

Charting Our Course: Navigating together Towards Success

**65TH ANNUAL CONVENTION**

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF VIRGINIA**

Tracy Soforenko, President

**November 2 — 5, 2023**

**Doubletree by Hilton Williamsburg**

50 Kingsmill Road,

Williamsburg, Virginia 23185

(757) 220 - 2500

**HOSTED BY THE Greater Williamsburg CHAPTER**

Bob Meter, President

**Our National Representative:**

**Donald Porterfield, President, National Federation of the Blind of Arizona, and Member of the Board,**

**National Federation of the Blind**

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# The Federation 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 policies and programs of the Federation; and to abide by its Constitution.”

# Convention Registration

Convention registration is available online. We ask everyone, whether a Virginia resident or not, to register using the correct virtual or in-person registration form. If you register before October 12, you will be entered into a drawing for $100. Current members of a Virginia chapter or division will be eligible to vote for resolutions and in our elections.

Advanced in-person registration on or before October 12 is subsidized.

Virtual participation is free of charge.

Details regarding in-person and virtual registration can be found at:

https://www.nfbv.org/convention

# Inclusivity, Diversity, and Social Conduct

We are committed to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone. Thank you for cultivating an atmosphere in which participants from diverse backgrounds can learn, network, and share with each other in an environment of mutual respect. We are committed to diversity, equity, and the free expression of ideas.

These principles have been outlined in our code of conduct found at:

<https://nfb.org/code-conduct>

We recognize a shared responsibility to create and uphold that atmosphere for the benefit of all. Prohibited behaviors include harassment, unwelcome sexual attention, and inappropriate use of the NFB of Virginia virtual convention platform. Prohibited behavior or misuse of the platform will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the convention and/or other consequences. For assistance or to report an incident at the convention, please call 703-672-1339, or email [help@nfbv.org](mailto:help@nfbv.org) for immediate attention. All reports will be fully investigated according to the steps in our code of conduct. Thank you for doing your part to contribute to our community and the high expectations we strive to maintain.

To file a confidential Code of Conduct violation, please do so at: https://tinyurl.com/43f5jrds

## VirtualMeeting Access

The 2023 National Federation of the Blind of Virginia convention is an in-person event with a limited virtual experience. We will be streaming the following convention sessions:

* Friday (11/3 - 9 AM to 12 PM) General Session
* Friday (11/3 - 5 PM to 6 PM) DBVI Public Meeting
* Saturday (11/4 - 9 AM to 12 PM) General Session
* Saturday (11/4 - 7 PM to 10 PM) Banquet
* Sunday (11/5 – 9:00 AM to 12 PM) General Session

In the next draft of the agenda, we will provide the details on accessing the convention stream.

# Convention Registration & Information

Convention registration and information will be held in the Promenade as you enter the hotel's conference center. The cost of on-site registration is $30. Pre-registration packet pick up and on-site registration will be open the following times:

* Thursday, November 2 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
* Friday, November 3 from 8:00 AM to 8:50 AM from   
  12:00 PM to 1:00 PM and then again from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
* Saturday, November 4 from 8:00 AM to 8:50 AM and 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

Door prizes and auction items can be brought to the registration desk beginning on Thursday evening.

## Meal Functions

Tickets for all meal functions are available via the online registration form and can be picked up at the registration desk as part of your registration packet. Banquet and box lunch tickets must be purchased by 8:50 AM on Saturday, November 4.

The $30 Late On-site registration does not include meal functions.

For more information about registration or meal functions, please contact the NFBV Help Line at: (703) 493-1107.

## Door Prizes

Door prizes will be drawn periodically throughout convention sessions on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday and at the banquet. To be eligible for door prizes, you must be registered for the convention and present in the room. Additionally, participants in the convention virtual experience will be eligible for door prizes. When participants in the convention virtual experience hear their name, they should email doorprizes@nfbv.org within 10 minutes to claim their prize.

## Action Auction

Throughout the convention we will be holding an Action Auction to raise money for the affiliate. The auction will be great fun with many valuable items up for bid. You will have a chance to preview auction items on Friday afternoon in the exhibit area. For more information, go to

https://nfbv.org/auction.

## Information Table

If you need assistance from the NFB of Virginia (such as helping a blind child get a good education, getting access to blindness skills training, learning to use NFB-NEWSLINE®, or resolving an employment discrimination problem), please go to the information table located at the rear of the Taylor ballroom. After the convention, a member of the NFB of Virginia will contact you. In addition, if you would like to sign up to receive any of our publications or would like to get regular updates about our programs and legislative efforts, please also visit the information table. The table will be open after the opening ceremonies on Friday, during General Session on Saturday, and all morning Sunday.

## DOG Relief Area

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The DoubleTree has grassy areas outside its main entrance. Please ask the front desk for assistance if you require help finding the trash cans.

## Assistive Listening Devices

A limited number of assistive listening devices are available during all convention sessions and during the banquet. For an assistive listening device, please go to the information table located at the rear of the Taylor ballroom during all convention general sessions. A credit card or identification card is required as a deposit for the equipment.

## Daylight Saving Time

Don’t forget to set your watches back one hour for the change that occurs early Sunday morning. Smart phones, of course, should handle this change automatically.

## Hospitality Room

The Hospitality Room is Room 18 on the 2nd floor, accessible via stairs or elevator in the Conference Center. Please review the schedule for pre-planned activities by invitation in this space.

# Thursday, November 2, 2023

5:00 PM to 7:00 PM Registration – Promenade.

6:00 PM to 8:30 PM Welcome Meet and Mix - Room 18, 2nd Floor.

Come meet and mix on Thursday night with members from across the Commonwealth in a relaxed environment. Grab the dinner, meet some friends, and unwind before the convention fully swings into gear. The cost for this event is $16. Register on or before October 27th. Remember prices may go up after the early registration deadline of October 12.

6:00 PM to 9:00 PM Silver Bells Reunion and Open House Dinner - Harrison Room: Sandy Halverson, Silver Bells Program Coordinator.

Please join us to learn about our transformative senior empowerment programs. Reconnect with alumni and staff. If you have never attended Silver Bells, find out more about the program from past participants. If you are one of our 120+ alumni, find out about upcoming training opportunities. Discover how our training will help you live the life you want! Please make certain to include the dinner in your registration because this meal has a separate charge.

8:00 PM to 10:00 PM Immersive History: A Celebration of Our Rich History and Culture - Central Lounge, Renee Valdez, Chair, NFB of Virginia Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee.

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee welcomes you to an evening program of interactive dance, music, and storytelling from the colonial era to the present. Learn dance and music from across the centuries and hear dynamic stories from guests and members alike. Dress comfortably because we will be moving, grooving, and laughing during this exciting program.

# FRIDAY, November 3, 2023

8:00 AM to 8:50 AM Registration – Promenade.

## General Session

Taylor and Adams Ballrooms

9:00 AM Opening Ceremonies.

* Call to Order - Tracy Soforenko, President, NFB of Virginia
* Invocation - Stewart Prost, President, Tidewater Chapter, Norfolk, Virginia
* Presentation of the Colors - NFB of Virginia Veterans Pledge of Allegiance - Gerald Meredith, President, Richmond Virginia Blinded Veterans Association, South Chesterfield, Virginia
* Federation Pledge – Collin Bruce, Member, Greater Williamsburg Chapter, Williamsburg, Virginia
* Star Spangled Banner – Deborah Jackson, Jackie Greenhow, Deborah Prost, Julie Orozco, and Dana Dishman
* Greetings from Williamsburg Vice Mayor Pat Dent.
* Greetings from Our Host Chapter – Bob Meter, President, Greater Williamsburg Chapter, Williamsburg, Virginia
* Convention Arrangements - Joe Orozco, Chairperson, Convention Organization and Arrangements, Arlington, Virginia
* 9:25 AM National Report – Donald Porterfield, President, National Federation of the Blind of Arizona and Member of the Board of Directors, National Federation of the Blind, Tucson, Arizona.

9:55 AM Seniors Setting Our Course - Silver Bells and DBVI - A partnership empowering blind and low vision seniors.

* Sandy Halverson, Moderator, Arlington, Virginia
* Melody Roane, Director, Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI), Richmond, Virginia
* Melinda Pugh, Herndon, Virginia
* Hazel Jones, Richmond, Virginia
* Judy Taylor, Bumpass, Virginia

10:20 AM Action Auction.

10:30 AM Revolutionizing Personal Safety for the Blind: Nathan Green, Chief Operating Officer for Safety Positive Foundation and Advanced instructor for the SEED program, Lexington, Virginia.

10:40 AM Protecting the Rights of All Blind People: Ensuring Civil Rights for Blind Prisoners. Rebecca Herbig, Director of Litigation – Virginia Disability Law Center, Richmond Virginia.

10:55 AM Deep in the Heart of the NFB - Reflections from Virginia’s 2023 McDonald Fellows and Kenneth Jernigan Convention Scholarship Fund Winners.

* Moderator: Mary Durbin, Chairperson, McDonald Fellowship Committee, and NFB of Virginia Liaison, Kenneth Jernigan Convention Scholarship Fund, Virginia Beach, Virginia
* Pam Balensiefen, Ashburn, Virginia
* Nathan Green, Lexington, Virginia
* Bob Meter, Williamsburg, Virginia

11:15 AM Charting A New Course: Running for the Virginia House of Delegates. - Michael Kasey, Past President, National Federation of the Blind of Virginia, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

11:25 AM Action Auction.

11:35 AM Finding Your Compass, Finding Your Place in the Blindness Movement – Julie Orozco, Recording Secretary, Potomac Chapter, Arlington, Virginia.

11:45 AM Reports and Announcements.

12:00 PM General Session Adjourns.

12:00 PM to 1:00 PM Registration – Promenade.

12:00 PM to 5:00 PM Exhibits and Resource Fair – Harrison Ballroom.

Why read about interesting gadgets when you could experience them? Why take our word for excellent services across Virginia when you could talk directly to the people who offer them? This and a lot more at our exhibit hall/Low Vision Resource Fair.

12:00 PM to 12:30 PM Box Lunch Pickup - Promenade (Please bring your meal ticket).

12:30 PM to 2:00 PM Rock your Growth: Becoming a Dynamic Leader- Taylor and Adams Ballrooms.

This is an exciting seminar for chapter board members and rising leaders in our affiliate. Do you serve on your chapter’s board or are you seeking to grow your leadership in our movement. Grab your lunch and join us for this interactive session led by Evelyn Valdez, President, Greater Alexandria Chapter and Joanne Wilson, Federation Leader to learn how you can grow your leadership skills and learn from fellow leaders from across the Commonwealth.

1:00 PM Full Colonial Williamsburg Tour - Bus departs from the main entrance.

1:30 PM Governor's Palace Tour - Bus departs from the main entrance.

## Friday Afternoon Concurrent Seminars

2:00 PM to 4:00 PM Navigating to your Destination - O&M and tech can help you get there - Room D, Domonique Lawless, and Jimmy Morris.

How can travel skills and technology come together to help you chart your course and reach your destination. Armed with solid skills and the latest in technology tools, you can safely achieve greater independence and chart your own adventures. Come check out our interactive panel discussion and rotate through our workstations to experience tools that can help you effectively and safely get to your goals.

2:00 PM to 3:30 PM First Aid and Emergency Preparedness Training Empowering Safety & Protecting Your Family – Room A and B. Christine Grassman and Braden Flax, certified CPR/First Aid/AED instructors.

Do you know how to use a fire extinguisher, how to assist a person who is choking, what to do about a severe cut or burn? What about how to detect a stroke, shock, hypothermia or hyperthermia? Come to the NFBV state convention in Williamsburg, where Christine Grassman and Braden Flax, certified CPR/First Aid/AED instructors will cover such topics. This class is limited to the first twenty class registrants who write to Christine Grassman cfgrassman@icloud.com

4:00PM to 5:00 PM Resolutions Committee – Room A and B, Deepa Goraya, Chairperson.

We encourage the participation of all members in setting Federation policy, and the best way to influence policy is through resolutions. As a grassroots organization, we serve our movement through collective action, and such action begins with policy making and debate. Come help shape the policies of the NFB of Virginia.

4:00PM to 5:00 PM Blind Veterans Meet Up - Room 18, 2nd Floor, Gerald Meredith, Veterans Social President, Richmond Virginia Blinded Veterans Association (RVBVA) and member, Richmond Chapter, South Chesterfield, Virginia.

We invite all those serving and those who have served, family and friends, to meet members and learn about the BVA. Sherri Geiger (VIST Coordinator) of the VA's Visual Impairment Services Outpatient Rehabilitation (VISOR) Program will be present to share information about services. Come out and meet veterans and make some new friends.

## Friday Evening Concurrent Sessions and Hospitality

5:00 PM to 7:00 PM Registration – Promenade.

5:00 PM to 6:00 PM Public Meeting on DBVI Divisions, Programs and Services - Adams Ballroom, Pam Cato, Deputy Commissioner for Services, Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired.

We are grateful that DBVI will hold a public meeting where attendees can ask questions and speak with agency leadership. DBVI wants to hear from you, so come and share your thoughts and ideas on how DBVI can better meet the needs of blind and low vision Virginians. Let your voice be heard. Virtual participants can email questions and comments for the public meeting at [help@nfbv.org](mailto:help@nfbv.org)

5:30 PM to 6:30 PM At-Large Chapter Meeting - Room D, Jody Silverberg, At Large Chapter Vice President.

Are you interested in joining the NFB but do not live near a chapter. Join our At Large Chapter that meets virtually throughout the year but meets for a great community gathering at the state convention. Join our Federation team!

6:00 PM to 7:00 PM Student Dinner Party, Room 18, 2nd Floor, Alli Kelso, President, Virginia Association of Blind Students.

Join the Virginia student division leaders and members for fellowship with old and new friends to kick off the convention weekend. Open and free to all students over the age of fourteen.

6:30 PM to 8:00 PM Youth Track: Cookie Decorating and Game Social for Families - Room A and B.

Calling all blind kids ages 0-13, siblings and parents! Join us for cookie decorating and drinks and a chance to meet other families from across the state. Bring any Braille or large print books your child no longer needs and pick up some free books from our free Braille book exchange table. (Email bsellers31@gmail.com with questions and any food allergies we need to be aware of).

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM Project RISE Opening Exercises - Room 18.

Project RISE participants, members of the student division, and scholarship finalists are invited to stay for an evening of interactive learning and social skills you can put to work right away in your personal and recreational lives.

7:00 PM to 10:00 PM Williamsburg Convention Hospitality – Harrison and Taylor Ballrooms, hosted by the Greater Williamsburg Chapter.

The Greater Williamsburg Chapter invites you to join us for an evening of music, food and conversation Friday, November 3. Come listen to local band “Manhattan Affair” led by Tony Ingram. Tony encourages participation and dancing. He performs everything from Sinatra to contemporary tunes. Enjoy a variety of appetizers chosen to fit each members specific food requirements. You must register for this program to attend. We are looking forward to hosting this evening, which will give members an opportunity to take a break and reunite with old friends and make new ones.

9:30 PM to 10:30 PM Scholarship Mixer – Room 18, 2nd Floor, Jimmy Morris, Chairperson.

This event is limited to the NFB of Virginia 2023 Jimmy Nelson Scholarship Finalists and the members of the Scholarship Committee.

# Saturday, November 4, 2023

8:00 AM to 8:50 AM Registration - Promenade.

## General Session

Taylor and Adams Ballrooms

9:00 AM Call to Order - Tracy Soforenko, President, NFB of Virginia.

Invocation – Ameenah Ghoston, Project RISE Mentor and Dallas Theological Seminary Student, Springfield, Virginia.

9:05 AM Why You Should Choose Structured Discovery Training. Amy Porterfield, President SAAVI Services for the Blind, Tucson, Arizona.

9:25 AM Rehabilitation Services for the Blind in Virginia - Rick Mitchell, Commissioner, Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired.

9:40 AM NFB BELL Academy® : Growing Possibilities for Students throughout Virginia, Louise Walch, NFB BELL Academy Coordinator, Virginia Beach Virginia.

Luise Schmidt-Eisenlohr, NFB BELL Academy Participant, Arlington, Virginia

* Tim Schmidt-Eisenlohr, Parent, Arlington Virginia

9:55 AM Action Auction.

10:00 AM Charting Our Course: Navigating Together, Tracy Soforenko, President, NFB of Virginia.

10:30 AM Empowering Students Through Self Advocacy – Lauren Altman, President, National Association of Blind Students, Livingston, New Jersey.

10:40 AM Action Auction.

10:45 AM Students Depart for Youth Track programming. (Children six years old and younger should be accompanied by an adult).

10:50 AM Introducing the 2023 NFB of Virginia James F. Nelson, Jr. Scholarship Finalists. Jimmy Morris, Chair, Glen Allen, Virginia.

11:00 AM Building Confidence Through Parenting Partnerships. Jessica Reed, Virginia Blind Parents Coordinator, National Federation of the Blind of Virginia, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

11:20 AM Action Auction.

11:30 AM Why I Am a Federationist. Mausam Mehta, Immediate Past Vice President National Association of Blind Students, New York, New York.

11:50 AM Reports and Announcements.

12:00 PM General Session Adjourns.

11:00 AM to 12:00 PM Youth Track - Central Lounge and Room D.

Students will connect with national student leaders in a small group session to learn about our positive philosophy and share what they wish their parents really knew.

12:00 PM to 12:30 PM Box Lunch Pickup – Promenade (Please bring your meal ticket).

12:00 PM to 1:00 PM Registration – Promenade.

12:00 PM to 1:00 PM Parent and Youth Track Lunch – Room D. Beth Sellers, President.

Network with other parents, learn about resources for your children, ask questions about our programs for students from toddlers to graduate school. Grab the boxed lunch or bring your own, but please join us for our parents’ lunch. Our lunch hour is an informal roundtable conversation for parents of children of all ages with low vision, blindness, deaf-blindness, and multiple disabilities. Find out about fun year-round and summer mentoring, skill building, and social programs we offer across Virginia and across the country. We will also hold a 10–15-minute business meeting.

12:30 PM to 1:45 PM Seniors Division Luncheon and Business Meeting - Harrison Room. Patty Droppers, President.

12:30 PM to 1:45 PM Virginia Association of Blind Merchants Division Luncheon and Business Meeting- Room 2 and 3, Yasiah Hurtado, President, Alexandria, Virginia.

Empower your future and discover your destiny by building your entrepreneurial business. Learn from others in our NFBV Merchants division so you can explore a profitable and engaging future.

12:30 PM to 1:45 PM Virginia Association of Blind Students Business Meeting – Room A and B. All students, including Project RISE participants are invited.

12:30 to 1:45 PM Community Lunch – Room 18

Make friends and build your network in this informal community Lunch in our hospitality space.

## Saturday Afternoon Breakout Sessions

1:15 PM to 3:45 PM Parent Track – Room D.

Parents, please join us for a fun and interactive session with multiple guest speakers! We will have opportunities to discuss inclusive education in public schools, going to college with blindness, low vision and/ or multiple disabilities, financial planning for the future, and orientation and mobility in the home and community.

1:15 PM to 4:15 PM Youth Track – Central Lounge

Bring your sighted siblings and join us at interactive stations: 1) orientation and mobility travel tips and tricks for all; 2) Braille literacy fun; and 3) tactile art. (Children six years old and younger should be accompanied by an adult).

2:00 PM to 4:15 PM Senior Track - Staying in the Game - Harrison Room, Patty Droppers, President, Seniors Division.

Join fellow seniors for this exploration of low vision and non-visual techniques including individual instruction and demonstration of nonvisual methods to help you succeed in your kitchen, manage your health, access information, and use accessible cell phones. Learn Approaches to care for grandchildren and address safety concerns from within our own families. Build your community of peers and positive role models across Virginia.

2:00 PM – 4:15 PM Charting Your Path to Job Success: Navigating the Workday with Confidence – Room A and B. Mausam Mehta, Coordinator.

Are you ready to embrace your full potential in your career journey? Ever wondered how to advocate for yourself confidently in various workplace scenarios, both in and out of the office? Join us for an interactive seminar designed to empower blind working age adults. In this unique session, we will dive into real-life work scenarios, offering practical role-playing exercises that empower you to advocate for yourself effectively, whether you are in a corporate office, healthcare, education, or any other industry. Gain confidence, build essential skills, and connect with peers who share your journey. Elevate your work and personal life by mastering the art of self-advocacy. Plus, get a few chuckles along the way.

2:00 Pm to 3:00 PM No Holds Barred: Your Real-World Introduction to Effective Debate - Room 18, 2nd Floor, Joe Orozco, Project RISE Coordinator.

In today's evolving job environment, learning how to debate nurtures essential skills in creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. If you learn how to negotiate the monthly bills you want, you will gain the confidence to advocate for the workplace accommodations you need. Open to students and adults, come learn how to cleverly defend your blindness philosophy in a world that tries to tell you it cannot be done.

#### Self Defense Classes:

2:00 PM to 3:00 PM Self-Defense with SEED - A Blind-Centric Approach - Room 2 and 3.

3:15 PM to 4:15 PM Self-Defense with SEED - A Blind-Centric Approach - Room 2 and 3.

Learn your options for defending yourself from unwanted touch during one of two identical presentations of the SEED program, a self-defense system designed BY the blind, FOR the blind. In this brief introduction, SEED Advanced Instructor Nathan Green, a Virginian and member of the at-large chapter, will teach some hands-on techniques that you can use right away to protect yourself. Learn how to be aware of your surroundings, how to de-escalate safety situations, and learn 2-3 hands on self-defense techniques in this interactive seminar. Both sessions are identical, but capacity is limited to 15 participants per session. To secure your participation, write to Nathan Green at ngreenseed@gmail.com.

3:15 PM – 4:15 PM A Blind Lawyer's Guide to the Legal Profession- Room 18, Lea Schiefele, Coordinator.

Meet successful blind and low vision attorneys and others in the legal field as we discover ways to help each other.

this meeting is a chance for lawyers to come together and share their knowledge and experiences with other lawyers, law students, and students interested in studying law. During the first part of the event, Lawyers and students will share knowledge and experiences with each other. The second part of the event will feature multiple discussion groups addressing topics such as LSAT and Bar prep, legal research, trial and appellate advocacy, navigating law school as a legally blind student, and more! Whether you are a lawyer, current law student, or thinking about going to law school, please join us for this interchange of ideas.

4:30 P M to 5:30 PM Blind Parents Meet Up – Room 2 and 3. Jessica Reed, James Shobert, and CJ Fish, Coordinators.

Being a parent is hard. Being a blind parent can appear impossible. Whether you are a current or prospective parent, join the blind parents group as we exchange techniques and continue to build community and connection which will empower us in our parenting journeys.

4:30 PM to 5:30 PM First Timers Reception – Room 18.

John Halverson and Tracy Soforenko, Coordinators

NFBV Membership Chair John Halverson and President Tracy Soforenko welcome first time Virginia convention attendees to an informal gathering. We want to help you get connected with your Federation Family. Due to space constraints, this Rookie Reception is best suited for first timers.

4:30 PM to 5:30 PM Sighted Partner Meet Up – Harrison Room.

Share and learn techniques and strategies to support your loved one while ensuring their independence and your own sanity.

4:30 PM to 5:30 PM Parents of Blind Children by the Poolside - Indoor Pool.

Grab the kids and join your new friends by the pool, or if the mood strikes you, in the pool, as the hotel has a nice indoor pool for your convenience. It is the perfect way to relax before the evening's festivities.

## 2023 Convention Banquet

Taylor and Adams Ballrooms

6:00 PM to 7:00 PM Pre-Banquet Reception (Cash Bar) – Promenade.

7:00 PM to 10:00 PM Banquet Program – Taylor and Adams Ballrooms, Tracy Soforenko, Master of Ceremonies and President, NFB of Virginia.

Invocation – Naim Abu el Hawa, Member, Potomac Chapter, Vienna, Virginia.

Banquet Address – Donald Porterfield, President, National Federation of the Blind of Arizona and Member of the Board of Directors, National Federation of the Blind.

2023 James F. Nelson Scholarship Awards Presentation - Jimmy Morris, Scholarship Committee Chairperson.

Action Auction - Jacki Brown, Chairperson and Auctioneer.

# Sunday, November 5, 2023

## General Session

Taylor and Adams Ballrooms

9:00 AM Call to Order - Tracy Soforenko, President, NFB of Virginia.

Invocation – Althea Pittman, President, Eastern Shore Chapter, Melva, Virginia.

9:05 AM Project RISE: Resilience, Independence, Self-Advocacy and Employment. Joe Orozco, Project RISE Program Coordinator, National Federation of the Blind of Virginia, Arlington, Virginia.

9:15 AM Helping Others Find Their Path: Teaching Structured Discovery Techniques in Africa – Domonique Lawless, President, Richmond Chapter, Mechanicsburg, Virginia.

9:25 AM Achieving Success/Overcoming Obstacles at the College of William & Mary: Lessons in Self Advocacy.

* Rachel McDonald, Ph.D., Pre-Employment Transition Services Facilitator, Center on Transition Innovations, Virginia Commonwealth university, Williamsburg, Virginia
* Lea Schiefele, Law Student, Huntly, Virginia
* Chris Infante, M.Ed., Elementary School Counselor, Richmond Public Schools, Henrico, Virginia

9:45 AM Action Auction.

Note: Project RISE participants should leave the General Session and meet in Room 18

9:55 AM Brag & Steal – Federation Chapters and Divisions Sharing Their Successes.

10:20AM Action Auction.

10:30 AM Interactive Town Hall Discussion with Donald Porterfield, President, National Federation of the Blind of Arizona and Tracy Soforenko, President.

Bring your questions to this open discussion about your questions about our work in the Federation. Virtual participants can email questions and comments for the town hall at president@nfbv.org.

10:50 AM Action Auction.

10:55 AM Business Session.

* Audit Committee Report - Sean McMahon, Chairperson, Alexandria, Virginia
* Treasurer’s Report - Mark Roane, Treasurer, Richmond, Virginia
* Resolutions - Deepa Goraya, Chairperson, District of Columbia
* Committee Reports
* 2024 Richmond and Washington Seminars - Deepa Goraya, District of Columbia, and Bonnie O’Day, Alexandria, Virginia, Legislative Directors
* Communications – Jacki Bruce, Williamsburg, Virginia
* Public Outreach – Uricka Harrison, Stewart Prost, and Corlis Jones, Co-chairs
* Membership, John Halverson
* Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – Renee Valdez
* Fundraising – Renee Valdez
* 2024 National Convention.
* 2024 NFB of Virginia Convention

11:50 AM to 12:00 PM Reports and Announcements.

12:00 PM General Session Adjourns.

Thank you to our Greater Williamsburg Chapter for hosting the 2023 NFB of Virginia State Convention. Your hospitality made us feel like family and it made the convention one of our best.

# Thank You to Our Sponsors and Exhibitors

Please thank this year’s Convention Sponsors and Exhibitors located in the Harrison Ballroom on

Friday, November 3 from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

## Vanguard - $2,000

## Trailblazers - $500

## Pioneers - $250 & $125

#### Dream Makers Circle

You can help build a future of opportunity for the blind by becoming a member of our Dream Makers Circle. It is easier than you think. You can visit your bank and convert an account to a POD (payable on death) bank account, which is payable after your passing to the National Federation of the Blind or one of our affiliates. Your legacy gift to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of Virginia can be made in the form of a will or living trust, an income-generating gift, or by naming us as the beneficiary of a retirement plan, IRA, pension, or a life insurance policy. You can designate a specific amount, a percentage, or list the NFB as one of several beneficiaries. For additional information, please contact Patti Chang at 410-659-9314, extension 2422, or at [pchang@nfb.org](mailto:pchang@nfb.org).

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#### Vehicle Donations

The National Federation of the Blind uses car donations to improve the education of blind children, distribute free white canes, help veterans, and so much more. We have partnered with Vehicles for Charity to process donated vehicles. Please call toll-free 855-659-9314, and a representative can make arrangements, or you can donate online by visiting [www.nfb.org/vehicledonations](http://www.nfb.org/vehicledonations).

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#### Preauthorized Contributions (PAC)

Can you help the National Federation of the Blind on a regular basis? Please consider joining our preauthorized contribution plan. Starting at $5 monthly, you can help us turn dreams into reality and raise expectations for blind people. Visit [nfb.org/pac](https://nfb.org/pac) to fill out the online form or email [pac@nfb.org](mailto:pac@nfb.org) for additional information.