**NABS Notes April 2016**

*The National Association of Blind Students --*

*A proud division of the National Federation of the Blind.*

**In this edition of the NABS monthly bulletin:**

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**Must-Read! Self-Advocacy in Higher Education Toolkit**

The NFB’s Self-Advocacy in Higher Education Toolkit can be found at the following here:

<https://nfb.org/self-advocacy-higher-education>

This link will bring you to many options, including a Spanish version of the text, as well as a feedback Web form through which you can provide suggestions or give feedback on this toolkit.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Valerie Yingling at [vyingling@nfb.org](mailto:vyingling@nfb.org) or by phone at (410) 659-9314, extension 2440.

**Have You Registered for the 2016 NFB National Convention?**

National Convention is swiftly approaching! With only two months left until the convention begins, make sure you pre-register and make your room reservation. You will not want to miss the networking opportunities and the exciting events that our annual convention promises to provide.

For more information about how to pre-register, as well as Convention location, please visit our site here:

<https://nfb.org/convention>

**Volunteering With NABS at National Convention**

Whether this is going to be your first Convention experience, or you are a familiar face among us, we look forward to seeing you at all of the various events that NABS has planned. Our annual NABS Social will kick it all off, followed by our Business Meeting which will feature informative and engaging presentations that you won’t want to miss. And, right before the Convention week ends, come socialize and play some fun card games with your fellow Federation family at Monte Carlo Night! We will also be having an Exhibit Hall table, and details are soon to follow on what you will find there. But, in order to make all of this happen, NABS needs your help. From marshalling for these events, to staffing the Monte Carlo Night, to volunteering at the Exhibit Hall table, we want to work with you. If you have any initial interest in volunteering with NABS at this year’s National Convention, please email Bre Brown at [bbrown@nfbtx.org](mailto:bbrown@nfbtx.org) or Kathryn Webster at [kathrynwebster.nfb@gmail.com](mailto:kathrynwebster.nfb@gmail.com).

We look forward to working alongside you, and reconnecting and meeting students from all across the country at this year’s Convention!

**State Updates**

All updates are printed below as they were received from their senders.

**Colorado:**

The last month has brought with it some exciting events.  We had a Leadership Seminar for our leaders to spend the day connecting with state leaders and learning more about NFB history, and to work on future planning with them as well.  We also had an informative student seminar that allowed us to connect with a new student, and with the new director of the Blind services at the Department of Vocational Rehab here in CO.  The seminar was full of good discussion and has resulted in the possibility to work more with TVI's in the future, in addition to students.  We've decided to sell 5 hour energy shots at the national convention.  So look for us after those late nights!  We are all looking forward to summer and planning on visiting some different chapters throughout the state to connect with more people and talk to them about student issues.

**Georgia:**

We have enjoyed some growth and activity in our division. In March, we had a student seminar, during which students were able to learn and hear from affiliate leaders. Through this seminar, we were also able to reach out to new people and organizations to make them aware of this event, as well as our division. We will be raffling off a Kindle Fire at this year’s National Convention, so make sure you stop by the Georgia table in the Exhibit Hall and buy yourself a ticket! You do not have to be present to win.

**Kansas:**

We are excited to announce that we are working hard on our recruitment efforts, and they are paying off! Several weeks ago, we held an informational session about our division at Wichita State. We worked with the Disabilities Services Office at the school to help us advertise the event, and we are thrilled to say that it was a success. We are looking to do more events like this in the future at colleges and universities across Kansas. We also will all gather as a division to celebrate the end of another successful school year, and are hoping to do so in May at a picnic that we are organizing.

**Massachusetts:**

# Happy April from MASSABS! Here in Massachusetts, we just had our spring student social on Saturday, April 16, and it was amazing! The social was held at Wheelock College, and we had an outstanding attendance of about 20 students. Shout out to our treasurer Steven Max-Faults for getting pizza donations from Upper Crust and Otto’s! At the social, we had a presidential update, legislative updates, NFB philosophy, and a great time hanging out with all of our MASSABS friends. We also discussed financial aid opportunities to help students attend National Convention and encouraged everyone to attend. We also got a visit from a student who is going to attend university in Massachusetts next year, and we are so excited to welcome her into the MASSABS family! We are continuing with recruiting efforts and hope to keep building the Federation. Next stop, Orlando! See you all at National Convention!

**New Jersey:**

In the beginning of April NJ put on a seminar at the College Of New Jersey with PA. It was great to see both states come together to put on an amazing seminar. The attendance was low, but it can only get better from here. NJ is thinking about selling something at National Convention but details have not been finalized as of now. Best wishes from your New Jersey Federation family!

**Pennsylvania:**

Pennsylvania was thrilled to work with New Jersey on a collaborative student seminar at the beginning of April. We are now gearing up for our National Convention fundraiser, and many of us are looking forward attending National Convention from PA. Stay tuned for our announcement about our fundraiser, and we are looking forward to Orlando!

**Texas:**

On April 08-09, the NFB of Texas hosted our annual youth conference put on by the Texas Association of Blind Students and the texas Parents Organization of Blind Children. This year, we had approximately 60 participants. It is such a joy to welcome new students and families to the federation. Along with our exhibits, student and parent breakouts, and social events, we had presentations on school involvement, the Pearson math editor, rehab transitions in Texas, mentoring, journeys in to the federation, and so much more. We would like to thank everyone who came and everyone who helped to make youth conference a success. We are certainly looking forward to next year already.

**April NABS Board Meeting Minutes**

National Association of Blind Students

Board Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2016

Meeting called to order at 9:07 p.m.

Members Present:

Sean Whalen (President)

Candice Chapman (1st Vice President)

Bre Brown (2nd Vice President)

Kathryn Webster (Secretary/Treasurer)

James Garret Mooney (Board Member 2)

Michael Ausbun (Board Member 4)

**Treasurer’s Report:**

**Checking account balance: $7,115.32**

**I closed our savings account since there is no reason to have one. We are not incurring any fees from the bank.**

**I will send Candice a check for reimbursement to Mississippi.**

**Bre has been sent $495. For Oklahoma and Alabama combined.**

**Michael has been sent reimbursement for Utah**

**Committee Reports**

Communications:

Scholarship page is up.

Blog post will be up for April.

Fundraising:

Update for National Convention, read below.

Legislative:

There was a meeting at Harvard last week. Hopefully there will be some progress with accessibility testing.

Keep collecting letters from your states and sending them to Sean and Kathryn.

Membership:

Membership call on Sunday, April 24 at 7 p.m. eastern. It will be a flashback to Washington Seminar with a piece from our national office and then a discussion from students about getting involved on campus and outside of the classroom. Our guest speakers will be Kathryn Webster, Michael Ausbun, Chris Nusbaum, and Gabe Cazares.

**State Updates**

Colorado had a seminar recently that was very successful.

Arizona put on their first student seminar in years with a strong attendance.

Texas had a great Youth Conference.

South Carolina is working on membership and fundraising.

Ohio is having a meeting soon.

Oklahoma had a great Convention.

Louisiana: New student president Yadiel.

Mississippi had a great Convention with solid fundraising; much revitalization.

Virginia is having a student seminar in conjunction with the affiliate at the beginning of May.

Maryland is having a student seminar on May 14.

Wisconsin had a good Convention with new board, same president.

**Fundraising at National Convention:**

Exhibit Hall sales: Water and soda

Flash drives: We will sell them at the table and around Convention. They will have lots of transition materials, software tutorials, screen reading software, advocacy documents, sample cover letters, etc.

Penny Wars: Kathryn will invite all divisions and we will have different levels based on sizes of divisions in order to have three weight classes.

**Monte Carlo:**

Charge an entry fee

Chips will be $10 for one bag, $15 for two bags.

**Mentoring Program:**

Will work on logistics

Meeting adjourned at: 10:04 p.m.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions, concerns or suggestions. The NABS Board works for you, and we want to know how we’re doing! Thanks for reading, and we’ll be back in May.

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.