

# **National Federation of the Blind - Alabama Affiliate 2021 Annual Virtual Convention**

Affiliate President - Barbara Manuel  
National Representative - Denise R. Avant, NFB National Directors Board  
Member, Chicago, Illinois

**March 3 – 7, 2021**

Welcome to the 2021 Alabama State Convention

**“Maximizing Your Potential”**

Below are quick agenda links for easy reference throughout the convention. If you are using JAWS and cannot access links by pressing enter, then route Jaws to PC and press the left mouse button. To just view the full agenda, start on page 2.

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## **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.

## **NFB of Alabama Officers and Board of Directors 2020-2021**

President – Barbara Manuel, Alabama Affiliate

1st Vice President – Tamika Williams, Mobile Chapter

2nd Vice President – Allen Harris, Birmingham Chapter

Secretary – Grace Anderson, Birmingham Chapter

Treasurer – Larry Povinelli, Huntsville Chapter

Board Seat 1 – Latresia Berry, Montgomery Chapter

Board Seat 2 – Jeffery Wilson, Birmingham Chapter

Board Seat 3 – Ellen Jones, Birmingham Chapter

Board Seat 4 – Brenda Houston, Tuscaloosa Chapter

Board Seat 5 – Constance Hughes, Huntsville Chapter

Board Seat 6 – Pazater Turner, Talladega Chapter

## **NFBA 2021 Virtual Convention Planning Committee**

Larry Povinelli, Chair Person

Tamika Williams

Luke Seibert

Latresia Berry

Jennifer Reeves

## How to work with Zoom

The following information will help you get the most from your ZOOM Conference experience. If you have issues connecting during the convention you may reach out to any of the following contacts:

Ashley Malson - (251) 581-6436 or shirochan@yahoo.com

Tomecia Caver - (256) 649-0912 or 2blessed2bstressed1025@gmail.com

Amy Katherine Wolff - (717) 381-5114 or amykatherine.wolff@rehab.alabama.gov

### Using Telephone:

To mute or unmute your audio, press \*6.

Note: during General Session, all persons will be muted by default. You must raise your hand to request the ability to speak.

If your name is mentioned as a winner of a door prize, you must raise your hand to claim your prize.

To raise your hand to ask a question, or claim your door prize, press \*9.

Always allow the host to lower your hand.

### Using Mac Computer:

Mute your microphone by pressing Command+Shift+A or press spacebar on the mute audio button. To unmute, press Command+Shift+A again or press the spacebar on the unmute button.

To raise your hand, press Option+Y.

Always allow the host to lower your hand.

### Using Windows Desktop or Laptop Computer:

Mute your microphone by pressing Alt+A or press spacebar on the mute audio button. To unmute, press Alt+A again or press the spacebar on the unmute button.

To raise your hand, press Alt+Y.

Always allow the host to lower your hand.

### Using iPhone or iPad:

Tap on the settings button and look through the options to improve your experience.

\*There are two buttons, meetings and general. Meetings has settings you should review.

Auto connect to audio allows you to select connect using internet audio.

This gets rid of the prompt before you connect to a meeting and ensures you get the best sound quality.

Always mute my microphone when joining a meeting ensures you are never accidentally heard until you want to speak.

Then just double tap the unmute audio button when you have something to contribute.

Always turn off my video ensures you never unintentionally show yourself or your environment when you did not mean to.

*Important:* To prevent the annoyance of VoiceOver always speaking the names of participants as they join and leave, turn off Show name when participants join.

When connecting, you will get a prompt saying, “to hear others, please join audio.” Select the “call using internet audio” option or go into settings and select internet audio to always be automatically connected.

*Important:* Find and double tap the mute my audio button until you want to be heard. Or go into settings and choose to always mute audio upon entry.

To raise your hand, tap on the more button on the far lower right, then double tap the button to raise your hand. This will exit you to the main screen. Allow the host to lower your hand.

To know who is currently speaking, swipe to the far left. It will say, displaying person’s name avatar.

You may want to use earbuds.

Again, always make sure your microphone is muted when you are not speaking to prevent background noise or people hearing you.

All meeting times are Central Standard Time.

## **Wednesday, March 3, 2021**

6:00-6:30 pm

### **Virtual Information Table**

Sandre Tyler, Membership Coordinator

Jill Rossiter, President, At Large Chapter

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

6:30-7:15 pm

### **Welcome and Overview**

Barbara Manuel, President

NFBA Affiliate

### **Sponsors and Exhibitor Showcase**

Jennifer Reeves

NFB Talladega Chapter

Tamika Williams, First Vice President

NFB Alabama Affiliate

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

7:15 -7:45 pm

### **Maximizing Healthy Lifestyles**

*Diabetes*

Debbie Wunder, President

NFB Diabetes Action Network

Columbia, Missouri

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

## **Enhancing Tips and Techniques of professionalism**

Sabrina Townsend, Food Service Director  
Montgomery Academy  
Montgomery, AL

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021a>

Meeting ID: 6025099492 one tap mobile +16468769923\_6025099492# US

7:30 – 8:30 pm

## **NFB of Alabama Virtual Exhibit Hall**

Jennifer Reeves  
Talladega, AL

Tamika Williams  
Mobile, AL

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021c>

Meeting ID: 8519569036 – one tap mobile + 16468769923\_8519569036

7:45 – 8:15 pm

## **Maximizing Your Potential Through Networking and connecting**

*WELCOME TO THE FAMILY!*  
Rookie Roundup

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

## **Enhancing Your Advocacy and Power Through Law**

Graham Sisson, Executive Director  
Governor Office on Disability  
Alabama ADA Coordinator

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021a>

Meeting ID: 6025099492 one tap mobile +16468769923\_6025099492# US

8:15 – 8:45 pm

## **Overcoming Adversities Utilizing Advocacy**

*Employment Equality*

Lonnie Williams Staff Attorney

ADAP Community Access Team

Juris Doctorate, Birmingham School of Law

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

## **Self-Advocacy**

Larry Canada, Senior Trial Counsel

Assistant Bar Examiner for the Louisiana Supreme Court

Juris Doctorate, Birmingham School of Law

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021a>

Meeting ID: 6025099492 one tap mobile +16468769923\_6025099492# US

## **Thursday, March 4, 2021**

6:00-7:00 pm

### **Magnifying Your Technical Skills**

*Exploring iPhone and Accessible Apps*

Denice Brown, President

NFB Greater Philadelphia Chapter, NFBPA Board Member

2021 NFB Scholarship Committee

Cell: 215-808-5875, Email: dbrown8827@aol.com

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

### **Affordable Tech**

Dezman Jackson, Accessibility Support Engineer

Vispero's Paciello Group, Second Vice-President

NFB of Maryland

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021a>

Meeting ID: 6025099492 one tap mobile +16468769923\_6025099492# US (New York)

### **Current Trends**

Doug Nixon, AT Field Services Coordinator, Gentry Facility  
Talladega AL

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021b>

Meeting ID:6547996714 one tap mobile +16468769923\_6547996714# US

7:00-7:30 pm

### **Increase Opportunity, Strengthening Equality, and Augmenting Security Through Legislation**

*Legislative Update*

Denise Avant, Board Member, National Federation of the Blind, Illinois  
Michael Evers, Legislative Chairperson NFB of Alabama

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

7:30 – 8:00 pm

### **Maximizing Your Potential Utilizing Accessible Resources**

Angela Fisher Hall, MLS, Regional Librarian  
Alabama Regional Library for the Blind, Montgomery AL

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US (New York)

7:30 – 8:30

### **NFB of Alabama Virtual Exhibit Hall**

Jennifer Reeves  
Talladega, AL

Tamika Williams  
Mobile, AL



<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021c>

Meeting ID: 8519569036 – one tap mobile + 16468769923\_8519569036

8:00 pm

**Maximizing Your Interests and Making Connections**

*Senior Division Meeting*

Carol Braithwaite, Chairperson

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

**“Maximizing Randolph Sheppard Potential”**

*Merchants Division Meeting*

Tracey Watts, Chairperson

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021a>

Meeting ID: 6025099492 one tap mobile +16468769923\_6025099492# US

**“Stronger Together”**

*Student Division Meeting*

Jessica Williams, Chairperson

Mausam Mehta, Secretary, National Association of Blind Students  
Representative

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021b>

Meeting ID:6547996714 one tap mobile +16468769923\_6547996714# US

**Friday March 5, 2021**

6:00 - 7:00 pm

**Alabama Affiliate Board Meeting**

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

7:00 - 7:30 pm

**Magnifying Equality for the Blind in Alabama**

*Resolution Committee*

Michael Evers, Legislative Chairperson, NFB Alabama Affiliate

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

7:00 – 7:45 pm

**NFB of Alabama Virtual Exhibit Hall**

Jennifer Reeves

Talladega, AL

Tamika Williams

Mobile, AL

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021c>

Meeting ID: 8519569036 – one tap mobile + 16468769923\_8519569036

7:30 – 8:00 pm

**Spotlight on Family Affairs**

**Celebrating Everyone’s Potential**

**Diversity and Inclusion**

Denise Avant, Board Member, National Federation of the Blind

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

8:00-9:30 pm

**Virtual Family Gala Night**

*A variety of games, talent showcase, and much more.*

Come join the fun!!!

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

8:00 pm

**Student Division Social Hour**

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021a>

Meeting ID: 6025099492 one tap mobile +16468769923\_6025099492# US

**Saturday, March 6**

9:00 am

**General Session**

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

**Maximizing Your Potential Agenda**

9:00-9:20 am

**Opening**

Call to Order: Barbara Manuel, President NFB Of Alabama

Opening Ceremonies

Welcome: Jill Rossiter, President At Large Chapter

Invocation: Minister Percy Garrett, Green Valley Church, Dothan, AL

Pledge: Minister Percy Garrett, Master Sergeant E8, U.S. Marine Corps

National Anthem: Cassidie Gorig-Worrell, Alabama School for the Blind

Greeting: Representative Rolanda Hollis, Alabama House of Representatives, 58 District, Birmingham, AL

9:20-10:05 am

**National Report**

Denise R. Avant, Board Member, National Federation of the Blind, Chicago, Illinois

10:05 -10:35 am

## **Enabling Individuals to Maximize their Potential**

### *Vocational Rehabilitation*

Curtis Glisson, Assistant Director Commissioner of Blind and Deaf Services  
Montgomery, AL

Dana Barbara, State Coordinator for the Blind, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

10:35 -11:10 am

### **Maximizing Potentials through The Randolph Sheppard Act**

Melba J. Taylor, Encore Associates, LLC  
Maryland Association of Blind Merchants, Baltimore Maryland

Robert Kelly, Blind Vender  
U.S. Maxwell Air Force Base, Contractor, Montgomery, AL

Susan Sarro, Instructor, Business Enterprise Program for the Blind  
E.H. Gentry, Talladega, AL

11:10 – 11:40 am

### **Finding Your Empowerment Within the Braille Monitor**

Gary Wunder, Editor, Braille Monitor magazine, the flagship publication of the National Federation of the blind  
Columbia, Missouri

11:40 – 12:00 pm

### **Celebrating Our Triumphs and Trials Together**

NFB Alabama 2020-2021 Report

Barbara Manuel, President, Alabama Affiliate  
Mobile, AL

12:00-1:00 pm

**Lunch**

## **NFB of Alabama Virtual Exhibit Hall**

Jennifer Reeves  
Talladega, AL

Tamika Williams  
Mobile, AL

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021c>

Meeting ID: 8519569036 – one tap mobile + 16468769923\_8519569036

1:00 – 1:15 pm

### **Vanda Pharmaceuticals, Inc**

Vicki Preddy, MSN, RN, Nurse Educator  
Vanda Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

1:15 – 1:30 pm

### **Maximizing the Limitless Potential of Alabama's Blind and Deaf-Blind Communities**

*AIDB Overview*

John Mascia, Au.D., AIDB President  
Talladega, AL

1:30 pm

### **Maximizing the Limitless Potential of the Adult Student**

Jessica Edmiston, E.H. Gentry Executive Director  
Alabama Freedom Center for the Blind Director

1:45 pm

### **Transitioning Empowerment**

Trevor Kribbs, Principal, Alabama School for the Blind  
Talladega, AL

2:00 – 2:05 pm **Fit Break**

2:05 – 2:35 pm

**Maximizing Potentials While Advocating for Equal Education**

Jalan Cunningham, Accessible Technology Coordinator  
University of Alabama, Birmingham

Michael Evers, Sensory Impaired Technology Coordinator, Office of  
Student Disability Services  
University of South Alabama

2:35 – 2:55 pm

**Maximizing Potentials Through Advocating**

Kaleigh Brendle  
Freehold, New Jersey

2:55 – 3:20 pm

**Maximizing Employment Potentials and Making Connections**

*National Federation of the Blind Direct Source*

Latresia Berry, Human Resource Manager, Family Guidance Center of  
Alabama  
Montgomery, AL

Donnavon Bitel, Diversity and Outreach Coordinator, Alabama Industries  
for the Blind  
Talladega, AL

3:20 – 3:40 pm

**Maximizing Potentials: One Person at a time**

Gina Huylenbroeck, Lived Experiences Around Disabilities (LEAD)  
British Victoria, Canada

Adjourn

7:00 pm

## **National Federation of the Blind of Alabama Banquet**

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

### **Banquet Program**

Opening

Banquet Entertainment Presented by Tony Nixon

Presider: Tamika Williams, First Vice President NFBA

Invocation: Luke Seibert, Student Division Treasurer

Special Presentation: Barbara Manuel, President NFBA Affiliate

Poem: Andrea Wagner

Introduction of National Representative: Tamika Williams, First Vice President NFBA Alabama Affiliate

Banquet Address: Denise R. Avant, NFB National Directors Board Member, Chicago Illinois

Scholarship Presentation: Grace Anderson, Scholarship Committee Chairperson

Special Presentation: Barbara Manuel, President, NFBA Affiliate

Pre-Authorization Contribution (PAC)

Adjourn

## **National Representative Biography**

I am Denise Renee Avant. I was raised in and I am still a resident of Chicago. I was admitted to practice law in Illinois in 1984. I attended the University of Missouri-Columbia, where I received a B.A. in political science in 1980, and a J.D. in 1983. I received my M.A. in journalism from Roosevelt University in 2003.

I retired from the Office of the Cook County Public Defender on August 31, 2017 after thirty years of service. I worked in our appellate and post-conviction units. Prior to working at the Public Defender, I worked for two years at the Will County Legal Assistance Program, Inc.

I am the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois, and currently serve on the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind, as well as on the board of the National Association of Blind Lawyers, a division of the NFB. I have been recently selected to serve on the Board of Directors of Access Living – Chicago.

I am the chair of the ABA Commission on Disability Rights. I have been a member of the American Bar Association since 2012, during which time I served as a commissioner to the Commission on Disability Rights, Center for Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Commission on Youth at Risk. I serve as a Member at Large/Disability to the ABA's nominating committee for the House of Delegates, and I have served on other ABA committees as well.

I participated in the Implicit Bias video series sponsored by the ABA. In August 2018 at the ABA's annual meeting, the Government and Public Sectors Lawyers Division presented me with the Nelson award.

My hobbies are reading, exercising and cross-country skiing, I am a longtime member and a deaconess and Secretary of the Board of Directors at Christian Tabernacle church, located on the south side of Chicago.

## **Sunday, March 7, 2021**

12:00 – 1:45 pm

### **Alabama Virtual Blind Market**

<https://zoom.us/my/nfbal2021c>

Meeting ID: 8519569036 – one tap mobile + 16468769923\_8519569036

Attention! Attention! Attention! NFB of Alabama family and friends. NFB of AL brings to you a new opportunity. A new opportunity to make a difference within the blind community.

Officially for the first time, we are giving blind business owners, independent contractors, and independent sales reps the chance to display their amazing product and services to you!

Looking for fragrances, custom art, jewelry, life coaching, custom office/ school supplies, sweet treats, event catering on wheels, or essential oils? Our merchants have all of these and so much more!!



NFB of Alabama is committed to supporting and enhancing our blind community!  
Come make connections and maximize the blind entrepreneurs!

2:00 pm

### **NFBA Annual Business Meeting**

<https://zoom.us/j/2516565165>

Meeting ID: 2516565165 one tap mobile +16468769923\_2516565165# US

### **Business Meeting Agenda**

Call to Order: Barbara Manuel, NFBA President

Invocation: Larry Povinelli, Treasurer, NFBA Board Member

Reading of Minutes: Grace Anderson, NFBA Secretary

Treasurer Report: Larry Povinelli, NFBA Treasurer

Nominating Committee

Report: Robert Kelly

Positions: Constitutional Offices, Board Seats, 1-3-5

Appointment of 2021 Delegate and Alternate

Chapter Updates

Old Business

New Business

Adjournment

# A special Thank You to our 2021 “Maximizing Your Potential” Sponsors

## Platinum:

### Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind



P. O. Box 698  
Talladega, Alabama 35161  
(256) 761-3200  
mascia.john@aidb.org  
www.aidb.org

## Gold:

### Vanda Pharmaceutical



2200 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, D.C.  
(202) 578-9060  
vicki.preddy@vandapharma.com  
www.vandapharma.com

## Silver:

### Alabama Freedom Center



Jessica Edmiston  
1105 Fort Lashley Avenue  
Talladega, AL 35160  
(256) 493-3360  
[edmiston.jessica@aidb.org](mailto:edmiston.jessica@aidb.org)  
[www.aidb.org](http://www.aidb.org)

## **E.H. Gentry**



Jessica Edmiston  
1105 Fort Lashley Avenue  
Talladega, AL 35160  
(256) 493-3360  
[edmiston.jessica@aidb.org](mailto:edmiston.jessica@aidb.org)  
[www.aidb.org](http://www.aidb.org)

## **Exhibitor Showcase:**

### **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services**

Marge Lebrick

236 Goodwin Crest Dr.  
Birmingham, AL 35209  
(205) 290-4308  
[marge.lebrick@rehab.alabama.gov](mailto:marge.lebrick@rehab.alabama.gov)

### **Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind**

E.H. Gentry - Technical Facility  
Doug Nixon

1105 Fort Lashley Avenue  
Talladega, AL 35160  
(256) 589-6597  
[nixon.doug@aidb.org](mailto:nixon.doug@aidb.org)  
[www.aidb.org](http://www.aidb.org)

### **Courageous U Coaching Services**

Constance Hughes

(251) 802-6543

Courageousucoachingservice@gmail.com

### **Florida Vision Technologies**

Jose Cintron

2880 W Oakland Park Blvd

Fort Lauderdale FL 33311

(800) 981-5119

jose@floridareading.com

www.floridareading.com

### **NFB of Alabama Newsline**

Jeff Wilson

1809 3rd Street NW

Center Point, AL 35215

(256) 589-2096

nfbmagicchapter@gmail.com

www.nfbal.org

### **Steet Sweets and More**

Amber Steet

7603338446

amsteet@gmail.com

### **Total Life change (TLC)**

Constance Hughes

(251) 802-6543

constance.hughes32@gmail.com

<https://bit.ly/38qEaio>

### **Vanda Pharmaceutical**

Vicki Preddy

2200 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, D.C.  
(202) 578-9060  
vicki.preddy@vandapharma.com  
www.vandapharma.com

**Company Emerald Coast Vision Aids**

Mike Hage

163 East Burgess Road  
Pensacola, FL  
(850) 206-5375  
Representative mike@ecvastore.com  
www.emeraldcoastvisionaids.com

**Alabama Freedom Center**

Jessica Edmiston

1105 Fort Lashley Avenue  
Talladega, AL 35160  
(256) 493-3360  
edmiston.jessica@aidb.org  
www.aidb.org

**E.H. Gentry**

Jessica Edmiston

1105 Fort Lashley Avenue  
Talladega, AL 35160  
(256) 493-3360  
edmiston.jessica@aidb.org  
www.aidb.org

We'd like to thank Pixelthin, LLC for assisting with the online registration and document preparation.

Lastly, your presence greatly enhanced our convention, and we are honored to have you as a friend.

“WITH LOVE, HOPE AND DETERMINATION, WE ARE TRANSFORMING  
DREAMS INTO REALITIES”

### **For More Information Contact:**

The National Federation of the Blind  
Alabama Affiliate  
896 Parliament Court  
Mobile, Alabama 36695  
(251) 656-5165  
Nfbal.president@gmail.com

### **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.