# **NABS Notes: September 2018**

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## **President’s Note**

It is finally the beautiful season of autumn! With pumpkin flavors everywhere, fresh smells in the air, and nearly mid-way through semesters, the NABS Board is busy traveling across the country to mentor, grow, and develop our youth. Each state convention, our leaders are rejuvenated to pour love and dedication into the hearts and minds of new and current leaders. During October, it is Meet the Blind Month; and though NABS is a national organization, everyday someone is meeting a blind student – that’s us! It is our civic duty to take an extra moment out of each of days to educate someone on our cane, guide dog, piece of technology, or ability to succeed…just like everyone else! Educating society is exhausting, but misconceptions diminish when we take that step toward enlightening others based on our personal experiences. This month, I challenge you to be thoughtful and intentional in responding when a sighted person offers assistance. We all face tiring actions from the world around us that make us want to absolutely scream. When this happens to me, I take a step back and ponder – what if I am the first blind person they are meeting in their entire life? I recognize, then, that I may be setting the stage for future interactions with blind people, and thus paving a path for them. Be that teacher, that role model, and that patient soul. At the end of the day, it will benefit each of us! I challenge you to raise the expectations of at least five people throughout the month of October. As always, reach out to us; we want to hear from you, even if it is just a hello!

## **New Resource – NABS Phone Number**

Our leadership wants to provide an outlet for students to voice concerns, seek advice, and learn about resources you may otherwise not be familiar with. With that, we launched our very own NABS phone number, where a NABS leader is on call to speak with blind students across the country. Please call 410-417-8360.

## **Follow NABS on Instagram**

NABS has an Insta account now, so follow us @NABSLink!

## Training Center Information

Please find recent news and information regarding our three fantastic NFB training centers.

BLIND, Inc.

<https://www.blindinc.org/>

<https://www.blindinc.org/blog/>

Colorado center for the Blind

<https://cocenter.org/>

<https://cocenter.org/blog/>

Louisiana Center for the Blind

<http://www.louisianacenter.org/>

<http://www.louisianacenter.org/lcb-lagniappe/>

## 2019 AAPD Summer Internship Program

Deadline to Apply: November 5, 2018 by 5pm Eastern Time

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) is a convener, connector, and catalyst for change, increasing the political and economic power of people with disabilities.

Since 2002, the AAPD Summer Internship Program has developed the next generation of leaders with disabilities and offered host employers access to a talented, diverse workforce. Each summer, AAPD places college students, graduate students, law students, and recent graduates with all types of disabilities in summer internships with Congressional offices, federal agencies, non-profits, and for-profit organizations in the Washington, DC area. Each intern is matched with a mentor who will assist them with their career goals. AAPD provides the interns with a living stipend, transportation to and from Washington, DC, and fully-accessible housing.

At the beginning of the summer, interns participate in a 1-week orientation session to learn about AAPD and the disability rights movement, meet the other interns, and participate in a variety of engaging workshops and events. As part of the AAPD network, interns also receive opportunities to attend events on Capitol Hill, conferences, community events, briefings, and more.

Any undergraduate student, law student, graduate student, or recent graduate from a US college or university who self-identifies as an individual with any type of disability is invited to apply.

Apply today:

<https://www.aapd.com/summer-internship-program/>

## Legislative Alert

Please find a legislative update from John Pare, Executive Director of Advocacy and Policy at the National Federation of Blind Headquarters, copied below:

The Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act passed; and is on President Trump’s desk for signature.

The Access Technology Affordability Act (H.R. 1734). We are up to 84 cosponsors in the House and 12 in the Senate. Special thanks to the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois. Fourteen House members from Illinois and Senator Tammy Duckworth have cosponsored this legislation.

You can contact your member of Congress by calling the Capitol Switchboard and asking for the office in question. The number is 202-224-3121. If you email your representative, please copy me at [JPare@nfb.org<mailto:JPare@nfb.org](mailto:JPare@nfb.org%3cmailto:JPare@nfb.org)>.

When you call or email, you might say something like the following:

"Hello, my name is [your name] and I am a constituent of [your representative]. I live in [city, state]. I am calling to urge [your representative] to cosponsor H.R. 1734, the Access Technology Affordability Act. This bill would increase the availability of Access Technology thereby increasing educational and employment opportunities for all blind Americans. The bill does this by creating a tax credit for the purchase of access technology. The National Federation of the Blind has analyzed the cost impact and the bill is either cost neutral or will save the government money. I urge [representative] to cosponsor the bill. Thanks."

## NABS Committee Updates

### Get involved!

* Legislative Advocacy Committee

When: third Sunday of the month | 8pm eastern

Chair: Kenia Flores ([kenia.flores@furman.edu](mailto:kenia.flores@furman.edu))

The NABS Legislative Advocacy Committee is working on content for our NABS Student Advocate Program. Each student advocate will complete modules about IEP’s, parental rights, self-advocacy, and higher education. We are also beginning to plan for our workshop during Washington Seminar. Washington Seminar will be taking place January 28-31, 2019, so please begin making your plans to attend. Additionally, our committee is working on the NABS Now Podcast to educate our members about policy and legislation. If you are interested in any of these initiatives, please contact Committee Chair Kenia Flores.

* Fundraising Committee

When: Second and fourth Sunday of the month | 8pm eastern

Chair: Kathryn Webster ([nabs.president@gmail.com](mailto:nabs.president@gmail.com))

You cannot say fundraising without saying fun! We are gearing up for Giving Tuesday, putting together a small business funding packet, exploring swag and merchandise for our cherished members, and ramping up for a Text-to-Give campaign! Come join us, even just once, to lend a hand or share an idea!

* Outreach Committee

When: first Monday of the month | 9pm eastern

Chair: Janae Burgmeier ([Janae.burgmeier@gmail.com](mailto:Janae.burgmeier@gmail.com))

Web Master: Dustin Cather ([cather.dustin@gmail.com](mailto:cather.dustin@gmail.com))

The outreach committee has been working to strengthen their existing projects and add in a few new ones as well. We have different themes each month, which we will be encompassing into each project. September's theme is unique employment and October's will be meet the blind month. The outreach committee prepares social media posts, blog entries, NABS notes content and we will also be releasing a podcast called NABS Now, as well as YouTube posts that will also relate to each month's themes. To give your suggestions or to get involved, please contact the outreach chair, Janae Burgmeier!

* Special Projects

When: Meetings as Needed

Chairs: Syed Rizvi, Tarik Williams, and Mausam Mehta

This unique committee is working on launching our nationwide mentor program with our national office, getting feedback from our members through our online survey, and working toward greater recruitment and retention. Reach out to help!

## September Blog Post

<http://nabslink.org/content/september-blog-post-working-audio-engineer-when-you-are-blind>

From the Editor - Angie Castro is a resident of Wisconsin; and an active member of the Wisconsin affiliate. Angie’s passion for music, sound, and audio editing proves true through her eagerness to get her foot in the door, regardless of what it takes. If you know Angie, you immediately think of her kind heart, loving personality, and loyal soul, but many don’t know about her hidden talent. Please join us in reading more about Angie’s unique skill set; and how she is making it happen through her successes.

I have been in the Audio Production Field for about a year now. But, first let me introduce myself. My name is Angie Castro and I am currently living in Madison, Wisconsin. I am an aspiring Audio Engineer who happens to be blind. I say aspiring because, I don’t have a whole lot of experience in the field yet, to really call myself an audio engineer. Well at least, those are my thoughts. I will be sharing some of my experiences I’ve had while getting my feet wet in the field.

I have been told that I have a great advantage to work in this field because my hearing must be great. While yes, I do have an advantage with working in this field because I use my hearing more than my vision, there are challenges that also come with it. Whether you are producing audio or mixing audio, you rely on your ears. But, for some things it can be a challenge because sometimes vision is needed, in the practical sense. Fortunately, I learned to adapt and adjust as needed. I have worked in the live sound aspect of audio engineering. While it is a great and ideal place for people to get their feet, wet and get started in this field, it can be hectic and stressful at times.

One of my professional experiences was when I worked as a stage hand at the theatre at a university in Madison. Prior to my start date, I spoke to my boss about my blindness, what I was able to do, and what I maybe was less likely to be successful doing. One adjustment I made was memorizing the faders and knobs on the board. I would also have a session set up a certain way so it was easiest for me to access the channels where the microphones were set up. I helped my coworkers with setting up and striking down afterwards. Some of my roles included: setting up microphones and cables, putting microphones away, and wrapping cables when we were done with shows. Powering off the board and the amps were really intriguing to me, letting me get more hands-on exposure to audio engineering. There were times where I would have to have someone help me when I had difficulty with something. My coworkers were always mindful of telling me if there was something on the ground such as a cable or chair or what have you.

Audio engineering is not just about producing or making music. It’s more than that. It’s making sure a song or a performance sounds great. It’s about ensuring the levels are not clipping or distorting and it all sounds clean. Another thing that you need to have is patience and communication skills to talk and work with an artist or performer. Ask them what they need and if they need help in any way. That is a big thing about this field. Whether you are working at a studio or a venue, you must be able to work with several different types of personalities. While I still have a lot to learn and more to experience, I can truly say, I love this field! It may have its challenges at times, but I don’t let blindness stop me from doing what I love.

## NABS Facebook Group

Join our Facebook group by visiting:

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/173482726798026>

The National Association of blind Students

A proud division of the National Federation of the Blind

Nfbstudents.org

(410) 417-8360