# March, 2024

# The Informant 2024

# Vol. 3: Growing, Innovating and Improving the Federation Family Together

# March 16, 2024

## Affiliate Zoom Link:

<<https://zoom.us/j/9612695221?pwd=dHlxZDNwcVVZbUVTYUM5cEU4cDlndz09>>

<https://zoom.us/j/9612695221?pwd=dHlxZDNwcVVZbUVTYUM5cEU4cDlndz09>

## From the President:

*Happy Saturday to my Federation family, friends, and*

guests as I welcome you to this terrific, tardy edition of "The Informant!"

With so much to recount after our information-filled quarterly state board

meeting on March 9, I am excited to share some important state division and

chapter updates for you all. The work and progress of our affiliate in

building the Federation lies with our membership. It is encouraging to learn

about how much is being done to continue to improve the lives of blind

people both statewide and nationally.

The month of March often marks the changing of the seasons, both in the

Federation and in our physical climate. Much like Daylight Savings Time, the

enthusiasm of the Federation returns, creating new possibilities for members

and leaders alike. Whether it is through your love for convention or your

interest in supporting a Federation program, I encourage all Michigan

Federationist to join me in diving headfirst into the Federation spirit.

Opportunities, something we often provide our members, exist for you to

raise expectations and to participate actively as we continue to build the

Federation.

What does "participating actively" mean in the Federation? This question,

like many I receive from our members throughout the affiliate, is important.

It can serve as educational opportunities for both our leaders and members

in innovating and developing chapters or divisions to be more inclusive and

effective. The Michigan affiliate is diverse, brimming with nuanced ideas,

identities, and positions. This gives me hope that there is something in our

affiliate this season that you can find that interests you and helps us in

continuing to turn dreams into reality. Taking on new projects, joining

different committees or even registering for your first convention can be a

first step to joining in the active Federation spirit with us this season.

Whatever your choice, know that I am here with you as we continue to live

the lives we want.

## Important National Updates

### \* Hotel reservations for the 2024 NFB National Convention are filling

quickly. The convention will take place July 3-8 at the Rosen Center Hotel

in Orlando, FL. For information about convention and to register online,

visit

<<http://www.nfb.org/convention>> [www.nfb.org/convention](http://www.nfb.org/convention).

#### \* The application period is still open for the 2024 Kenneth Jernigan

#### Scholarship program.

The award is designed for first-time attendees of the

NFB national convention and provides financial assistance to those who

request. Applicants must be a member of a local chapter or state division in

Michigan. The application for the Kenneth Jernigan Award can be found at

<<https://nfb.org/form/kenneth-jernigan-convention-scho>>

<https://nfb.org/form/kenneth-jernigan-convention-scho.>

### \* The 2024 NFB National Scholarship program is live.

Every year, the National Federation of the Blind offers thirty scholarships to students enrolled in a college, university, or other post-secondary educational program. Graduating high school seniors are also encouraged to apply.

Applicants are required to meet the legal definition of blindness and

prepare to attend the entire national convention in Orlando. The deadline

for the scholarship program is March 31, 2024. To apply for the national

scholarship program, please visit <<https://scholarships.nfb.org/>>

[https://scholarships.nfb.org/.](https://scholarships.nfb.org/)

### \* The 2024 NFB of Michigan caucus will take place on July 3 at 9pm at

### the Rosen Center Hotel in Orlando.

 Room location and additional information

will be made available shortly.

## Important State Updates

### \* The NFBMI happily welcomes its new Webmaster, Benjamin McKenzie, as

### part of its team.

Chapter and division leaders are advised to discuss

webpage updates with the Communications Committee. Each active chapter is

encouraged to have a member on the state communications committee.

### \* Beginning April 1, the NFBMI Webpage will offer a form for members

### requesting financial assistance for Federation programs.

This form, inspired by some of the leadership of the NFB of Maryland, is similarly used in numerous affiliates. The deadline for requesting funding from the NFB of

Michigan for national convention is May 31, 2024. Members are encouraged to

register for the 2024 NFB convention and explore funding options with their

chapter or division prior to applying. Offers of assistance are contingent

upon adherence to Federation program policies and attendance of required

program sessions.

### \* The NFBMI Capital Region Chapter will be partnering with

The affiliate to present a statewide voter access education seminar.

The tentative date of this program will be Saturday, August 10, 2024. Topics

covered include accessible ballots, electronic voting, and items blind

voters face during primary and general elections in our state. If you are

interested in joining or supporting this program,

contact Jay J. Meddaugh at

<mailto:[vp at nfbmi.org](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)> [vp at nfbmi.org](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)

or Mark Eagle at

<mailto:[treasurer at nfbmi.org](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)> [treasurer at nfbmi.org.](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)

### \* The National Federation of the Blind of Michigan will have a vendor

### table April 25-26 at the 2024 MAER Conference at the Park City Hotel in

### Traverse City.

We encourage members or interested guests to join us and

learn about the 2024 Raising Expectations Accessing Life (REAL) program, as

well as updates to our scholarship program and how you can get a student to

apply.

### \* The National Federation of the Blind of Michigan will have vendor

### tables at both the 2024 Libraries Without Walls program in Lansing on May 9

### and the 2024 Visions Conference in Ann Arbor on June 5.

During these opportunities to network with professionals and teachers of the blind, we

encourage members to assist in promoting our scholarship program for

students, the 2024 voter access program and additional work we do the

achieve equality, opportunity, and security for blind people. If you are

interested in attending either of these events to represent the Federation,

please contact Robert at

<mailto:[President at nfbmi.org](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)> [President at nfbmi.org.](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)

### \* The 2024 State Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of

### Michigan will take place October 31-November 3 at the Radisson Plaza Hotel

### at Kalamazoo Center.

 The address is 100 W. Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI

49007.

Convention details, including registration, will come in time. If you

are interested in joining the convention planning committee, including

coordination or agenda development, please contact Jay J. Meddaugh at

<mailto:[vp at nfbmi.org](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)> [vp at nfbmi.org.](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)

### \* The NFBMI fundraising committee is excited to announce our Spring

### fundraising program, "The 2024 NFBMI Double Good Challenge."

 From March 30-April 2, each active chapter, and state division will have a live link to

a Double Good virtual popcorn store. We encourage all members to share their

chapter or division's link and help their store rise in sales to support

members quest as we prepare for our national convention in Orlando.

Remember, proceeds from this fundraiser directly support the members that

need assistance in attending our national convention and other programs. For

more information about the fundraiser or how to receive your

chapter/division's link, join the fundraising committee meeting on Sunday,

March 17 at 7pm.

### \* The NFBMI Membership committee thanks all active chapters and

### divisions for their work to update and maintain records using our online

### portal.

 If you are a dues-paid member of a chapter or division and have

questions about your activity status, please consult your chapter or

division membership coordinator. Every active chapter and division have a

membership coordinator.

### \* The NFBMI Communications committee is seeking members to help spread

### the word of the Federation.

 If you are a person that is organized,

proficient in social media or drafting emails, your skills can be the work

that moves the affiliate and the Federation forward. If you are someone that

cares about your chapter or division's accomplishments being highlighted via

these channels or our webpage, this is a committee for you. Please contact

Ather Jammoa, chair, at <mailto:[Atherjammoa at yahoo.com](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)>

[Atherjammoa at yahoo.com](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org) for more information on how to join and play your part in working towards our goals.

### \* The NFBMI Youth and Family program planning committee is hard at

### work in providing the best opportunities for blind children and families.

The committee is excited to begin actively promoting the 2024 Raising

Expectations Accessing Life (REAL) program, which takes place June 21-23 in

the city of Flint. If you are interested in attending as a participant in

either our STEM2U or NFBMI Scholars track, please read more about it on our

official registration page. Please join us for our next committee meeting on

March 19, where we will be working on program coordination. For more

information, please contact Tara Morgan at

<mailto:[tara.morgan180 at gmail.com](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)> [tara.morgan180 at gmail.com.](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)

## Chapter/Division Announcements

### \* At Large Chapter:

The At Large chapter has been hard at work in

advocacy. This week, March 15, the chapter partnered with the affiliate in

submitting an official letter to Kalamazoo Public School Transportation

regarding their withholding of accommodations for a blind parent. The

chapter meets every first Tuesday of the month at 8pm via Zoom and holds a

monthly philosophy discussion every third Tuesday of the month at 8pm. We

hope to connect with everyone there.

### \* Detroit Chapter:

The Chapter hosted a demonstration of the I9 Ap

that is currently being developed by a group in the Apple Developer Academy

to help guide blind pedestrians via GPS and cameras;

Began discussing the intersectionality of a crisis in low self-esteem in the

Black community as well as the blind community;

Held a fund-raiser/outing that took 20 people to the Detroit Public Theater

for A Day At The Play to enjoy Blues For An Alabama Sky on March 3rd;

Participated in a local Black History Month Program where Membership

Committee Chair John Scott, Member Bob McPhearson, and President Richard

Clay were guest speakers;

Is planning the next meeting for our Ad-hoc committee on Voting Problems

following the recent primary election;

And, member Tara Morgan just launched the March Madness Games Squares

pool/betting competition for everyone as a fund raiser with great cash

prizes that will donate all proceeds to the Chapter. Call Tara now and

throughout the month to purchase squares at $25.00 each at: 586-260-7803.

### \* Flint-Genessee Chapter:

our monthly Chapter meetings in person and

Hybrid are going Very Well and strong with twenty plus members attending.

Kudos to the members! If you are interested in joining the Flint-Genessee

chapter, our next meeting will be Thursday, March 21 at 6pm. For more

information, please contact Sheila Fulmore at

<mailto:[sspfulmore0402 at gmail.com](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)> [sspfulmore0402 at gmail.com.](http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbmi-talk_nfbnet.org)

### \* New Wayne County Chapter:

Hello members . We are continuing with the

Avon fund raiser through 03/18/2024. We will have our chapter meeting on

04/06/2024 at the Red Apple restaurant 32711 Michigan Ave. Wayne MI. A

member rejoined the chapter on 03/12/2024. On 04/04/2024, we will have our

chapter meeting. When the meeting is adjourned, the chapter will go hiking

for fun and exercise. All are welcome to join.

### \* Blind Michigan Seniors Advocating for Seniors (BMSAS):

Hello

Michigan Seniors! Please join me for our monthly meeting. It will take place

on the 4th Monday of the month at 8:00 PM. We will be meeting in the

Michigan ZOOM Room. This month we will talk about our upcoming National

Convention. There will also be an incredibly special fund-raising event to

help our members with Convention expenses. Hope to see you there!

## Important State Affiliate Dates

### \* 03/17/24 NFBMI Fundraising Committee Meeting

### \* 03/19/24: NFBMI Youth and Family Program Planning Committee Meeting

(5pm)

### \* 03/19/24 NFBMI AT Large Philosophy Discussion (8pm)

### \* 03/22/24 BSBP Consumer Involvement Committee Meeting

### \* 03/28/24: NFBMI Legislative Committee Meeting

### \* 03/30/24: NFBMI Double Good Fundraiser Begins

### \* 04/02/24 NFBMI At Large Chapter Meeting

With Love, Hope and Determination,

Robert Parsons, Jr., M. A., CRC, CVRT, LLC

President, National Federation of the Blind of Michigan

(269) 216- 8640

www.nfbmi.org <[http://www.nfbmi.org](http://www.nfbmi.org/)>

"Without struggle, there is no progress." - Frederick Douglas