**NABS Notes May 2016**

*The National Association of Blind Students --*

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

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

National Convention is swiftly approaching! With only a month left until the convention begins, make sure you preregister and make your room reservation. You will not want to miss the networking opportunities and the exciting events that our annual convention is sure to provide. For more information about how to preregister, as well as convention location, please visit the following link:

<https://nfb.org/convention>

NOTE: The last day to preregister is May 31.

**Volunteering With NABS at National Convention**

National Convention is just around the corner! 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 has ended, come socialize and play some fun card games with your fellow students. 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 or Kathryn Webster at 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!

**NABS at the NFB Healthy Fair**

On Thursday, June 30 from 10-4pm, as part of this year’s fun and festivities, the National Federation of the Blind Sports and Recreation Division and WE Fit Wellness™ are planning an exciting and dynamic Try It Seminar and NF-Be Healthy Fair. The Try It Seminar will be an opportunity for blind and visually impaired individuals, and their families, to try out a variety of sports and recreational activities. The NF-Be Healthy Fair will be a wonderful chance for participants to explore their personal health, check out blindness-specific health products, and learn about sports and recreation opportunities in Florida and across the nation.  We will gather in the ballroom to learn about nutrition, tips and tricks to exercising right, and have an opportunity to donate blood at the blood drive!

 The National Association of Blind Students is proud to be a silver sponsor of this event.

In addition to selling bottled water throughout the event in order to keep our members hydrated, we will be marshalling and interacting with many of the stations. To make this possible, we need your help! If you are interested in learning about health and nutrition, want to help NABS fundraise, or just love to hang out with some cool athletes, students, and newcomers, then sign up for a shift!

Please email Kathryn Webster at [kathrynwebster.nfb@gmail.com](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/h/xwczhiofkl8p/?&cs=wh&v=b&to=kathrynwebster.nfb@gmail.com) for additional details and to volunteer for a morning or afternoon shift! NABS, We Fit Wellness, and the Sports & Rec Division appreciate your help!

**May NABS Blog Update**

In this month’s blog article, you’ll have the opportunity to read about an affiliate leadership Seminar that took place at the beginning of May at the Jernigan Institute. Kathryn Webster, along with Virginia students, reflected on the impact of such a weekend.

Visit <http://nabslink.org/content/embracing-our-membership-our-meaning-and-our-movement>

To read about the impactful experience had and to learn about how you can build relationships with your own affiliate!

**State Updates**

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

**Kansas:**

**KABS** is increasingly becoming an active division, and we have done several exciting things together throughout the month of May that we would like to share with the rest of our NFB family. First of all, we are proud to announce that Kabs has launched its Facebook page. We post our upcoming activities, pictures of events, and a lot more.  Please like us on Facebook and learn about our division! The weather was delightful, and everyone enjoyed one another’s company and delicious food that KABS provided. Unfortunately, not everyone was able to come, but we still had a wonderful time.

Finally, we did an outreach at the Kansas school for the deaf and blind. We had a great presentation and luncheon there, and some of the students became interested in joining our student division. We are looking forward to getting new members and making our division bigger and stronger. All of our students are enthusiastic about the upcoming national convention, and we are very grateful to our state for providing the financial assistance to our students to make the trip to Orlando possible.

**Maryland:**

The Maryland Association of Blind Students just concluded a busy and exciting spring by putting on our first student seminar in 3 years! On May 14, 17 blind students from across the state gathered in Laurel for a fun time of working out at the gym, making friendships, and empowering each other to get active in all aspects of our community lives, showing that we as blind people can and do live the lives we want. The afternoon of fun and learning concluded with an insightful philosophical discussion led by leaders from both the affiliate and the student division. Thanks to our dedicated and enthusiastic Membership/Communications Committee, under the able leadership of Nesma Aly and Ellana Crew, for leading the planning of one of our most successful seminars yet! As national convention approaches, MDABS is looking forward to

Gathering with our Federation family from across the country, and to participating actively in our work at the national level to ensure that all blind people can live the lives we want. See you in Orlando!

**Utah:**

Hello Federationists! The Utah Association of Blind Students recently had a change to our board with Chelsea Peahl being elected as the new president. We are currently talking with members on the NABS board to brainstorm ideas on how to make our division as strong as it possibly can be! We are also planning a new fundraiser for the year and are also beginning to think about some activities to have this year! Please be patient with us as we get our division going once again!

**Virginia:**

From May 6 to 8, the Virginia Association of Blind Students (VABS) held a weekend seminar on leadership at the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute in Baltimore, Maryland. During this event, students were able to learn invaluable skills, such as time management, interviewing tips, and accessibility options for both employment and curriculum. Most importantly, we engaged with our national president, Mark Riccobono, and reflected on the significance of building relationships with local, state, and national leadership. Between the large turnout of students in comparison to recent events and the enthusiasm of the group, the conference was a huge success! We were grateful to have the majority of the Virginia student board, several members all across our state, and our national state liaison Kathryn Webster join us alongside our entire Federation family of Virginia. We look forward to seeing you in Orlando!

**May NABS Board Meeting Minutes**

May 15, 2016

Meeting called to order at 9:06 p.m.

Members Present:

Sean Whalen (President)

Candice Chapman (1st Vice President)

Bre Brown (2nd Vice President)

Kathryn Webster (Secretary/Treasurer)

Hindley Williams (Board Member 1)

James Garret Mooney (Board Member 2)

Chris Nusbaum (Board member 3)

Michael Ausbun (Board Member 4)

**Treasurer’s Report:**

**Checking account: $6,083.33**

**Sending check to Sean for $464**

**Sending check to Jeannie for $100 toward Convention planning**

**Awaiting $240 from a fundraiser in January**

**Committee Reports**

Communications:

Lots of blog articles coming for May

New section within the blog called: “Living the life we want” for old students and current students

Continue to grow Twitter followers and friends on Facebook

NABS blast on KJFC radio Tuesday night from 8-9pm with special guests Kathryn Webster and Syed Rizvi

NABS Notes: lots of info this month with National Convention and NABS events there. Scholarship page will be posted. Blog updates and state updates will be featured.

Fundraising:

Penny Wars: emails and phone calls to presidents of national divisions done this week by Kathryn

Exhibit hall: water and soda; snack packs

Flash drives: sold for $8; lots of cool stuff on there for blind students

SeaWorld ticket raffle: sold at Exhibit Hall table, by Board members, and Fundraising committee members

Door prizes: grand cash prizes, four smaller prizes to draw during business meeting

Monte Carlo Night: $5 for entrance; $10 for one bag of chips; $15 for two bags of chips

During our meetings, we should sell drinks and snacks in the back of the rooms

Legislative:

Three different letter templates written

Online form for equal access to education testimonies

Membership:

Training center testimonies being collected. We are working on a template. Reach out to Garret Mooney with questions.

Membership directory will be uploaded soon!

Mentoring program at National convention: Sean will send out blast email to membership

Website:

Preregistration is up for National Convention.

Mentoring Program links are on home page.

Kathryn put up a new Find Your State menu on home page.

Preregistration for our meeting will be up soon!

Recruitment strategy for National Convention:

Reaching out to Paul to get more students from around the area to come

Meeting adjourned at 11:46 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 June.

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.