

# National Federation of the Blind of Ohio

## **78th Annual State Convention**

## **November 14, 15, 16, and 17, 2024**

## DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Cleveland-Westlake

## 1100 Crocker Road, Cleveland Westlake, Ohio 44145

## (800) 445-8667

## Richard Payne, Affiliate President

## Suzanne Turner, Convention Arrangements Coordinator

## Shawn Callaway, National Representative

## Hosted by the Cuyahoga and Cleveland Chapters

## 

Welcome to the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio’s 78th Annual State Convention. Our theme “Unleashing Potential: Empowering Through Leadership,” reflects the knowledge that our members are the power behind the nation’s oldest and largest blind people’s movement.

As a founding affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind, we have a strong legacy of working together as a community in order to protect and advocate for our civil rights as blind people from its very beginning.

Through our vast network of blind members and friends, we coordinate programs, services, and resources to defend the rights of blind people, provide information and support to blind children and adults, and build a community that creates unlimited opportunities.

We believe in the ability of blind people to organize and advocate on our own behalf and reflect this belief from our democratically elected leaders to our diverse nationwide membership.

We respect and are inclusive of blind people of all backgrounds and abilities. It is our uniqueness as individuals and our collective dedication to our mission as blind people that is at the core of our strength as an organization.

Working together, we are an unstoppable force in our pursuit of civil rights for the blind in Ohio and beyond.

# The Belief Message

The National Federation of the Blind advances the lives of its members and all blind people in the United States. We know 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. Our collective power, determination, and diversity achieve the aspirations of all blind people.

# NFB 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.

# Code of Conduct

The National Federation of the Blind of Ohio State Convention is a family friendly event. We are committed to maintaining a safe and welcoming environment dedicated to positive experiences for blind people. We hold ourselves and our attendees to strict adherence to the National Federation of the Blind Code of Conduct found at:

<https://nfb.org/about-us/history-and-governance/code-conduct/code>

# Privacy Notice

“This is a public event. You may be filmed on video or captured in photos that may be published in media outlets, including Twitter, Facebook, or other social media sites. Some sessions and activities at the 2024 National Federation of the Blind of Ohio State Convention may be photographed or videotaped. By participating in the State Convention, registrants agree that The National Federation of the Blind of Ohio has the right to use their image, likeness and/or voice or sound recording taken in connection to the State Convention in all Media.”

# Convention Arrangements

If you have any questions about convention arrangements, contact Suzanne Turner, Convention Arrangements Coordinator, at (216) 990-6199 or [SMTurner.234@gmail.com](mailto:SMTurner.234@gmail.com).

# Reserve Your Room Now!

The DoubleTree by Hilton Cleveland Westlake Hotel address is 1100 Crocker Road, Cleveland Westlake, Ohio 44145. You can make reservations by calling (800) 445-8667. Individuals must identify themselves as being with the group, The National Federation of the Blind, at the time the reservation is made in order to receive the special group rate. The room rates are only $105.00, taxes are 17.5%, which includes breakfast for 2 occupants per room. Breakfast is from 6:30 AM to 10:00 AM. In the Sanctuary Restaurant. The last date to reserve a room is Tuesday, October 15, 2024. The good news is that when you make your reservations, funds are not deducted from your credit card until you arrive at the hotel.

# The Beautiful DoubleTree Cleveland/Westlake Hotel

On behalf of the affiliate President, Richard Payne, and the Ohio Executive Board of Directors, we are honored to have you join the 78th state of Ohio convention here in beautiful Westlake Ohio. As you will experience during your stay, Northeast Ohio has a lot of great attractions, and this city is one.

The beautiful Doubletree, Cleveland Westlake is elegant and simple. It has a clean design and warm hospitality. When you walk through the double doors, you’re immediately in the lobby. As you pivot left of the doors, the Sales Department is straight ahead. However, if you pivot right, that corridor leads to the Canterbury/Dover, and Bradley/Bassett Ballrooms. Various Seminars and the Pre-Function Area are located there as well. Subsequently, back at the front door, if you walk twenty feet forward, to the left is the hotel's Front desk, you will check-in and grab delicious chocolate chip cookies. Directly across from the front desk is the sanctuary restaurant where you can partake of watering appetizers, order a full course meal, or relax at the elegant/sexy bar. But, if you need to wind down for a minute or two, there are cloth chairs and several sofas In the middle of the lobby for just that.

Again, as you check into the hotel at the front desk, the sleeping rooms are just around to the right of the desk, and down the hall. You will also notice as you journey down the opening hallway, the elevator is directly to your left. There are several of our Convention rooms on the second and third floor, which all are accessible! Just turn right after exiting and travel down the hall. Please review the agenda for more details not to miss anything the convention has to offer!

# Online Pre-Registration and Hotel Registration

Online Pre-Registration is open until November 4, 2024 at 11:59 AM. You can go to: NFBOHIO.ORG/Convention and complete the process. Pre-Registration is $25.00, and the Banquet is $55.00. Note: After November 4th at 11:59 AM. In-person Registration is $30.00, and the Banquet is $60.00.

Hotel Pre-Registration packet pick-up and convention registration will take place in the Pre-Function Area outside the Ball Rooms. Those who have completed their registration prior to convention will form a line at the Pre-Registration Table for a speedy process. Visit the Registration Table to register for convention, or to purchase additional tickets to events. Both tables will be open for two shifts on November 15 from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 1:45 PM. We look forward to helping you register as quickly as possible so you can be on your way to enjoying a great weekend of events. For more information about registration, please contact Suzanne Turner, Convention Arrangements Coordinator at (216) 990-6199 or [SMTurner.234@gmail.com](mailto:SMTurner.234@gmail.com).

# NFB Literature

NFB literature will be available throughout the convention next to the registration area. Feel free to take as much as you like; and share it with your friends and family.

# Annual Auction

Help our affiliate to continue its legacy of advocacy by and for the blind by bringing your positive energy and generously giving in support of a great cause during our annual auction held at the Banquet on Saturday evening.

It promises to be fun for the entire family with many valuable items up for bid. Our chapters, divisions, and many friends contribute a wide range of items including electronics, gift certificates, food baskets, and more.

Please contact Annette Lutz at (614) 288-4323 to make plans to get auction items to her immediately upon arrival at the hotel. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

# Door Prizes

Door prizes will be drawn periodically throughout convention sessions on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and during our banquet. To be eligible to win a door prize, you must be registered for the convention and present in the meeting space when your name is called. All donated items should be labeled clearly in print and Braille with the donor's name, the amount of the gift, and the type of gift being contributed. Deliver prizes directly to Annette Lutz or leave them with a representative at the Convention Registration table along with its print/Braille label.

# Hospitality

You are invited to the hospitality suites during the hours of 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM on Fri, Nov 15, for snacks and beverages. Ohio affiliate members will be on hand to greet attendees. The location will be in the relaxing Club Room on the second floor of the hotel! Do not mis delicious treats, great conversations, and mingling with old and new friends.

# Exhibit Hall

Whether you are an information seeker or a new gadget shopper, you will find everything that you need to help you live the life you want at the 2024 Exhibit Hall. Visit Exhibit Hall on the Conference Level, (Rooms A/B and C/D Rooms), which is located on the third floor, Saturday, November 16 from Noon until 4:30 PM. Explore the latest technology and to get answers to the questions that race through your mind about employment, healthcare, services for the blind, and so much more.

For questions, please reach out to Suzanne Turner, Convention Arrangements Coordinator at (216) 990-6199 or [SMTurner.234@gmail.com](mailto:SMTurner.234@gmail.com).

# Guide Dogs

For your convenience, At the end of the Banquet Hall (closest to the Dover Room) There is two exits that will take you to the parking lot, and off to the left are some grassy areas for any pups that need to take a break. For assistance, with any guide dog issues please contact, Luann Bowers, OAGDU Division President at (419) 822-6828 or by email: [luannbowers4@gmail.com](mailto:luannbowers4@gmail.com)

# Dream Makers Circle

You can help build a future of opportunity for the blind by becoming a member of our Dream Makers Circle (DMC). It is easier than you think. You can visit your bank and convert an account to a P.O.D. (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 {insert state} 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).

# 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 [https://nfb.org/vehicledonations](http://www.nfb.org/vehicledonations).

# Pre-Authorized Contributions

Can you help the National Federation of the Blind on a regular basis? Please consider joining our pre-authorized contribution (PAC) plan. Starting at $5 monthly, you can help us turn dreams into reality and raise expectations. Call 877-632-2722, visit: <https://nfb.org/pac> to fill out the online form, or email [pac@nfb.org](mailto:pac@nfb.org) for additional information.

You can leave a legacy through planned giving. Please consider including us in your estate planning. It is easier than you think. We are so grateful for all you do.

**Meet National Representative, Shawn Callaway**

Shawn Callaway is a locally acclaimed disabilities advocate, motivational community leader, and currently a Program Specialist for the United States Department of Health and Human Services. For more than 23 years, he has leveraged his own experience, professional career, and personal time toward helping others to overcome obstacles that are highly attributed to the attitudes, misconceptions, and perceptions of what it means to a person with disabilities. In his current position as a Program Specialist, Shawn manages grant programs that focus on establishing innovative opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and traumatic brain injuries. Shawn has also dedicated a portion of his professional career as a Social Worker, currently for the Columbia Light House for the Blind, and previously for the DC Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) and the Catholic Communities non-profit organization. In these roles, Shawn worked with consumers struggling with a variety of conditions related to vision loss, mental health, or addiction. He facilitated peer support groups and helped them gain access to resources to assist them in having the best quality of life.

Shawn is familiar with having unexpected circumstances and life-altering events that impacted his life moving forward. After graduating from high school, Shawn planned to obtain a BA degree from South Carolina State University. Unfortunately, in 1991 Shawn was involved in an accident that caused him to become permanently blind. But Shawn did not allow his circumstances to hold him back. A few years after the accident, he entered the Workforce Technology Center (WTC) in Baltimore, MD and obtained independent living skills, assistive technology training, and Braille reading training. His efforts at WTC became the catalyst to propel Shawn forward in pursuing higher education degrees including his associate’s, bachelor’s, and master’s, as well as his licensure in Graduate Social Work.

In 2011, Shawn was elected President of the National Federation of the Blind of the District of Columbia and in 2016 he was elected to the NFB National Board of Directors. Shawn is inspired by the NFB’s mantra “You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back.” This quote has motivated Shawn to continue his efforts in helping others live the lives they want to, in upholding multiple leadership positions and affiliations to give back to his community. Within the NFB Shawn is Chairman of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee, President of the National Organization of Blind Black Leaders, and Chairman of the Blind Greek and Masonic Group. He has served as Chairman of the DC State Rehabilitation Council and as previous Boards for the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind and the D.C. Center for Independent Living. Shawn is a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated and the Fort Stevens Lion’s Club. In addition, Shawn’s influence can be heard on Takoma Radio 94.3 airing every first and third Monday of each month. Shawn is a co-host of the radio show titled “Open Our Eyes” which focuses on the inclusion of persons with disabilities within our society. In 2016, Shawn received a citation from U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen, for his leadership in bringing awareness to the needs of the blind community regarding employment. Shawn currently resides in Washington, D.C. with his lovely wife of 18 years Latonya Callaway, raising their 9-year-old daughter, Camille.

**EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS:**

**Licensure:** Licensed Graduate Social Worker

**A.A.** in Psychology I Essex Community College I 1995

**B.A.** in Psychology I University of Maryland College Park I 1997

**M.S.W.** in Social Work I Catholic University of America I 2000

# CONVENTION AGENDA

### **Thursday, November 14, 2024**

We don’t let vision loss define our future. We envision the life we want.

The NFB of Ohio is inviting the general community to participate in our opening roundtable, which is an Informational Seminar that will educate and provide a snapshot on community networks respective programs and services with a Q/A segment to learn what can benefit the blind at home, work, and play.

Also, networks will Gain access to hundreds of blind Ohioans looking to develop themselves and their communities. This event will be held November 14th from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM at the Doubletree Cleveland-Westlake Hotel, Canterbury/Dover Room. The NFB of Ohio will welcome: The Ohio State-Wide Independent Living Center, Ohio Civil Rights Commission, Disability Rights Ohio, My Blindness & Me Peer Support Program, Convenient Care Home Services, Linking Employment Abilities and Potential, Outdoor Recreation Inclusion Cleveland Metroparks, and Accessible Ohio Services.

Canterbury/Dover Room

### **Friday, November 15, 2024**

**9:00 AM to 10:30 AM** - Pre-Registration Packet Pick-up and Convention Registration:

Pre-Function Area

**10:30 am to Noon** -Ohio Board of Directors Meeting Veterans Recognition - Featuring

The Westlake Demon Marching Band

Canterbury/Dover Room

**12:30 PM to 1:45 PM** -Pre-Registration Packet Pick-up and Convention Registration:

Pre-Function Area

**GENERAL SESSION:** Canterbury/Dover Room

**2:00 PM** - Call to Order

Richard Payne, President, NFB of Ohio

**2:05 PM** - Invocation Rev.,

Dr. Carolyn Peters, President, Ohio Communities of Faith

Division, and Vice President, NFB of Ohio

**2:10 PM** - Opening ceremonies: Color Guard Presentation

**2:25 PM** - Welcome and Opening Remarks by the Host Chapters

Jackie Schieman, President, Cuyahoga Chapter, and William Turner, Vice President, Cleveland Chapter,

**2:35 PM** - Convention logistics

Suzanne Turner convention coordinator, and Cleveland Chapter, President

**2:40 PM** - National Report

Shawn Callaway, National Board of Directors, and

President, NFB of the District of Columbia

**3:15 PM** - Where the Blind Work

Annette Lutz, Chair, Ohio Employment Committee and Business Enterprise Operator, David Perry, Cincinnati Association for the Blind

and Visually Impaired and Shawn Martin, Department of Defense (DFAS)

Come Celebrate the work and accomplishments of blind people by attending a panel of successful employed professionals discussing their career success, and more. Come and hear what a typical day looks like, discovering elements that has prepared them for job readiness, how they learned alternative techniques, and advocating for reasonable accommodations. Thus, the blind breaking down misconceptions and raising expectations on employment.

**3:40 PM** - Opportunities, Training, and What to Expect

Michael Bullis, Member, At

Large Chapter Informative Speaker on Disability Program Services and Business

Ownership

**4:05 PM** - Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD)

Berna King, CRC, Acting Deputy Director, and Allison Meloy, MS, CRCActing Vision Services Program Manager,

Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired

**4:25 PM** - An update on Ohio Deaf and Blind Education Services

Lou Maynus, Ed.D., Ed.S., Superintendent, Central Administration Office

**4:45 PM** - What does the Federation mean to me?

Jackie Schieman, President, Cuyahoga Chapter

**5:00 PM** - Adjourn: General Session resumes at 9:00 AM Saturday.

**5:30 PM to 8:30 PM** - Hospitality Night: Join in the fun and fellowship on hospitality night. Visit the Club Room on the second floor to eat and socialize.

**6:00 PM to 7:30 PM** - Ohio Community Service Division Meeting: Patricia McPherson, President

Bassett Room

**6:00 PM to 7:30 PM** - Ohio Association of Guide Dog Users Division Meeting:

Luanne Bowers, President

Bradley Room

**7:00 PM to 8:30 PM** - Ohio Communities of Faith Division Meeting: Dr. Rev. Carolyn Peters,, President

The doors are always open! We are a diverse group of blind members representing various religions. Join our business meeting, elections and learn about resources. Amphitheater Room

**7:30PM to 8:30 PM** - Ohio At-Large Chapter Meeting: Colleen Roth, President

Bradley Room

**7:30 PM to 8:30 PM** - Resolutions Committee Meeting: All are welcome to attend. Resolutions adopted by the convention become the policy of the organization.

Frank Bragassa, chair

Bassett Room

**8:30 PM** - Nominating Committee Meeting. This is a closed meeting.

Amphitheater Room

**9:30 PM** - Free Concert, featuring the Visionaries.

Canterbury/Dover Room

### **Saturday, November 16, 2024**

**7:00 AM to 8:45 AM** - Scholarship Breakfast Meeting: Invited guests will meet in the Sanctuary Restaurant.

Kinshuk Tella and Kristin Coen, Co-Chairs, Scholarship Committee

**8:00 AM to 8:45 AM** -- Final Registration: Pre-Function Area

**GENERAL SESSION:**Canterbury/Dover Room

**9:00 AM** - Call to Order

Richard Payne, President, NFB of Ohio

**9:05 AM** - Invocation

Joann Williams, Community of Faith, Vice President

**9:10 AM** - Announcements

**9:15 AM** - Update on legislation

Suzanne Turner, Ohio Legislative Director

**9:35 AM** - Aira Tech Corp

Jenine Stanley, Director, Customer Success & Engagement

**9:55 AM** - Ray Ban Meta Smart Glasses and Be My Eyes/AI Capability

Gloria Conway, Member, Senior Division/Sharing Solutions , Renee Arrington Johnson, Member, Cleveland Chapter

**10:15 AM** - Presentation from the Teacher of tomorrow Program

Heather James, Educator , Certified Visually Impaired Teacher

**10:35 AM** - Art Experiences for The Blind/Low Vision Community

Joy Mistovich , Assistant Education Director / Digital UX Accessibility Specialist, Butler Institute of American Art

**11:00 AM** - United way of greater Cleveland

Michelle Snowden, Associate Director of 211 Navigation Services and Stanley Griffin, 211 Quality Assurance Specialist.

**11:25 AM** - Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)

Pannal

Shawn Callaway, Chair, National DEI Committee, Richard Payne, NFB of Ohio, President, and Christopher Sabine and Marion parker, Co -chairs of the Ohio DEI committee

**11:40 AM** - Ohio Affiliate report

Richard Payne, President, NFB Ohio

**Noon** - Adjourn: General Session resumes at 9:00 AM Sunday.

**Noon to 4:30 PM** - Exhibit Hall : Third Floor, Conference Level, (Rooms, A/B and C/D)

**1:00 PM to 2:30 PM** - Ohio Senior Division Meeting: Mariann Denning, President

Canterbury/Dover Room

**1:30 PM to 3:00 PM** - Blind Parent’s Meeting: Shawn Callaway, National Representative and Masquenada Douglas, Vice President, Greater Akron Chapter

Amphitheater Room

**2:00 PM to 3:30 PM** - Ohio Membership Committee Meeting: William Turner and Kathy Legg, Co-chairs

Basset Room

**2:30 PM to 4:00 PM** - Ohio Diabetes Action Network (DAN): Joann Williams, President

Club Room

**5:30 PM to 6:30 PM** - Pre-Banquet Social Hour, Cash Bar Ball Room

**6:30 PM** - NFBOH Banquet (proof of tickets required) Ball Room

**Event Highlights:**

**Master of Ceremonies**: Suzanne Turner, Board Member, NFB of Ohio

**Invocation**: Rev., Dr. Carolyn Peters, Vice President, NFB of Ohio

**Keynote Speaker**: Shawn Callaway, National Representative

**Awards presentation**: Annette Lutz, Awards Committee Chair

**Scholarship Awards**: Kinshuk Tella and Kristin Coen-Mishlan, Scholarship

Committee Co-Chairs

**Not-So-Silent Auction:** Annette Lutz, Secretary, NFB of Ohio, and President, NFB Capital Chapter

**Money for the Movement:** Kathy Legg, Treasurer, NFB of Ohio

**9:00 PM -- After Party:** Ballroom. Stick around after the Banquet to socialize and celebrate with your NFB of Ohio community. Enjoy live music and a cash bar.

### **Sunday, November 17, 2024**

**7:45 AM to 8:45 AM** -- Faith meeting Communities of Faith Division, Rev.,

Dr. Carolyn Peters, President,

Amphitheater Room

**GENERAL SESSION : Ball Room**

**9:00 AM** - Call to Order

Richard Payne, President, NFB of Ohio

**9:05 AM** - Remembering Federation Members who are No Longer with Us.

**9:10AM** - Leadership Presentation Panel

Richard Payne, President, NFB of Ohio, Rev., Dr. Carolyn Peters, Vice President, NFB of Ohio, Shawn Callaway, National Representative

**9:45 AM** - My journey and road to success

Janine Pickens, Member, Miami Valley

**10:00 AM** - Financial Report Kathy Legg, Treasurer, NFB of Ohio

**10:15 AM** - Nominating Committee Report

**10:20 AM** - Affiliate Elections

**10:40 AM** - Resolutions

Frank Bragassa, Chair

**11:15 AM** - Reflections Of My First National Convention

Sabrina Brashers, Miami Valley Chapter and Chasity Gillium, Cleveland Chapter

**11:30 AM** - STEM2U, 2024

Emily Kiehl, Facilitator

**11:50 AM** - Closing Remarks

Richard Payne, President, NFB of Ohio

**Noon** - Adjournment

## **National Federation of the Blind of Ohio**

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## **78th Annual State Convention Sponsors**

We are thankful to the following community partners for their commitment to the transformative work of the blind in Ohio. Their support enables the blindness community to be even stronger.

**Vanda Pharmaceuticals**

Dedicated to raising awareness of Non-24-Hour Sleep Wake Disorder (Non-24) and supporting the blindness community. Non-24 is a rare circadian rhythm disorder affecting people who are totally blind. People living with non-24 experience excessive daytime sleepiness and nighttime sleeplessness, which leads to impaired social and occupational function.

**Disability Rights Ohio**

A non-profit corporation with a mission to advocate for the human, civil, and legal rights of people with disabilities in Ohio.

**Cincinnati Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired**

A private, not-for-profit organization offering comprehensive services and job opportunities for people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired. Every day we work to ensure full lives and community inclusion for those we serve.

**Ohio Legal Services for Seniors-Pro Seniors**

We help Ohio seniors resolve legal & long-term care problems & fight Medicare and financial fraud. Our Legal Helpline Provides free legal information, advice, and referral for residents of Ohio age 60 and over, regardless of income or resources. The Mid-America Pension Rights Project provides information and guidance related to pensions and retirement benefits. The Senior Financial Exploitation Project provides advice about preventing financial exploitation and helps resolve the legal problems caused by financial exploitation.

**We would like to thank the Norwalk Ohio Lions Club for supporting our 2024 scholarship program again this year.**