# National Federation of the Blind of Michigan (NFBMI

**The Informant 2024**

**Vol. 12: Wrapping Up Success with the Federation**

**December 17, 2024**

## Affiliate Zoom Link

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

## From the President

With the spirit of the Holiday upon us, the year ending and feelings of giving coursing through me, I often reflect on the thing we can be most proud of this year. With the number of accomplishments and milestones that we as blind people achieve, small and not-so-very, each day; it isn’t difficult getting overwhelmed when I put this lens through that of what we have given to another. Whether it is small moments of independence or monumental milestone accomplishments where the entire family shines; the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan has a reputation for giving to others. In this month’s issue of our monthly newsletter, I encourage all of our leadership, membership, and guests to reflect on what they have given. Whether it be through an NFB program experience, an opportunity for another blind person to progress in their journey, a chance for blind people to have equal representation in space or even securing the future of blind people through meeting you. Take these moments, memories, testimonials; and, as you reflect on which of these you feel most proud of**, remember that the philosophy of the Federation underpins some of this pride. Our shared belief that blindness is but a characteristic that does not define us or our future empowers us to live the life we want; regardless of the low expectations placed upon us. Happy Holidays, my Federation Family. 2024 has been an exhilarating, wonderful, awe-inspiring ride full of opportunities to gain experience and grow as a leader with each and every one of you. I look forward to all that 2025 can bring us as the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan.**

## Important National Program Updates

* The National Federation of the Blind continues to advocate for the promotion of braille literacy for children and adolescents. Please support our initiative of providing braille holiday letters and cards to blind children. If you are interested in learning more about this program, please visit <https://nfb.org/programs-services/early-childhood-initiatives/santa-letters>.
* The National Federation of the Blind excitedly partners with 64-ounce games on a wonderful holiday opportunity. By purchasing one of their customized holiday braille Christmas ornaments, you can select your NFB affiliate to donate $5 of your purchase toward. The ornament display reads “National Federation of the Blind. Live the Life You Want 2024.” For more information, please visit: <https://64ouncebraille.com/products/nfb-christmas-ornament-fundraiser>
* The 2025 NFB STEM2U national program training will take place at the Jernigan Institute from January 9-12 for all affiliates that plan to bring non-visual STEM curriculum programs for blind adolescents to their states. The NFB of Michigan is proud to be represented by its NFB STEM2U coordinator, Ather Jammoa, who will be attending the training in Baltimore. We look forward to all that the training, and Ather, will bring our STEM2U instructors and students.
* The 2025 NFB Washington Seminar will take place February 3-6 at the Holiday Inn Washington Capital. The Washington Seminar is an annual, national program where all 52 of the Federation affiliates gather to discuss pertinent issues that affect the blind with their elected officials. It is a joyous time for the blind to both advocate and celebrate our power as a collective. To learn more about the enthusiasm, process, and participants of the NFB Washington Seminar; please visit https://nfb.org/programs-services/advocacy/washington-seminar.
* The 2025 NFB national convention will take place at the Marriott Hotel from July 8-13 in New Orleans, Louisiana. Additional information about convention registration and hotel reservations will come shortly. To learn more about our national convention, please visit [www.nfb.org/convention](http://www.nfb.org/convention).

## Important State Updates

* Visitors and members of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan can now view this issue and past issues of “The Informant” on the NFBMI Webpage. You can access these issues by visiting [www.nfbmi.org/informant](http://www.nfbmi.org/informant).
* We encourage all chapters, divisions and members that are considering ways they can support our organization more to join the Pre-Authorized Contribution (PAC) plan for as little as $5 per month. To learn more about the PAC plan and how it benefits members and programs of the National Federation of the Blind, please visit [www.nfb.org/pac](http://www.nfb.org/pac).
* The National Federation of the Blind of Michigan congratulates Michigan Association of Blind Students Vice President and Flint Genesee Chapter member, Tiaira Mays, in being named a National Association of Blind Students (NABS) 2025 Washington Seminar sponsored attendee. NABS is a proud national division of the National Federation of the Blind and we are excited that Tiarra will be interacting with student leaders from around the country in her first seminar experience; representing our affiliate every step of the way.
* The National Federation of the Blind of Michigan will be participating in the 2025 MAER conference as a vendor. During this opportunity, the affiliate will be able to promote its programs; including the 2025 REAL program, 2025 BELL program and our national scholarship program. The conference will take place April 24-25 in Lansing.
* The National Federation of the Blind of Michigan is excited to announce the leaders of some of its 2024-2025 state committees. Please stay tuned for announcements from these chairs for meeting dates and times that are listed either within future issues of “The Informant” or personally by the chair/ co-chair of the committee. Future committees are still being finalized and will be announced. State committee chairs include Maryann Murad (Membership Committee), Sanho Steele-Louchart (Scholarship Committee), Ather Jammoa (Communications Committee), Sheila Fulmore and Mark Eagle (Legislative Committee), Felecia Bradford (Leadership Development Committee), Robert Parsons (Fundraising Committee), and Donna Posont (Youth and Family Programs Planning Committee).
* The National Federation of the Blind of Michigan recognizes and congratulates Michigan Association of Blind Students (MIABS) President, Jerusalem Crawley, and Vice President, Tiarra Mayes, for being named to the planning committee of the 2025 National Association of Blind Students (NABS) Midwest Regional Student Seminar, This regional student seminar aims to unite the students of various Midwest NFB affiliates (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Minnesota and Wisconsin) for a weekend of leadership building, skills training and professional development; complete with presentations, social activities and networking opportunities. If you are a blind high school student, college student or person interested in the student experience that feels like this opportunity may benefit you; please consider this program when registration information becomes available in coming months.
* The NFBMI fundraising committee is grateful for the efforts and suggestions of so many of our members in its efforts to make our programs successful. As a reminder, state affiliate fundraising programs aim to build opportunities for members across the affiliate and support a variety of our initiatives, including Washington Seminar, National Convention, State Convention, and our different youth programs. The NFBMI Fundraising committee calls are usually held on the first Friday of every month at 6pm, however December’s meeting will be held on Friday, December 20, 2024, at 6pm to discuss preparation for the Q1 fundraising plan after some communication challenges. We look forward to everyone’s participation and encourage at least one member from each active chapter and division to participate live on our state affiliate Zoom line.

## Chapter/Division Updates

* **At Large Chapter:** We are excited for our virtual Holiday party, taking place on December 17, 2024, on our affiliate Zoom. We are also looking forward to having our quarterly in-person activity and future philosophy discussion in 2025. Happy Holidays to everyone.
* **Detroit Chapter:** We are sending four members to the 2025 Washington Seminar, including one member of the student division. We look forward to all that 2025 brings.
* **Flint-Genesee Chapter:** As always, we invite you to join us at our monthly chapter meeting, held on the third Thursday of every month at the Flint Public Library from 5:30 PM to 6:45 PM. If you're outside the Genesee County area, you can also join us via the MI Zoom link. The Flint Genesee Chapter would like to take a moment to wish everyone a *Happy Holidays*! We are especially proud of our accomplishments this year. A big thank you to all who helped make our Toys for Tots and Coats for Kids drives success. Your generosity made a difference in many lives. We are also thrilled to congratulate our chapter members on their recent achievements. Tiaira Mayes was elected Vice President of the Student Division, and Steven Crouch was elected Secretary of the Student Division. We are so proud of both of them! Additionally, we are delighted to share that 18 of our chapter members attended the state conference this year. We all gained valuable knowledge and cherished the opportunity to bond with each other and other chapter members across the affiliate. Our successful Gobble Gobble Popcorn fundraiser allowed us to give back to the community and meet the needs of our chapter. Thank you to everyone who participated and supported this cause. On December 14th, our chapter celebrated the holiday season together. We were fortunate enough to visit the Wayne County chapter and had an amazing time. We are excited for the activities and opportunities that 2025 will bring, and we look forward to continuing our work together. Once again, we wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season!
* **Michigan Association of Blind Students (MIABS):** MIABS will be sending four members of its board to the 2025 Washington Seminar. We look forward to meeting new students and gaining new members in 2025.
* **Michigan Seniors Advocating for Seniors (BMISAFS):** The BMISAFS Seniors will be meeting on December 23rd. Please plan to attend as we continue our discussion of cyber safety.
* **New Wayne County Chapter:** On Friday, December 13, our chapter engaged in a festive, fun, food-filled party with a gift-wrapped auction. With 25 partiers a grand time was had by all. We are looking forward to 2025 with great hope and excitement. Our first meeting will be held January 4 at the Henry Ford Centennial Library on Michigan avenue in Dearborn from 1-3p m. Please come by noon for social time and bring some goodies to share if you wish. Our annual elections will occur and all dues paying members may vote for the future leadership of our chapter. We are sending two members to Washington Seminar and are planning fund raisers to help send all our members to New Orleans for our national convention in July. Blessings for a great 2025 filled with kindness, love, and joy.

## Important Affiliate Dates

* **12/17/24:** NFBMI At Large Chapter Virtual Holiday Party – 8pm
* **12/20/24:** NFBMI Fundraising Committee Meeting – 6pm
* **12/21/24:** NFBMI Detroit Chapter Holiday Party – 12pm
* **12/23/24:** Michigan Seniors Advocating for Seniors Meeting – 8pm
* **12/27/24:**NFBMI Soundboard—8pm
* **1/04/25:** NFBMI New Wayne County Chapter Meeting—1pm
* **1/06/25:** NFBMI At Large Chapter Meeting—8pm
* **1/10/25:** NFBMI Fundraising Committee Meeting—6pm
* 1/10/25: NFBMI Communications Committee Meeting—8pm

With Love, Hope and Determination,