

National Federation of the Blind of New York 67th Annual Convention

December 8 to 10, 2023

Hilton Albany | 40 Lodge Street, Albany, NY

Phone: 518-462-2611

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.

We Would Like to Thank All Our 2023 Sponsors!

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General Information

Hotel Shuttle

The hotel provides a free shuttle to and from the airport and the train station. Please note, the shuttle service is provided on a first come first served basis as availability allows. Call 518-462-2611, hit 0 to be connected to the front desk and request your shuttle.

Registration Table

Please stop by East Gallery C in order to pick up your banquet and other various meal tickets, agendas, and to ask any convention related questions. Please note that registration will be open on Friday, only, between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM Any pre-ordered box lunches can be picked up at the registration table on both Friday and Saturday, between 12:00 PM and 12:30 PM

Guide Dog Relief

There are a few potential places where you might choose to relieve your guide dog, depending on your needs, so please contact our NYAGDU president, Heather Bird at 585-739-6473, or Jim Jonas at 585-472-2433 for detailed information.

For Ease of Navigation

Please note that many events are held in the same location. For instance, the NYSCB Townhall, Board Meeting, General Sessions, and Business Meeting will all take place in Governor CD. Please consult the schedule below for locations of specific events.

Dining and Meals

If you have prepaid box lunches for Friday or Saturday or Banquet tickets, they will be provided to you during registration packet pick-up. Similarly, if you have pre-registered for the Hospitality Dinner or the NEWSLINE Breakfast, they will also be in your registration packet.

Hilton Albany Food and Drink Options

Charter Restaurant is open Friday 6:30 AM to 2 PM; Saturday and Sunday 6:30 AM to Noon.

Sessions Lounge is open Friday 3:30 PM to Midnight; Saturday 11 AM to Midnight; and Sunday 11 AM to 11 PM.

Mr. B's Coffee is open 6:30 AM to 11 AM.

Room service is available from 4:30 PM to Midnight.

Thursday, December 7th, 2023

There will be no meetings on Thursday, which is reserved for travel and arrivals.

Friday, December 8th, 2023

8:00 AM to 5:00 PM - Registration packet Pickup East Gallery C

Please note that registration will take place only on Friday.

9:00 AM to 5:00 PM - Exhibit Hall East Gallery

Please come and visit our valued exhibitors to find out about a variety of technologies, products, programs, services, and other resources.

Please note that the Exhibit Hall will only take place on Friday.

9:00 AM to 11:00 AM - New York State Commission for the Blind Town Hall Meeting Governor CD

Julie Hovey, Associate Commissioner

This town hall style meeting provides an opportunity for NYSCB to share information about its programs and services available to blind New Yorkers, and for our members to ask questions and provide constructive feedback to NYSCB.

**11:00 AM to 12:00 PM - NFBNYS Board of Director's Meeting
Governor CD**

Chancey Fleet, President, NFBNYS Inc.

**12:00 PM to 12:30 PM - Box Lunch Pickup
East Gallery C**

Pre-ordered box lunches will be available for pick-up at the registration table and will require presentation of your box lunch ticket(S) found in your registration envelope.

**12:00 PM to 1:30 PM - NYAGDU Business Meeting
Capital AB**

Heather Bird, President, New York Association of Guide Dog Users

The New York Association of Guide Dog Users will conduct their annual business meeting, which will include a detailed sample demonstration of how NYAGDU can assist an individual in selecting a school or short list of schools to apply to out of the numerous and varied options in the industry.

**1:30 PM to 2:55 PM Exploring the A in STEAM, How the Arts and
STEM Transform Individual Creativity into Collaborative
Innovation
Empire AB**

Chancey Fleet, President, NFB of New York State

Danielle Montour, Braille and Tactile Literacy Educator, XR Researcher and Inclusive Design Advocate

This blend of demonstration and discussion will explore how Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math attract and rely upon creative individuals for success and growth. Ensuring that the arts are considered and integrated in STEM curricula exponentially enhances the potential of individuals and the possibilities for everyone.

**1:30 PM to 2:55 PM - Creativity Drives Innovation in Meeting Medical Needs
State AB**

Moderator, Rasheta Bunting, NFBNYS Vanguard Chapter president,

Come and join a Panel discussion, hosted by the Blind Diabetics of NY and the Blind Seniors of NY, focusing on how creative solutions to challenges within the medical arena have been addressed by blind people, for blind people.

Panel

- Lynn Heitz - Certified Diabetes Lifestyle Coach, and Director of Business Engagement for Accessible Pharmacy Services
- Jovan Campbell - Former State and National Scholarship Recipient, Secretary NFBNYS Vanguard Chapter
- Dr. Alex Cohen, PhD – Chief Marketing and Accessibility Officer, Accessible Pharmacy

**3:00 PM to 5:00 PM - Living, Teaching, Learning and Problem Solving with Creativity
Empire AB**

Heather Bird, NFB BELL Academy Coordinator for NYS

Maura Kutnyak, President, New York Parents of Blind Children

Candice Attrill, Group Organizer, Blind Parents of New York

Hosted by the NFB BELL ® Academy of NYS, the New York Parent's of Blind Children and the Blind Parents of New York, join us for a variety of hands-on activities aimed at exploring how creativity in play and learning, ultimately leads to creativity in careers and life. Content is developed by and for TBS, blind parents, and parents of blind children. Activities will be enhanced with group discussion, and direct presentation.

3:00 PM to 4:15 PM - Creativity in the Professional Arena State AB

Moderator, Cayte Mendez, 1st Vice President, NFBNYS, president,
National Association of Blind Educators

This round table discussion is an opportunity for a panel of creative professionals to answer your questions and share their perspectives on how creative expression in personal presentation can be harnessed to your benefit in the contexts of Accademia and career, through the spoken and written communication you engage in, the fashion choices you make, the virtual presence you curate, and more.

Panel

- Maura Kutnyak-Smalley, President New York Parents of Blind Children, Staff Attorney Criminal Defense Unit Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo Inc.
- Kelleigh Larson, Board member, NFBNYS, Rochester Chapter, MS. CRC Rehabilitation Counselor, ACCES-VR
- Dawn Penson, President New York Association of Blind Students, Vice President, NFBNYS Syracuse Chapter

5:45 PM to 7:00 PM - Hospitality Dinner Kelsey's

Rasheta Bunting, NFBNY Newsline Outreach Specialist, DEI Committee

Luis Mendez, NFBNY Newsline Director

Maura Kutnyak, NFBNY Newsline Outreach Specialist, NYPBC President

Those who have RSVPed through the registration form will gather for a hospitality dinner sponsored by NFB Newsline and hosted by the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee.

Please arrive between 5:45 and 5:50, to facilitate an enjoyable experience for all, and don't forget that you must present your Hospitality Dinner Ticket(s) for this event.

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM - Hospitality Night Kelsey's

All are welcome to check out our hospitality night sponsored by NFB Newslines and hosted by the DEI committee, for comradery and conversation, a guided improv activity with Kelleigh Larsson and Paul Grenier, and don't forget to check out this year's opportunity to learn a new dance with Stephanie Foxworth. A cash bar will also be available.

Saturday, December 9th, 2023

7:30 AM to 8:50 AM - NFB NEWSLINE Breakfast Kelsey's

Those who have pre-registered for this event will gather for breakfast with our NEWSLINE staff, to learn about the variety of avenues that NEWSLINE offers for reconnecting with your morning paper. Please note that you will need to present the NEWSLINE Breakfast ticket(s) from your registration envelope for this event.

9:00 AM to 12:00 PM - Morning General Session Governor CD

- 9:00 AM Call to Order and Welcome**
Chancey Fleet, President NFBNYS
- 9:05 AM Invocation**
Reverend Paul Grenier
- 9:10 AM Logistics and Announcements**
Chancey Fleet, President NFBNYS
- 9:15 AM Presidential Report**
Chancey Fleet, President NFBNYS
- 9:35 AM National Report**
Patty Chang, Director of Outreach, NFB, and
1st Vice President NFBIL

10:05 AM Updates from the New York State Commission for the Blind

Julie Hovey, Associate Commissioner NYSCB

10:25 AM BELL Report

Heather Bird, 2nd Vice President, NFBNYS and
NFB BELL® Academy Coordinator for NYS

Maura Kutnyak, President, New York Parents of Blind
Children

10:40 AM Library Report from the Orchard

Laurenne Teachout, MSLS, Senior Librarian
New York State Talking Book and Braille Library

10:55 AM NEWSLINE Report

Luis Mendez, NFB NEWSLINE Director for NYS

Maura Kutnyak NFB NEWSLINE Outreach Specialist for
NYS

11:20 AM Library Report from the Big Apple

Chancey Fleet, Assistive Technology Coordinator,
Andrew Heiskell Braille and Talking Book Library

11:35 AM Raising Expectations Through Creativity

Patty Chang, Director of Outreach for the NFB, and 1st Vice
President NFBIL

11:50 AM Announcements

Chancey Fleet, President NFBNYS

12:00 PM Adjournment

**12:00 PM to 12:30 PM - Box Lunch Pickup
East Gallery C**

Pre-ordered box lunches will be available for pick-up and will require presentation of your box lunch ticket(S) found in your registration envelope.

**12:00 PM to 1:30 PM - New York Association of Blind Students
Business Meeting
Albany**

Dawn Penson, President, New York Association of Blind Students

The NYABS will be meeting over lunch to conduct their annual business meeting. Please bring your box lunch, or other items you have arranged to the room and see what our Blind Students have been up to and have planned for 2024.

**1:30 PM to 4:30 PM - Afternoon General Session
Governor CD**

1:30 PM Call to Order and Welcome Back

Chancey Fleet, President, NFBNYS

1:35 PM Creativity Fills your Social Currency Bank Account

Heather Bird, 2nd Vice President, NFBNYS

1:50 PM Culinary Creativity Creates Crucial Connections

Gian Carlo Pedulla, the Blind Gourmet

**2:05 PM The Visual Arts Aren't So Visual After All,
From Fine Arts to Arts and Crafts**

Ann Cunningham, Certified Botanical Artist

**2:20 PM Creativity in Craftsmanship,
From Crafty Hobby to Creative Career**

Ray Wright, Owner-Founder Wright Turn Only Designs

2:35 PM Legislative Efforts, Learning and Looking Ahead

Manahil Jafri, Board member, National Association of Blind Students

Christian Minkler, President, NFBNYS Buffalo Chapter

2:55 PM Creativity in Writing Goes Far Beyond "Creative Writing"

Gary Wunder, Editor, The Braille Monitor

3:10 PM Communicating Creativity Through Your Appearance

Tricia Waechter. Owner/Founder Blind Girl Designs

3:25 PM Creativity in Music

Kevin Reeves, Musician and Trainer at I See Music

3:40 PM Finding the People and Places to Share and Grow your Creative Potential

Bernice Bird, Independent Living Skills Educator, Retired

3:55 PM Creative Problem Solving - Busting the "Yes, but" Game with "Ask Miss Cayte"

Cayte Mendez, President, Blind Educators Division and 1st Vice President, NFBNYS

4:20 PM Announcements

Chancey Fleet, President, NFBNYS

4:30 PM Adjournment

**6:30 PM - Banquet
Kelsey's**

Mistresses of Ceremonies - Rasheta Bunting and Kelleigh Larsson

- Invocation – Mindy Jacobsen
- Keynote Address - Patty Chang
- Door Prizes -Margo Downey
- Auctioneer - Veleria Jacobs

Sunday, December 10th, 2023

**7:30 AM Resolutions Committee Meeting
Empire AB**

Chancey Fleet, Resolutions Committee Chair and President NFBNYS

**9:00 AM to 11:20 PM - NYS Affiliate Business Meeting
Governor CD**

9:00 AM Call to Order

9:05 AM Invocation
Ahmat Djouma

9:10 AM Presentation of Resolutions

9:40 AM Election of Officers

10:00 AM Chapter Reports
Buffalo Chapter
Rochester Chapter
Syracuse Chapter
New York City Chapter
Vanguard Chapter
Long Island Chapter

10:20 AM Division Reports
New York Association of Blind Students
New York Association of Guide Dog Users
New York Parents of Blind Children

10:30 AM Group Reports
Blind Diabetics
Blind Parents
Blind Seniors

10:45 AM Committee Reports
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

10:50 AM Pledges

11:05 AM Stronger Together – Looking Ahead
Heather Bird – Second Vice President, NFBNYS

11:15 AM Closing Announcements

Chancey Fleet - President, NFBNYS

11:20 PM Adjournment

Exhibit Hall

Please remember to visit the Exhibit Hall in the East Gallery from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM on Friday the 8th. Our valued sponsors and exhibitors are ready to chat with you and share information on, and demonstrations of, a variety of resources, services, and products.

Thank You again to All of Our 2023 Sponsors!

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making a difference together

We are devoted to being a good neighbor in every community we serve. That's why we're working with customers like you to help our communities thrive. Your support allows us to give more and do more to improve lives and make our neighborhoods stronger. Thank you for helping us make a difference.

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**The New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB)
is Proud to Be Part of the
National Federation of the Blind of New York's
2023 Annual Convention**

The NYSCB congratulates the National Federation of the Blind of New York on its 2023 annual convention.

NYSCB provides vocational rehabilitation and other direct services to legally blind or deaf-blind New York State residents including children, adults, and older adults. The commission works closely with not-for-profit agencies for the blind throughout New York State to provide technical, educational and resource assistance to our participants. One of NYSCB's primary services is assisting participants in achieving economic self-sufficiency and full integration into society. NYSCB offers these services through seven district offices across New York State.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program – provides guidance and counseling to assist participants who are legally blind, find or retain employment.

Business Enterprise Program - provides training for blind vendors in operating food service facilities in federal and state buildings. Any New York State resident who is legally blind or deaf-blind and is a United States citizen may be eligible for this program.

Children's Program - rehabilitation services to legally blind children between the ages of birth and 21. Early intervention, empowering parents, arranging services to supplement educational activities and ensuring a smooth transition to adult services

Transition Program - pre-employment transition services to students ages 14 to 21 and vocational rehabilitation services for all youth who are legally blind, including those with additional disabilities.

Summer Socialization Skills Program - summer camp and recreational opportunities for youth who are legally blind.

Equipment Loan Fund - helps to purchase equipment that will improve the quality of daily life.

Independent Living Program - helps individuals with low vision carry out day-to-day activities and assists them in living at home and in the community.

Contact us at:
1-866-871-3000
visionloss.ny.gov

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Vanda Pharmaceuticals is 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 up to 70% of people who are totally blind.

People living with Non-24 experience excessive daytime sleepiness and nighttime sleeplessness, which leads to impaired social and occupational functioning. This is due to the misalignment between the internal master body clock and the 24-hour day.

For more information about Non-24 call Maggie Felton, 202-579-8035.

Helen Keller National Center

iCanConnect

Free Telecommunication for people with combined of vision loss and hearing loss.

More information can be found at icanconnect.org

Bryan Ward | Coordinator, iCC Programs
(p) 516-570-3249



Blind Girl Designs



Blind Girl Designs

Whimsical prints featuring white canes in 3-D tactile ink. Hoodies, t-shirts, totes, and aprons including the tactile White Cane Snowflake, our new tactile Holiday White cane tree, and tactile "I love my cat" with a white cane prints! Come see and feel many of our 23 prints featuring white canes and braille. Support a blind artist!

New York State Preferred Source Program

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