# NFB Logo

# Learning Lifting Leading

# 69th Annual State Convention

National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina

Marty R. McKenzie, President

Doubletree by Hilton

2100 Bush River Road

Columbia, SC 29210

803-731-0300

Thursday, August 14 – Sunday, August 17, 2025

## **Convention Notes**

### National Federation of the Blind Pledge

I pledge to participate actively in the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality, opportunity and security for the blind; to support the programs and policies of the Federation and to abide by its constitution.

### National Federation of the Blind One Minute Message

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.

### Integrity and Respect

As with all NFB of SC functions, our members are held to the highest standards of decorum outlined in the National Federation of the Blind Code of Conduct. To allow all attendees the chance to benefit from all aspects of the convention, we are committed to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone. We appreciate your assistance in cultivating an atmosphere in which participants from diverse backgrounds may learn, network, and share with each other in an environment of mutual respect. Thank you for doing your part to contribute to our community and the high expectations we strive to maintain.

## **Welcome**

Welcome to the DoubleTree by Hilton Columbia, SC. It is our pleasure to have you here with us for your 2025 convention. We are looking forward to a couple of successful days of learning and camaraderie. We hope you enjoy your time here with us and if there is anything we can do while you’re visiting, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Rick Lackland is the Director of Sales and Matt Burros is our General Manager. Enjoy!

## **Dog Relief Area**

For those with dog guides, there are two specific dog relief areas. A trash receptacle has been placed there for convenience and tidiness. The first area is straight out the front door of the hotel across the parking lot. The second area outside has multiple entry points. It can be accessed from the Congaree B meeting space door (to the left) or the Sleeping Room E + F doors (to the right). Ask the front desk if more information is needed.

## **Contact Us**

We have several convenient ways for you to connect with us. They are:

Website: [www.nfbofsc.org](http://www.nfbofsc.org)

Phone: 803-254-3777

Address:

Federation Center of the Blind

119 S. Kilbourne Rd.

Columbia, SC 29205

National Federation of the Blind of South Carolina President:

Marty R. McKenzie

[president@nfbofsc.org](mailto:president@nfbofsc.org)

843-939-8091

You can also find us on Facebook and X.

## **National Representative**

## **Shelia Wright, M.Ed.**

Shelia Wright grew up in a small town in South Carolina. Though her vision was never good, she did not know that she was blind until she was sixteen, when she finally saw an eye doctor that talked openly about her blindness and the importance of her learning Braille while she was young. He urged Shelia and her parents to check to see if South Carolina had a school for the blind. This led her family to contact the Commission for the blind, but the agency did little to provide the services she needed. They claimed she had too much vision to need training in Braille and Cane travel.

Shelia attended the University of South Carolina and received a B.A. in Psychology and an M.Ed. in Vocational Rehabilitation. She worked in the field of Rehabilitation for the Blind for over thirty years.

Shelia came to the Federation as a struggling blind person, having been told that she would never make it through a semester in college. When the National Federation of the Blind, through its then-President Donald Capps, weighed in on her behalf, rehabilitation services in South Carolina looked at Shelia in a whole new light. The Federation believed in her so much that frequently it asked her to do things she thought she could not do, but with every accomplishment, she became the woman she is today.

Shelia currently serves as the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri. She was elected to the National Board of Directors in July 2022.

## **Schedule**

### Thursday, August 14, 2025

7:00 – 9:00 PM Rookie Round-Up Capital Room

7:30 – 9:30 PM Blind Merchants Pre-Convention Prep Session –

Boardroom

### Friday, August 15, 2025

6:30 – 8:45 AM Hot breakfast buffet in restaurant – Self-serve – Boy Scouts and volunteers available to assist

10:00 – 6:00 PM Registration – Capital Room Exterior

10:00 – 6:00 PM Exhibit Hall –Congaree Prefunction

10:00 – 5:00 PM Blind Merchants Snack Bags – Capital Room

11:00 – 12:50 PM SC Association of Black Leaders Division – Newberry

12:00 – 5:00 PM Youth Track Breakout One – Richland

Fun-filled session of interactive games designed to energize, connect, bond and spark friendly competition.

12:00 – 5:00 PM Youth Track Breakout Two – Fairfield

Peaceful space to relax, get creative, engage in smaller team games.

1:00 – 1:50 PM Computer Science and Technology Division –

Newberry

2:00 – 2:50 PM SC Association of Blind Students Division - Calhoun B

2:00 – 2:50 PM At-Large Chapter – Newberry

2:00 – 2:50 PM SCSDB Blind Alumni Calhoun A

3:00 – 3:50 PM Experiences from the Louisiana Center of the Blind

James Byers, LCB Graduate -- Saluda

4:00 – 4:50 PM Blind Merchants Division – Calhoun B

4:00 – 4:50 PM Senior Division Meeting – Saluda

4:30 – 5:30 PM Resolutions Committee – Calhoun A

5:30 – 6:30 PM NFB of SC State Board Meeting – Saluda

7:00 – 10:00 PM Reception – Congaree B

### Saturday, August 16, 2025

6:30 – 8:45 AM Hot breakfast buffet in restaurant – Self-serve – Boy Scouts and volunteers available to assist

8:00 – 8:50 AM Registration – Congaree B Prefunction

8:00 – 8:50 AM Exhibit Hall – Congaree Prefunction

## **Morning General Session – Congaree B**

9:00 – 9:30 AM Welcome Marty R. McKenzie

Invocation Hubert Holmes

Presentation of Colors Eagle scouts

National Anthem Landon Bryson and

Kaitland Davis

Host Chapter Remarks Andrew Adams

9:30 – 10:00 AM National Report,

Shelia Wright, National Representative

10:00 – 10:20 AM SC School for the Deaf and the Blind,

Valerie Feiling, Director of Education Services

10:20 – 10:35 AM Summer Camps

Dr. Tina Herzberg, Professor, USC Upstate

10:35 – 10:40 AM Fit Break

10:40 – 11:00 AM SC Talking Book Services,

Jennifer Falvey, Director

11:00 – 11:20 AM SC Commission for the Blind, Luis Mendoza,

Director of Administration

11:20 – 11:30 AM Parents of Blind Children Update

Sonia Timmons, SCPOBC Leader

11:30 – 12:00 PM Presidential Report

Marty R. McKenzie, President

12:00 PM Adjourn

## **Lunch Break**

12:00 – 2:00 PM Box Lunches – Congaree B

12:15 – 1:45 PM Registration – Congaree B Prefunction

12:15 – 1:45 PM Exhibit Hall – Congaree Prefunction

## **Afternoon General Session – Congaree B**

2:00 – 2:05 PM Welcome

2:05 – 3:05 PM Generational Stories: Finding Common Ground

Sonia Timmons and Dr. Tina Herzberg, Moderators

3:05 – 3:35 PM Wearables: What They Can Do for You

Steve Cook and David Bundy, Federationists

3:35 – 3:40 PM Fit Break

3:40 – 4:00 PM Legislative and Advocacy Committee Updates

Janice Bright and David Houck, Co-chairs

4:00 – 4:20 PM Federation Center Report, David Houck, Executive

Director and Ed Bible, FCB Board Chair

4:20 – 4:40 PM ADA Title II: Web Accessibility Final Rule

Sarah Massengale, ADA Coordinator

4:40 – 5:00 PM Rocky Bottom Report, Thom Spittle, RBRCCB Chair

5:00 PM Adjourn

## **Evening Break**

5:15 – 5:45 PM Nominating Committee – Frank Coppel, Chair – Newberry

6:00 – 6:45 PM Registration – Congaree B Prefunction

## **Convention Banquet – Congaree B**

7:00–10:00 PM

Welcome Marty R. McKenzie, President

Invocation Frank Loza, District 3 Representative,

NFB of SC

Keynote Address Shelia Wright, National Representative

Special Awards

Awarding of Scholarships Shannon Cook, Scholarship Chair

Midlands Gives Award Valerie Warrington, Treasurer

Educator of the Year Award Tracy Spittle, Chair

Donald C. Capps Award David Houck, Chair

Betty R. Capps Award Julie Bible, Chair

Presidential Citation Marty R. McKenzie, President

### Banquet Fundraiser

Our annual banquet fundraiser is an opportunity for individuals, chapters, divisions, and business partners to contribute to the NFB of SC to further programs, services, and policies of the affiliate. Donations can be made through Pay Pal on [www.nfbofsc.org](http://www.nfbofsc.org), by cash or writing a check made payable to the NFB of SC and mailed to Federation Center of the Blind. See page 3 for the address.

Adjourn

### Sunday, August 17, 2025

6:30–8:45 AM Hot breakfast buffet in restaurant – Self-serve – Boy Scouts and volunteers available to assist

8:30–8:45 AM Registration – (CONGAREE B PREFUNCTION)

## **Morning General Session – Congaree B**

9:00 – 9:30 AM Remembering Those Who Went Before Us

A Memorial, Melinda Jones

9:30 – 10:00 AM NFB of SC, Successful Transitions and Rocky

Bottom Treasurers Reports -- Valerie Warrington

and Roger Webb, Treasurers

10:00 – 10:15 AM Resolutions, The Honorable Parnell Diggs,

10:15 – 10:30 AM Update on SUN, PAC, Dream Maker’s Circle, Frank Coppel, chair, Doing Our Fair Share Committee

10:30 – 10:35 AM Fit Break

10:35 – 11:50 AM Elections

11:50 – 12:00 PM Chapter, Committee, and Division Drawings

12:00 PM Adjourn

## **Convention Live Stream Information**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8032543777?pwd=QTVQd2RzN3l6QnNmZ0Fm Snp6NG8vQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8032543777?pwd=QTVQd2RzN3l6QnNmZ0Fm%20Snp6NG8vQT09)

Phone Number: 929-205-6099

Meeting ID: 803 254 3777

Passcode: 124578

One tap mobile

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