

Welcome to the 2025 National Federation of the Blind of California State Convention

## March 14 – 16, 2025

## DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Hotel Anaheim Resort

## 2085 South Harbor Boulevard

## Anaheim, CA 92802

**Unite:** **Building Community with Intelligence and Purpose**

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. Together with love, hope, and determination, we transform dreams into reality.

**Board of Directors**President, Tim Elder  
First Vice President, Rachel Grider  
Second Vice President, Robert Stigile  
Secretary, Shannon Dillon  
Treasurer, Tiffany Manosh

**Board Members**  
Alison Depner  
Brian Buhrow  
Jamie Principato Crane  
Cheryl Thurston  
Karen Steele  
Michael Richardson  
Shelbi Felter

**Convention Planning Committee Members**Rachel Grider, Brian Buhrow, Julia Cardenas, Shannon Dillon, Ethan Fung, Shelbi Felter, Angela Fowler, Patricia Grider, Gene Kim, Tiffany Manosh, Jamie Principato-Crane, Michael Richardson, Cheryl Thurston, Robert Stigile, and Marisa Vallejo.

**Chapter Presidents**Jacquisse Braxton – Antelope Valley Chapter, Cathy Gaten – At Large Chapter, Veronica Martinez - Bakersfield Chapter, Jeanette Jones – Central Valley Chapter, Yvette Lee – Escondido Chapter, Michael Richardson – Inglewood Chapter, Cheryl Thurston – Inland Empire Chapter, Arietta Woods – Pathfinder Chapter of Los Angeles, Marisa Vallejo– Poder y Movimiento Latina/o Sección, Tiffany Manosh – River City Chapter, Carmen Weatherly – Riverside Chapter, Julia Cardenas – San Diego Chapter, Robert Stigile – San Fernando Valley Chapter, Bobbi Pompey – San Francisco Chapter, Miguel Mendez – San Joaquin County Chapter, Jamie Principato Crane – San Jose Chapter, Debbie Worstman – Shasta Cascade Chapter, Ethan Fung– California Association of Blind Students, Shannon Dillon – California Association of Guide Dog Users, Jeanette Jones – California Parents of Blind Children, Arietta Woods – Seniors Division, Joy Stigile – Diabetes Action Network, Angela Fowler – Deafblind, Joga Singh – Sports & Recreation, and David Chan – Orientation Center for the Blind Alumni Association, Inc.

## **Registration**

A registration and information table will be stationed in **Tuscany A, B, & C Foyer**. You can pick up pre-registration packets, wrist bands, and register.

## **Hours:**

Friday March 14th: 3:30 PM-5:30 PM and 7:00 PM-9:00 PM  
Saturday March 15th: 7:00 AM-1:45 PM

**Hospitality Suite**

A hospitality suite will be open and available to all during the convention. This is a great place to mingle with other convention attendees and enjoy refreshments. **Location TBD**

## **Hours:**

Friday March 14th: 4:30 PM-5:30 PM—Pizza will be provided.

Saturday March 15th: 7:00 AM-8:00 AM, 12:00 PM-1:30 PM—Light breakfast and lunch items will be provided.

Sunday March 16th: 7:00 AM-8:30 AM—Light breakfast items will be provided.

## **First Time Attendees**

If this is your first state convention, you should join us at the Rookie Roundup on Tuesday, March 11, at 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm over Zoom. You will be welcomed by our leaders and given a brief orientation on what you can expect during the convention. They will make sure you have a wonderful experience and don’t miss anything. Be sure to indicate on your registration form that this is your first convention so we can make it special.

## **Spanish Interpretation**

We are broadcasting live interpretations of the Rookie Roundup, board meeting, resolutions, vendor showcase, general sessions, and the banquet through a Zoom conference function and dedicated telephone audio line that can be accessed from any mobile phone. Please contact Marisa Vallejo ([m77vallejo@gmail.com](mailto:m77vallejo@gmail.com)) or Rachel Grider (rachel.grider@gmail.com) for more details.

## **Captioning and Sound Amplification**

We are broadcasting live translations of the Rookie Roundup, board meeting, resolutions, vendor showcase, general sessions, and the banquet through a Zoom conference function that can be accessed from any mobile phone. Some FM transmitters will also be available on sight for sound amplification. Please contact Rachel Grider at Rachel.grider@gmail.com for more details.

## **Vendor Showcase and Exhibit Hall**

At 8:30 am – 9:30 am Saturday, March 15, in **Tuscany C**, you will hear vendors describe the current products and services which they will have on display. The Exhibit Hall will be open from 9:30 am –1:45 pm Exhibitors may begin setting up their exhibit tables at 7:00 am in **Tuscany D, E & F**

## **Guide Dog Relief Area**

The guide dog relief area will be located across the driveway from the front door of the hotel.

**Virtual Attendees**

Zoom links for the board meeting, resolutions, general sessions, and the banquet will be provided in a separate document to those who have registered.

**Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors!**

**Bell Champion Sponsor $10,000**

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Designing the Waymo Driver, an autonomous technology, to give people a new kind of freedom – to go where they want, when they want, while making the frustrations and concerns with driving a thing of the past.

**Gold Partner Sponsor $1500**

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**Northwest Center for Assistive Technology Training (CATT-NW)**

Our mission is to provide assistive technology training to teachers of blind/low vision children, utilizing a “train the trainer” model, while also providing support/training for other parents, guardians, and professionals working with blind or low vision children, including those with additional disabilities.

Contact: Ting Siu tingsiu@wssb.wa.gov

**Silver Ally Sponsors $750**

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**VisualEyes Access**

VisualEyes Access, LLC offers consulting services in the field of web and digital accessibility, and high-quality, affordable visual interpreting and administrative services to blind and low vision individuals.

Contact: Shawn Welker [Shawn@VisualEyesAccess.com](mailto:Shawn@VisualEyesAccess.com)

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**Sensory Tourism Australia**

Sensory tourism is an emerging concept that presents destinations differently, with less emphasis on traditional sightseeing. Physical and multi-sensory aspects of a destination are the priority to enhance the tourism experience for blind and low vision travelers with their other senses – hearing, taste, smell, and touch.

Contact: James Buck McFarlane [hello@sensorytourism.com](mailto:hello@sensorytourism.com)

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**Saavi Services for the Blind**

Saavi Services for the Blind is a certified structured discovery training center that provides comprehensive skills training in nonvisual techniques to people of all ages, as well as robust summer programs for middle and high school aged youth.

Contact: Emily Papenfus epapenfus@saavi.us

## Friday, March 14, 2025

***4:30 pm – 5:30 pm Hospitality Suite***

Enjoy mingling with fellow convention attendees. Pizza will be provided.

**Location TBD**

### 5:30pm – 6:30 pm Board Meeting

President Tim Elder

Meetings of the Board of Directors are open to the public. Please join us as we discuss policies, conduct other business, greet our scholarship finalists and hear from National Federation of the Blind National Representative. All first timers should attend. We will recognize rookies at the end of the board meeting.

**Tuscany A, B, & C**

***7:00 pm – 8:00 pm Orientation Center for the Blind (OCB Alumni)***

President, David Chan

OCB alumni reconnect with old friends, learn what is going on at the center, and discuss division business.

**Tuscany D**

***7:00 pm – 9:00 pm California Association of Blind Students***

President, Ethan Fung

Students and supporters, come join our student division for networking and our state convention meeting.

**Tuscany B**

### 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm DeafBlind Division

President, Angela Fowler

Are you experiencing the unique dual challenge of vision and hearing loss? Then come join us. Learn tips and tricks from other Deafblind Californians.

**Tuscany C**

***7:00 pm – 9:00 pm Sports and Recreation Division***

President, Joga Singh

If you are a fan of sports, or lover of recreational activities, and want to increase or share your knowledge in these areas, please join the general meeting of our Sports and Recreation Division. We will hear from guest speakers and discuss future plans.

**Tuscany A**

## Saturday, March 15, 2025

***7:00 am – 1:45 pm Registration***

**Tuscany A, B, & C Foyer**

***7:00 am – 8:00 am Hospitality Suite***

Enjoy mingling with fellow convention attendees. Light breakfast will be provided.

**Location TBD**

***7:00 am – 8:00 am Resolutions Committee***

Chair, Laura Millar

All are encouraged to observe the Resolutions Committee meeting which comes together once a year to decide on the policies and direction of the affiliate for the upcoming year. The 2025 members are Chairperson Laura Millar, Shannon Dillon, Tim Elder, Ever Hairston, Rachel Grider, Roy Payan, and Jamie Principato Crane

**Tuscany C**

***8:30 am – 9:30 am Vendor Showcase***

Coordinator, Cheryl Thurston

Listen to a brief description of products and services from each exhibitor. This is a wonderful way to survey everything in the hall at one time and then follow up with each exhibitor at their tables immediately after the presentations.

**Tuscany C**

### 9:30 am - 1:45 pm Exhibit Hall

Check out the latest technology, services and information from organizations offering useful resources to blind people.

**Tuscany D, E, & F**

***9:30 am – 11:30 am California Association of Guide Dog Users Division***

President, Shannon Dillon

Join the California Association of Guide Dog Users to learn about guide dog programs and hear what we have been doing for the last year.

**Tuscany C**

**9:30 am – 11:30 am *Tactile Graphics and Art Breakout***

Marco Salsiccia, Chancey Fleet, Raquel Alim, and Ting Siu

Explore different kinds of tactile graphics, and learn how to create your own tactile art.

**Tuscany G**

***11:30 am – 1:30 pm Parents of Blind Children Division***

President, Jeanette Jones

Come join the California Organization of Parents of Blind Children as we embark on a journey through science. Is your kid blind? Have they ever been told that science is too visual for them to pursue? We’re here to turn that stereotype on its head! We have designed a morning of exciting scientific experiments and explorations both for younger and older kids which are fully accessible, completely safe, and sure to get everyone excited about science!

**Tuscany G**

### 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm Diabetes Action Network

President Joy Stigile

All our welcomed to attend and learn more about Diabetes!

**Tuscany C**

***12:00 pm – 1:30 pm Hospitality Suite***

Enjoy mingling with fellow convention attendees. Lunch items will be provided.

**Location TBD**

### 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm General Session

President, Tim Elder

**Tuscany A, B, & C**

### 2:00 pm Call to Order

Opening ceremony Pledge of Allegiance and NFB Pledge — Julie Cardenas

### 2:05 pm National Report—Grasping the Movement

[Shawn Callaway](https://nfb.org/about-us/leadership/board-directors/shawn-callaway), Boardmember, National Federation of the Blind, reports on what our organization is achieving to advance the rights of blind people and shares updates from President Mark Riccobono.

#### **2:30 pm Legislating Website Access—Working with allies to pass A.B. 1757**

[Sarah Harris](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarah-harris-a43247100/) and [Guillermo Robles](https://www.ccbnet.org/drupal7/node/37), California Council of the Blind, join President Elder for a discussion of the need for website accessibility legislation and how all blind Californians can work together for this goal.

#### **2:50 pm Round the Bend—Pedestrian Crossings of the Future in City Planning**

[Peggy Martinez](https://creativeinclusion.us/), ADAC Principal, Creative Inclusion, informs us of the latest developments in California’s new cities of the future design. We will hear about major changes to pedestrian crossings and implications for our orientation and mobility. Tactile representations will be available in the back of the room.

#### **3:20 pm Federation Safety Nets—The Freedom of Training and Community**

[Mary Azatyan Witmeyer](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mary-witmeyer-734090302/), Member and Graduate, Colorado Center for the Blind, and [Julie Deden](https://cocenter.org/about-us/from-the-director/), Executive Director, Colorado Center for the Blind, discuss Mary’s journey out of forced adult conservatorship on the road to legal independence. Don’t miss this compelling personal story.

**3:50 pm Museums for All—Free access to life long learning programs**

[Laura Millar](https://lauramillar.com/), Member and Public Health Consultant, discusses the Museums for All program, SNAP nutrition benefits and how socioeconomic barriers should not preclude a life of learning and cultural enrichment for all blind people.

**4:10 pm Rideshare Denials—Making Uber/Lyft Pay Through Small Claims**

Linda Macleod, Member, shares her experience recovering $12,000 in damages against Uber in small claims court for three service animal denials. Learn how easy this process could be for the average member who experiences discrimination from rideshare drivers.

#### **4:30 pm AI Advances —Automated Descriptive Assistance with Be My Eyes**

[Hans Jørgen Wiberg](https://www.linkedin.com/in/hans-j%C3%B8rgen-wiberg-8a16b915/?originalSubdomain=dk) , Founder and boardmember, Be My Eyes, shares the latest developments in the rapidly changing world of artificial intelligence and accessibility. Learn about this powerful new tool for getting descriptions of the world around us with a blend of human and computer vision.

#### **4:50 pm Report of the Nominating Committee**

[Ever Lee Hairston](https://nfb.org/about-us/leadership/board-directors/ever-lee-hairston), Nominations Committee Chair, announces the slate of proposed candidate’s and comments on the election process that will follow on Sunday morning.

#### **5:00 pm Adjourn**

Members should quickly exit the room to make way for the banquet setup. Please take your conversations to the hotel lobby to enable the support staff to quickly change over the facility space.

### 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm Formal Banquet (doors open at 6:45 pm)

Mistress of Ceremony – First Vice President, Rachel Grider

Hear an inspiring address from our national representative, meet our scholarship winners, conduct fun auctions with games, and generally be delighted as we celebrate our success as an organization.

**Tuscany A, B, & C**

## Sunday March 16, 2025

***7:00 am – 8:30 am Hospitality Suite***

Enjoy mingling with fellow convention attendees. Light breakfast will be provided.

**Location TBD**

***7:00 am – 8:30 am Senior Division***

President, Arietta Woods

Join the Senior Division meeting for a super-charged experience!

**Tuscany A, B, & C**

## ***9:00 am – 12:00 pm General Session***

## ***Tuscany A, B, & C***

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### 9:00 am Our Money—Financial Report

Affiliate Treasurer Tiffany Manosh reports on our financial state.

### 9:15 am Together We Can—A Report from Your President

The President of the National Federation of the Blind of California provides an update on the activities of the affiliate over the past year, the financial state of the organization and reflections for the future.

### 9:40 am Resolutions

The convention votes on the proposed resolutions.

### 10:30 am Election of Officers & Board Members

An election will be run for the open positions including any nominations from the floor and short statements from the candidates.

### 12:00 pm Adjourn.

### Thank You to Our Convention Committees and Coordinators

Every year, too many individuals to name donate their time and talents to make our convention amazing. We operate this convention with a primarily volunteer team. We would love to have more people join our stellar group for convention planning and logistics efforts. Please share your desire to join us next year with [president@nfbcal.org](mailto:president@nfbcal.org) and Rachel Grider ([rachel.grider@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.grider@gmail.com)), or call (916) 382-0372.

***Thank you to the below leaders who graciously donated their time and abilities***

**Scholarships**: Chairperson Gene Kim, Lisamaria Martinez, and Skyler Covich

**Resolutions**: Chairperson Laura Millar, Shannon Dillon, Tim Elder, Ever Hairston, Rachel Grider, Roy Payan, and Jamie Principato Crane

**Nominations**: Chairperson Ever Hairston, and unconflicted representatives Debbie Worstman, Tiffany Manosh, Ethan Fung, and Tim Elder.

**Transportation**: Cheryl Thurston

**Registration**: Tiffany Manosh, Robert Stigile, Shannon Dillon, and Karen Steele

**Exhibits**: Cheryl Thurston

**Banquet**: Rachel Grider

**Parents**: Jeanette Jones

**Spanish** **Translation and Closed-Captioning**: Marisa Vallejo, Roy Payan, and Rachel Grider

**Agenda Embossing and Printing**: Brian Buhrow, Tiffany Manosh, Rachel Grider, and Patricia Grider

**Audio** **Video**: Brian Buhrow and Dwayne Davis

**Ambassador**: Michael Richardson

**Rookies**: Cheryl Thurston, Veronica Martinez, and Jamie Principato Crane

**Door** **Prizes**: Tiffany Manosh & Angela Fowler

**Auction** **Baskets**: Karen Steele and Michael Richardson

**Guide** **Dog** **Relief**: Shannon Dillon

**PAC**: Robert Stigile