**NABS Notes November 2015**

*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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**The NFB National Scholarship – APPLY TODAY!**

Are you legally blind?

Do you reside in the United States, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico?

Are you pursuing or planning to pursue a full-time, postsecondary course of study at a U.S. institution in the 2016 scholastic year?

Are you available to attend the entire NFB National Convention in Orlando, Florida from June 30-July 5, 2016?

Are you eager to meet Federation leaders and network with some of the brightest, most passionate mentors out there?

If you said yes to all of these questions, then we strongly encourage you to apply to our 2016 National Scholarship Program!

To recognize achievement by blind scholars, the National Federation of the Blind annually offers blind college students in the United States and Puerto Rico the opportunity to win one of thirty merit-based, national-level scholarships ranging in value of $3,000 to $12,000. All scholarships awarded are based on academic excellence, community service, and leadership.

Visit our website at [www.nfb.org/scholarships](http://www.nfb.org/scholarships) to begin your application!

Remember: applications, along with all necessary documents, must be submitted no later than March 31, 2016. Do not wait until the end of February to start gathering additional information and beginning the online form.

**Leading the Way: Grand Canyon Sound Academy**

This program is for students who are blind/ visually impaired or fully-sighted.

A group of 20 teenagers from across the U.S. will be selected to receive scholarships for a once-in-a-lifetime leadership adventure: Grand Canyon Sound Academy.

Dates: July 24-August 4, 2016

Student Program Fee and Scholarship: In celebration of the National Park Service’s 100th birthday, the Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division is providing generous scholarship support. Youth participants will only be responsible for paying or fundraising a $300 No Barriers program fee as well as travel costs to/from Phoenix, AZ. (This reflects a scholarship of $2,700/person).

Selected participants will be expected to fulfill a set of scholarship requirements before, during, and after the expedition.

TO APPLY: Submit an online application and correlating materials here:

www.nobarriersusa.wufoo.com/forms/2016-leading-the-way-grand-canyon-sound-academy

EARLY APPLICATION DEADLINE: December 4

LATE APPLICATION DEADLINE: January 8, 2016

To learn more, visit www.nobarriersyouth.org/programs/leading\_\_the\_way

**The Ins and Outs of Mathematics: Upcoming NABS Membership Call**

When: Sunday, December 13, 2016

 Time: 7pm eastern

Where: NABS Conference call line

 Dial: 605-475-6700

 Access code: 7869673

Come join us on our December membership call to discuss the ins and outs of Mathematics with two fabulous guest speakers! Be sure to bring lots of questions!

**State Student Presidents Call this Sunday**

When: Sunday, November 29, 2016

 Time: 9pm eastern

Where: NABS conference Call line

 Dial: 605-475-7600

 Access code: 7869673

State student division presidents: NABS wants to hear from you!

Please join us this Sunday for what will be an engaging and information-filled call!

**State Updates**

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

**Arizona:**

Greetings from the Arizona students division! As we approach the holiday season the Arizona ABS is ramping up for some seasonal fund raising events. We are constructing holiday gift baskets full of Christmas favorites such as hot coco, candy canes, seasonal coffee mugs, and fruit jams amongst other items. We will be auctioning these baskets during Arizona chapter holiday parties from North Phoenix all the way down to lower Tucson and everything in between. We are also planning an awesome event to ring in the New Year’s which will be a lot of fun and also a great opportunity for membership building! To go along with all this fun event planning, and fund raising Arizona is busy putting together a student seminar where we will be looking to partner with local organizations to introduce upcoming students, current students, and parents of blind students to the Federation and let them see all the awesome work we are doing everyday on their behalf. We are proud to share with you that SAAVI, will be partnering with the students division by offering their Tucson location for us to host the seminar. We are looking forward to this holiday season and all the great work we do together, and as always, through Love Hope and Determination we change what it means to be blind because we will live the lives we want!

**California:**

The California Association of Blind Students is excitedly embarking on a new chapter, with several new board members: Carla Scroggins (President), Mary Church (First Vice-President), Miso Kwak (Second Vice-President), Candace Luther (Secretary), Hoby Wedler (Treasurer), and board members Tino Benelli and Jimmy Cong. We are very excited to work together to strengthen and grow both the student division as well as the Federation.

We had a wonderful time at our state convention in Fremont, CA October 30th – November 1st. Events included a pizza social hosted by CABS, as well as an inspirational and motivating meeting, including encouraging and inspiring speeches by our NABS state liaison Garrett Mooney, NFB of California affiliate President Mary Willows, and immediate past CABS president Angela Fowler. There was a great turnout of college students at convention and at our CABS meeting in particular. We are eager to get to work building our student division and our Federation. Our first board meeting on Sunday November 15th went very well as we began the exciting task of building a strong board for a strong California student division. We look forward to having a lot to report as our affiliate grows. Wishing everyone a very happy holiday season.

**Colorado:**

The Colorado Association of Blind Students (CABS) held our annual business meeting at the NFB of Colorado's state convention on October 31.  We got to hear from our national rep, president Riccobono and our state president Scott LaBarre on their experiences with the NFB's student division and their thoughts on student involvement, leadership, and building the Federation.   NABS president Sean Whalen called in to give us a NABS update as well.  It was great to have Learning Ally present on their services and their new college mentoring program.  A new board was elected with Anna Givens as president, JJ Aragon as vice president, Nick Thomas as treasurer, Liliya Asadullina as secretary, and board members Quincie Mattick, Antonio Rozier, and JJ Duran.

Throughout the convention we sold keychains that we hand made.

We are still doing our NFL football pool fundraiser where people can win some of the money we raised.

Since the convention we have created a twitter account  @cabslink and stepped it up on Facebook to do some membership outreach.  We are looking forward to our end of semester/Christmas celebration that we are currently planning.  Lastly, we are starting to plan a leadership seminar to be held in the beginning of the year.  There is much ahead and we all are looking forward to the coming year.

**Connecticut:**

The Connecticut Association of Blind Students held its fourth annual business meeting at the forty-fourth annual National Federation of the Blind of Connecticut State Convention in November. We had our annual snack pack fundraiser and were proud to participate in the Legislative Leadership Workshop co-hosted by the NFB of Connecticut and the National Association of Blind Students. CTABS Founder and President Justin Salisbury passed the presidential torch to Brian Martin, of Stamford, Connecticut, who is a graduate of the Post-secondary Readiness Empowerment Program (PREP) at BLIND, Inc.

**Illinois:**

Over Halloween weekend Illinois held its state convention in Naperville, IL. During the weekend IABS had two fundraisers, a 50/50 raffle as well as a Karaoke night called IABS Idol, as well as a student luncheon where we were pleased to have our NABS rep Candice Chapman speak. We also had our yearly IABS business meeting. This year we elected several new members to serve on the IABS board ranging from high school students to grad students. Currently IABS is planning a Student Seminar on April 16th 2016 in Chicago, IL. Last year the seminar was attended by students in Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, Colorado, and Illinois. If any states are interested in attending or help with planning the student seminar just let me know at kayteaell@gmail.com .

**Kansas:**

The Kansas student division is alive and well! This year at our state convention in Wichita, we had our inaugural business meeting, which consisted of various speakers including leaders in the affiliate, our national representative Julie Deden, and our student representative Hindley Williams. There was a lot of energy at our convention, and we are excited to recruit new members, and take the ideas that we brainstormed together and put them into action!

**Maryland:**

The 2015 convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland was a truly unforgettable event, and the activities our student division hosted during the convention were a huge success! On Friday, over 25 students of all ages and from all walks of life attended our annual business meeting, greatly exceeding the expectations of our planning committee. Many of these students also attended a luncheon we hosted on Saturday afternoon. In both of these action-packed meetings, we were inspired and energized by such dynamic presenters as NFBMD President Sharon Maneki, NFB national rep Jeannie Massay, and NABS national rep Kathryn Webster. We also conducted a very successful 50-50 raffle, raising $111 for the division thanks largely to the work of our able fundraising chair, Erin Daring. At our business meeting we elected an energetic new Board, which consists of the following leaders:

President: Chris Nusbaum

Vice President: Nathan Clark

Secretary: Ellana Crew

Treasurer: Erin Daring

Board Members: Nesma Aly, Tyron Bratcher, and Alycia Levy

We congratulate these emerging leaders and look forward to the work MDABS will do under their leadership. Stay tuned for future updates from Maryland—great things are coming!

**Massachusetts:**

We, along with our affiliate, attended a listening session with the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind. He has asked us to write a self-advocacy toolkit that they can send to students who call in needing help with inaccessibility at school.

We are also collecting data on what the commission has told students regarding out of state funding. Apparently some students have been misinformed or have misunderstood MCB's policies in this area. The commission would like to further investigate. We have just completed our list of 90 colleges and universities DSS contact information so we can disseminate our state and national scholarship applications as well as publicize our listserv for crowdsourcing accessibility problems.

Finally, we are working with NFBMA on building a parent, TVI workshop for convention taking place February 26-28. We are very excited about this collaboration and hope that we will get a big turnout. We are offering continuing education credits for the TVIs in attendance.

**Nevada:**

The Nevada state convention took place in Las Vegas Nevada, the weekend of October 29–November 1st. It was filled with excitement, though not much change. At our annual convention business meeting, the students had the pleasure of hosting Mr. Sachin Pavithran, Whitehouse appointee and chair of the United States access board, and Mr. Parnell Diggs, immediate past president of the South Carolina Affiliate, national representative, and executive director of governmental affairs. Both distinguished gentlemen congratulated the Nevada students on our recent outreach success, while reminding us to stay diligent. There were no elections this year, as the Nevada student division constitution mirrors the affiliate constitution, which specifies elections will take place every two-years. Thus, the board is as follows:

President: Ja’nisha Murphy (Junior, University of Nevada, Las Vegas)

Vice President: Nina Cadillo (sophomore, University of Nevada, Reno)

Secretary: Michael Ausbun (Senior, University of Nevada, Reno)

Treasurer: Ryan McKinney (junior, Truckey Meadows Community College)

At the banquet, several students were acknowledged for their work at a variety of internships in and around the community. Those students were Zippora Jones (tutoring blind children), Erik Bergraf (Assistive technology training), Nina Cadillo (Software and website accessibility analysis for the University), and Dora Uchel (integrating individuals into independent living). Next, two students were rewarded  merit-based scholarships; those students were Dora Uchel (Social Work, University of Nevada, Reno) and Michael Ausbun (Philosophy, University of Nevada, Reno).

To end the convention, Michael Ausbun was elected to be the Nevada Affiliate Vice-President, raising the student presence on the affiliate board to four–Kimmie Beverly (President), Michael Ausbun (Vice-President), Zappora Jones (Board member), and Dora Uchel (Board Member). Together with Love, Hope, and Determination, we know that we can, and will, transform our dreams into reality.

**New Jersey:**

New Jersey elected a new board at the 39th state convention a couple of weeks ago. Vee Gaspa as President, Kristie Hong as Vice President, Sammi Hashash as secretary/treasurer, Jeremy Capati as board member one, and Hank Miller as board member two. The board is very eager and had a long brainstorming session the weekend following convention on their first board conference call. The affiliate is working close with NJABS as we work to rebuild our division. We are planning a fund-raiser to take place during the state affiliate’s holiday party on Jan. 9. More great things to come in the future for NJABS!

**New York:**

As many of other states, we had our state convention around end of October. It was held in redison hotel in Albany. there were many exciting activities in the convention. However, two of the student meetings had important mark. First one was Friday and we met informally to get to know each other. On Saturday, we had our business meeting and our election with a wonderful new young board. Also, a few guest speakers gave grate words to our new comers. We believe they were two productive meetings.   I hope you’ll hear from us more in the future.

**North Carolina:**

Hello and Happy Thanksgiving fellow Federationist!

The North Carolina Association of Blind Students has been busy during the month of November! Several of our members are planning on attending Washington Seminar, and have been preparing themselves and making plans to do so. Including applying for funding from NABS. There are also a number of students in North Carolina that will be applying for the NFB’s National Scholarship! To guide them through the application process, we will have a member of the scholarship committee on one of our upcoming calls to answer any questions about applying. Lastly, we will be launching a very exciting contest on our December membership call. The purpose of this contest is to motivate more participation in NCABS through a little friendly competition. For this contest, points will be awarded to our members when they complete a variety of tasks. Tasks include attending conference calls, writing equal access education testimonials, being engaged with us on social media, and many more! Every three months, the person who has earned the most points will win a prize! In September of 2016, at our next State Convention, we will announce our grand prize winner who has collected the most points over the entire ten month period. So as you can see, NCABS, is keeping busy and working hard to do our part in building the federation. Our next conference call will be Sunday December  8, 2015 at 8:00. Call (712) 432-3900 and enter the access code 3866158 to join us for our last call of 2015!

Best wishes to all students approaching the end the semester, finish strong!

**Pennsylvania:**

The Pennsylvania Association of Blind Students is at the threshold of some very exciting new events and opportunities. A new board now serves this student division: Hindley Williams (President), Lily Asadullina (Vice-President), Lizzy Muhammad (Secretary), Jason Polansky (Treasurer), and India Scott (Board Member). At the historic convention in Wilkes-Barre this year, we heard from some inspiring speakers, including our national president Mr. Riccobono, got to know one another better, and have already started making plans and taking action. Check out our Facebook group by searching “PABS,” and stay tuned for more PABS activity! Much is on the horizon as we recruit new members, plan a seminar, and live out a positive philosophy of blindness as students.

**Texas:**

Howdy from the great state of Texas. On the weekend of November 13-15 we had a successful and exciting state convention in Austin, Texas. We had several students in participation at our convention. Onn Friday evening, we held the annual business meeting of the Texas Association of Blind students. The meeting was full of energy. We had some great presentations about NFB-Newsline®, being a student teacher, being a mentor in STEM 2U, landing an internship, and so much more. Before elections, Gabe Cazares delivered the 2015 presidential report. TABS has certainly been busy over these past few years, and we can’t wait to continue the work of changing what it means to be a blind student. At the end of our business meeting, we held our elections. This has been a time of transition for TABS. Gabe is now successfully employed and has stepped down from the presidency. We would like to thank him for his six years on the TABS board, of which three of those years he was president.

The election results are as followed:

President: Bre Brown

First vice President: Daniel Martinez

Second Vice President: Kayleigh Joiner

Secretary: Harley fetterman

Treasurer: Jonathan Franks

Board member I: Sal villa

Board member II: Tony McKinney

We are looking forward to another great year in TABS!

**Virginia:**

During Halloween weekend, the Virginia affiliate held its annual state convention. This convention was a great success for student division, especially the fundraisers. We had 2 fundraisers: a bake sale and jailbreak. Both were successful. We raised over $400 with the two fundraisers. The affiliate absolutely loved the jailbreak fundraiser, and were very enthusiastic about handcuffing leaders in the federation.  In addition to successful fundraisers, the student division helped facilitate a youth track, which consisted of a mobility lesson on the Metro, breaking boards, and philosophy discussions. On Saturday afternoon, VABS held its annual business meeting and conducted elections. Sarah Patnaude, president of VABS for the past two years, did not seek re-election. With that, our new president is Kim Valko, who previously held the position of vice president. Kierra Davis is our vice president; Jen Shields as our secretary/treasurer; Reed Haney as board member 1; and Robert Parsons as board member 2. VABS is looking forward to another exciting year!

**Washington:**

Washington State officially created a student division on October 31st 2015 during the Washington State Convention of the National Federation of the Bind. We are very excited to get started planning events, and are looking forward to building the organization. This new division has the following officers; President: Hannah Werbel, Vic President: Lark Braun, Secretary:  Tracie Tonasket, and Treasurer: Tasha Budnik. We are also pleased to announce that Tracie Tonasket and Abby Griffith were this year's state scholarship winners. The new student division in Washington State is here and is ready to begin recruiting new members and to begin changing lives.

**Wisconsin:**

Greetings from the state of Wisconsin! We are currently working on planning two fundraisers for Washington Seminar which consist of having a bake sale at Lighthouse Church in Madison, WI in the month of December and a bowl-a-thon at Village Lanes in city of Monona, WI in early January. We are also planning on teaming up with the Wisconsin Parents of Blind Children division to go on a sleigh ride at Redridge ranch in Mauston, WI as a student activity sometime in February.

**November NABS Board Meeting Minutes**

**National Association of Blind Students**

Board Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2015

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)

James Garret Mooney (Board Member 2)

Michael Ausbun (Board Member 4)

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Checking account: 5217.78

Savings account: 1230.57

Awaiting Karen’s check from January’s auction.

**Committee Reports**

    Communications: Bre

Blog is up for November.

Alex Anderson will be writing a reflection on the student Legislative Leadership Workshop.

Hindley will be sending out a call for state updates early this week.

    Fundraising: Kathryn

Share the gofundme page all over social media! [www.gofundme.com/blindstudents](http://www.gofundme.com/blindstudents)

We have raised over $2,000; and we are nearing the last week to meet our goal.

Chipotle fundraiser in California will take place in early January with the help of Angela Fowler.

Applebee’s fundraiser in Ruston, LA will take place in mid-January with the help of Syed and David of LCB.

Funding application to assist students in attending Washington Seminar is out. Applications are due Sunday, November 22.

Please let your states know.

    Legislative: Sean

Really successful Legislative Leadership Workshop held in Connecticut on November 7.

Follow-up materials and notes will be sent out to all participants early this week.

Legislative Committee actively participated in Twitter Thursday by pushing the Marrakesh Treaty.

We are still collecting letters for equal access to education. Please encourage your states to write!

    Membership: Candice and Garret

There was a successful membership call to introduce the new NABS Board.

The December Membership call will take place during the first two weeks of December. Guest speakers include Erich Guillory of LCB and John Miller, President of the National Science and Engineering Division.

Database project is starting so we can increase our mass membership list. Please collect membership directories from your states.

    Website: Kathryn

Please send Kathryn student president updates as soon as you are aware of them!

Bre and Kathryn are working on creating a scholarship page within our homepage.

**State Updates**

Candice, Bre, and Kathryn will briefly update the Board on their states.

The last three weeks have been full of student division transitions.

Candice:

Oregon: convention two weeks ago; hoping to have a student division revitalized.

Missouri: will reach out to affiliate president

Minnesota: New president; recruitment event coming soon

Mississippi: some recruitment projects in the works

Florida: planning for their Convention in January

Bre:

Texas: great Convention this past weekend; Bre is president

West Virginia: searching for student to write an equal access to education testimony

Louisiana: student seminar a few weeks ago with Bre in attendance; 30-35 participants

New Jersey: new president (Vee Gaspa)

New York: student gathering and lunch at convention; NABS Rep was Bre; state-wide board instead of all in NYC

Delaware: new affiliate president; hoping to start a student division shortly.

North Dakota: not much happening there; will try to increase contact

Kathryn:

Connecticut: new student president (Brian Martin ;) Kathryn was at Convention weekend of November 6

North Carolina: new student president (Bobbi Pompey ;) Kathryn was at convention late September, as was Sean Whalen as NABS Rep; young, vibrant, new board!

Massachusetts: Derek Manners is now Legislative Director (will help collect letters ;) Convention last week of February; may invite NABS Rep; students met with DORS counselor to discuss current policies and potential additions; implementing a self-advocacy tool kit

Virginia: new president (Kimberly Valko;) Kathryn was in attendance; great fundraisers; planning to have a summer Blow-Out event

DC: no student division yet; Convention was weekend of October 15

Kentucky: gathering students for Washington Seminar

Tennessee: working to get lots of letters!

South Dakota: need to pinpoint a future student leader

**New Business:**

Washington Seminar planning:

Sean will talk to President Riccobono about when we should hold our annual auction.

Fundraising committee will brainstorm ideas for events/fundraisers for Wash Sem and bring final thoughts to the board for a vote.

Sean will appoint a committee to plan the logistics of our Winter Seminar; let Sean know if interested in helping. Kathryn, Hindley, Candice, Bre, and Michael expressed interest.

Bringing back the student president luncheon on Monday, January 25 after the Winter Seminar.

Students are encouraged to attend the Legislative Training at 1pm on Monday, January 25. Those receiving funding from NABS are required to attend.

Meeting adjourned at 10:18 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 December.

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.