

THE NJ COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
INVITES YOU TO:
THE APRIL 2026
COMMUNITY CONNECTION CALL

#BeTheChange:
Focusing On Moving From Passive Awareness to Active Awareness.
~Take Personal Responsibility For Managing Stress~

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2026 | 10:30AM TO 12:00PM

Hosted by Krystle Allen, CBVI Community Outreach Specialist

In April, there are a variety of observances our NJ community can connect with.

Stress Awareness is recognized this month and across the state thousands are impacted by stress.

National Poetry Month is celebrated each April. In NJ we have a variety of open mic events, spoken word clinics, and the Dodge Poetry Festival. April is also Jazz Appreciation Month.

Did you know the first pageant started in Atlantic City, NJ? April 8th each year observes International Pageant Day and celebrates all individuals who are a part of the NJ "Crowned" community with and without disabilities.

Join us as we hear from our Keynote Presenter who will share information about free family friendly programming and the history of the poetry festival at NJPAC. Connect with resources providing reflections about blind individuals who contributed to the history of jazz appreciation observed this month. Unveil the royalty in yourselves as we hear from two pageant titleholders, one of which is Mrs. Northern New Jersey International.

Tell a friend to tell a friend!

Keynote Presenter:

- Ysabel Gonzalez, Producer at NJ Performing Arts Center

Resource Provider:

- Mr. Perry "The Maestro" Thompson, Founder/President - The Rhythm and Blues Preservation Society
- Ashley Inniss Independent Beauty Consultant/Ms. Independent 2025 of the Ms. Blind Diva Empowerment Pageant
- Dr. Ellen James-Occupational Therapist/Executive of Growing In Motion/Mrs. Northern NJ International 2026

The benefits of networking and sharing information are the primary focus of the Community Connection Calls. This month's *"In Our Own Voices"* panelists will share their stories. All are members of New Jersey's blind, deafblind, and visually impaired community.

***"In Our Own Voices"* Panelists:**

- Mary Irvine, NFB NJ Northern Chapter member
- Edward Cash, Dancing with the Blind Champion 2024
- Delric Pollins Jr. a.k.a. D-Roy, Co-founder at Greater Vision Foundation
- Anthony Lanzilotti, 2nd Vice President/Membership and Outreach Chairperson at NJCB, and Treasurer of NJ Statewide Center For Independent Living Council

Here are the simple directions for participating in the CBVI Community Connections Call:

Option 1: Join via Zoom

1. Either Click the Zoom meeting link here: [Join Zoom Meeting](#)
2. Or Open the Zoom App and Enter the Meeting ID and Passcode

Meeting ID: 161 116 2134

Passcode: 1910

Option 2: Join on the phone via One Tap Mobile (click the link from your mobile device)

- [+16468287666,,1611162134#,,,,*1910#](tel:+16468287666,,1611162134#,,,,*1910#) (New York)

Option 3: Dial-in via Phone

1. Dial the conference phone number: **1-646-828-7666**.
2. Enter the Meeting ID: **161 116 2134** when prompted
3. When asked for a participant ID, simply press the pound key (#).
4. Enter the Passcode: **1910**

That's it! You're all set to join the meeting.

Relay Captioning Link for individuals who are Deaf or Hearing Impaired:

(At the start time of the event, please login by clicking on the link below)

<https://www.captionedtext.com/client/embed.aspx?EventID=6146009>

If you have any questions, or would like to be a Community Connections Call panelist, please don't hesitate to email: Krystle.Allen@dhs.nj.gov or call: 973-648-4497