 8, 2018**

***Cypress II***

**9:00am - 12:00 Noon**

**9:00am CALL TO ORDER**

**Pamela Allen, President**

**9:10 - 9:50am Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Living the Lives We Want**

**Marissa Hirschman, LCB Alumnus and Louisiana Tech TBS Graduate Student**

**Waukeshia Jackson, LCB Student**

**Ana Martinez, LCB Alumnus and Louisiana College freshman, Pineville**

**Salvador Villa, LCB Student**

**9:50 - 10:10am Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Sharing our Message**

**Anil Lewis, Executive Director, NFB Jernigan Institute**

**10:10 -10:25am Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Working Together to Create Change**

**Michael Ausbun, LCB Alumnus and Louisiana Tech O&M Graduate Student**

**10:25 -10:50am Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: Taking Care of Business**

**Secretary’s Report, Kristen Sims**

**Treasurer’s Report, Eric Guillory**

**Reflections, Pam Allen**

**10:50 -11:20am Raising Expectations and Transforming Lives: The NFBL in Action**

**Committee Chairpersons and Chapters and Division Presidents will give reports, share updates, and present state fundraising donations.**

**11:20 -11:40am Nominating Committee Report and Elections**

**11:40 -11:50am Closing Remarks and Announcements**

**“$100 for 100” drawing**

**11:50am "Have Gavel Will Travel" Award Presentation**

**12:00pm ADJOURNMENT**

Never doubt that a thoughtful, committed group of citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has. – Margaret Mead

WITH HEARTFELT APPRECIATION FROM THE STATE PRESIDENT:

To the Greater Baton Rouge Chapter – your hard work and hospitality made everyone feel welcome!

To Anil Lewis, our national representative – your tireless dedication, example, encouragement, and leadership inspire us and show us that we can live the lives we want!

To our distinguished presenters and guests – your collaboration and commitment help increase opportunities for blind people of all ages!

To those who assisted with convention planning, helped with registration, handled transportation and convention logistics, contributed door prizes, helped with exhibits, assisted with childcare, served on committees, performed in the play, and welcomed new members – your ideas, generosity, and enthusiasm helped make our convention a success!

To everyone who donated and purchased auction items, supported our NFB BELL Academy activities, played Bingo, made or increased your PAC pledge, and participated in other fundraising efforts – your generous contributions make our programs, scholarships, and outreach efforts a reality!

To the management and staff of the Crowne Plaza – your commitment to outstanding customer service helped our convention run smoothly!

To first-time convention attendees – your willingness to learn and to share inspired us! We welcome you to our Federation family!

To LCB students, staff, and alumni and staff and students of our Institute on Blindness at Louisiana Tech – your loving support and outstanding example make a difference! Each day, you show others that blindness is not a barrier to success and independence! Together, we are changing what it means to be blind!

To chapter, division, and state officers – your loving service and dedicated leadership are unparalleled and always appreciated!

To each NFBL member – your energy, sacrifice, and commitment make our work possible! Thank you for your love and support!

To our beloved mentors and cherished friends, Jerry Whittle, Arlene Hill, Jeff Pearcy, Tom Ley, and Darick Williamson – your lives made a difference! Thank you for making us better people; for showing us through your example how to live and serve; for helping us find hope, joy, and independence!  You are always in our hearts, and we will celebrate your legacies by continuing the work you loved so much!

Pamela Allen, President

*Live the Life You Want*

Tune and lyrics by J.P. Williams, James Brown,

Richie Flores, and J.J. Meddaugh

Live the life you want

nobody can stop you,

Shoot for the sun,

break on through,

So your blind, you'll be fine, we've got good news,

you can live the life you want

we know the truth.

Grab a cane, get trained, gotta get moving.

Make a change, earn a wage, that's what we're doing.

Come with me,

to live the life you want,

nobody can stop you,

Shoot for the sun,

break on through,

So your blind, you'll be fine, we've got good news,

you can live the life you want

we know the truth.

You and me, NFB

let's dream together,

NFB, you and me

lives on forever,

you will see.

You can live the life you want, nothing can stop you.

Shoot for the sun, break on through,

So you’re blind, you'll be fine, we've got good news,

you can live the life you want,

‘cause we know the truth.

you can live the life you want,

‘cause we know the truth.

**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.**

**\* \* \* \* \***

**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.**