**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:**

Cheryl Gross

Merchant Relations

National Association of Blind Merchants

Phone: (866) 543-6808, extension 14

**cherylgross@blindmerchants.org**

**Blind Entrepreneurs: Earn an Entrepreneur of Excellence Certificate**

**While Building Your Business**

**Colorado Springs, Colorado (February 4, 2014):** The Hadley School for the Blind and the National Association of Blind Merchants together with the National Federation of the Blind’s Entrepreneurs Initiative (NABM/NFBEI) are partnering to offer free online business education. Enroll now to complete a two-part series of Hadley courses without taking time away from your business, and NABM will award you with an Entrepreneur of Excellence Certificate. Individuals who earn the certificate will be recognized at NABM's Business Leadership and Superior Training (BLAST) Conference, or at its annual meeting held in conjunction with the convention of the National Federation of the Blind. (Attendance at these events will not be a requirement for certification.)

NABM and Hadley will also offer “Randolph-Sheppard on the Web.” Randolph-Sheppard on the Web consists of regularly scheduled webinars focusing on business trends and challenges pertinent to all blind operators. These live online discussions will enable you to work with other merchants and Business Enterprise Program (BEP) professionals to solve the pressing concerns that affect your business. If you don’t have time to participate live, the seminars will be archived on the Web so you can listen at your convenience.

The courses, modules and webinars offered through this partnership are part of Hadley’s Forsythe Center for Employment and Entrepreneurship (FCE). The goal of this initiative ([www.hadley.edu/business](http://www.hadley.edu/business)) is to provide individuals who are blind or visually impaired with the knowledge, resources and networking opportunities to enable them to successfully launch and grow their own businesses.

Courses and modules are online only and are practical, relevant and interactive. The FCE also includes live and recorded online lectures available through Seminars@Hadley; interactive group discussions; access to an online resource center; and a directory of visually impaired business owners.

“Entrepreneurs of Excellence set the tone for their businesses, by ‘modeling the way’ and continually investing in their own personal growth,” says Hadley President Chuck Young. “These self-employed leaders know that the business is only as good as their ability to manage and become profitable. This is an incredible opportunity for vendors to affordably invest in themselves, their business and their future.”

Nicky Gacos, President, National Association of Blind Merchants, adds, “We are excited and proud to collaborate with The Hadley School for the Blind. They are a world leader in quality correspondence and online learning for the blind. This is no cost, highly accessible, flexible, user friendly training for 21st century business people. This will be in the trenches, where the rubber meets the road, practical education you can apply now. It is for the blind manager who is truly committed to increased professionalism and profit. Most states will be accepting these courses and webinars to meet upward mobility requirements.  I can't wait to begin awarding certificates of excellence and seeing profits rise.”

To learn more about how you can earn your certificate and keep current in your industry, visit [www.hadley.edu/nabm](http://www.hadley.edu/nabm) and enroll today!