

Our Belief Message

The National Federation of the Blind advances the lives of its members and all blind people in the United States. We know 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. Our collective power, determination, and diversity achieve the aspirations of all blind people.

State Convention Agenda

October 23-26, 2025

Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown

2600 Louisiana Blvd. NE

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110

Tara Chavez, President

National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico (NFBNM)

505-328-3349

NFBNM.President@gmail.com

DOOR PRIZES:

Door prizes will be drawn during general convention sessions and during the banquet. To win, you must be registered for the convention, and you must be in the room when your name is called, unless you are working at the registration table.

Code of Conduct

We welcome all attendees to our convention and embrace diversity, inclusion,
and mutual respect. To that end, please keep the following expectations in
mind when you join us in Albuquerque.

The National Federation of the Blind provides support to members and
advocates for our rights to live the lives we want through advocacy, public
awareness, and mentoring. As a member or guest at our Convention, you not
only represent yourself but also represent our organization. We want you to
enjoy your time with us and to make new friends and renew old acquaintances. Although we encourage members to socialize and have fun, the convention also provides an important opportunity to come together to continue the work of our organization, to learn about the important initiatives that we are involved with on a local and national level, and to plan our work for the future.

Please remember these guidelines

1. Welcome new attendees: Although you will undoubtedly enjoy time with your friends, please reach out to those who have never joined us before and help them to be comfortable. We welcome people from all walks of life with diverse needs and experiences.
2. Attend and participate in sessions: It is expected that when you commit yourself to come to convention that you are also agreeing to attend sessions.
3. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances. If your behavior could possibly make anyone uncomfortable, even if you would not be upset by it yourself, do not do or say anything that could be considered inappropriate by anyone.
4. We understand that, for some, enjoying an alcoholic drink is part of the
fun at the Convention. However, public drunkenness and the associated
behaviors that often accompany it not only reflect badly on you but also do not enhance our standing as an organization.
5. Please do not use heavy colognes or perfumes, as some of our guests have chemical sensitivities.

# Thursday, October 23, 2025

## ***7:30 PM - 9:30 PM***

Board of Directors Meeting (Registry)

Tara Chavez, President, NFBNM

# Friday, October 24, 2025

## ***8:00 AM - 9:00 AM***

## ***1:30 PM - 3:00 PM***

 Registration (Registration Counter)

 Sarah Villavicencio, Registration Chairperson

 Adults $30.00 and Children $15.00

Please stop by to register, pick up your print or Braille agendas and

your meal tickets (if purchased).

## ***9:00 AM - Noon***

 General Session Part 1 (Wurlitzer)

## ***9:00 AM - 9:20 AM***

Call to Order

Tara Chavez, President, NFBNM

Invocation

Veronica Smith, President, SAGE Group, NFBNM

Pledge of Allegiance

Margot Kelley, First Grade Student, Zia Elementary School

National Anthem

Nicky Zolman, Member, At Large Chapter, NFBNM

NFB Pledge

Melanie Redhouse, President, San Juan Chapter, NFBNM

**The National Federation of the Blind Pledge**

I pledge to participate actively in the efforts 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.

Belief Message

Tara Chavez, President, NFBNM

**The Belief Message**

The National Federation of the Blind advances the lives of its members and all blind people in the United States. We know 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. Our collective power, determination, and diversity achieve the aspirations of all blind people.

Announcements and Convention Arrangements

Frank Maestas, Convention Co-Coordinator

## ***9:20 AM - 9:25 AM***

Greetings from the City of Albuquerque,

Tim Keller, Mayor

## ***9:25 AM - 9:30 AM***

Action Auction

## ***9:30 AM - 10:00 AM***

Life Beyond My Dreams

Jamie Sibson, Secretary/Treasurer, At Large Chapter

## ***10:00 AM - 10:45 AM***

National Report

Ronza Othman, National Representative, National Federation of the Blind

## ***10:45 AM - 11:05 AM***

Developments in Library Services for the Blind

Representative from NM Library for the Blind and Print Disabled

## ***11:05 AM - 11:30 AM***

My Blindness, Myself

Mario Hooee, Member, At Large Chapter, NFBNM

This member of our Federation family will tell their story of blindness and how the Federation has helped them live the life they want.

## ***11:30 AM - 11:35 AM***

Action Auction

## ***11:35 AM - 11:55 AM***

What Is the Business Enterprise Program and How Can it Help Me earn a living?

Christine Abeyta, and Ramona Ruiz, Business Enterprise Program, New Mexico Commission for the Blind

## ***11:55 AM - Noon***

Announcements and Convention Arrangements

Frank Maestas, Convention Co-Coordinator

## ***Noon - 1:15 PM***

NFBNM Welcome Luncheon (Ambassador/Registry)

Mistress of Ceremonies, Tara Chavez, President, NFBNM

Luncheon Keynote Speaker, Ronza Othman, National Representative, National Federation of the Blind

Action Auction

## ***1:30 PM - 3:00 PM***

At Large Chapter Meeting (Wurlitzer)

Frank Maestas, First Vice President, At Large Chapter, NFBNM

## ***2:00 PM - 6:00 PM***

Exhibits (Regal)

Juan Haro and Denise Otero, Chairpersons

## ***3:15 PM - 4:55 PM***

Senior Action Group Energy (SAGE) Group (Wurlitzer)

Veronica Smith, President, SAGE Group, NFBNM

## ***4:00 PM - 5:00 PM***

Public Meeting of the New Mexico Commission for the Blind

(Ivory)

Greg Trapp, Executive Director, New Mexico Commission for the Blind

## ***5:00 PM - 6:00 PM***

Orientation Center and STEP Program Alumni Reunion (Wurlitzer)

Jamie Sibson, Director, NM Commission for the Blind Orientation Center

This is an opportunity for alumni to catch up with old friends and staff from their days at the Orientation Center and/or in the STEP Program and network with other past and present students. If you want to know more about the Orientation Center or are thinking of attending STEP, please come meet some of our staff and students to learn how our program can help you achieve your goals of independence.

## ***7:00 PM - 7:30 PM***

Nominating Committee (Uptown Boardroom)

Frank Maestas, Chairperson, Nominating Committee

This is a closed meeting open only to chapter and division presidents.

## ***7:30 PM - 10:0******0 PM***

Name That Tune (Wurlitzer)

Friends-Fun-Prizes a fundraising event. Pay-to-play…one must pay to "get in the game". Fun for the whole family. Bring a friend and make new friends, have a fun evening with us. $10.00 at the door.

# Saturday, October 25, 2025

## ***8:00 AM - 9:00 AM***

## ***1:00 PM - 1:30 PM***

## ***4:15 PM - 4:30 PM***

Registration (Registration Counter)

 Sarah Villavicencio, Registration Chairperson

 Adults $30.00 and Children $15.00

Please stop by to register, pick up your print or Braille agendas and

your meal tickets (if purchased).

## ***8:00 AM - Noon***

Exhibits (Regal)

Juan Haro and Denise Otero, Chairpersons

## ***8:00 AM - 9:00 AM***

Resolutions Committee (Wurlitzer)

Kelly Burma, Chairperson, Resolutions Committee

## ***9:00 AM - 11:30 AM***

Focusing on Students: What the NFBNM Can Do for You

(Wurlitzer)

Adelmo Vigil, President Emeritus, NFBNM

Frank Maestas, First Vice President, NFBNM

## ***8:30 AM - 10:00 AM***

Seminar for Rehabilitation Professionals (Roxy)

Jamie Sibson, Secretary/Treasurer, At Large Chapter, NFBNM

Daphne Mitchell, First Vice President, Albuquerque Chapter, NFBNM

## ***10:00 AM - 11:30 AM***

Seminar for Parents of Blind Children (Roxy)

Tara Chavez, President, NFBNM

Letita Flores, Mother of a Blind Child

**Lunch on Your Own**

## ***1:30 PM - 4:30 PM***

General Session Part 2 (Wurlitzer)

## ***1:30 PM - 2:00 PM***

President's Report

Tara Chavez, President, NFBNM

## ***2:00 PM - 2:10 PM***

Pre-Authorized Contribution (PAC) Plan

Adelmo Vigil, President Emeritus, NFBNM

## ***2:10 PM - 2:45 PM***

Status Report on the New Mexico Commission for the Blind

Greg Trapp, Executive Director, New Mexico Commission for the Blind

## ***2:45 PM - 3:00 PM***

Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning (BELL) Program Update Tara Chavez, President, NFBNM

## ***3:00 PM - 3:25 PM***

Status Report on the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMSBVI)

Heather Miller, Ed.D., Superintendent, NMSBVI

## ***3:25 PM - 3:30 PM***

Action Auction

## ***3:30 PM - 3:50 PM***

Becoming a Blind Educator

Kaden Calahan, Certified Secondary Teacher

## ***3:50 PM - 4:20 PM***

Celebrating 40 Years of the New Mexico Commission for the Blind

Adelmo Vigil, President Emeritus, NFBNM and Greg Trapp, Executive Director, New Mexico Commission for the Blind

## ***4:20 PM - 4:30 PM***

Convention Announcements

Frank Maestas, Convention Co-Coordinator

## ***6:00 PM - 7:00 PM***

No Host Social Hour/ Silent Auction Display (Ambassador/Registry)

Proceeds of the Silent Auction will benefit our scholarship program for parents of blind children to support the family to attend the National Federation of the Blind convention.

## ***7:00 PM - 10:00 PM***

State Convention Banquet (Ambassador/Registry)

Master of Ceremonies, Frank Maestas, First Vice President, NFBNM

Invocation

Lindsay Sloan, Second Vice president, Albuquerque Chapter

Keynote Speaker

Ronza Othman, National Representative, National Federation of the Blind

Presentations, Awards and Drawings

# Sunday, October 26, 2025

## ***9:00 AM - Noon***

General Session Part 3 (Wurlitzer)

## ***9:00 AM - 9:20 AM***

Report on the Washington Seminar

Tara Chavez, President, NFBNM

Frank Maestas, First Vice President, NFBNM

## ***9:20 AM - 9:45 AM***

Our Experience at National Convention “Together in New Orleans 2025”

Shelly Smith and Celia Perea, parents of blind children

## ***9:45 AM - 10:05 AM***

Resolutions

Kelly Burma, Chairperson, Resolutions Committee, NFBNM

## ***10:05 AM - 11:45 AM***

Business Meeting

Minutes of 2024 State Convention

Tonia Trapp, Secretary, NFBNM

Treasurer's Report

German Benitez, Treasurer, NFBNM

Elections

Frank Maestas, Chairperson, Nominating Committee, NFBNM

## ***11:45 AM - Noon***

Final Announcements, Closing Remarks, and Adjourn

# NFBNM CHAPTERS AND GROUPS

**CHAPTERS**

At Large Chapter (Statewide)

President, Janet Montoya 505-672-9626

NFBNM.ALC.President@gmail.com

Albuquerque Chapter (Albuquerque)

President, German Benitez 505-702-5044

NFBNM.AbqChapter@gmail.com

San Juan (Farmington)

President, Melanie Redhouse 505-419-7168

NFBSanJuanPresident@gmail.com

West Mesa (Albuquerque)

President, Juan Haro 505-382-3345

NFBNM.WestMesaChapter@gmail.com

**GROUPS**

Senior Action Group Energy (SAGE)

Group Chair, Veronica Smith 505-269-1034

NFBNM.SAGE@gmail.com

Student Group

Group Chair, Gitana Curtis 505-862-3213

gitanacurtis@gmail.com

# NFBNM BOARD MEMBERS

President

Tara Chavez, Albuquerque term expires 2026

First Vice President

Frank Maestas, Holman term expires 2026

Second Vice President

Urja Lansing, Albuquerque term expires 2026

Secretary

Tonia Trapp, Albuquerque term expires 2026

Treasurer

German Benitez, Albuquerque term expires 2026

Board Member

Martin Gallegos, Santa Fe term expires 2026

Board Member

Mario Hooee, Zuni term expires 2026

Board Member

Jamie Sibson, Alamogordo term expires 2026

Board Member

Janet Montoya, White Rock term expires 2025

Board Member

Juan Haro, Albuquerque term expires 2025

Board Member

Gitana Curtis, Farmington term expires 2025

# Outreach Opportunities

## **Dream Makers Circle**

You can help build a future of opportunity for the blind by becoming a member of our Dream Makers Circle. It is easier than you think. You can visit your bank and convert an account to a POD (payable on death) bank account, which is payable after your passing to the National Federation of the Blind or one of our affiliates. Your legacy gift to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico can be made in the form of a will or living trust, an income-generating gift, or by naming us as the beneficiary of a retirement plan, IRA, pension, or a life insurance policy. You can designate a specific amount, a percentage, or list the NFB as one of several beneficiaries. For additional information, please contact Patti Chang at 410-659-9314, extension 2422, or at pchang@nfb.org.

## **Vehicle Donations**

The National Federation of the Blind uses car donations to improve the education of blind children, distribute free white canes, help veterans, and so much more. We have partnered with Vehicles for Charity to process donated vehicles. Please call toll-free 855-659-9314, and a representative can assist, or you can donate online by visiting [www.nfb.org/vehicledonations](http://www.nfb.org/vehicledonations) .

## **Pre-Authorized Contributions (PAC)**

Can you help the National Federation of the Blind on a regular basis? Please consider joining our pre-Authorized contribution plan. Starting at $5 monthly, you can help us turn dreams into reality and raise expectations for blind people. Visit [nfb.org/pac](https://nfb.org/pac) to fill out the online form or email pac@nfb.org for additional information.

Visit [www.nfbnm.org](http://www.nfbnm.org) for more information.

# Our Hope

We hope that by attending our convention your expectations of yourself are raised, so that blindness is no longer the characteristic that defines you or your future, and that low expectations no longer stand between you and your dreams. We want you to become empowered to live the life you want.

# Our Thanks

Thank you to everyone who appeared on the agenda, and to all who chaired and/or served on committees.

Thank you to the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired for brailling the agendas for us this year.

We wish to thank Ronza Othman for serving as our national representative. The national perspective you brought to us is so important to our achievement of equality, security, and opportunity.

Thank you to the management and staff of the hotel for all their assistance in planning this weekend and making our stay enjoyable.

We wish you safe travels home, and we hope to see you all next year.

# Our Supporters

We thank you for helping us make this a great convention and your ongoing support: Humanware, JW.org, Nanopac, New Mexico Commission for the Blind, New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and, New Mexico State Library, Vancro and Blind Girl Designs.



 **JW.org**

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**Assistive Listening Devices**

**Available to Check Out during NFBNM State Convention**

The NFB of New Mexico has Assistive Listening Devices available for persons who are

Deaf, DeafBlind, or Hard-of-Hearing. Our Assistive Listening Devices use a stationary

transmitter that connects to the Public Address system in a meeting room and transmits

the sound directly to a receiver that you can clip to your belt or other clothing. To use the

receiver, you will need to plug in a 3.5mm headset. We have small headsets available to

check out along with the receivers, or you can use your own headset. We have 2 neck

loops available on a first-come, first-serve basis for people who have hearing aids with a

Telecoil switch they can activate; the neck loop will send the sound directly to the

hearing aids.

Please go to the registration desk to check out and return receivers and headsets.

When you check out a receiver, you will either need to provide a credit or debit card, or

you can give us a deposit of $80 cash only. If you provide a debit or credit card, we will

take a password-protected picture of the card using a cell phone and will permanently

delete the picture when you bring back the equipment in good condition. If you provide a

deposit of $80 cash only, we will return the money to you when you return the

equipment in good condition. You will also need to sign our NFB of New Mexico

Assistive Listening Device Checkout Form For Receivers And Headsets, where you

acknowledge your understanding that if you do not return the equipment or if you

damage the equipment, we will either charge your credit or debit card for the cost of

replacing the equipment, or we will keep the $80 deposit and ask you to pay the

remaining cost to replace the equipment.

We realize that you may be attending multiple days of the convention. Even so, we ask

that you return the receiver and headset each day after the last event you plan to attend

that day. This way, we can charge the receivers overnight to ensure they will have a full

charge when they are checked out the next day. If you keep the receiver for multiple

days and turn it in when you are done attending the convention, we cannot guarantee

that the receiver will maintain its battery life over multiple days.

These receivers can operate on three different channels. The board meeting, general

sessions, Resolutions Committee meeting, and the banquet will all be broadcast on

Channel E, which is the default channel. If you are attending a meeting during the

convention other than those just listed, you may need to change the channel on your

receiver to either channel A or Channel H to tune in the broadcast for that particular

meeting.

To change the channel on the receiver, press and hold the volume up and down buttons

together for five seconds. Then you can use the volume up and volume down buttons to

change the channel to A or H. Once you have changed the channel, either press the

power button to save and exit, or the change will be saved automatically in 5 seconds if

you take no action. If you need help changing the channel on your receiver, please go to

the registration desk.