

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!

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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.

6:30 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!

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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 Robin Hoerber.

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.

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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!

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