The National Federation of The Blind Alabama Affiliate 2024 Annual Convention

# “People, Purpose, Passion; A Pathway to Success”

## March 8-10, 2024

 

## Welcome

Hotel: Capstone

320 Paul W. Bryant Drive

Tuscaloosa, AL 35401

Phone: 1.800.477.2262

**Registration:** $25.00 | 30.00 after February 23

**Banquet:** $40.00 | 45.00 after February 23

Alabama Stadium/Locker Room/lunch Tour, 20.00 25.00 after February 23

Red Carpet Gala 15.00, 20.00 after February 23

Box Lunch 20.00, 25.00 after February 23

National Representative

John G. Paré Jr.

Executive Director of Advocacy and Policy

National Federation of the Blind

Baltimore Maryland

## NFB Pledge

I pledge to participate actively in the effort 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.

## 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 recognize a shared responsibility to create and uphold that atmosphere for the benefit of all.

The following link will take you to the NFB website:

[Code of Conduct](https://nfb.org/about-us/history-and-governance/code-conduct)

## NFB of Alabama Officers and Board of Directors 20232024

* President: Barbara Manuel, Alabama Affiliate
* 1st Vice President: Tamika Williams,
* Second Vice President: Jill Rossiter,
* Secretary: Grace Anderson,
* Treasurer: Larry Povinelli,
* Board Seat 1: Ashley Malson
* Board Seat 2: Jeffery Wilson
* Board Seat 3: Zippora Jones
* Board Seat 4: Brenda Houston
* Board Seat 5: Tiffany Moore
* Board Seat 6: Pazater Turner
* Registration Chairperson: Zippora Jones
* Door Prize Chairperson: Brenda Houston
* Scholarship Chairperson: Grace Anderson
* Vendor Fair Chair’s: Jeff Wilson, Grace Anderson

## Friday, March 8, 2024

### 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

University of Alabama Stadium, Locker Room Tour & Lunch

### 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM & 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Registration

Pre-Function Area

### 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Vendor Fair

Pre-Function Area

### 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM & 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Hospitality Room

### 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Are You Aware of the Many Initiatives the National Federation of the Blind offer? Join Us As we enlighten you on some of our projects.

NFB Programs and Initiatives

Anil Lewis

NFB Executive Director of Blindness Initiatives

Atlanta, GA

Murphy Room

### 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Be A Change Agent!

Connecting the Dots to Create an Inclusive Ecosystem

Dewanda Davis, M Ed

Founder and CEO of Elevated Career Services

Mobile, AL

President Room

### 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Promoting Literacy for the Blind

Casey Robertson Ed.S; NCUEB

Teacher of Blind and Visually Impaired  
Faculty Professional Development and Research Institute

Louisiana Tech University

Hamilton, Mississippi

Fitzpatrick Room

### 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

National Federation of the Blind of Alabama Affiliate Board Meeting

Murphy Room

### 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Legislative Pathways for Empowerment

Resolution Committee

Percy Garrett, Affiliate Legislative committee Chair

Murphy Room

### 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

NFB of Alabama Seniors Division

Carol Braithwaite, President

President Room

### 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

National Association of Blind Merchants

Tracy Watts, President

Murphy Room

### 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Student Division

Jonesti Steele, Chair

Fitzpatrick Room

### 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM

At Large Chapter Meeting

Jill Rossiter, President

Gayle Room

### 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

**Dinner Break**

### 8:00 PM – 11:00 PM

People Purpose & Passion Red Carpet Reception, Sponsored by Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind

Ballroom C & D

🌟

**Join us for a Glamorous Night of Entertainment!**

You are cordially invited to our Red Carpet Award Show, join us to shine on the red carpet, celebrate outstanding achievements, and embrace a night of glamour and excitement! Enjoy door prizes, performances, a hysterical comedian, and an exclusive cash bar! Dress code is semi-formal attire (suits, cocktail dress, button down and dress pants, etc.) Early Bird registration: $15 and At the Door: $20. See you on the red carpet!

Ballroom C & D

## Saturday March 9, 2024

### 7:45 AM – 8:15 AM

Registration

Pre-function Area

" People, purpose, and passion: A pathway to success "

General Session

Hotel Capstone Ball Room

### 8:30 AM – 9:00 AM

Alabama School for the Blind Marching Band

International Lions Club Parade of Nations

District One Winners

Talladega, Alabama

### 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

Call to Order:

Barbara Manuel, President NFB of Alabama

Opening Ceremonies

Welcome: Brenda Houston, President, Tuscaloosa Chapter

Invocation: Margaret Brown, Board Member, Tuscaloosa Chapter

NFB Pledge: Jill Rossiter

Presentation of Colors:

National Anthem: Jackie Hall, Secretary, Tuscaloosa Chapter

Proclamation: Jill Rossiter

Greetings:

Mr. Kip Tuner, President

Tuscaloosa City Council

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

### 9:30 AM – 10:10 AM

2024 National Report

John G. Paré Jr.

Executive Director of Advocacy and Policy

National Federation of the Blind

Baltimore Maryland

### 10:10 AM – 10: 35 AM

Creating Pathways, Fueling Purpose and Serving People

Dennis A. Gilliam, Ed, D

President

Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind

Talladega, AL

### 10:35 AM – 11:00 AM

Rebuilding Lives: The power of Rehabilitation

W. Ashley Townsend, MA, CRC

Assistant Commissioner

Blind and Deaf Services

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

Montgomery, AL

### 11:00 AM – 11:25 AM

Inclusive Learning: Illuminating paths for blind students

Casey Robertson Ed.S; NCUEB

Teacher of Blind and Visually Impaired  
Faculty Professional Development and Research Institute

Louisiana Tech University

Hamilton, Mississippi

### 11:25 AM – 11:35 AM

**Aira: The Visual Interpreting Service**

### Everett Bacon

Vice President of Blindness Initiatives

Aira Tech Corporation

NFB Board of Director’s Secretary

NFB of Utah Affiliate President

Salt Lake City, Utah

### 11:35 AM – 12:00 PM

Celebrating progress: Highlights of the people’s movement

National Federation of the Blind of Alabama Affiliate Report

Barbara Manuel, NFBAL President

Convention Announcements

### 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Lunch Break

### 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

NFB of Alabama Vendor Fair

Pre-function Area

### 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

Hospitality Room

### 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Promoting success with accessibility

**Breakout I:**

Useful iPhone Apps for Blind Individuals Using Voiceover

Denice F. Brown

Greater Philadelphia NFB Chapter President

Philadelphia, PA

Murphy Room

**Breakout II:**

Assistive Game-Changing technology

Doug Nixon and Staff

E. H. Gentry

Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind

Talladega, AL

Gayle Room

**Breakout III**

“Boldly Inclusive: Insuring Voting Rights for the Blind Community”

Anil Lewis

NFB Executive Director of Blindness Initiatives

Atlanta, GA

President’s Room

### 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

**Breakout I:**

Social Security: Working While Disabled

Todd Birdsong

Public Affairs Specialist

Social Security Administration

Tuscaloosa, AL

Murphy Room

**Breakout II:**

Post Washington Seminar: Next Steps Toward Equality

John G. Paré Jr.

Executive Director of Advocacy and Policy

National Federation of the Blind

Baltimore Maryland

Gayle Room

**Breakout III:**

National Library Services for the Blind

Rhonda Napier

Regional Librarian

Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled

Montgomery, AL

President’s Room

### 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM

**Breakout I:**

Accessing Aira Tech

Everett Bacon

Vice President of Blindness Initiatives

Aira Tech Corporation

NFB Board of Director’s Secretary

NFB of Utah Affiliate President

Salt Lake City, Utah

Murphy Room

**Breakout II:**

Building a Supportive Community: Fueled by Passion

Casey Robertson Ed.S; NCUEB

Teacher of Blind and Visually Impaired  
Faculty Professional Development and Research Institute

Louisiana Tech University

Hamilton, Mississippi

Gayle Room

**Breakout III:**

Talking blind live presents: socializing more in 24

Zippora Jones, Moderator

Panel:

Jill Rossiter, NFBA At Large Chapter President

Vision Rehabilitation Therapist

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

Florance, Alabama

Latresia Berry, Montgomery Chapter Member

Director of Human Resources/Accounting

Family Guidance Center of Alabama

Montgomery, Alabama

Tarmen Siaway

Clinical Director

Family Guidance Clinic

Family Guidance Center of Alabama

Montgomery, AL

President’s Room

Announcements & Adjourn

### 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Mix & Mingle

### 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

2024 Annual Affiliate Banquet

Hotel Capstone Ballroom

Entertainment: Tony Nixon

Presider: Jill Rossiter, NFBAL Second Vice President

Invocation: Jerry McKee

Memorial In Memory

Dinner Served

Introduction of National Representative: Jill Rossiter, NFBAL Second Vice President

Banquet Address: National Federation of the Blind Representative

John G. Paré Jr.

Executive Director of Advocacy and Policy

National Federation of the Blind

Baltimore Maryland

Scholarship Awards: Grace Anderson, Scholarship Committee Chairperson

Awards Ceremony: Tamika Williams, First Vice President

Barbara Manuel, Affiliate President

Pre-Authorization Contribution (PAC): Anil Lewis, Executive Director of Blindness Initiatives

Adjourn

### 9:15 PM – 11:00 PM

Family Feud

Host: Kevin Floyd, Mobile, Alabama

Does your team have what it takes to claim the 2024 NFB "Head of Household" Family Feud Championship? Will you take down the 2023 champ E.H. Gentry? Join the fun! You may walk away with bragging rights.

Entry to participate is free and winners will walk away with a reward!

Contact Jennifer Reeves for more information.

Let’s get to feuding!

National Federation of the Blind of Alabama

2024 National Representative



**“John G. Paré Jr.”**

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 bachelors and masters from the University of Florida in Gainesville and has lived in Florida, Texas, Virginia, and Maryland

## Sunday, March 10, 2024

### 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM

Devotion

President’s Room

### 10:00 AM

Alabama Affiliate Annual Business Meeting

Call to Order: Barbara Manuel, NFBAL President

Invocation

Reading of Minutes: Grace Anderson, NFBAL Secretary

Treasurer Report: Larry Povinelli, NFBAL Treasurer

Resolutions

Legislative Committee: Percy Garrett, Committee Chair

Nominating Committee Report: Brenda Houston, Chairperson

Positions: Board Seats, 1 – 3 – 5

Elections

Appointment of 2024 Delegate and Alternate

Affiliate Grants to National

Chapter Highlights

Old Business

New Business

Adjourn

The NFB provides a loving, supportive, and encouraging family that shares in the challenges and triumphs of our blind brothers and sisters. This deeply held faith in one another sustains members during times of challenge and cheers on individual and collective successes. Love is the feeling that permeates our organization and pushes us to expect the best from each other.

**The National Federation of the Blind of Alabama Appreciates your Presence during our 2024** " **People, purpose, and passion: A pathway to success** **" Convention”**

**Your presence has enabled us to have a successful convention! To our sponsors, presenters, vendors and attendees, we salute you and convey sincere gratitude to you for joining us as we evolve toward equality, opportunity and security for all.**

## NFB One Minute Message

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.