**NABS Notes March 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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**The NFB National Scholarship – TIME IS RUNNING OUT TO APPLY!**

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.

**Mark Your Calendars – NABS at the 2016 NFB 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!

**March NABS Blog Update**

Every year hundreds of federationists travel to Washington D.C. to advocate for blind Americans on Capitol Hill. Each year, it is our goal to bring new students along. This year, the National Association of Blind Students was able to sponsor approximately 15 students to attend. Among those students were Michael Ausbun and vee Gaspa. In this blog, you can read about their experiences as first time attendees. The blog can be found at http://nabslink.org/content/washington-seminar-perspectives-first-timers. If you have ideas for future blog posts, please email Bre Brown at [bbrown@nfbtx.org](https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/h/c6zf1gi013pt/?&cs=wh&v=b&to=bbrown@nfbtx.org). Stay tuned for our April blog post.

**State Updates**

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

**Alabama:**

In January, the Alabama association of Blind Students held a Luncheon  to revitalize the student division. At the luncheon, elections were held. The board members are as follows. President: Anna Walsh; Vice president: Jessica Williams; Secretary: Grace Anderson; Treasurer: Leslie Dixon; board member: Tripp Gulledge.

In March, AABS held several student events at our NFB state convention. A business meeting was held and dues were collected at that meeting. We conducted a student luncheon where a panel of experts discussed several important things pertaining to college readiness. During the convention, AABS conducted two fundraisers. The first was a 50/50 raffle, and the second was a horse race. Both were reasonably successful.

In the future, AABS hopes to grow as a student division and get involved in student issues on the national level. Our next meeting will be in April. Plans are underway for more fundraising events and we are always trying to think of ways to reach out to other blind students across Alabama.

**Connecticut:**

CTABS is gearing up for a well-attended National Convention with a unique fundraiser. We have been planning engaging conference calls by inviting national leaders to share their professional and personal experiences with us. We are working closely with the affiliate to plan another great State Convention this coming November. CTABS is eager to develop young leaders into mentors for incoming students! As we begin planning a regional student seminar, we are open to ideas, suggestions, and contributions from any northeast states! Please contact Kathryn Webster at kathrynwebster.nfb@gmail.com .

**Massachusetts:**

Hey Nabsters! This is Kristina Vu, MASSABS’ new board member, bringing you an update on what’s going on in Massachusetts. We just wrapped up a very successful state convention, where we had a record breaking attendance of thirty-nine students! Our weekend was jam-packed with student activities from karaoke night to legislative updates. We also elected a new board. Here are their names and positions: President Syed Rizvi, First Vice President Precious Perez, Second Vice President Dylan Hedtler-Gaudette, Secretary Meaghan Roper, Treasurer Steven Max-Faults, and Board Member Kristina Vu.

We are already looking forward to our spring social, which will be held on Saturday, April 16, at Wheelock College, in Boston. We will have food, fun activities, and federation updates!

With a great new board, a growing membership, and such a great start to the year, MASSABS is excited to continue building the federation!

**North Carolina:**

After a great student seminar in January with knowledge on social security and financial planning, we are beginning to think about National Convention. While we aim to bring as many students as possible to Orlando, we also want students to learn, grow, and engage in our philosophy. Next month, we are hoping on having a special guest speaker to discuss training at our national centers. Stay tuned!

**Ohio:**

Greetings from the great state of Ohio. Ohio is very excited to be in the process of rebuilding it's student division. On March 5, a national Federation of the blind scholarship application seminar was conducted in the city of Columbus. During this scholarship workshop, leaders of the national Federation of the blind of Ohio discussed with potential scholarship candidates the value of the Federation, and the importance of changing perceptions of there cited counterparts. In Ohio, we are very excited to be part of building the Federation, and we very much look forward to sharing exciting news about Ohio with you soon.

**Tennessee:**

TABS is having our meeting at our state Convention will be held April 1-3 in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, at the Clarion Inn, 2227 Old Fort Parkway.

**Texas:**

The Texas Association of Blind students in conjunction with the Texas Parents of Blind Children will be holding our annual youth conference in Dallas, April 8-10. The conference is for Parents of blind children, blind students, and related professionals to come together during this exciting weekend to network, learn, and have lots of fun! We will have exhibits, a reception, an open TABS board meeting, a joint session for parents, students, and professionals, a formal luncheon, breakout sessions for students and parents, a recreational trip, and more. We are pleased to welcome Jeannie Massay from Oklahoma as our national representative. This is always an exciting time here in Texas, and this year will not be any different. You can find all of the details and preregister at [www.nfbtx.org](http://www.nfbtx.org). Those who preregister will be entered in to a special drawing to win their registration fee of $50.00 bac. If you have any questions, feel free to email me at bbrown@nfbtx.org .

**Virginia:**

Virginia students are fast at work planning our first-ever student seminar. As a student division with representation from nearly all age groups, we aim to make an inclusive environment to all. In May, we plan to partner with the Virginia School for the blind to engage in NFB history, philosophy, and membership development as we work with national leaders. We also are planning our annual Blowout, involving great partnership with our affiliate to bring in younger students. We hope to have a solid turnout at National Convention.

**March NABS Board Meeting Minutes**

National Association of Blind Students

Board Meeting Minutes

 Sunday, March 20, 2016

Meeting called to order at 9:06 pm

Members Present:

Sean Whalen (President)

Candice Chapman (1st Vice President)

Bre Brown (2nd Vice President)

Kathryn Webster (Secretary/Treasurer)

Hindley Williams (Board Member 1)

Chris Nusbaum (Board member 3)

**Treasurer’s Report:**

**Checking account balance: $**2,103.58

**Saving account balance: $**7,307.39

**Check was sent for Michael’s flight to Idaho for $413.20**

**Check was sent to Sean for final Wash Sem money**

**Awaiting $150 from Virgil for auction items**

**Awaiting $240 from David of LCB for Apple Bee’s fundraiser**

**Sending check to Bre tomorrow for Oklahoma for $157.35 and for Alabama for $337.98**

**We had a national division call on Tuesday for all presidents and treasurers. Quick summary: We will be working closely with national during the transition, as well as sending monthly bank statements to the National office for archival purposes.**

**Committee Reports**

Communications: Bre, Chris, and Hindley

Washington Seminar blog going up shortly. Next project is resources web page to improve and update that.

NABS Notes: will go out at the end of the week to include what needs to be included before the end of March. We will be recruiting members to help preparation for National Convention.

Social media: Friend us on Facebook at NABS Link and follow us on Twitter @nabslink.

Fundraising: Kathryn

Sent thank you to the committee for helping. Recruiting for help for National Convention fundraisers. Made a final spreadsheet to archive who has donated (organizations and individuals.) Sean will send out thank you notes to all who donated. Kathryn will update Gofundme tonight.

Legislative: Sean and Kathryn

Meeting with President of Harvard to continue the accessibility push there (second meeting with her, fifth with the university.)

We are still collecting letters for equal access to education. Please send them to Sean and Kathryn at nabs.president@gmail.com and kathrynwebster.nfb@gmail.com

Membership: Candice

State Presidents call this coming Sunday, March 27 at 9pm eastern.

Scholarship call was well attended.

Please send ideas for an April membership call to Candice Chapman at chapman.candicel@gmail.com

We are making lots of progress with uploading the membership directories to the website.

Website: Kathryn

Kathryn and Bre are making the scholarship page this week. Kathryn will put it up as a link from the homepage. Big import of state president updates happening tomorrow.

The logo will be put up this week.

**State Updates**

Candice Chapman:

MS: Convention in two weeks, and Candice will be there.

Working on getting in touch with Missouri, Arkansas, and Oregon.

FL: is doing well.

Bre Brown:

AL: just had State Convention, and Bre went. Overall, things went well, but we will continue working with them.

TX: Youth conference next month.

LA: State Convention next month.

DE: working on creating a student division.

Kathryn Webster:

CT: We set a new time for our monthly conference calls (second Thursday at 8pm.) We are planning a student seminar that will expand upon last year’s legislative leadership workshop into a more interactive and varying subject seminar. We have merged the student treasury with the affiliate in a restricted fund. Hoping to have a fundraiser at National Convention (some sort of raffle.)

DC: Kathryn is working with Amir to pinpoint new leaders. We are bringing in DC people to help with a Facebook photo initiative…may gain more momentum in membership recruitment at the same time.

MA: New president. Kathryn was there. Great Convention! Great new leaders.

NC: Kathryn is heavily involved throughout the transition.

TN: Doing well.

VA: Helping plan their student seminar for the end of May.

**National Convention Preparation:**

Business meeting: Sean will handle the agenda for that. Direct ideas to him.

NABS Social: The evening of the first full day of Convention; room already booked.

Monte Carlo: still happening; we have the bar tender and usual room.

Exhibit Hall table: Still happening.

Kathryn and Bre will coordinate shifts for what we need volunteers for.

Mentoring program: Will continue this discussion in April; Membership Committee will brainstorm ideas.

Fundraising at Convention: Penny Wars maybe? 50/50 raffle? Kathryn will conduct a call with her committee and then present recommendations to the NABS Board for feedback and decision making.

Elections:

Positions up for election: President (2 year term), 1st VP (1 year term), 2nd VP (2 year term), Treasurer (1 year term), Secretary (2 year term), Board member 2 (2 year term), Board member 4 (2 year term.)

Meeting adjourned at 10:56 pm

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 April.

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.