

# National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

**2020 Annual Convention: Rise Up!**  
**Friday, November 6 to Sunday, November 8**

## AGENDA



**Image: Mark Riccobono**  
*President*  
National Federation of the Blind



**Image: Marc Maurer**  
*Immediate Past President*  
National Federation of the Blind

The Members of the Board of Directors and  
the Convention Host Committee  
Welcome You to the 54th Annual Convention of the  
National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

*Ronza M Othman, President*  
National Federation of the Blind of Maryland  
15 Charles Plaza, #3002  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

*Scott White, Chairman*  
Convention Host Committee

ANYWHERE & EVERYWHERE!

## ***WELCOME!***

Welcome to the 54th annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland being held anywhere and everywhere. The COVID-19 pandemic has altered the ways we ordinarily connect to advance our movement, but it has not changed the spirit of the Federation.

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures, in addition to love, hope, and determination that always will transcend distance. Though the format of this year's convention is new for all of us, there still are many of the same opportunities to learn new things, be inspired by our colleagues, renew Federation family friendships, and participate in the conversations that raise the expectations for blind people. Though apart, we will still build the Federation together.

### Special Information for First-Time Attendees:

All first-time convention attendees are cordially invited to attend a **First-Timers Orientation from 8 to 9:30 p.m., on Wednesday, November 4.**

The Ambassadors Committee will walk you through the events that will take place throughout the weekend, explain processes such as door prizes and voting, as well as make sure every first-time convention attendee is matched with a mentor.

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

## ***INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY, AND SOCIAL CONDUCT***

We are committed to providing a harassment-free environment for everyone. Thank you for cultivating an atmosphere in which participants from diverse backgrounds can learn, network, and share with each other in an environment of mutual respect. We are committed to diversity, equity, and the free expression of ideas. These principles have been outlined in our code of conduct, which can be found at [NFB.org/Code-Conduct](https://www.nfb.org/code-conduct).

We recognize a shared responsibility to create and uphold that atmosphere for the benefit of all. Prohibited behaviors include harassment, unwelcome sexual attention, and inappropriate use of the NFBMD virtual convention platform. Prohibited behavior or misuse of the platform will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the convention and/or other consequences. **For assistance or to report an incident at the convention, please call 504-621-4162 or email [Convention@nfbmd.org](mailto:Convention@nfbmd.org) for immediate attention.** Formal reports can be submitted to the NFB National Office at [NFB.org/About-Us/History-and-Governance/Code-Conduct/Grievance-Report-Form](https://www.nfb.org/about-us/history-and-governance/code-conduct/grievance-report-form). All formal reports will be fully investigated according to the steps in our code of conduct. Thank you for doing your part to contribute to our community and the high expectations we strive to maintain.

## ***ACCESSING THE CONVENTION***

The 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland will be accessible via Zoom, web streaming, Smart Speaker, Newsline, and Direct Dial Conference Line.

### Zoom:

Click on the imbedded links in the agenda to launch the Zoom desktop client or mobile application. Alternatively, dial 301-715-8592 and enter the ten- or eleven-digit Conference ID listed in the agenda followed by the pound key.

### Web Streaming:

Visit <http://nfbmd.org/convention/stream>.

### Smart Speaker:

Ask your Amazon device to Open Federation of Maryland.

### Newsline:

Find the stream on the Maryland information channel.

## Direct Dial Conference Line:

Call 339-209-4083.

*\*Please note, the web stream, Smart Speaker, Newsline, and Direct Dial methods of access are enabled for listening only and do not permit interactive engagement. Consequently, those wishing to engage with the convention, including for the auction, door prizes, and other activities will need to do so using either the Convention Virtual Information Table or via email.*

## ***PREREGISTRATION AND LATE REGISTRATION***

### Preregistration:

Convention preregistration was conducted online and closed on October 16. Those who preregistered will receive exclusive email announcements and be eligible to win door prizes during convention. In order to be eligible to cast votes in state elections and the consideration of resolutions, individuals must have:

- 1) preregistered for the convention on or before October 16;
- 2) paid 2020 chapter and/or division dues to an NFBMD chapter and/or division prior to September 30; and
- 3) enrolled in the NFBMD voting platform on or before October 16.

### Late Registration:

Late registration is available online only and is available at [NFBMD.org/Convention](https://www.nfbmd.org/Convention). Late registration costs \$25 per person.

If you did not preregister, you are strongly encouraged to register using the online portal. NFBMD would like to have contact information for those participating in the convention to communicate important information and opportunities. Those who do not register may attend all convention events as listed in the agenda that follows.

## ***VIRTUAL INFORMATION TABLE***

NFBMD will offer a Virtual Information Table throughout the convention to provide assistance, confirm eligibility for door prizes, sign up for committees, bid on auction items, and conduct other business. The Virtual Information Table is available via email at [Convention@nfbmd.org](mailto:Convention@nfbmd.org) or by phone at 410-261-4550. It will operate on Friday, November 6, from 10:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, November 7, from 8 a.m. to the end of the banquet; and Sunday, November 8 from 8:30 a.m. to adjournment.

## ***EXHIBIT HALL***

The NFBMD exhibit hall will be virtual and consist of three components this year. The live components will operate on Friday, November 6, from 1 to 5 p.m.

- Exhibitor Virtual Showcase: Exhibitors and sponsors will address the convention during the Exhibitor Virtual Showcase on November 6, from 1 to 3 p.m.
- Exhibitor Office Hours: Visitors to the NFBMD Exhibit Hall will be able to directly interact and conduct business with exhibitors and sponsors from 3 to 5 p.m., on November 6. Each participating exhibitor and/or sponsor will be available remotely to answer questions, share information, and transact business.
- Exhibitor Information Page: Exhibitor and sponsor information, including customer service information, will be available at [NFBMD.org/ExhibitHall](https://www.nfbmd.org/ExhibitHall).

## ***DOOR PRIZES***

In order to be eligible to win door prizes, convention attendees must have pre-registered for the convention on or before October 16. When a person's name is called for a door prize, that individual must let the Door Prize Committee know within two minutes that the individual is present. Winners can raise their hands in Zoom, send email to [DoorPrizes@nfbmd.org](mailto:DoorPrizes@nfbmd.org), or call the Virtual Information Table at 410-261-4550. Winners must give the code word when calling the Virtual Information Table or sending emails. They also may be asked to give the code word if using Zoom via telephone so the committee can verify the identities of those whose names do not appear in Zoom. The code word will be announced when the door prizes are drawn.

## ***PRE-AUTHORIZED CONTRIBUTION PROGRAM***

We encourage all convention participants to join the NFB Pre-Authorized Contribution (PAC) Program. This program raises funds for the National Federation of the Blind by automatically debiting your checking account or charging your credit card the specified monthly amount you designate. Individuals are encouraged to enroll in the PAC Program, or if already enrolled, raise their monthly contributions. NFBMD will enter into a drawing any individual from Maryland who, during the 2020 State Convention, enrolls in the PAC Program or raises their monthly contributions. The winner of the drawing will receive lodging at the 2021 NFBMD annual convention.

NFBMD will not take financial and banking information this year. Instead, we will assist in completing the online PAC form for those who would like assistance. The form is located at [NFB.org/PAC](https://nfb.org/PAC). Individuals may call the NFBMD PAC Hotline at 410-618-4151 during the convention for assistance in completing the form. Individuals who complete the form themselves should send a copy of the email confirmation they receive to [PAC@nfbmd.org](mailto:PAC@nfbmd.org) in order to be entered into the drawing. The National Center staff will contact individuals for financial and banking information following the convention. Individuals who complete the form but do not actually enroll in or increase their contributions to the PAC Plan will be determined ineligible for the drawing prize.

### ***NFBMD CONVENTION TOURS***

The Convention Host Committee is finalizing plans for virtual tours. Visit [NFBMD.org/Convention](https://nfbmd.org/Convention) for the most up-to-date information about this year's tours.

### ***VOTING***

Those individuals who: 1) enrolled in the voting platform prior to October 16, 2020; 2) pre-registered for the convention prior to October 16, 2020; and 3) were dues paying members in good standing of an NFBMD chapter or division on or before September 30, 2020 are eligible to vote during the convention. To vote, eligible individuals may text or call 916-915-0920. We will practice voting on a question with no policy implications during the convention weekend.

### ***NFBMD CONVENTION BREAKFAST CLUB***

We will hold a meeting every morning throughout the convention to help orient participants to that day's activities and provide access information for specific events. The Breakfast Club will take place on Friday from 8 – 8:45, Saturday from 7:30 – 8:15, and Sunday from 8 – 8:45. To participate, call 339-209-4083.

### ***SPECIAL ATTENTION ITEMS***

- The convention agenda has been assembled using Eastern Standard Time (EST). Please be mindful to convert published times to your appropriate time zone.

- Banquet tickets will neither be sold nor exchanged this year. You are encouraged to arrange for your favorite entrée and imagine yourself at a table of 10 at 7 p.m. on Saturday night.
- Darlene Price is the chairman of the Door Prize Committee, and the Convention Host Committee is responsible for gathering door prizes. Please contact Convention Host Committee Chairman Scott White at [Swhite@nfb.org](mailto:Swhite@nfb.org) or at 410-868-9519 to arrange to contribute door prizes. Due to the virtual nature of the convention, we request door prize donations be monetary in nature. You must be registered for the convention and present when your name is called in order to win a door prize. Door prizes will be awarded during the general sessions on Saturday and Sunday and during the convention banquet.
- Mike Bullis is the Chairman of the National Funding Support Committee, which manages our Convention Auction. Please consider donating experiences and commitments to make baked goods, such as cooking lessons for this auction. Please contact Convention Host Committee Chairman Scott White at [Swhite@nfb.org](mailto:Swhite@nfb.org) or at 410-868-9519 to arrange to contribute auction items.
- You are strongly encouraged to have your NFB membership coins with you during the NFBMD Convention and keep them in your possession at all times. There may be specific incentives, activities, and prizes for those carrying their NFB membership coins.
- The Maryland Parents of Blind Children Division Seminar will be convened virtually. Information for this year's seminar can be found at [NFBMD.org/Convention](http://NFBMD.org/Convention). Visit the site to register for the conference and to find a full agenda for adult and family events.
- The Maryland Seniors Issues Division Seminar will be convened virtually. Information for this year's seminar can be found at [NFBMD.org/SeniorSeminar](http://NFBMD.org/SeniorSeminar). Visit the site to register for the conference and to view the agenda.

The Ambassadors Committee will hold an orientation for first-time convention attendees on Wednesday, November 4, beginning at 8 p.m. This meeting is for those attending the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland Convention for the first time and/or those attending the NFBMD convention virtually for the first time. Come to get oriented to the activities that will take place throughout the weekend. Get all of your questions answered.

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

## Organization Information

National Federation of the Blind of Maryland  
15 Charles Plaza, #3002, Baltimore, MD 21201  
443-426-4110; [President@nfbmd.org](mailto:President@nfbmd.org)



**Image: Ronza Othman**  
*President*

*National Federation of the Blind of Maryland*



**Image: Pam Allen**

*President and National Representative*  
*National Federation of the Blind of Louisiana*



**Image: Sharon Maneki**  
*Immediate Past President*

*National Federation of the Blind of Maryland*

**OFFICERS:**

Ronza Othman, President, Baltimore  
Deborah Brown, *First Vice President*, Rockville  
Anil Lewis, *Second Vice President*, Baltimore  
Judy Rasmussen, *Secretary*, Kensington  
Shawn Jacobson, *Treasurer*, Olney

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Dezman Jackson, Baltimore  
Sharon Maneki, Columbia  
Maurice Peret, Baltimore  
Melissa Riccobono, Baltimore  
Melba Taylor, Bowie  
Marguerite Woods, Baltimore

## ***OUR CREDO***

The National Federation of the Blind knows 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. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back!

## ***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.

## ***ABOUT THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF MARYLAND***

The National Federation of the Blind of Maryland (NFBMD), an affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), is an organization of blind people and their friends. We believe in the full capacity of blind people; we have the power, influence, diversity and determination to help transform our dreams into reality. Our members work together for a brighter tomorrow by raising the expectations for blind people everywhere so that blind persons can live the lives they want.

## ***WHO WE ARE***

The National Federation of the Blind of Maryland is a 501c(3) nonprofit made up of blind people of all ages, and their families and friends. Our strong local chapters and divisions, and well-trained leaders help newly blind people adjust to vision loss and promote the full participation and integration of blind people in our communities. We bring our collective experiences together to effect change at the state and national level.

## ***WHAT WE DO***

- Assist blind persons to acquire the skills of independence
- Help blind persons to develop confidence in themselves through our many service activities

- Teach blind persons the skills of leadership through active participation in conventions, chapter meetings, and civic activities
- Encourage blind seniors to continue their active and meaningful lifestyles
- Prepare blind students for productive tax-paying careers through academic and training scholarships
- Inform people with diabetes about their options for coping with vision loss
- Support parents and friends of blind children with information about the capabilities of the blind
- Protect and promote the civil rights of blind persons through public education and legislative action
- Advocate for policies that eliminate discrimination and guarantee equal access to educational programs and high-quality rehabilitation
- Educate the public through seminars, community activities and our publications



# AdNet



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 Serving the blind, deaf and mobility impaired community in their workplace by providing Reasonable Accommodations Support Services to government and corporate entities.  
 Contact Betsy Cerulo, CEO, [bcerulo@adnetp3.com](mailto:bcerulo@adnetp3.com), 410-715-4035*

## **LIVE THE LIFE YOU WANT**

*Lyrics copied from October 2015 Presidential Release*

**Chorus:** Live the life you want. Nobody can stop you.  
Shoot for the sun and break on through.  
So you're blind. You'll be fine. We've got good news!  
You can live the life you want. Yes, we know the truth.

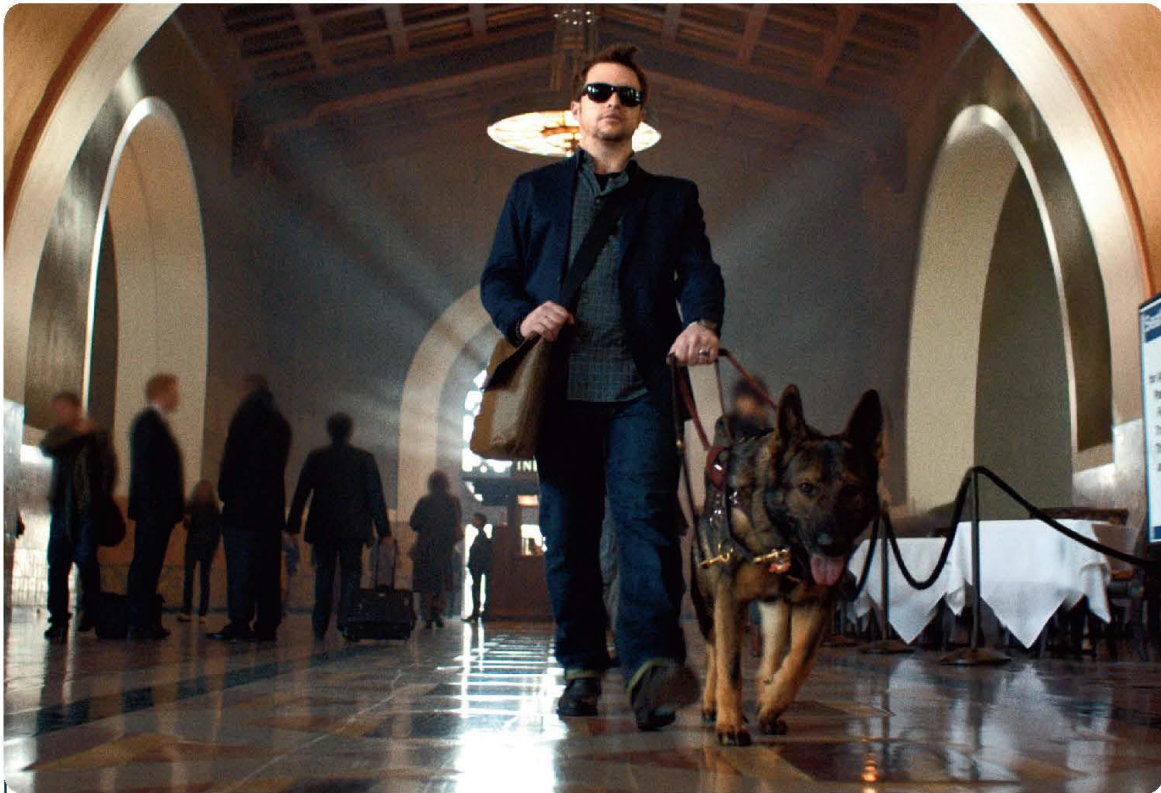
Grab a cane, get trained, gotta get movin'.  
Make a change in the wage, that's what we're doin'.  
Come with me, yeah

### **Chorus**

You and me, NFB, let's dream together.  
NFB, you and me, lives on forever.  
You will see yeah

### **Chorus**

You can live the life you want. You'll know the truth.



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.

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**COME VISIT US AT OUR BOOTH TO LEARN ABOUT NON-24**

**ZOOM ID: 239 845 1471 PASSCODE: 1**

**MAGGIE FELTON 202-579-8035**

MAGGIE.FELTON@VANDAPHARMA.COM

**NON-24**  
a circadian rhythm disorder

**VISIT US ONLINE AT [www.Non-24.com](http://www.Non-24.com).**

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*Vanda Pharmaceuticals Advertisement:* 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. Come visit us at our booth to learn about non-24. Zoom ID: 239 845 1471 Passcode: 1; Maggie Felton 202-579-8035, [Maggie\\_felton@vandapharma.com](mailto:Maggie_felton@vandapharma.com) Visit us online at [www.non-24.com](http://www.non-24.com).

***WE EXTEND PROFUSE THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING  
CONVENTION SPONSORS:***

Title Level Sponsor

Vanda Pharmaceuticals

Independence Level Sponsors

AdNet/AccountNet, Inc.

Maryland Relay

Equality Level Sponsors

Blind Savvy USA, LLC

Brown, Goldstein and Levy LLP

Sipbound Corporation

Opportunity Level Sponsors

Friends of the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled

Maryland Technology Assistance Program

The Flower Barn and The Clayground Studio and Gallery

The Low Vision Shop

Freedom Level Sponsor

3DPhotoWorks

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# **CHAPTERS AND DIVISIONS OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF MARYLAND**

## **At Large Chapter**

Marguerite Woods, president, 443-271-1668, [mmwoods719@gmail.com](mailto:mmwoods719@gmail.com)  
Monthly meetings third Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., via phone:  
(605) 313-4818, access code 720125

## **Baltimore County Chapter**

Ruth Sager, president, 410-602-9030, [rsager78@gmail.com](mailto:rsager78@gmail.com)  
Monthly meetings fourth Wednesday in Pikesville

## **Central Maryland Chapter**

Graham Mehl, president, 301-875-8295, [blind@trailstone.com](mailto:blind@trailstone.com)  
Monthly meetings first Tuesday in Columbia

## **Eastern Shore Chapter**

Heather Guy, president, 410-430-8954, [hguy403@comcast.net](mailto:hguy403@comcast.net)  
Monthly meetings second Saturday in Salisbury

## **Greater Baltimore Chapter**

Anil Lewis, president, 410-659-9314, ext. 2374, [alewis@nfb.org](mailto:alewis@nfb.org)  
Monthly meetings third Saturday in Baltimore

## **Greater Carroll County Chapter**

Brian Keseling, president, 410-855-5605, [bkmaverick@gmail.com](mailto:bkmaverick@gmail.com)  
Monthly meetings second Tuesday in Westminster

## **Greater Cumberland Chapter**

Jean Faulkner, president, 301-729-8942  
Monthly meetings third Wednesday in Cumberland

## **Maryland Association of Blind Students**

Qualik Ford, president, 301-312-9813, [gsford@outlook.com](mailto:gsford@outlook.com)  
Periodic meetings throughout the year

## **Maryland Association of Blind Merchants**

Melba Taylor, president, 240-381-1637, [m.taylor@encoreassoc.com](mailto:m.taylor@encoreassoc.com)  
Periodic meetings throughout the year

### Maryland Parents of Blind Children

James “Garret” Mooney, president, 480-433-8003,  
[james.garret.mooney@gmail.com](mailto:james.garret.mooney@gmail.com)

Periodic meetings throughout the year

### National Harbor Chapter

Amber Woods, president, 301-978-6686, [woodsamber83@gmail.com](mailto:woodsamber83@gmail.com)

Monthly meetings fourth Saturday in Suitland

### Senior Issues Division

Ruth Sager, president, 410-602-9030, [rsager78@gmail.com](mailto:rsager78@gmail.com).

Periodic meetings throughout the year

### Sligo Creek Chapter

Debbie Brown, president, 301-881-1892, [Deborahb14@verizon.net](mailto:Deborahb14@verizon.net)

Monthly meetings second Saturday primarily in Silver Spring

### TLC Chapter

Meleah Jensen, president, 504-621-4162, [MeleahHeather@gmail.com](mailto:MeleahHeather@gmail.com)

Meetings third Thursday in Towson

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### MARYLAND RELAY

*Telecommunications Access of Maryland (TAM) is a division of the Maryland Department of Disabilities and operates the Maryland Relay and Maryland Accessible Telecommunications programs. Maryland Relay is a free, public service for individuals who are Deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind, or speech-disabled that enables them to communicate using the telephone.*

*The Maryland Accessible Telecommunications (MAT) program offers a wide variety of solutions and tools—from amplified phones to Braille TTYs to tablets— needed to independently make or receive phone calls.*

Visit [www.mdrelay.org](http://www.mdrelay.org) for information.

## ***COMMITTEES OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF MARYLAND***

If you're interested in being appointed to a particular committee, notify the NFBMD president at [president@nfbmd.org](mailto:president@nfbmd.org) or 443-426-4110.

### Advocacy Committee

Sharon Maneki, chairperson

### Ambassadors Committee

Judy Rasmussen, chairperson

### Audit Committee

Barry Hond, chairperson

### BELL Committee

Lizzy Muhammad Park, chairperson

### Braille Spectator Committee

Ronza Othman and Sharon Maneki, editors

### Deaf-Blind and Hearing Loss Issues Committee

Janice Toothman, chairman

### Development and Fundraising Committee

Anil Lewis and Shawn Jacobson, co-chairpersons

### Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Anil Lewis, chairperson

### Employment Committee

Pam Goodman, chairperson

### Guide Dog Issues Committee

Ashley Alvey and Janice Toothman, co-chairpersons

### Legislation Committee

Sharon Maneki, chairperson

### Membership Committee

Dezman Jackson, chairperson

### PAC Plan Committee

John G. Paré Jr., chairperson  
Stephanie Flynt, vice chairperson

### Public Relations Committee

Chris Danielsen, chairperson

### Resolutions Committee

Jesse Hartle, chairperson

### Scholarship Committee

Mildred Rivera, chairperson

### Sharon Maneki Youth Empowerment Grant Committee

Sharon Maneki, chairperson

### Social Media Committee

Karen Anderson, chairperson

### Website and Technology Committee

Graham Mehl, chairperson

### Youth Activity Committee

Lizzy Muhammad Park, chairperson



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## ***CONVENTION-RELATED COMMITTEES:***

### Anna Freysz Cable Award Committee

Debbie Brown, chairperson

### Convention Host Committee

Scott White, chairperson

### Convention Organization and Activities

Meleah Jensen, chairperson

### Convention Registration Committee

Marie Marucci, chairperson

### Distinguished Educator of Blind Children Award Committee

Teresa Graham, chairperson

### Door Prize Committee

Darlene Price, chairperson

### Jennifer Baker Award Committee

Trudy Pickrel, chairperson

### Kenneth Jernigan Award Committee

Dr. Marc Maurer, chairperson

### National Funding Support Auction Committee

Michael Bullis, chairperson

### Nominating Committee

Ellen Ringlein, chairperson

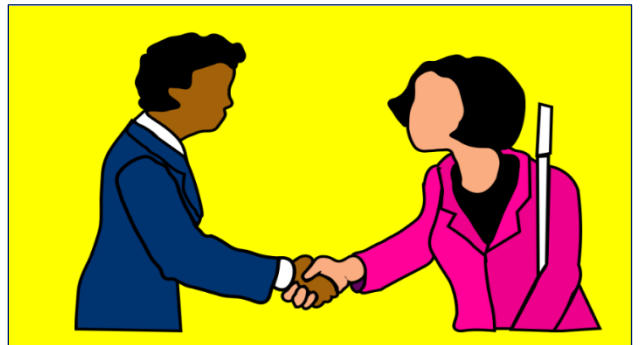
## ***LEAVING A LEGACY***

### **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. Just 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 the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland. Your legacy gift to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland 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, ext. 2422, or at [pchang@nfb.org](mailto:pchang@nfb.org).



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Services  
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Your Disability Trainers and  
Advisors

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

**congratulates the National  
Federation of the Blind of MD on  
your first virtual convention!**  
***"Thanks for all you do for blind  
people!"***

## ***STAY CONNECTED AND INFORMED:***

Follow the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland on Twitter:

[Twitter.com/NFBMD](https://twitter.com/NFBMD)

Friend the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland on Facebook:

[Facebook.com/NationalFederationoftheBlindofMaryland](https://facebook.com/NationalFederationoftheBlindofMaryland)



Stay connected with your fellow Maryland Federationists by joining our state email listserv. This list allows you to receive affiliate and national announcements, and also start and participate in discussions regarding blindness and blindness issues. To sign up, visit [NFBnet.org](https://NFBnet.org), click on “Join or Drop NFB Mailing Lists,” activate “NFBMD” link, and follow the instructions. Many of our local chapters also now have listservs. Talk to your chapter president to learn how to sign up so you don’t miss important information about chapter news and events.

Visit our website at [NFBMD.org](https://NFBMD.org). Check out our blog for the President’s Messages. We welcome blogposts from all of our members. Be sure to check out the Blindness Resources link, and the Know Your Rights link to keep up to date on important information. Be sure to download and print “About NFBMD,” in the “About Us” tab on [NFBMD.org](https://NFBMD.org), for use at chapter outreach events.

## **STRIVE**

*Lyrics by Barbara Elliott*

Sometimes people tell me blind people should be quiet and sit down  
But I say "No!" I say "No!" I say "No."  
They contend that I should be content to let others lead me around,  
But I say "No!" I say "No!" I say "No."  
Everybody needs somebody to help sometimes, but I'm in charge of me,

**CHORUS:** I've gotta strive, strive, strive a little farther,  
Reach, reach, reach a little longer,  
Work, work, work a little harder,  
Hope, hope, hope a little stronger.  
Watch me, watch me, watch me.  
Nothin's gonna stop me, stop me, stop me.

I'm spreading my wings, soaring on a dream,  
I can do anything!  
I gotta be brave even when I'm afraid to do hard things.  
I'll tell myself "Go!" I'll just go, I will go.  
I'm not a fool; I need training and tools to live out my dreams.  
So I'll say "Go!" I'll just go, I will go.  
I'm not a passenger in my life. I'm gonna take control and drive.

**Chorus**

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**EXPANDING OUR PROMINANCE IN MARYLAND**



Image: NFBMD Eastern Shore Chapter Members Amy Crouse and Mary Elligson receive White Cane Awareness Day Proclamation for Worcester County



Image: NFBMD President Ronza Othman with Delegate Cathi Forbes in Annapolis advocating to modernize the name of our Library so it becomes the Maryland Library for the Blind and Print Disabled



Image: NFBMD engaged in legislative advocacy in Annapolis with Delegate Attar fighting for access to information concerning electric low-speed scooters



Image: NFBMD engaged in legislative advocacy in Annapolis with Senator Clarence Lam fighting for desegregated voting based on disability



Image: NFBMD Central Maryland Chapter Meet the Blind Month Hike with Councilman Opel Jones

# Convention Agenda

## ***FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6***

### **9 a.m. to 12 p.m.—Annual Conference for Parents and Teachers of Blind Children: Maryland Parents of Blind Children**

Meeting ID: [898 9205 8751](#)

We will learn about the best ways to advocate for your child under the conditions of COVID-19. Also, we will have presenters from the Colorado Center for the Blind and the Louisiana Center for the Blind explain how their summer programs can make up for any lost instruction as a result of COVID-19. Additionally, parents can learn how to cope with the stresses of our new virtual world.

Host: Garret Mooney, president, Maryland Parents of Blind Children Division; Baltimore, Maryland

### **9 to 10:30 a.m.—NFBMD Board of Directors Meeting (Open to All)**

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

This is an official business meeting.

### **10:30 to 11:30 a.m.—Resolutions Committee Meeting**

Meeting ID: [942 0234 6609](#)

All are welcome!

Host: Jesse Hartle, Resolutions Committee chairperson, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Lutherville, Maryland

### **11:30 to 1 p.m.—NFBMD New Member Town Hall**

Meeting ID: [930 5016 1538](#)

Come learn about the NFB and the NFB of Maryland, how to become a member, why to become a member, and what makes the NFB unique. This town hall is for those who are new to the NFB, those who are interested in joining, and those who have questions about the organization. Hosts: Jeannie Massay, treasurer, National Federation of the Blind; chairperson, NFB Membership Committee; Norman, Oklahoma  
Dezman Jackson, Membership Committee chairperson; Board Member, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

### **1 to 4 p.m.—Living Successfully with Vision Loss – Tips and Tricks**

Meeting ID: [991 6981 2809](#)

Learn about regaining independence after losing vision. All are welcome!

Host: Ruth Sager, president, Maryland Senior Issues Division, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

### **1 to 5 p.m.—Exhibits**

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

Check out the latest offerings from a variety of companies and organizations that provide technology and services for the blind.

Host: Jen White, Sponsorship and Exhibits coordinator; Owings Mills, Maryland

#### **1 to 3 p.m.—Exhibitor Showcase**

Come hear about the products and services NFBMD sponsors and exhibitors have to offer.

#### **3 to 5 p.m.—Exhibitor Office Hours**

Connect directly with NFBMD sponsors and exhibitors to ask questions, get additional information, and transact business. Visit [NFBMD.org/ExhibitHall](https://www.nfbmd.org/ExhibitHall) to get direct connect information.

### **3 to 4 p.m.—Blind Parents Meeting**

Meeting ID: [810 4428 4520](#)

Share tips and tricks on how to parent using non-visual techniques.  
Network with other blind parents and caregivers.

Host: Melissa Riccobono, chairman; Baltimore, Maryland

### **3 to 4 p.m.—Maryland Career Mentoring Mixer**

Meeting ID: [977 0927 2542](#)

Are you a participant in the NFB Career Mentoring Program? Are you interested in becoming a mentor? Are you between the ages of 14 and 21? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, this session is for you. Come network and mingle with current and prospective participants in the NFB Career Mentoring Program.

Host: National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

### **4 to 5 p.m.—At-Large Chapter Mixer**

Meeting ID: [942 1497 1127](#)

The At-Large Chapter will meet to network.

Host: Marguerite Woods, president; Baltimore, Maryland

#### **4 to 7 p.m.—Student Workshop**

Meeting ID: [973 7060 8918](#)

Come learn about matters of interest to students including how to self-advocate in school, with potential employers, and in the world. Learn what resources are available for students.

Host: Qualik Ford, president, Maryland Association of Blind Students Division; Baltimore, Maryland

#### **5 to 6 p.m.—Deaf-Blind and Hearing Loss Issues Committee Meeting**

Meeting ID: [834 5402 4569](#)

Share strategies and ideas to maintain independence. Anyone interested is invited to attend.

Host: Janice Toothman, chairman; Bowie, Maryland

#### **5:30 to 7 p.m.—Maryland Association of Blind Merchants Symposium and Networking Mixer**

Meeting ID: [950 7772 4586](#)

Come learn about matters of interest to blind merchants and network with fellow blind entrepreneurs.

Host: Melba Taylor, president, Maryland Association of Blind Merchants Division; Bowie, Maryland

#### **6 to 7 p.m.—Parent and Families Networking Hour**

Meeting ID: [831 9061 1917](#)

Participants of the Parent and Teacher Seminar, as well as those with school-aged children are invited to a networking event. This is an opportunity for families to chat and get to know one another.

Host: Garret Mooney, president, Maryland Parents of Blind Children Division; Baltimore, Maryland

## **6 to 7 p.m.—Protecting the Rights of Guide Dog Users**

Meeting ID: [943 3945 6573](#)

Share strategies and ideas on how to ensure the rights of guide dog users are protected.

Hosts: Ashley Alvey, co-chairman; Baltimore Maryland; Janice Toothman, co-chairman; Bowie, Maryland

## **7 to 8:30 p.m.—Virtual Picnic and a Play**

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

The Braille is Beautiful players will perform “Sorry Wrong Number,” an NFBMD favorite.

Host: Debbie Brown, play director; first vice president, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Rockville, Maryland

## **8:30 - 10:00 p.m.—NFBMD Games Night**

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

This gameshow style evening promises to be fun for all ages.

Host: Melissa Riccobono, board member, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

## ***SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7***

### **7 to 8:15 a.m.—Maryland Association of Blind Students Annual Meeting**

Meeting ID: [943 8928 1029](#)

The Maryland Association of Blind Students will hold its annual business meeting, including planning future workshops and events and holding elections.

Host: Qualik Ford, president, Maryland Association of Blind Students Division; Baltimore, Maryland

### **8:30 a.m. to Noon—Saturday Morning Session**

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

#### **8:30 a.m.—Call to Order, Opening Ceremonies, and Invocation**

#### **8:50 a.m.—Voting Rules of Engagement and Constitutional Amendment Consideration**

#### **9:05 a.m.—Legislative Welcome**

Presenter: President Pro Tem Melany G. Griffith, District 25, Maryland State Senate; Annapolis, Maryland

#### **9:15 a.m.—Rise Up and PAC**

Presenters: John Paré, executive director of Advocacy and Policy, National Federation of the Blind, Maryland PAC Plan chairman; Baltimore, Maryland

Stephanie Flynt, Government Affairs Specialist, National Federation of the Blind, Maryland PAC Plan Vice Chairman; Baltimore, Maryland

#### **9:25 a.m.—We Rise as a National Movement: A Report from Our National Office**

Presenter: Pam Allen, first vice president and chairperson, Board of Directors, National Federation of the Blind; President, NFB of Louisiana; executive director, Louisiana Center for the Blind; Ruston, Louisiana

**10 a.m.—Rise Up in Partnership: Libraries and Legislation**

Presenters: John Owen, director, Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled; Baltimore, Maryland

Delegate Catherine Forbes, District 42A, Maryland House of Delegates; Annapolis, Maryland

**10:25 a.m.—Rise Up in Innovation: Excellence in Nonvisual Access and Blindness Programs**

Presenters: Anil Lewis, executive director of Blindness Initiatives, National Federation of the Blind; second vice president, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

Susan Vowels, DBA, Accessibility Inclusion fellow, Center of Excellence in Nonvisual Access; Constance F. and Carl W. Ferris associate professor and chair, Department of Business Management, co-director, Information Systems Minor, Washington College; Chestertown, Maryland

Renee Hill, Accessibility Inclusion fellow, Center of Excellence in Nonvisual Access; principal lecturer, College of Information Studies, University of Maryland; College Park, Maryland

**10:55 a.m.—Rise Up and Get Training**

Presenters: Pam Allen, executive director, Louisiana Center for the Blind; Ruston Louisiana

Julie Deden, executive director, Colorado Center for the Blind; Littleton, Colorado

Jennifer Kennedy, executive director, Blind, Inc.; Minneapolis, Minnesota

**11:25 a.m.—Questions and Discussion**

**11:30 a.m.—Rise Up for Equal Pay: Celebrating the End of Subminimum Wages in Maryland**

Moderator: Sharon Maneki, director of Legislation and Advocacy and board member, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Columbia, Maryland

Presenters: Leah Palmer, member, Greater Baltimore Chapter; Owings Mills, Maryland

Thomas Ampomah, member, Central Maryland Chapter; Columbia, Maryland

Matthew Rice, policy specialist, People on the Go Maryland; Windsor Mill, Maryland

Rachel London, executive director, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council; Baltimore, Maryland

Bob Hoffman, executive director, Maryland Works; Columbia, Maryland

**NOON—ADJOURN**

**12 - 1:55 p.m.—Luncheon: The Education of Blind and Low-Vision Students**

Meeting ID: [966 4768 7165](https://www.zoom.us/j/96647687165)

For parents, teachers of the blind, and those interested in matters concerning blind students.

Host: Garret Mooney, president, Maryland Parents of Blind Children Division, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**12 - 1:55 p.m.—Luncheon: Reclaiming Independence After Vision Loss**

Meeting ID: [910 4513 7973](#)

For seniors and others facing vision loss.

**Host:** Ruth Sager, president, Maryland Senior Issues Division, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**2 to 5 p.m.—Saturday Afternoon Session**

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

**2 p.m.—Call to Order**

**2:05 p.m.—Rise Up**

Presenter: Ronza Othman, president, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**2:45 p.m.—Celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act**

Presenters: Marc Maurer, immediate past president, National Federation of the Blind; Catonsville, Maryland

Tracey Hall Hennigan, second vice president, Greater Baltimore Chapter, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Gwynn Oak, Maryland

Sharon Maneki, immediate past president and member, Board of Directors, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Columbia, Maryland

**3:15 p.m.—The Bridges Project: A Helpdesk for Transition**

Presenters: Carlton Anne Cook Walker, Esq., project manager for the Bridges Project, The Image Center of Maryland; Blindness Education and Advocacy Resource (BEAR) teacher of students with blindness/low vision; president, National Organization of Parents of Blind Children; Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Hindley Williams, project coordinator for the Bridges Project, independent living specialist, The Image Center of Maryland; Secretary, TLC Chapter; Towson, Maryland

**3:25 p.m.—All Rise: State-Wide Services and Initiatives for the Blind**

Presenters: Carol Beatty, secretary, Maryland Department of Disability; Baltimore, Maryland

Toni March, director, Office of Blindness and Vision Services, Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS); Baltimore, Maryland

W. Robert Hair, superintendent, Maryland School for the Blind; Baltimore, Maryland

Michael Gosse, director of accessibility, Blind Industries and Services of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

**4:00 p.m.—Questions and Discussion**

**4:05 p.m.—Rise and Shine: A Report from Our Title Sponsor**

Presenter: Magdalena Felton, clinical nurse educator, Vanda Pharmaceuticals; Hunt Valley, Maryland

**4:15 p.m.—Rise Up: Ensuring Equal Access to Education During a Global Pandemic**

Moderator: Melissa Riccobono, member, Board of Directors, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Board Member, Maryland Parents of Blind Children; Baltimore, Maryland

Presenters: Brittany Bomboy, member, Maryland Parents of Blind Children; Baltimore, Maryland

Juhi Narula, secretary, Maryland Association of Blind Students; Bowie, Maryland

Naudia Graham, member, Central Maryland Chapter, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Ellicott City, Maryland

**4:45 p.m.—QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION**

**4:50 p.m.—REPORTS AND RESOLUTIONS**

**5 p.m.—ADJOURN**

**7 p.m.—54th Annual Convention Banquet**

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

Master of Ceremonies: Marc Maurer, immediate past president, National Federation of the Blind; Catonsville, Maryland

Keynote Banquet Address: Pam Allen, first vice president and chairperson, Board of Directors, National Federation of the Blind; President, NFB of Louisiana; Executive Director, Louisiana Center for the Blind, Ruston, Louisiana

Scholarships and Awards.

## ***SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8***

### **9 a.m. to Noon—Sunday Morning Session**

Meeting ID: [624 813 8327](#)

#### **9 a.m.—Call to Order**

#### **9:05 a.m.—Federal Welcome**

Senator Chris Van Hollen, United States Senate; Maryland

#### **9:15 a.m.—Rise Up and Salute: Recognizing Our Veterans**

Presenter: Ed Jackson, board member, Greater Baltimore Chapter, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland  
James Vale, national service director, Veterans Benefits and Policy, Blinded Veterans Association; Alexandria, Virginia

#### **9:35 a.m.—Rise Up and Protect Pedestrians**

Presenter: Delegate Dalya Attar, District 41, Maryland House of Delegates; Baltimore, Maryland

#### **9:50 a.m.—Teach ‘Em to Rise Up When They’re Young: NFBMD BELL and STEAM Programs**

Presenters: Lizzy Muhammad-Park, NFB BELL Academy coordinator for Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

Karen Anderson, first vice president, Greater Baltimore Chapter, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

#### **10:20 a.m.—Rise Up for Students: A Report from the National Association of Blind Students**

Presenter: Kenia Flores, First Vice President, National Association of Blind Students; Ruston, Louisiana

#### **10:40 a.m.—Rise Up for Entrepreneurship**

Presenters: Melba Taylor, board member, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; President, Maryland Association of Blind Merchants; Bowie, Maryland

Eileen Rivera-Ley, treasurer, TLC Chapter, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Baltimore, Maryland

Christopher Myers, member, Greater Cumberland Chapter, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Cumberland, Maryland

**11 a.m.—Financial Report**

Presenter: Shawn Jacobson, treasurer, National Federation of the Blind of Maryland; Olney, Maryland

**11:15 a.m.—Affiliate Elections**

**11:30 a.m.—Resolutions and Other Business**

**Noon—Adjourn**

***A CLOSING MESSAGE***

*On behalf of the officers and Board of Directors, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all Federationists and friends for your generous monetary donations and gifts of goods and services. We had a very successful year and an outstanding convention because of your help!*  
*Ronza Othman, President*

## ***BRaille IS BEAUTIFUL***

Na na na-na na na, na na na-na nah.  
Na na na na nah, na na na-na nah.

### **Chorus:**

Go on and live your life,  
Don't need a bit of sight.  
In the end you'll find  
Braille is beautiful.  
Put your fingers on the page.  
Tell your friends it's all the rage.  
It's all gonna be OK, yeah  
Braille is beautiful!

Na na na na na na, Na na na-na nah Braille is beautiful!  
Na na na-na nah, Na na na-na nah.

### **Verse**

Louis Braille was his name. Slate 'n' stylus was his game.  
They tried to stop him, but we adopted the code that paved the way.

### **Chorus**

Na na na na na na, Na na na-na nah Braille is beautiful!  
Na na na-na nah, Na na na-na nah.  
Na na na-na nah, Na na na-na nah.

**BRaille IS BEAUTIFUL!**

## 2020 NFBMD EXHIBITORS

The following is a list of organizations that will participate in the 2020 NFBMD Virtual Exhibit Hall. Check [NFBMD.org](https://www.nfbmd.org) for updates and additions to this list.

- Vanda Pharmaceuticals
- AdNet/AccountNet, Inc.
- Maryland Relay
- Blind Savvy, LLC
- Low Vision Specialists of Maryland and Virginia
- Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled
- Maryland Technology Assistance Program
- Custom Canes / You Cane Give
- Aira
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Maryland ABLE
- Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)
- The Image Center of Maryland
- Vispero