

American Council of the Blind of Virginia

**2025 Hybrid Convention
Hilton Garden Inn, Fredericksburg, VA**



**"Together Again:
Reconnect, Recharge, and Rise!"**

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Welcome to the ACBVA 2025 Hybrid Convention!

Dear ACBVA Members, Friends, Exhibitors, and Sponsors,

It's my pleasure to welcome you to the first-ever hybrid convention of the American Council of the Blind of Virginia (ACBVA)! After several years of meeting virtually, we're thrilled to finally bring back the in-person experience—while keeping the convenience of Zoom for those joining from afar.

Our growing membership has made it possible to organize what promises to be a dynamic and memorable weekend:

Friday Evening: Kick things off with a lighthearted icebreaker, tasty appetizers, and our 'Lead the Way: Igniting Leadership in ACB Virginia' workshop—perfect for both new and longtime members.

Saturday: A full day of learning and connection, featuring sponsor and exhibitor showcases, tech and low-vision solutions, emergency preparedness, state-level advocacy, and falls prevention.

Saturday Night: Enjoy our banquet, where Debra Hill will inspire us as our featured speaker—followed by a silent auction and karaoke fun, all to benefit ACBVA.

Sunday: Our Annual Membership Business Meeting will include reports about what your organization has been doing and what we hope to do this coming year, proposed Bylaws, elections for open Board seats, followed by updates from the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI), and a public hearing.

Perhaps best of all, this weekend gives us the chance to finally meet—face to face—the wonderful friends we’ve only seen on Zoom! While you’re here, don’t forget to renew or join.

Membership is just \$13 through the end of October, even if dues increase to \$15 after the Annual Membership Business Meeting and adoption of the new Bylaws.

I encourage you to take time to connect, learn, and celebrate our shared mission. None of this would be possible without the incredible volunteers who devoted countless hours to make this convention happen. Please join me in thanking them for their hard work and dedication.

Thank you for being part of ACBVA and for all you do to strengthen our community. I look forward to seeing—and hearing—you throughout the weekend!

With warm regards,

Doug Powell

President, American Council of the Blind of Virginia

Sponsors

Our sincere gratitude goes to all the below sponsors who contributed at least \$250 to support our convention.

Individual Sponsors

- Jim and Davida Luehrs: Reston, Virginia
- Martin Pfeiffer: Springfield, Virginia
- Chris Jennings: Arlington, Virginia
- Larry Moye: West Boylston, Massachusetts
- Patricia Brown Reedy
- Reverend JanettaRose Green & Maria Dipasquantonio: Maclean, Virginia

Corporate Sponsors

Aquilano Salon



Logo description: Blue circle with white text "Aquilano Salon"

Website: <https://www.aquilanosalon.com/>

Contact Person: John Pascazio

Phone: 703-683-0755

Email: aquilanosalon@me.com

Computers for the Blind (CFTB)



Logo description: Letters C F T B over the words
Computers for the Blind

OPENING WORLDS - ONE COMPUTER AT A TIME

Website: <https://computersfortheblind.org/>

Contact Person: Stacy Turos

Phone: 214-340-6328

Email: outreach@computersfortheblind.org

iBUG Today



Logo description: A ladybug forms the letter G in ibug.
iBlind Users Group

Website: <https://ibugtoday.org/>

Contact Person: Michael McCulloch, President

Phone: 832-453-7139

Email: mdmcculloch1@gmail.com

Contributed by: Sree Roy, Springfield, VA

Selvas BLVThe logo for Selvas BLV features the word "selvas" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font, followed by "BLV" in a lighter blue, sans-serif font. The letters are closely spaced, and the overall design is clean and modern.

Logo description: The words Selvas BLV

Website: <https://selvasblv.com/>

Contact Person: Earl Harrison, National Account Manager

Phone: 512-914-1925

Email: earle@selvasBLV.com

Vanda Pharmaceuticals



Logo description: The word VANDA over the word Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Website: <https://www.vandapharma.com/>

Contact Person : Maggie Felton,
Clinical Nurse Educator – Patient Outreach
Non-24 Sleep Wake Disorder

Phone: 202-579-8035

Email: Maggie.felton@vandapharma.com

###

ACBVA 2025 State Convention Program Agenda

October 17–19, 2025

Hilton Garden Inn – Madison Room

Fredericksburg, Virginia (540) 548-8822

Theme: Together Again – Reconnect, Recharge, and Rise!

Pet-friendly hotel — welcoming guide dogs and support animals!
#

Friday, October 17: Welcome & Warmth

4:30 pm - Check In at Registration Desk just outside Madison Room—and pick up your goodie bag!

5:30 PM – Hospitality Hour

Kick off the weekend with light refreshments, friendly faces, and the chance to reconnect in a relaxed setting.

6:00 PM - Special Welcome

We're honored to kick off our convention with a warm welcome from Kerry Devine, Mayor of Fredericksburg, Virginia. Join us as Mayor Devine greets attendees and helps us officially open the 2025 ACBVA Hybrid Convention!

6:30 PM – Icebreaker: “Oops, I Did What?”

Laughter guaranteed! Hear hilarious and humbling stories from

fellow members about life's blind moments. Hosted by the delightful Robin Hoerber and Margie DeMars.

7:00 PM – Hybrid Convention Officially Kicks Off!

Enjoy the start of our hybrid weekend—where in-person and online participants come together as one community.

7:00 PM – Workshop: Lead the Way – Igniting Leadership in ACB of Virginia

Led by ACBVA leader and President Doug Powell and experienced facilitator and leader Jeremy Grandstaff, this session will help you explore your leadership potential, gain practical tools, and connect with others passionate about making a difference. Whether you're curious about getting involved or already guiding a team, this workshop is for you.

8:30 PM – Adjourn for the Day

Want to keep the conversation going? Join fellow attendees in the hotel lobby or at the hotel bar for casual drinks and connection!

#

Saturday, October 18: Learn, Laugh & Lead**7:30 AM – Breakfast**

Start your day with great food and even better company. Served in the hotel lobby.

9:00 AM – Our hybrid convention keeps rolling!

Join us as the morning sessions continue—featuring engaging speakers, interactive discussions, and plenty of opportunities to connect from wherever you are.

9:00 AM – Welcome & Agenda Overview

Doug Powell and RoseAnn Ashby will welcome everyone and preview what's ahead.

We'll begin with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Michaun Harrison, a blind veteran and ACBVA member, followed by a live performance of the Star-Spangled Banner sung by ACBVA's own Lisa Calhoun.

9:30 AM – Session 1: Advocacy in Action – Get Involved, Make an Impact

Ready to turn your passion into real change? We will hear from two of our Virginia State delegates, Patrick A. Hope (District 1) and Rodney T. Willett (District 58). This dynamic session will equip you with tips and insider knowledge to advocate more effectively when we travel to Richmond this winter.

Facilitated by RoseAnn Ashby, you'll learn how to amplify your voice and make a meaningful impact on policies that affect the blind and low vision community.

10:30 AM – Break

Grab some coffee, stretch your legs, and be sure to visit our vendors in the Washington Room.

10:45 AM – Session 2: Household Management – Tips & Tricks

Make life at home easier and safer by exchanging tips and techniques with other members in a lively discussion led by Sam Joehl and Vicki Ratcliffe.

11:45 AM – Break

This is another perfect time to meet with vendors or grab your chance to get a peek at the silent auction items—don't miss those hidden gems!

12:00 PM – Vendor & Silent Auction Introductions

Donna Clarke will kick things off with a quick highlight of the silent auction—what's available, how it works, and why your bids matter—before introducing our amazing vendors.

You'll then hear lightning-round intros from vendors, so you know who to visit during lunch and throughout the day.

12:45 PM – Lunch & Vendor Showcase

Enjoy lunch while exploring innovative products and services tailored for the blind and low vision community.

2:00 PM – Session 3: Emergency Preparedness – Plan, Prepare, Protect

Donna Clarke and Crystal Goodwin, from Fairfax County Department of Emergency Management and Security, walk us through critical safety planning that's both practical and empowering.

3:00 PM – Break

Vendors are standing by, and auction items are calling — take a few minutes to explore!

3:15 PM – Session 4: Falls Prevention – Stand Tall, Stay Safe

Larry Johnson, an ACB member from San Antonio, TX, who has given workshops from 1 hour to 8 weeks on Falls Prevention, and Doug Powell, a 20+ year Tai Chi teacher, combine to give hints to improve your environment and exercises to improve your balance with special focus on people who are blind or have low vision.

4:15 PM – Break

Final chance of the day to visit vendors and check out silent auction items before bidding begins!

4:30 PM – Session 5: Tech That Talks Back – Everyday Strategies for Navigating AI & Assistive Technology

Facilitated by Jeremy Grandstaff and Stan Gowin.

Discover how today's smart tools can boost independence and simplify daily life. Whether you're tech-curious or already plugged in, this session will explore how assistive technology and AI—from voice assistants to apps and smart home devices—can help you work smarter, navigate more confidently, and stay connected. You'll get real-life strategies, hands-on examples, and a chance to ask questions. No tech experience needed—just bring your curiosity!

5:30 PM – Free Time

Take a break, visit with friends, or grab a chance to talk to a

vendor.

Bidding on auction items begins!

6:00 PM – Celebration Banquet & Keynote Address

Join us for a delicious dinner and an evening of inspiration featuring Debra Hill, motivational speaker, singer, and proud member of ACBVA.

Debra will share her story, voice, and vision for resilience and empowerment.

Learn more about her work and music at debrahillsings.com.

7:30 PM – Evening Fun: Entertainment, Social Hour & Silent Auction

Donna Clarke hosts an evening full of laughter, music, karaoke, and last-chance bidding on fantastic auction items. Auction winners will be announced at 8:30 PM.

9:00 PM – Adjourn for the Day

Still buzzing? Head to the lobby or the bar for a nightcap and more great conversation.

#

Sunday, October 19: In the Future

7:30 AM – Breakfast

Ease into the final day with conversation and breakfast served in the hotel lobby. Take this final opportunity to claim your silent auction wins!

9:00 AM – Join us as we kick off the final day of our hybrid convention!

Tune in for the Annual Business Meeting, important updates, and engaging discussions as we wrap up a fantastic weekend together.

9:00 AM – Annual Membership Business Meeting

All members are encouraged to attend. We'll vote on bylaws, elect Board members, and hear from our officers and committees.

Call to Order – Doug Powell, President

Roll Call of Members – In-person and on Zoom

Agenda Approval – Doug Powell

Approval of 2023 Annual Membership Business Meeting Minutes
– Sue Bowmaster, Secretary

Approval of 2024 Annual Membership Business Meeting Minutes
– Sue Bowmaster, Secretary

Approval of 2024–2025 Treasurer's Report – Theresa Breeden,
Treasurer

Approval of Audit Report – Jonathan Avila

Approval of 2025–2026 Budget – Doug Powell

Approval of Bylaws Revisions – Doug Powell

Election of Board Members – Doug Powell

Approval of Resolutions – Doug Powell

President's Report

A. Co-Chairs

B. Bylaws Revisions

Committee Reports

Advocacy – RoseAnn Ashby & Vinettea Freeman

Communications – Theresa Breeden & Debra Hill

Fundraising – Theresa Breeden & Lisa Calhoun

Membership – RoseAnn Ashby & Theresa Breeden

Program Planning – Sue Bowmaster & Sam Joehl

Other Business

Adjourn

11:00 AM – DBVI Presentation

Updates and insights from the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired, presented by Kathy Malone, Deputy Commissioner for Services.

11:30 AM – DBVI Public Hearing

A public forum for questions, comments, and shared concerns.
Your voice matters!

12:30 PM – Farewell & Adjournment

Grab lunch on your own, exchange contact info, and travel safely home—until we're together again!

###

What to Expect at Convention

Hotel Orientation

Check-in Desk:

From the lobby entrance, go straight ahead to the front desk

Breakfast Area:

As you face the front desk, go to your Left

Hotel Restaurant & Bar:

As you face the front desk, go to your Right

Restrooms, Elevators, and Meeting Rooms:

With the front desk on your right, go straight toward the window and turn right at the hallway to find restrooms, elevators, and the Madison & Washington Rooms.

Volunteers:

Guides are available to assist you in the lobby, near elevators, and near Madison & Washington rooms.

Be My Eyes & Hilton:

Access Hilton's brands and services through the Service Directory in the Be My Eyes App, for help with accessible rooms and amenities.

Pool:

Indoor pool open until 10:00 PM

#

Guide Dog Relief

Guide Dog relief areas located behind hotel.

Trash receptacles available.

#

Zoom Links for Virtual Convention Participants

Zoom links will be emailed to all individuals who have registered for the convention, along with a copy of the convention program book. The same Zoom links will be used throughout the convention, including the annual membership business meeting taking place on Sunday morning. However, for convenience, we will also email the links each day to participants. Please do not share these links.

#

Transportation

If you have not done so already, please let RoseAnn Ashby know of your transportation needs. Specifically, she is organizing volunteers to pick people up from the Fredericksburg train station on Friday and to return them to the station on Sunday. In order to make this happen, you need to let her know when your train arrives on Friday and when it leaves on Sunday. She can be contacted at beachrose9@verizon.net or 703-403-0226. Amtrak toll free number is 800-872-7245.

In addition, she is arranging for car transportation, particularly for those who live far from a train station. In order to be considered for this accommodation, please contact her at your earliest convenience.

Food Highlights

Friday - Hospitality Hour in meeting room:

Pork sliders, veggie spring rolls, chicken skewers, fruit, and veggie trays

Saturday - Breakfast in lobby:

Chick-fil-A chicken nuggets & biscuits, Robin Hoerber's pound cake, yogurt, fruit, and more (volunteer servers; eat in lobby or take to room if desired)

Saturday - Lunch in meeting room:

Broadway Deli buffet: soup & salad, assorted meats, cheeses, breads, pasta salad, and chips (volunteers available to assist)

Saturday - Dinner in meeting room:

Seasonal harvest buffet: maple-glazed pork loin, herb-roasted chicken, roasted broccoli & cauliflower, mashed sweet potatoes, farm salad, artisan rolls, chocolate cake & berry tart (volunteers available to assist)

Sunday - Breakfast in lobby:

Costco treats, Krispy Kreme glazed doughnuts, fruit, and yogurt (volunteer servers)

All Day:

Coffee, tea, and water available in lobby & near meeting rooms

#

Assistive Technology Consultations

Don Barrett (Windows) & Stan Gowin (Mac)

Short sessions to troubleshoot, answer questions, and recommend resources

Sign up at registration

For questions in advance, contact Stan Gowin at

sgowin@verizon.net

#

Special Raffle – Computers for the Blind (CFTB)

Refurbished computer with Windows 11, 256GB SSD, 8GB RAM

1-year license for JAWS, ZoomText, or Fusion

1-year warranty & JAWS training

Sign up at registration to enter raffle

50/50 Raffle

Feeling lucky? Don't miss your chance to win big in our 50/50 raffle! Half the proceeds go to support ACBVA programs, and the other half goes straight to one lucky winner.

See Theresa Breeden for your tickets—get in on the fun early, because you can't win if you don't play! \$5/1 ticket, \$20/5 tickets. To play virtually email, Theresa at theresa@acbva.org.

Door Prizes

Door prizes announced throughout the convention – don't miss out! You need to be present to win!

Silent Auction

List of Silent Auction items will be emailed and posted on the website closer to the event. Instructions on how to place bids and participate coming soon. Both in-person and virtual attendees can participate.

#

Display of Visual Diagrams in Accessible Forms for Blind and Visually Impaired Individuals

Visual diagrams are playing an increasingly dominant role in providing information in education, employment and daily living. However, most of these representations are inaccessible for us. The primary alternative to visual graphics are manually created tactile diagrams, which are time consuming and costly to create. An effective, low-cost, totally automated, real-time method of converting and rendering accessible graphics is needed.

Dianne Pawluk from Virginia Commonwealth University will be at the convention recruiting individuals to participate in focus groups on this issue; compensation will be provided.

Dianne can be reached at: dpawluk@vcu.edu

#

2025 ACBVA Exhibitors

A P Real Oils and More



Logo description: Green circle with A P Real Oils and more! in the center

Websites:

<https://www.facebook.com/APRealOilsAndMore/>

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/aprealoilsandmore>

April Branch is an entrepreneur who creates and promotes natural products. She makes her own shea butter blends, sells body oils, and sells natural soaps. She believes everything good for your skin and body is naturally made. She had eczema as a child and she believes that this was part of her personal testimony to help others discover that nature's products, such as shea butter, are the only products our body naturally craves and needs. She sells quality fragrance body oils for men, women, and children. She promotes them because they are natural and do not have the alcohol found in perfume and cologne. Her mission is to naturally

make AP Real Oils & More the one-stop destination for your body by responding to skincare and personal hygiene through providing all natural products to the heart of her company- YOU!

Contact Person: April Branch

Phone: 804-909-1901

Email: aprealoilsandmore@gmail.com

#

Ability2Access (A2A)



Logo description: The words Ability 2 Access below a large A 2 A with right arrow

Website: <https://ability2access.com/>

Ability2Access (A2A) provides schools, government agencies and individuals with the highest quality low vision and blindness products, software and trainings.

A2A is the authorized dealer for Freedom Scientific, Optelec, LVI, Irie-AT, HIMS, HelpTech, eSight and more. We have showrooms in both Radford, VA and Ashland, VA (both by appointment only). The President, Julie Akers, of Ability2Access has over 17 years of experience in the low vision and blindness industry and is

dedicated to improving the outcomes and facilitating the independence of individuals with visual impairments or blindness.

A2A will come to your home, school, or workplace to provide a free, no obligation on-site demonstration of the products. We value our customers and want to ensure their satisfaction and appropriate usage of the products by offering on-site delivery, set-up and basic training (at the time of delivery) for all products \$1000 or more.

Contact Person: Julie Akers or Kendall Akers

Phone: 540-392-0388 (c) or 540-639-9732 (office)

Email: julie@ability2access.com or kendall@ability2access.com
or Products@ability2access.com

#

Breeden Inspirations



Logo description: The words Breeden Inspirations, Handmade Stationery Products below the roots of a Tree of Life.

In 2018, Theresa Breeden lost her central vision to Macular Telangiectasia 2. She turned that challenge into inspiration, creating low-vision stationery—journals, planners, and notebooks with bold lines, large print, and wide spacing. Each cover is a unique piece of art, designed by Theresa herself. Her work proves that vision loss doesn't stop creativity—it transforms it.

Contact Person: Theresa Breeden

Phone: 540-621-4843

Email: breedeninspirations@gmail.com

Connect: [Facebook](#) | [Amazon](#)

#

**disAbility Resource Center of the Rappahannock Area,
Inc. (dRC)**



Logo description: Shapes of different colors with d R C in the center

Website: <https://www.cildrc.org/>

The disAbility Resource Center (dRC) empowers people of all ages and all types of disabilities to live as independently as possible. We achieve this through the five core services of Independent Living: independent living skills training, peer mentoring, advocacy, information and referral, and transition services. These services work together to support individuals in gaining the skills, confidence, and resources needed to lead self-directed, fulfilling lives.

dRC is one of 17 Centers for Independent Living in Virginia and 403 around the country. We work together, and in our communities, to advocate for change to ensure people with disabilities have access to programs and services.

The dRC believes that people with disabilities should always be fully included and valued members of their communities—because inclusion, equality, and participation are not privileges; they are rights.

Mission Statement

To assist people with disabilities in achieving their highest potential and the full benefits of independent living by providing them—and those who support them—and the community with information, education, and resources.

Objectives

- Serve people with all disabilities and of all ages to live independently.
- Promote independent living and full community inclusion for all.
- Ensure access for people with disabilities in all areas of community life.

- Advance awareness and appreciation of the abilities and contributions of people with disabilities.

Contact Person: Debra Fults, Executive Director

Phone: 540-373-2559

Email: dfults@cildrc.org

#

Enhanced Vision



Logo description: The word enhanced in green and vision in blue, a Vispero brand

Website: <https://www.enhancedvision.com/>

Enhanced Vision is a leading developer of assistive technology for the visually impaired including Macular Degeneration, Glaucoma, Cataracts, Retinitis Pigmentosa and Diabetic Retinopathy. Low vision assistive technology enables people to read, write and fully participate in life.

Enhanced Vision has been at the forefront of the low vision field since its inception in 1996. We have brought many of the industry's most innovative assistive technologies to the market. With a strong management background in medical devices, the company furthered the assistive technology market with the development of one of the first headworn magnifiers called the V-

Max, now called JORDY. Today our product portfolio is considered one of the most diverse and reliable on the market. Dedicated to helping individuals maintain their independence, Enhanced Vision has developed leading assistive technology to create a full line of superior, easy-to-use low vision tools at affordable prices. We pride ourselves for listening to our customers in order to develop the best assistive technology possible. Our assistive technology is offered by low vision professionals and can be found in specialized low vision agencies throughout the world. We are located in Orange County, California.

The Quality Policy at Enhanced Vision is to exceed customer's expectation in everything we do. Through our customer focus and continuous improvement philosophy, quality is evident in every low vision device we design, manufacture, test and deliver. Emphasis on innovative technology, quality, and reliability coupled with our extensive distribution network provides our customers with superior products and services. We at Enhanced Vision take every measure to ensure quality, excellence and industry-leading processes throughout every single operation.

Serving Northern Virginia

Atlantic Low Vision



Logo description: A stylized eye with the words Atlantic Low Vision, Low Vision Solutions

Website: <https://atlanticlowvision.com/>

Atlantic Low Vision provides assistive technology for those with impaired vision. We create a personal relationship with our clients establishing a direct connection. We create this by providing a no obligation demonstration. This allows the client to see, feel, and use the machines we offer. We offer demonstrations at home or office, so we both can get a feel for the best solution for you. Phil Linz is the rep for Enhanced Vision products for northern Virginia.

Contact Person: Phil Linz

Phone: 703-888-7134

Email phil@atlanticlowvision.com :

Serving Southern Virginia

Advanced Vision (no website)

Advanced Vision Provides assistive Technology to those who are in need. I pride myself for quick and accurate evaluations for products that will meet the needs of the individual. I review with you the things that you want from a product and then show it to you to see how you do. I come to you to demo products to create a stress-free environment with a no obligation demonstration. I have been a representative for Enhanced Vision low vision products for almost 25 years. I have over the past 6 years picked up some other products to include in my portfolio.

I look forward to meeting each of you.

Contact Person: Allen Bareford

Phone: 804-400-1151

Email: bareford@comcast.net

#

Foundation Fighting Blindness



Logo description: The words Foundation Fighting Blindness in white letters on navy square with beam of light

Website: <https://www.fightingblindness.org>

The Foundation Fighting Blindness was established in 1971 by a passionate group of individuals determined to help find treatments and cures for blinding diseases affecting themselves or loved ones. At the time, very little was known about these devastating diseases that lead to blindness, and there were no clinical trials for potential treatments.

The Foundation's goal was clear, and today the mission of the Foundation is to drive the research toward preventions,

treatments, and cures for blinding diseases, including age-related macular degeneration, retinitis pigmentosa, Usher syndrome, Stargardt disease, Leber congenital amaurosis, and more.

Together, these conditions affect more than 10 million Americans and millions more worldwide.

An additional goal of the DC Metro chapter is to provide support, resource connections and helpful information to those with any vision issue. Both in-person and virtual meetings are scheduled a few times a year to help foster these connections.

At the convention Davida will have printed documents for sighted or low vision attendees. She will also provide materials electronically to anyone who would like them in that format. She may also have a flyer for an in-person event in November, program TBD.

Contact Person: Davida Luehrs

Phone: 703-819-8621

Email: davidaluehrs@gmail.com

#

Guiding Eyes for the Blind



Logo Description: Man and guide dog sitting next to the words Guiding Eyes for the Blind

<https://www.guidingeyes.org/>

Guiding Eyes for the Blind provides guide dogs to people with vision loss. We are passionate about connecting exceptional dogs with individuals for greater independence.

Since 1954, Guiding Eyes has graduated more than 10,000 guide dog teams. We believe in the powerful, meaningful change that our beautiful dogs bring to the lives of people facing the daily challenges that blindness and vision loss present.

It can cost up to \$50,000 annually to train and care for a guide dog throughout its working lifetime with a person who is blind. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, we provide all services completely free of charge to people who are blind or with vision loss. At Guiding Eyes, we rely upon the contributions of our generous donors to fulfill our mission.

Contact Person :

Melissa Carney : mcarney@guidingeyes.org

Madeline Bruggeman: MBruggeman@guidingeyes.org

[Guide Dog Users Inc](#)

This is a network of affiliates of guide dog users across the United States.

Contact Person: Cindy Labon: cindylabon@gmail.com

#

JW.org



Logo description: White letters JW.org on blue square

Website: <https://www.jw.org/en/>

Jehovah's Witnesses are a global religious organization that can be found in 240 lands. We are Christians who believe in Jesus Christ and that he is God's son. We base our beliefs solely on the Bible. While we primarily help our local communities with our bible-based education work, we also provide support in other ways. We invite you to explore this further using the link below:

[Louis Braille—Bringing Light to Prisoners of Darkness](#)

JW.ORG provides many free Bible study aides for those who are blind or visually impaired. These include Braille and large print publications. Also, audio publications can be accessed via JW.ORG, JW Library and Alexa. Additionally, screen reader (RTF) and notetaker (BRL) files as well as DAISY and MP3 formats are available. Videos with audio descriptions are also published on

JW.ORG. These resources assist individuals, married couples as well as their teens and young children to have uplifting Bible-based information that assists them to face daily challenges successfully and provide answers to life's big questions.

Contact Person: Kevin Burrus

Phone: 845-430-1408

Email: kwburrus@gmail.com

[Contact Us](#)

#

Lions



Logo description: The words Lions International in blue and L in gold on shield with lion's head on left and right

Website: <https://e-district.org/sites/md24/>

In 1917 Melvin Jones, a 38-year-old Chicago business leader, told members of his local business club they should reach beyond business issues and address the betterment of their communities

and the world. Jones' group, the Business Circle of Chicago, agreed.

The mission of the Lions is to empower volunteers to serve their communities, meet humanitarian needs, encourage peace, and promote international understanding through Lions Clubs.

Lions are constantly seeking civic minded citizens who are willing to donate some time and effort toward making our communities better places in which to live. If you are interested in visiting a Lions Club, please contact Davida Luehrs to receive an invitation to a local Lions Club. You can join us and learn more about what Lions really do to help their fellow man. Membership in a Lions Club is by invitation only; however, the only requirements are to be of legal age and good character. Through membership, Lions not only help people in need, but they have opportunities to develop personal friendships and gain valuable leadership skills which can be used in their work or in their personal lives.

At the convention Davida will be selling the 2025 White House Ornaments that the Reston Lions sell as well as the Virginia peanuts. She will provide the flyers electronically in advance and will take orders in advance of the convention. She will also certainly take orders at the convention.

Contact Person: Davida Luehrs

Phone: 703-819-8621

Email: davidaluehrs@gmail.com

#

National Industries for the Blind (NIB)



Logo description: N I B and National Industries for the Blind in blue on white background

Website: <https://nib.org/>

NIB is the nation's largest employment resource for people who are blind, and through its network of associated nonprofit agencies, is the largest employer of people who are blind in the country. We create opportunities for people who are blind to become wage earners and taxpayers, reducing their reliance on government support and increasing engagement with their communities.

NIB connects its associated agencies with manufacturing and service delivery opportunities with the federal government and commercial companies. Our customers get the business solutions that they need, and people who are blind are employed—it's a win-win. We offer career training, which is crucial to getting Americans who are blind employed and keeping them employed. Today, thousands of people who are blind are using these skills in state-of-the-art manufacturing and professional services careers.

NIB's impact is made possible through the sale of SKILCRAFT® products and services produced and delivered by people who are blind. SKILCRAFT is a registered trademark owned and licensed by NIB. The SKILCRAFT line includes thousands of offerings — from office supplies and hardware to knowledge-based professional services — that meet or exceed exacting government standards, including the rigorous requirements of the U.S. military.

NIB's vision is that blindness is not a barrier to employment. NIB's mission is to enhance the personal and economic independence of people who are blind, primarily through creating, sustaining, and improving employment.

At the convention Kathy Gallagher will be talking about employment opportunities with NIB and their associated agencies and will collect resumes from anyone who has a resume with him/her.

Contact Person: Kathleen Gallagher, Learning and Development Manager

Phone: 703-310-0500

Email: Kgallagher@nib.org

#

Patriot Vision Industries



Logo description: White words Patriot Vision Industries, LLC in white over an array of blue bordered red stars.

Website: <https://patriotvisionindustries.com/>

Family owned and operated by President and founder John D. Palmer, We specialize in and manufacture technology under the exclusive PATRIOT brand for all sorts of visual needs! We help you select the right technology to meet YOUR specific needs and to reach your functional goals. Matching technology to the person is what we do!!

PATRIOT VISION INDUSTRIES LLC, nestled in the rolling hills of central Florida, proudly designs, manufactures and distributes innovative assistive technology under our PATRIOT brand.

Pioneers in the industry, we continually strive to empower our customer's lives with our award-winning products and improve the quality of life for those we serve.

Patriot is the brand you can trust. Please call today to schedule a demonstration with one of our authorized dealers in your area, worldwide, or to receive more information or place your order! Patriot Industries has products that harvest AI which can do item descriptions, read barcodes, electric bills and count money. Patriot also provides portable CCTV's with OCR reading, along with digital magnifiers and a wearable that harvest the OCR reading and contrast color adjustment options.

Contact Person: Haley Lan, National Account Executive

Phone: 470-313-4116

Email: haley@patriotvision.com

#

Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington



Prevention of Blindness Society
of Metropolitan Washington®

Logo description: the words Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington below a stylized eye.

Website: <https://www.youreyes.org/>

Founded in 1936, POB is dedicated to the improvement and preservation of sight and quality of life by providing services and

education, and by championing healthy vision and innovation to everyone in our area.

Each year, POB impacts approximately 13,000 community members through our evidence-based programs — including vision acuity and glaucoma screenings, eyeglasses distributions and fittings, educational vision resources and events, low vision rehabilitation services and support group networks, and more. We remain committed to comprehensive vision health, ethical service within the community, deep respect for individuals and families in all circumstances, innovation in service delivery, and serving as a facilitator among our medical and social service peers.

Our organization serves the District of Columbia, Northern Virginia, and Montgomery and Prince George's Counties of Maryland.

Contact Person: Tara Aziz, Senior Coordinator, Low Vision Programs

Phone: 202-234-1010

Email: taziz@youreyes.org

#

Selvas BLV

The logo for Selvas BLV features the word "selvas" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font, followed by "BLV" in a lighter blue, sans-serif font.

Logo description: The words Selvas BLV

Website: <https://selvasblv.com/>

'SELVAS' translates to "rainforests" or "jungles," and symbolizes growth, resilience, and interconnected ecosystems.

'BLV' stands for blind and low vision.

We launched our first Braille notetaker in 2001. Since then, we have refined our products to become top-of-the-line refreshable braille displays, braille tablets, multimedia players, and more.

Contact Person: Earl Harrison, National Account Manager

Phone: 512-914-1925

Email: earle@selvasblv.com

#

Sportable Richmond Adaptive Sports and Recreation



Logo description: the word sportable in orange and navy next to stylized raised arms.

Website: <https://sportable.org/>

Founded in 2005, Sportable creates opportunities and transforms the lives of individuals with physical disabilities, visual

impairments, and those requiring physical accommodations through sport, recreation, health, and wellness.

As Central Virginia's premier adaptive sports club, Sportable provides sport and wellness opportunities to more than 400 athletes each year by offering a variety of competitive and recreational adaptive sports programs.

Our athletes are of all ages, come from different backgrounds, and have varying abilities.

By fostering a fun, inclusive, competitive, and accessible environment, we transform the lives of our athletes and free them to see beyond their disability, enhance their peer relationships, and help them to reach their personal finish line.

Contact Person: David Robbins, Community Outreach Manager

Phone: 804-340-2991

Email: david@sportable.org

#

Vanda Pharmaceuticals



Logo description: VANDA over the word Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Website: <https://www.vandapharma.com/>

Vanda is a global biopharmaceutical company focused on the development and commercialization of innovative therapies to address high unmet medical needs and improve the lives of patients.

Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake Disorder

Non-24 (Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake Disorder) is a circadian rhythm disorder that causes a person's internal body clock to become out of sync with the 24-hour day. Non-24 has High Prevalence and Low Awareness in the Blindness Community. Up to 70% of people who are totally blind may have Non-24 and may not even know it. People living with Non-24 may experience trouble falling asleep and staying asleep, have a strong urge to sleep during the day, and have sleep patterns that are different from most people.

Contact Person: Magdalena Felton, Clinical Nurse Educator – Patient Outreach

Phone: 202-579-8035

Email: Maggie.felton@vandapharma.com

#

Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired



Logo description: blue letters dbvi on gold. Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired. Education, employment, independence in black

Website: <https://www.dbvi.virginia.gov/>

The Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) is a state agency that helps individuals in Virginia who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind. DBVI provides people with the tools, support, and job opportunities they need to reach their desired levels of employment, education, and personal independence.

DBVI works with people of all ages across Virginia. The agency offers special programs and services to help people learn new skills, find jobs, and become more independent. With help from DBVI, people can feel more confident and ready to take part in their communities.

DBVI has a team of trained and committed staff who work with each person to create a plan that fits their needs. Services are offered in local communities and at the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired in Richmond. Everything DBVI does is focused on supporting individuals to build the skills, confidence and positive attitude needed to achieve their goals.

To learn more about DBVI's programs, services, and job opportunities, visit their website.

Contact Person: Rick Mitchell, Commissioner

Phone: 800-622-2155, or 804-371-3140.

Email: rick.mitchell@dbvi.virginia.gov

Or

Contact Person: Becky Keller, PreETS Specialist

Phone: 804-845-0685

Email: becky.keller@dbvi.virginia.gov

#

Visionary Solutions



Logo description: the words Visionary Solutions in white on navy background.

Website: <https://www.visionarysolutions.online/>

Michael Beattie can help you and your child – whether you are struggling to get the right IEP (Individualized Education Program) in place for your child or you are trying to determine which schools or educational programs would be best suited for your child.

Michael has the education, training, and practical experience to help you effectively navigate the difficult world of special education. Since he went through the special education system to get needed services for himself, he can empathize with and understand your challenges. He is well versed in reading and analyzing test scores, reports and IEPs, and applying that knowledge to help achieve the best possible education for your child. He is familiar with the school culture, both public and private, and can help guide you through difficulties with a school, or help to choose the school that may be the right fit for your child. He is also well informed regarding the local professionals in such fields as Testing, Speech and Language, Visual and Auditory Processing, Neuro-psychology, and Occupational Therapy. He can help you select the right professionals to help you best support your child. He is an expert at seeking and obtaining positive results even in contentious and sometimes hostile situations.

At the convention he will also be announcing the creation of a resume bank of blind job seekers and searching for contracts that would provide employment for people in the resume bank.

Contact Person: Michael Beattie

Phone: 703-994-8619

Email: michaelbeattie@yahoo.com

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Goodie Bag and Door Prize Contributors

Access To Places

Website: <https://accesstoplaces.com>

Contact Person: Antonio Guimaraes

Phone: 954-222-2377

Email: info@accesstoplaces.com

Irie-AT

Website: <https://irie-at.com>

Contact Person: Cody Mitchell

Phone: 541-257-1032

Email: cody.mitchell@irie-at.com

Leader Dogs for the Blind

Website: <https://www.leaderdog.org>

Contact Person: Leslie Hoskins

Phone: 248-651-9011

Email: leslie.hoskins@leaderdog.org

MedRVA

Website: <https://www.medrva.com/>

Contact Person: Marianne Johnson, Fundraising Coordinator

Phone: 719-322-6896

Email: marianne.johnson@medrva.com

Prevention of Blindness of Metropolitan Washington

Website: <https://www.youreyes.org/>

Contact Person: Tara Aziz, Senior Coordinator, Low Vision Programs

Phone: 202-234-1010

Email: taziz@youreyes.org

Six Dot Paws

Website: <https://sixdotpaws.company.site/>

Contact Person: Cole Bischoff, or his mother, Danielle Bischoff

Phone: 703-856-3923

Email: sixdotpaws@gmail.com

The Seeing Eye

Website: <https://seeingeye.org/>

Contact Person: Chelsie White

Phone: 973-539-4425

Email: whitec@seeingeye.org

VisualEyes Access

Website: <https://visualeyesaccess.com/>

Contact Person: Shawn Welker

Phone: 517-630-1420

Email: Shawn@VisualEyesAccess.com

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In Gratitude

Program Planning and Convention Logistics Committees

No convention can happen without the dedication, time, and talent of many individuals. From designing the program to coordinating logistics—securing space, arranging food, recruiting vendors, and raising donations—these committees make it all possible.

Program Planning Committee

Co-Chairs: Sue Bowmaster & Sam Joehl

Members: RoseAnn Ashby, Donna Clarke, Margie DeMars, Tina Egge, Jeremy Grandstaff, Debra Hill, Robin Hoerber, Davida Luehrs, Doug Powell

Convention Logistics Committee

Convention Coordinator: RoseAnn Ashby

Assistant Coordinator: Theresa Breeden

Members: Donna Clarke, Margie DeMars, Debra Hill, Maria Evangelista, Susan Hedrick, Dennis Helms, Robin Hoerber, Davida Luehrs, Martin Pfeifer, Doug Powell

Session Facilitators and Presenters

A heartfelt thank you to everyone sharing their expertise and leading engaging sessions:

Keynote Banquet Speaker: Debra Hill

Icebreaker: Margie DeMars & Robin Hoerber

Leadership Training: Doug Powell & Jeremy Grandstaff

Advocacy: RoseAnn Ashby

Household Management: Vicki Ratcliffe & Sam Joehl

Emergency Preparedness: Donna Clarke & Crystal Goodwin

Falls Prevention: Doug Powell & Larry Johnson

Assistive Technology & Artificial Intelligence: Jeremy Grandstaff & Stan Gowin.

#

Special Thanks

Rick Morin, Media and IT Manager from the national office of the American Council of the Blind, has been instrumental in designing and executing our hybrid program. His expertise and support made this convention possible.

Patrick Hope and Rodney Willett, two Virginia state delegates, bring special expertise about the state legislative process and how to advocate effectively. We are indebted to them for their willingness to take time out of their busy schedules to speak with us in person on a Saturday morning. We will be better prepared to lobby in Richmond this winter as a result of their wise counsel.

Kerry Devine, the Mayor of Fredericksburg, graciously accepted our invitation to speak with us on the first evening of the convention. We so appreciate her willingness to take the time to welcome us to her city.

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Thank You to Our Local Business Donors

We are grateful for the generous support of these local businesses, whose contributions help make our convention a success:

- Breeden Inspirations
Fredericksburg, VA
- Chick-fil-A
1094 International Pkwy, Fredericksburg, VA 22406
- Costco
3102 Plank Rd #600, Fredericksburg, VA 22407
- Krispy Kreme
1891 Carl D Silver Pkwy, Fredericksburg, VA 22401
- Skechers
1370 Carl D Silver Parkway Bldg 5, Fredericksburg, VA 22401
- Staples
2003 Plank Rd, Fredericksburg, VA 22401
- Witches Brew Café
Locust Grove, VA

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Patrons:

Thanks to our many friends and allies who provided financial support for our convention.

Anonymous – Thank you!

Jerilyn Anderson

China Archer

RoseAnn Ashby

Marjorie Barclay
Sue Bowmaster
Theresa Breeden
Lois Butterfield
Lisa Calhoun
Barbara Coffey
Suzanne Cox
Margie DeMars
Tina Egge
Alex Erby
Maria Evangelista
Pamela Frick
Andrea Glosser
Mariane Herndon
Debra Hill
Robin Hoerber
Pamela Johnson
Barbara Kreutzer
Keith and Carol Kurtz
Loretta Lacorte
Ninette LeGates
Leslie Lenny
Doug Powell
Melody Rawles
Abigail Reynolds
Schuyler Richardson
Margaret Scott
Vicki Ratcliffe
James VanDevender
Gail Wiltshire
#

Volunteers:

No convention would be possible without the tireless work and support provided by our wonderful volunteers. Thank you - - you are awesome!

Sally Cooney Anderson

Liana Ashby

Marjorie Barclay

Misti Battle

Linda & Adam Binion

Stacy Curley

Rebecca DeJesus

Marietta D'Ostilio

April French

Christine Frescas

Grant Gates

Linda Hahn

Heather Held

Relda Larquet

Louisa McClanahan

Ken Melendez

Tom & Judy Morgan

Sharifa Mosavi

David Palmer

Traci Rasdorf

Jody Silverberg

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ACBVA 2024-2025 Board of Directors

Doug Powell, President

president@acbva.org

RoseAnn Ashby, Vice-President

roseann@acbva.org

Sue Bowmaster, Secretary

s.bowmaster@cox.net

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treasurer@acbva.org

Donna Clarke, Board Member

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blink183@verizon.net