# NABS Notes July 2016

*The National Association of Blind Students*

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

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## National Convention in a Nutshell

The 2016 National convention was a huge success!

Our Membership Committee coordinated our annual Mentor Program with a great turnout and several events with a diverse group of students.

Our Fundraising Committee raised over $4,200 through the sales of snackpacks, bottled water, soda, raffle tickets, and flash drives. We also held our annual Penny Wars fundraiser and hosted an energetic Monte Carlo Night, as we do at each national convention.

The National Association of Blind Students would not have come out so strong without the help of our volunteers, card dealers, marshallers, and overwhelming support. This year was particularly bitter sweet with our immediate past President Sean Whalen and immediate past 1st Vice President Candice Chapman bidding NABS farewell after years of talent, leadership, and unequivocal effort. We know that both Sean and Candice will always be here for guidance, suggestions, and problem solving; and now, we are more than confident to follow in their footsteps with great new leaders on board.

Congratulations to our newly elected officers and board members:

President, Kathryn Webster

1st Vice President, Bre Brown

2nd Vice President, Syed Rizvi

Treasurer, Luke Schwinck

Secretary, Michael Ausbun

Board Member 1, Vee Gaspa

Board Member 2, Tarik Williams

Board Member 3, Chris Nusbaum

Board Member 4, Bryan Duarte

The National Association of Blind Students has hit the ground running with high hopes for blind students across America. Thank you President Whalen, Vice President Chapman, and Board Member Garret Mooney for your devotion to blind students. I would not be here today without your mentorship, belief in me, ability to challenge ideas, and sincere friendship. We are eager to make each of you proud in the coming year! With national convention three weeks behind us, we are energized more than ever to plan for our division’s 50th anniversary in 2017 and transform our dreams into reality. We are the students of today, yet the leaders of tomorrow.

Thank you; and we will see you in January at Washington Seminar.

Kathryn Webster

President

## July Membership Call: Meet the NABS Board

The 2016 NABS Board is eager to host our first membership call as newly elected leaders!

When: Sunday, July 31, 2016

Time: 7pm eastern daylight time

Where: Conference call line: 605-475-6700

 Access code: 7869673

Details: We invite you to join us for our Meet the Board call at 7:00 pm eastern. During this call, the NABS Board will have the opportunity to introduce themselves. We will discuss our various committees and ambitious plans for the upcoming year. Bring your questions, suggestions, and ideas! Come dream big with us!

## NABS Flash Drives: Students Success Toolkits

These flash drives were made for you: fellow students, parents, and curious learners!

For just $10, our 4 gb Flash drives contain the following software, Tutorials, resources, Templates, and information To ensure you are successful.

* Software: including NVDA
* Tutorials: including Excel, Outlook, and more!
* Templates: including sample cover letters, resumes, professionalism preparation documents, etc.
* Additional Resources: including NFB literature, an LSAT practice test, the NFB Self-Advocacy Toolkit, and personal testimonies from our NFB training centers
* Health/Fitness documents

To order your very own drive, visit:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd0FJAEhElmWp_Smg2zM8DTRT9Sqmg1bhVvGEy_2pxZODSUBg/viewform?c=0&w=1>

We accept PayPal, Venmo, and checks.

Direct any questions to Luke Schwinck (luke.schwinck@hotmail.com) or Kathryn Webster (nabs.president@gmail.com)

## Announcement from Our National Legal Team

Our National Federation of the Blind Legal team has been fast at work preparing resources for blind students, parents, teachers, and higher education administrators. If you’ve read the first version of the Self-Advocacy Toolkit, we now have a new edition with a plethora of additional resources and answers for you.

* Self-Advocacy in Higher Education Toolkit Version 2.0:

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

* High-Stakes Testing Self-Advocacy Toolkit:

<https://nfb.org/high-stakes-testing-self-advocacy-toolkit>

* Higher Education Accessibility Online Resource Center

<https://nfb.org/higher-education-accessibility-online-resource-center>

## Join A NABS Committee

Three committees have been established, and we need your help for them to be successful!

Please reach out to the NABS committee chairs or co-chairs to get involved.

### Fundraising Committee

Chair: Luke Schwinck (luke.schwinck@hotmail.com)

Co-Chair: Syed Rizvi (syedrizvinfb@gmail.com) and Tarik Williams (williams.tarik20@gmail.com)

Description: The most important part of any movement is funding that movement. Therefore, the Fundraising Committee of the National Association of Blind Students, a proud division of the National Federation of the Blind, is paramount to effecting positive change for blind students in our nation. This is illustrated by the majority of the NABS Board, beginning with their involvement on the Fundraising Committee. We are seeking passionate, creative, and hardworking students from all corners of the country to learn, and lead alongside President Kathryn Webster and the NABS board. Our vision for this year is to engage in a variety of ventures from grant writing to hosting local and national fundraising events, and everything in between. The majority of our committee’s work is creating, planning, and implementing events such as Monte Carlo Night at national convention and NABS Café at Washington Seminar, as well as making fundraising merchandise decisions. We are anxious to share with you our experience, and knowledge with the sincere hope that you will return the favor. This year on the fundraising committee you can expect to work hard and have a great time doing it!

### Legislative Committee

Chair: Michael Ausbun (mausbun@nevada.unr.edu)

Co-Chair: Vee Gaspa (veegaspa@gmail.com)

Description: Have you ever found yourself in a class where the materials were inaccessible? Have you ever thought legislation, the political process, or advocating for equality, opportunity, and security for blind students is important? We need your help! The Legislative committee of the National Association of Blind Students is looking for volunteers! We work closely with the Governmental Affairs team at the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute, in order to facilitate the dialogue which leads to the development of equitable policy. We will be focusing on our national agendas from a student’s lens, and need your help doing so!

### Membership/Communications Committee:

 Chair: Bre Brown (bre.brown24@gmail.com)

Co-Chairs: Bryan Duarte (bjduarte@asu.edu) and Chris Nusbaum (dotkid.nusbaum@gmail.com)

Description: Are you interested in communicating with our membership, and facilitating personal and professional development? How about insuring students have access to resources to help them be successful? Join us! The Membership/Communications Committee of the National Association of Blind Students is looking for volunteers! Tasks include, though are not limited to, planning and participating in membership calls, writing and gathering blog posts, generating resources for student toolkits, development of regional student programs, and membership outreach. This is a newly formed committee, so it’s got a lot of reach to get your feet wet in something new and fun!

## Adult Rehabilitation and Employment Survey

If you are blind or visually impaired, reside in the United States, and are at least 18 years of age, we cordially invite you to participate in this survey. The purpose of this survey is to gain a better understanding of your experiences as an adult who is blind or visually impaired, including your experiences with education, employment, training, and vocational rehabilitation. If you complete this survey, you will be entered into a drawing in which 5 individuals will win a $100 VISA gift card.

We offer you three ways to complete the survey:

1. Go to: [www.pdrib.com/ares](http://www.pdrib.com/ares)
2. You may Email: pdrib2016@gmail.com
3. You may call: (318) 257-2029

Questions or concerns about this survey may be directed to: Edward Bell, Principal Investigator, Professional Development and Research Institute on Blindness, (318) 257-4554 ebell@latech.edu

## Monthly NABS Blog

This month, NABS is proud to share a myriad of reflections experienced from our national scholarship winners during the 2016 National Federation of the Blind National Convention. Each year, 30 finalists are selected to attend our National Convention, be matched with mentors each day, and gain some financial gain toward the pursuit of higher education. If you are hooked immediately, or interested in learning more, please visit our scholarship page at www.nfb.org/scholarships

Please join us in reading some personal stories from our new and seasoned Federationists as we marvel over their accomplishments!

http://nabslink.org/content/scholarship-spotlight-part-1-meet-some-our-2016-scholarship-class

## State updates

Disclaimer: All updates are not edited, revised, or altered by the NABS Board; instead pasted directly from the state student leader.

### Colorado:

What an incredible time we had at this year's National Convention!  Colorado had many students in attendance this year.  We sold 5 hour energy shots and will continue to sell them. CABS donated soda and helped out at one of our local chapter's picnic this month.  We are currently working on putting together materials for high school students in Colorado in order to help them better prepare for college.  On that same note, we are planning to work with the local chapter of AER to reach out to rehab professionals and TVI's.  We will be holding a seminar for teachers of blind students to help them understand what their students will be facing in college.  We are also planning a dinner in September to reach out to students. There's been talk about one on one mentoring and a possible science seminar in the future as well! CABS continues to work with the Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB) and the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind in mentoring programs and events throughout the year. Stay tuned for more!

### Connecticut:

The Connecticut Association of Blind Students is gearing up for our 45th Connecticut State Convention that will be held from November 4-6 in Shelton, CT. Congratulations to our CTABS Treasurer, Kathryn Webster, for being elected President of the National Association of Blind Students. We are ready to continue building our student division and developing new leaders. We were excited to have two Connecticut students awarded national scholarships during the 2016 national Convention. The CT students will be working hard on recruiting for our state scholarship program, as well as legislative matters as we prepare for Washington Seminar.

### Hawaii:

The Hawaii student division is proud to announce that we will be presenting a charter for our organization at this year’s State Convention. We have been diligently working on the structure, formality, and leadership of our group. As we work closely alongside our affiliate leadership, the Hawaii students are excited to kick off the coming academic year with a great deal of effort. As of October 1, 2016, HIABS will officially be chartered as a formal division within the Hawaii Affiliate. There, we will hold elections, host a 2-hour breakout session, and plan for the upcoming year. We are eager to get involved on both the state and national level to improve the lives of all blind students.

### Massachusetts:

The Massachusetts Association of Blind Students had a very successful month in June and at the end of the semester. Massachusetts had for national scholarship winners at National Convention this year, as well as two Jernigan Fund Award recipients. We had nine students attend the National Convention in total. MASSABS is looking forward to the fall semester and toward more growth in our division this year.

### Maryland:

The Maryland Association of Blind Students is excited to report that this year's national convention was the most successful one in our history! For the first time in many years, MDABS raised some funds of our own during national convention by selling Old Bay seasoning, the unique and delicious Maryland staple which has become famous for adding a little spice to our crabs. Thanks to the hard work of our Board members, led by ever-energetic fundraising chair Erin Daring, we raised a total of $285 during the week, setting a new fundraising record for us! We were also happy to have two first-time convention attendees among our membership, both of whom loved their convention experience and came away from it recommitted to the work of the Federation. As we prepare to return to school, we're also beginning to make plans for our 50th annual state convention, to be held October 28-30 in downtown Baltimore. We're confident that the events we plan this year will be our best yet, and will be worthy of our affiliate's golden anniversary celebration. Stay tuned for updates!

### Oklahoma:

We are happy to report that much has happened. During the seminar day of Oklahoma’s state convention on March 31, 2016, the Oklahoma student division held its first student seminar. During the student seminar we learned about accessibility technology for students, advocating in higher education, adults training centers, and entering the force as a young blind adult. We discussed several useful resources to students including study aid apps, sources for accessible textbooks, and accessible technology lending programs to the blind. Later in the day we learned some useful blindness skills and performed some confidence building exercises together. Overall, we had a great student’s seminar. This year we tried out a new fundraising idea that we borrowed from the Texas Association of Blind Students and it was a great success. For those of you at convention you know what I am talking about but for the rest of you I will give some more details. This year we sold raffle tickets for comfortable seating for two individuals during general sessions. We were able to receive two very comfortable chairs and provide snacks and water severs complementary with the seats. Because who doesn’t want to be comfortable and pampered during general session. With this fundraiser we were able to raise $160.00. The fundraiser was so popular we will be bringing it back this coming year. During state convention the student division always has its annual business meeting. We were able to grow are student division this year. The student division board is as followed. Cammie Loehr reelected as president, Rex Schuttler elected vice president, Cathy Tuton elected as secretary, Callie Chappell reelected as treasurer, and Yoshi elected as board member. Meeting were decided to be held the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00pm via conference line.

### Virginia:

The Virginia Association of Blind Students has seen a resurgence in the past few months in terms of fundraising and marketing strategies. Once a division of our affiliate that was shrouded in mystery, VABS has hit the ground running in fundraising with our shot glass fundraiser at National Convention. The event allowed VABS to add a few hundred dollars to our budget and put us in place for future fundraising possibilities. Future plans for the division includes our breakfast social fundraiser on August 6th at our State Board Meeting, our procurement of an exhibit hall table for our state convention, our “Dance Party” themed social at our state convention in Virginia Beach, and our planned 50/50 raffle at the same event. Also, our plans for outreach and marketing are well underway with collaborative efforts on different events during “Meet the Blind” month that includes Richmond’s “Walk with the Blind,” Fredericksburg’s “Paddle with the Blind,” and Chesapeake Bay’s “Bowl with the Blind.” All of these events will have the attendance, cosponsor ship, or advertisement of the Virginia Association of Blind Students.

## July NABS Board Meeting Minutes

July, 2016

Meeting called to order at: 9:05 P.M.

### Members Present:

Kathryn Webster (President)

Bre Brown (1st Vice President)

Luke Schwinck (Treasurer)

Michael Ausbun (Secretary)

Vee Gaspa (Board Member 1)

Tarik Williams (Board Member 2)

Chris Nusbaum (Board member 3)

Bryan Duarte (Board Member 4)

### Treasurer’s Report:

Checking account balance: 7752.65

* Four donations
	+ $500.00 white cane
	+ $350.00 Sun fund
	+ $750.00 Jernigan fund
	+ $15.00 per month to PAC every month; 180 a year
* Reimbursements
	+ $115.00 convention supplies
	+ $24.76 Uber ride
	+ $90.00 two banquet tickets
* Total revenue: 4124.09
	+ $870.00 Monte Carlo
	+ $1145.00 registration
	+ $1646.87 exhibit hall
	+ $462.22 Penny wars

### Committee Reports

### Fundraising:

* Goals
	+ Raise $10,000-$15,00
	+ Continue writing Grants, fundraising traditions, and new fundraising programs.
	+ Facilitating communication with Greek life on campuses
	+ Diversification of geographic representation on the committee.

### Legislative:

* Goals
	+ Collect at least 15 letters from each state
	+ Have representation on the committee from all 52 affiliates
	+ Try to get at least one letter of support from institutions in each state
	+ Continue frequent and effective communication with our Government Affairs Team (Gabe Cazares, Parnell Diggs, John Pare, ETC.)

### Membership/Communications:

* Goals
	+ Working on the dear student initiative
	+ A guide for Student presidents
	+ Redevelopment and maintenance of the Student resource section of the website
	+ Maintain the scholarship page on the website
	+ Update Facebook/increased promotion
	+ More state student division presence on social media

### Old Business:

The national Convention was a smashing success. Thanks to the new and old board for stepping up and taking responsibility. Discussion of modifications to increase the experience for all students at student division events will come at a later date.

### New Business:

* Behavior
	+ Conference etiquette:
		- If you are not talking, please mute yourself.
		- Call for the floor by stating your name
		- If you are disconnected, simply call back in. Please be mindful that we will still be discussing things, so rejoin respectfully.
* Social media
	+ Behavior
		- It is important to note that you need to remain professional; you are a mentor and role model and a leader.
	+ Remember to share social media posts; friend NABS on Facebook and twitter.
	+ Make sure you join the student list serves.
* The structure of meetings
	+ The meeting will start on time. “Early is on time, on time is late.”
	+ The general order is: Roll call; treasurers report; state updates/communication; old business; new business; comments
* Committees
	+ Fundraising

Schwinck, Duarte, and Rizvi

* + Legislative

Ausbun and Gaspa

* + Membership/Communication

Brown, Williams, and Nusbaum

* Positional Responsibilities
	+ Treasurer:
		- Providing the National Office with bank statements, reimbursements, and all other relevant documentation.
	+ Secretary
		- Taking notes and having them to everyone within 48 hours
	+ Williams
		- Delivering the NABS Notes consistently.
	+ Websites
		- President Webster and Duarte will make sure that website information is up to date, consistent, and well organized.
* Short term long term email by July 20
	+ Overview of long term and short term action plan
* State liaison program
	+ You have a group of six or seven states assigned to you
	+ Accountability: stay in touch with your states. Get in contact with your states within the next week
* NABS rep program
	+ NABS Reps. Are determined by several factors, such as Finances, experience what the state needs, etc.
	+ Folks need to try to request a nabs rep within 8 weeks
	+ A lot of states do not realize that they have this program.
* In-person board meeting
	+ Aug. 12 – Aug. 14
	+ Get receipts to Kathryn
	+ Everyone needs to be at the Jernigan Institute by 5 P.M
	+ People will fly out by Sunday afternoon
	+ Dress will be business professional
	+ Logistics need to be booked soon
	+ Call for ideas
		- The best way to network with leaders
		- How to start a division from scratch
		- Relationship building and communication with external authorities
	+ If anyone has any dietary restrictions, please let President Webster know

Meeting adjourned at 10:04 P.M