# National Federation of the Blind of Virginia

# 2018 PROJECT RISE

### Resilience, Independence, Self-Advocacy, Employment

Dear Parent:

When you think of success, you think of your child. When you think of hope, you think of your child. When I think of the future, I think of your children! Regardless of one’s background, we share this overwhelmingly similar characteristic of blindness or low vision. When I was in high school and early college, I wanted to be “normal,” whatever that meant. I saw myself as just like everyone else, so I craved that feeling from others. As I grew more comfortable with my blindness, there were moments of revelation where I knew I was worth it and enough to make my dreams come true. Your child is in that youthful stage of their life where opportunities are endless. Regardless of the skill set or stage of transition your child is in, we welcome them with open arms to a world of possibilities. Blindness and low vision will never hold them back; and we are here to show them how to make that dream a reality.

Project RISE, (Resilience, Independence, Self-Advocacy, Employment) is a transition program, focusing on providing blind and low vision students with the skills necessary to become competitively employed. These skills will be useful whether the students attend an institution of higher education, a vocational school, or enter the job market directly after high school. Project RISE will combine the knowledge of successful blind professionals, the positive philosophy of the NFB, and a strong curriculum to give blind students, between the ages of 14-22, the skills and confidence they need to be successful. This program has the potential of changing the future of blind students.

Throughout the six months, students will meet one Saturday a month, for about five hours, participating in workshops designed to make them more competitive in the job market. Some topic areas include: travel and transportation, independent daily living skills, communication and interview techniques, and dressing appropriately for job settings. Throughout Project RISE, students will have access to successful blind mentors. Finally, students will have some kind of work experience during the summer months. The Saturday programs will run from January to May, with the last program session as a weekend spent at the National Federation of the Blind national center during the month of June. There, students will meet exceptional role models at the national level, who can provide ample resources to your child.

Now, I welcome you to our Project RISE family; and I encourage you to explore our program!

Kathryn C. Webster

Coordinator | Project RISE

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