

# **National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas**

Welcome to the 71<sup>st</sup> Annual Arkansas  
State Convention

April 4 and 5, 2025

Held at the LaQuinta Inn & Suites,  
Bentonville, Arkansas

**"Breaking Barriers - Change Starts  
with Us"**

## **Introducing the Arkansas Affiliate Board**

President: Nena Chadwick

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Charles Tate

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: April Scurlock

Treasurer: David Henry

Secretary: Gene DeLeon

Board Member 1: Bryson Jones

Board Member 2: Jahmal Lovato

Board Member 3: Bettye Johnson

Board Member 4: Cindy Scott-Huisman

## **Introducing Chapter Presidents:**

At Large Chapter: Tanya Vanhouten

Central Arkansas Chapter: Wesley Hillman

Northwest Arkansas Chapter (NWA): David Henry

## **Our National Representative: John Pare**

Mr. Paré is the executive director for Advocacy and Policy at the National Federation of the Blind. In this position, he oversees the NFB-NEWSLINE® program, the largest electronic newspaper service in the world, the Independence Market, and the Federation's Governmental Affairs office. He has testified before the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations Legislative Branch Subcommittee regarding library services for blind Americans.

He was instrumental in the negotiations and passage of the Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Act and the Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act.

He has appeared on CNN, Fox, BBC, and various radio programs to discuss issues affecting blind Americans.

He has a bachelor's and master's from the University of Florida in Gainesville.

## **The National Federation of the Blind**

The oldest and largest organization of and for the blind in the US, is made up of blind/visually impaired people of all ages and their families and friends. As noted above, the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas Affiliate is made up of an affiliate board, which meets monthly, and various chapters, which also hold monthly meetings and have their own board members. At the affiliate and chapter levels, we do have working committees to help achieve our goals.

## **The National Federation of the Blind**

### **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.

## **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.

## **Integrity and Respect:**

To allow all attendees the chance to benefit from all aspects of the convention, we are committed to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone.

We appreciate your assistance in cultivating an atmosphere in which participants from diverse backgrounds can learn, network, and share with each other in an environment of mutual respect. Thank you for doing your part to contribute to our community and the high expectations we strive to maintain.

## **Fragrance-Free Policy:**

The National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas's goal is to be sensitive to members with perfume and chemical sensitivities who, as a result, may suffer potentially serious health consequences. In order to address this concern, members and participants at conventions and other meetings should refrain from wearing scented products, including, but not limited to, perfumes, colognes, aftershave lotions, or similar products. We want to ensure full participation in all of our state-wide activities.

## **Registration**

All convention attendees are required to register. Registration with the convention entitles you to the convention room rate and qualifies you to win door prizes. If you have pre-registered for the convention, please go to the registration area to pick up your registration packet. If you did not pre-register, you may do so in the registration area. The onsite registration fee is \$80. We will adhere to the registration times strictly so that our registration workers can participate in all convention activities. See the agenda for a list of times and locations of the registration area.

The registration table outside the Creeks Meeting room opens from 9 am to 9:45 am on Friday, the 4<sup>th</sup>, and 8:15 to 8:45 am on Saturday, the 5<sup>th</sup>, for packet pickup.

### **Door Prizes**

Will be drawn throughout the meeting. You must be present to win in person and be able to raise your hand virtually. In order to move things along, if your name is called, please call out so someone can bring your prize to you.

All Exhibitors will be in the Creeks Meeting room at the back of the room. Times Friday 4<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 5 pm, Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 3 pm.

## **GENERAL SESSION I: The Creeks**

### **Friday, April 4 Morning**

10 am Call to order-Announcements

President Nena Chadwick

10:10 am Opening Prayer

Bettye Johnson

10:15 am The NFB Pledge & Belief Message

Bryson Jones

10: 20 am Welcome to Bentonville

Mayor Orman

10:35 am National Report - National Rep

John Pare, Executive Director for Advocacy  
and Policy at the National Federation of  
the Blind

11:20 am Door Belles

11:30 am Parents of Blind Children

Cassandra McNabb, President of the  
National Division of Parents of Blind  
Children

12 to 1:30 pm Lunch

## **SESSION II: The Creeks**

### **Friday, April 4 Afternoon**

1:30 pm announcements President Chadwick

1:35 pm Sam's Club Jamila Evilsizor

Inclusive Design and Accessibility

1:55 pm Arvest Cynthia Allen

2:10 pm Membership - April Scurlock  
Membership Coordinator

2:25 pm Door Belles

2:30 pm Fit Break- Maryanne Melley

President NFB of Connecticut

2:45 pm Washington Seminar

Bettye Johnson, Affiliate Board Member

2:55 pm Library for the Blind

Natalie Marlin, Senior Librarian

3:15 pm Nano Pac - Calvin Churchwell

3:30 pm Vanda Pharmaceuticals

Vicki Preddy

3:45 pm PAC Plan Report

4 pm Kenneth Jernigan Leadership

Charles Tate

4:15 pm Announcements and Adjourn

(Dinner on your own)



## **7 pm Auction**

Come join us for a fun-filled time while we bid on fantastic items!!!

## **GENERAL SESSION III The Creeks**

**Saturday, April 5 Morning**

**NOTE: Any agenda Item marked with a \* Is subject to change during the convention.**

10 am- Announcements

President Nena Chadwick

10:05 am Presidents Report

Nena Chadwick, President

10:20 am My Blind Story - Gene Deleon

\*10:30 am State Legislation Issues:

DSB- ARS Merger David Henry

Texas VS Kennedy John Pare

11 am Door Belles

11:05 am National Scholarship Winner 2023

Athena Scopelite, John Brown University

11:20 am Division of Services for the Blind and Sources, Independent Living

From adolescents to older individuals. What services are out there?

12 to 1:30 pm Lunch

**GENERAL SESSION IV The Creeks**

**Saturday, April 5 Afternoon**

1:30 Announcements

President Nena Chadwick

1:30 to 2:45 pm Breakouts:

Touchable Art - Kim Crowell

University of Arkansas Arts Department

Blind Beauty - Jerree Harris

Vice President At Large Chapter

Blind at Heart

Exhibitors Tables

3 pm Business Meeting

Bring to Order

Rollcall

NFB Pledge

Business Meeting Minutes 2024

Treasurer Report

Resolutions

Nomination Report - April Scurlock

Affiliate Constitution

NEA Chapter Constitution

Chapter Reports:

At Large - President Tanya VanHouten

Central - President Wesley Hillman

Northwest Arkansas - President David Henry

Elections:

Board Member 1:

Board Member 2:

Announcement and Adjourn

## **7 PM Banquet**

Prayer Bettye Johnson

Dinner

Banquet Address John Pare

door prizes, awards, and drawing for the grand prize.

Thank you to the Northwest Arkansas Chapter for hosting the convention this year.

Thank you to all our members, volunteers, sponsors, exhibitors, friends, and most importantly, our families for all the support you have given throughout the year so that we can "Build the National Federation of the Blind!"

### **Dream Makers Circle**

You can help build a future of opportunity for the blind by becoming a member of our Dream Makers Circle. 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 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).

### **The PAC Plan**

Allows members, affiliates, chapters, and others to give a regular and automatic donation to the Federation every month. All you need to provide is your checking, savings or credit card account identification information.

Because of the costs associated with operating the program, the minimum donation is \$5 a month and there is no restriction on how much you donate.

Please sign up at the PAC table during convention to begin a new PAC contribution or to make changes to your current contribution. Your donation will help the blind live the lives they want.

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

Thank you to all our great sponsors and exhibitors

Bronze Level: NanoPac, Inc

918-665-0329.

[www.nanopac.com](http://www.nanopac.com)



Exhibitors:

NanoPac, Inc

Calvin Churchwell, Vision Rehabilitation  
Specialist

[www.nanopac.com](http://www.nanopac.com)

Arkansas Library for the Blind  
501-682-2858

Non-24 Disorder/Vanda Pharmaceuticals  
Vicky Freddie on behalf of Shauna Jathro  
[Shauna.jathro@vandapharma.com](mailto:Shauna.jathro@vandapharma.com)

JW.org  
Nick Wells  
501-609-6359