**National Federation of the Blind of Ohio (NFBO)**

From the Ohio President’s Desk

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Richard Payne, Ohio Affiliate President

1019 Wilmington Ave, Kettering Ohio 45420

(937) 829-3368

Rchpay7@gmail.com

Dear Ohio Members and Friends,

Happy Mother’s Day to all mothers and those who take on the role!

As many blind people lead independent lives and that several laws has made it possible for persons with disabilities to thrive, be independent and successful. I have inserted below important information for you to reflect on and become versed about the fight for civil rights in this country.

Also, I want to provide you with dates and information that are important to remember. Such as;

1. NFB Career Fair

2. NFB In Review

3. ADA Title II Final Rule

4. Introduction to the organized movement

5. Ohio membership Meeting

6. And More

**Fighting for Civil Rights:**

people with disabilities have pushed for the recognition of disability as an aspect of identity that influences the experiences of an individual, not as the sole-defining characteristic of a person. We have had to battle against centuries of biased assumptions, harmful stereotypes, and irrational fears. The stigmatization of disability resulted in the social and economic marginalization of generations of Americans with disabilities, and like many other oppressed minorities, left people with disabilities in a severe state of impoverishment for centuries.

In the early days people with disabilities were considered meager, tragic, pitiful individuals unfit and unable to contribute to society, except to serve as ridiculed objects of entertainment in circuses and exhibitions. They were assumed to be abnormal and feeble-minded, and numerous persons were forced to undergo sterilization. People with disabilities were also forced to enter into institutions and asylums, where many spent their entire lives. Many faced segregations and this was widely accepted, this ultimately served to keep people with disabilities invisible and hidden from a fearful and biased society.

**President Franklin Delano Roosevelt:**

In the 1930’s the United States saw the introduction of many new advancements in technology as well as in government assistance, contributing to the self-reliance and self-sufficiency of people with disabilities. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the first president with a disability, was a great advocate for the rehabilitation of people with disabilities, but still operated under the notion that a disability was an abnormal, shameful condition, and should be medically cured or fixed. The federal government began to get increasing pressure to provide people with disabilities with rehabilitation and vocational training. World War II veterans made disability issues more visible to a country of thankful citizens who were concerned for the long-term welfare of young men who sacrificed their lives to secure the safety of the United States.

**Barriers of People with Disabilities:**

Even after the initial advancements made towards independence and self-reliance, people with disabilities still did not have access to public transportation, telephones, bathrooms, and stores. Office buildings and worksites with stairs offered no entry for people with disabilities who sought employment, and employer attitudes created even worse barriers. Otherwise, talented, and eligible people with disabilities were locked out of opportunities for meaningful work.

the civil rights movement began to take shape, and disability advocates saw the opportunity to join forces alongside other minority groups to demand equal treatment, equal access, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities. We have challenged the negative attitudes and stereotypes, rallying for political and institutional change, and lobbying for the self-determination of a minority community. This is just part of the reason for our local and national initiatives to address the physical and social barriers facing the blind community. Parents of blind children also started insisting that children who were blind be accepted into schools where their children could have the same opportunities to engage in society just like children who were not blind.

**the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:**

Many other groups now lobby in Congress and march on Washington for civil rights with a cause to move language for people with disabilities. In 1973, the Rehabilitation Act was passed, and for the first time in history, civil rights of people with disabilities were protected by law.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) provided equal opportunity for employment within the federal government and in federally funded programs, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of either physical or mental disability. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act also established the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, mandating equal access to public services (such as public housing and public transportation services) to people with disabilities, and the allocation of money for vocational training.

**Handicapped Children Act of 1975:**

In 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed to guarantee equal access to public education for children with disabilities. This act of legislation specified that every child had a right to education and mandated the full inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education classes, unless a satisfactory level of education could not be achieved due to the nature of the child’s disability. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act was renamed in 1990 to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which further elaborated on the inclusion of children with disabilities into regular classes, but also focused on the rights of parents to be involved in the educational decisions affecting their children. IDEA required that an Individual Education Plan be designed with parental approval to meet the educational needs of a child with a disability.

**the Americans with Disabilities Act:**

In the 1980’s, disability activists began to lobby for a consolidation of various pieces of legislation under one broad civil rights statute that would protect the rights of people with disabilities, much like the 1964 Civil Rights Act had achieved for Black Americans. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, or gender, but people with disabilities were not included under such protection.

After decades of campaigning and lobbying, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in 1990 and ensured the equal treatment and equal access of people with disabilities to employment opportunities and to public accommodations. The ADA intended to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, services rendered by state and local governments, places of public accommodation, transportation, and telecommunications services. Under the ADA, businesses were mandated to provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities (such as restructuring jobs or modifying work equipment), public services could no longer deny services to people with disabilities (such as public transportation systems), all public accommodations were expected to have modifications made to be accessible to people with disabilities, and all telecommunications services were mandated to offer adaptive services to people with disabilities. With this piece of legislation, the US government identified the full participation, inclusion and integration of people with disabilities in all levels of society.

While the signing of the ADA placed immediate legislative demands to ensure equal access and equal treatment of people with disabilities, deep-rooted assumptions and stereotypical biases were not instantly transformed with the stroke of a pen. People with disabilities still face prejudice and bias with the stereotypical portrayal of people with disabilities in the movies and in the media, physical barriers to schools, housing and to voting stations, and lack of affordable health care. The promise of the ADA is yet to be fully realized, but the disability rights movement continues to make great strides towards the empowerment and self-determination of Americans with disabilities.

I emphasize the enactment of civil rights for persons with disabilities with renewed commitment as a leader in the Federation, and to say that our job is far from being done. We must keep fighting because the blind community depends on us.

Many of you face strong resistance to equal treatment on the job and in other parts of your lives. While this is true the stronger and larger the movement gets by taking our philosophy and demanding that we continue to be part of the change will result in that change.

**From Membership Co-Chairs, Kathy Legg, and William Turner**

Greetings chapter and division presidents of the Ohio affiliate of The National Federation Of The Blind. As coordinators of the membership committee, William Turner and I Cathy LEGG would like for you to assist us in having a successful membership seminar with members who have been in the affiliate five years or less, we will have the seminar May 21, 2024 ,at 6:30-8:30 PM in the Ohio Zoom room.

We would like you to encourage all your members who are new to attend. It is important that we equip them with as much information as possible about their participation in your chapters, divisions, and the affiliate. You will receive a reminder e-mail and an agenda inviting your members to the seminar. Guest speakers will be Richard Payne President, Ohio Affiliate, Suzanne Turner President, Cleveland Chapter and membership coordinator for the Ohio Affiliate and Trisha Kulkarni NABS past President, Scholarship winner2023 If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me. Sincerely the membership committee

Welcome to the National Federation of the Blind National Convention Virtual Experience, a dedicated online space for exclusive convention activities. We are excited to offer opportunities for engagement and connection to participants who are unable to attend the convention in-person.

Registration

The Virtual Experience registration fee is 10 dollars. Registration includes access to the convention mobile app and opportunity to win door prizes.

[Register](https://nfb.org/civicrm/event/register?reset=1&id=595)

**Critical Actions:**

May Presidential Release:

The [May Presidential Release chapter version](https://nfb.org/resources/publications-and-media/presidential-releases) is available for chapter meetings. The next live presidential release is scheduled for Thursday, May 30, 2024, at 8:00 p.m., eastern. Zoom TBD.

Convention:

**Convention Resolutions:**

The national convention is just two months away. Our Resolutions Committee, chaired by Donald Porterfield, is currently accepting proposed resolutions for the convention to consider. Proposed resolutions should be emailed to the committee at resolutions@nfb.org. Don’t forget, the deadline to submit a resolution is Tuesday, June 4, at midnight, eastern. Donald recently published a [blog post on the topic of writing resolutions](https://nfb.org/blog/resolutions-101-way-drive-external-change), so be sure to check it out as you prepare to submit yours.

**National Federation of the Blind National Convention Career Fair:**

Join us for the National Federation of the Blind National Convention career fair. The career fair is an event for blind people seeking jobs to connect with employers and is an opportunity for employers to seek more talent for their teams. Registration is required by Friday, May 31, 2024.

[National Convention Job-Seeker Registration](https://nfb.org/civicrm/mailing/url?u=33724&qid=9768544)

[National Convention Employer Registration](https://nfb.org/civicrm/event/register?reset=1&id=597)

To prepare job seekers, the Employment Committee will be hosting “Elevating Your Career Fair Experience,” an online seminar designed to provide tips and techniques for creating the most positive experience while attending the fair. Members will automatically be registered for the online seminar once they have registered for the career fair. For more information on the career fair or webinar, please contact Lia Stone, employer liaison, at evangeliastone@gmail.com or Jennifer Wenzel, jobseeker liaison, at jenwen319@gmail.com.

The career fair will take place on Wednesday, July 3, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., eastern.

**News:**

**Dream Big! Give $25 Drive Launches May 16:**

We announced the launch of our Dream Big! Give $25 Drive on the May Presidential Release. This year we have some new elements to encourage magnification of our messaging and peer-to-peer fundraising. When you give $25 or more between May 16 and July 6, you're entered into the Dream Big: Give $25 Drive Drawing. Each $25 increment is a chance to win! Why "Dream Big"? Because blindness doesn't hold you back. You could win prizes like roundtrip transportation for two to the 2025 NFB National Convention, hotel accommodations, registration, banquet tickets, or $2,000 cash! Thanks to our partners at APH and HumanWare, you could also win a Monarch—a dynamic tactile device! New this year, friends and family can make donations in your honor, and you'll get extra entries. The drive supports funds like the Kenneth Jernigan Fund and the White Cane Fund, and you can choose one when you donate. To enter, visit [nfb.org/Give25Donate](http://nfb.org/Give25Donate); call 410-659-9314, extension 2430; or send a check to National Federation of the Blind and mention #Give25 and the fund in the memo. The winner will be announced July 8, 2024. Thank you for your generosity.

**ADA Title II Website Final Rule:**

On April 24, 2024, the [ADA Title II Website Accessibility Final Rule](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/24/2024-07758/nondiscrimination-on-the-basis-of-disability-accessibility-of-web-information-and-services-of-state) was published in the Federal Register. The National Federation of the Blind has been advocating for the release of this final rule since the advance notice of proposed rulemaking was announced in 2010, nearly fourteen years ago. An advance copy of the rule was distributed in early April, and we released an [official statement on the ADA Title II Website Accessibility Rule](https://nfb.org/about-us/press-room/national-federation-blind-applauds-us-department-justice-web-and-mobile-content) at that time.

You can read our official statement, as well as many other Federation positions on key federal policies, on the [Policy Statements page](https://nfb.org/programs-services/advocacy/policy-statements) of our website.

**Museum of the Blind People’s Movement—Funding:**

Recently, the Museum of the Blind People’s Movement was awarded two government grants. The first was from the federal government, in the form of Congressionally Directed Spending, in the amount of $301,000. The second was from the state of Maryland, in the form of a legislative bond initiative, in the amount of $250,000. We thank both the federal and state governments for their generous contributions to preserving the history of the organized blind in the United States.

**Voting Accessibility:**

We are in the midst of primary voting season and have a presidential election approaching in November. If you are a registered voter, you have the legal right to cast your private and independent ballot. As we make our way through this election year, it is important to ensure that your vote is both private and independent. The Help America Vote Act requires all polling stations during federal elections to have one accessible ballot-marking device available. It is the polling place’s responsibility that these devices are set up and ready for use by the start of election day as well as having trained poll workers to operate the machines. If your state permits remote voting options, this process must also be accessible, thereby providing privacy and independence. Instances that do not provide accessibility, whether you voted in person or remotely, can be reported to the Department of Justice. We at the NFB are also interested to hear why your voting experience did not go as planned so feel free to contact Jeff Kaloc at 410-659-9314, extension 2206, or jkaloc@nfb.org. Here is the information to file a complaint with the Department of Justice:

* By complaint form at <http://www.justice.gov/crt/complaint/votintake/index.php>
* By email at voting.section@usdoj.gov
* By telephone at 800-253-3931 (toll free)
* By telephone at 202-307-2767
* By fax at 202-307-3961

**Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization:**

The Senate will be considering the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization this week. This bill contains several access provisions that we have specifically been advocating for. Please watch your inboxes for a legislative alert coming soon.

**Blind Businesswoman Vindicated and Awarded over $30,000 by Jury in Federal Equal Access Case:**

We supported recent ADA litigation. A jury in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California rendered a verdict in favor of Lisamaria Martinez, a blind entrepreneur, in her equal access lawsuit against the County of Alameda. The jury found that the county Clerk-Recorder’s Office deliberately violated her rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and California law. [Read and share the full press release.](https://nfb.org/about-us/press-room/blind-businesswoman-vindicated-and-awarded-over-30000-jury-federal-equal-access)

**May Boutique—Document Creation:**

There are different options for accessible word processors. Join our document-creation-software boutique on May 28 from 2:00-3:30 p.m. to learn about the features and accessibility of some popular options. [Register today.](https://nfb.org/form/accessibility-boutique-reg)

**Reminders:**

**NFB Year in Review Available:**

Have you ever wanted something to reference our past year, or just something you can link to or print and take to meetings? Our Year in Review for 2023 is out and will soon be available in the NFB Portal, in the Finance and Organizational Documents modules. Think of the Year in Review as a short-form annual report for quick reference or sharing. Please take a look and employ this helpful resource.

Dates to Keep in Mind: (all times eastern)

* July 3-8, 2024: National Convention; Orlando, Florida

Introduction to the Organized Blind Movement

* Wednesday, May 8, 8:00 p.m.
* Wednesday, August 7, 8:00 p.m.
* Wednesday, November 6, 8:00 p.m