

E-CONNECTOR

News from Colorado Parents of Blind Children (CO-POBC)

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NEW!

NFB EARLY EXPLORER'S PROGRAM

The NFB Jernigan Institute is pleased to announce a new program designed to introduce young blind children (ages birth to 7) and their families to the long white cane. Through the program parents will receive the tools, support, and confidence needed to become their child's first cane travel teacher. Providing children with an early start to independent movement and travel ensures that children will be more confident and curious travelers throughout life. Possessing these skills allows young blind children to learn and play alongside their peers with ease.

Families participating in the program will receive a free child-sized white cane,

an informational DVD and *Travel Tales*, a quarterly e-newsletter. The newsletter will bring you tips and ideas for travel activities you can do with your child. The DVD features parents, kids and professionals who will inspire you to get your child moving and exploring the world.

To get started in the program complete the [Early Explorers Program Registration form](#) online. For more information visit www.nfb.org/earlyexplorers, e-mail earlyexplorers@nfb.org, or call (410) 659-9314, extension 2418.

AND IF YOUR CHILD IS OLDER?

No matter what the age of your child, take a few minutes to [view the Early Explorers video online](#). Many of the kids in the video are older and all parents can learn from watching and listening to what they have to say. The overall message is clear. Get a cane in your child's hands, encourage your child to take the cane everywhere he or she goes and be proud of this travel tool that, with practice, will bring independence and self confidence.

Editor's Note: Please feel free to contact us if you have an announcement you would like included in the newsletter or if you would like to add a friend or family member to the e-mail list. Direct all communications to: copobc@gmail.com, attention Julie Hunter, editor

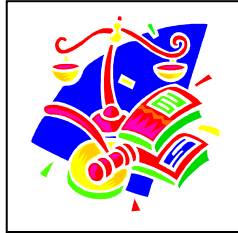


A LESSON IN POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

Parents, students and teachers are invited to join the NFB of Colorado for a “Day at the Capitol” in Denver on Tuesday, January 17th, 2012. The purpose of the NFBCO Day at the Capitol is to communicate the legislative priorities of blind Coloradans to our state senators and representatives. Members of the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado will meet in the Old Supreme Court Chambers at 8:00 a.m., and following a briefing on the issues to be presented to the legislators, the group will divide into teams. Each team will be given the names and office locations of a few representatives and senators and the teams will visit those offices to present the NFBCO legislative agenda and share information about our organization and the NFBCO scholarship program.

This is a wonderful opportunity to experience the legislative process at a grass roots level and to begin to understand the importance of collective action in achieving change for blind and visually impaired

Coloradans. Please mark your calendars and join us in the Old Supreme Court Chambers at the Capitol building at 8:00 a.m. on January 17th. For more information contact Lisa Bonderson at 303-504-5979.



NFB: STANDING UP FOR EQUAL RIGHTS AND FAIR TREATMENT

As you know, Colorado Parents of Blind Children is part of the National Federation of the Blind. The NFB leads the way in fighting for and defending the rights of blind people. Often parents of blind children are not aware of the work being done by the NFB. Since children are somewhat sheltered by the special education laws, parents may be oblivious to the roadblocks that potentially await after high school graduation. Here is a story about one such roadblock encountered by a young blind woman in her efforts to take the California Bar Exam. It is a reminder for us to thank the National Federation of the Blind for its work in clearing the roadblocks to equal access and equal treatment.

Blind Law School Graduate Paves the Way for Blind Test Takers

“Stephanie Enyart, who graduated from UCLA School of Law, was forced into court by the refusal of the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE) to allow her to take the bar exam using her primary reading method, a computer equipped with screen reading and screen magnifying software.

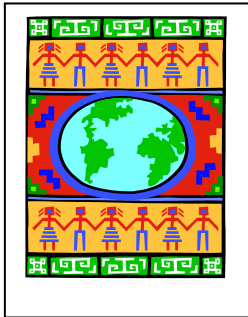
NCBE argued that it fulfilled its legal obligations to Ms. Enyart by offering accommodations such as Braille or a human reader, alternatives that do not work well for Ms. Enyart. The courts resoundingly rejected that argument, holding that licensing examinations must be administered to exam takers with sensory impairments in a manner that “best ensures” that they are tested on what the examination purports to measure, rather than on the exam takers’ impairments. The judge found that Stephanie Enyart is entitled to take the bar exam on a computer equipped with text-to-speech screen reading and visual screen magnification software, as the method that will best ensure that she is tested on her aptitude rather than her disability.

Ms. Enyart was represented with the support of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) by Brown, Goldstein & Levy, LLP, in Baltimore, MD, and the LaBarre Law Offices, P.C., in Denver, CO.)”



PARENTS ENCOURAGING PARENTS

Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conferences are family-centered events designed to offer support, information and education to both parents and professionals who work with children with disabilities in Colorado. The next PEP Conferences will be held February 2-4, 2012 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. For more information about PEP and to complete the preliminary application, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cd/esp/PEP.asp>. You may also call 303-866-6846 or 1-877-834-0588 toll-free for general information.



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS MAGAZINE PODCAST LINK

The Audio Internet Reading Service of Los Angeles (AIR-LA) offers free podcasts of the *National Geographic Kids*

magazine. Each month Danielle Rayne reads from the magazine highlighting different people, animals and places around the world. Interesting facts, games and activities are featured. Subscribe to [National Geographic Kids Magazine Podcast](#). It's free!



SPECIAL EDUCATION GUIDES AVAILABLE IN SPANISH

Several publications designed to help parents with disabilities navigate the special education process are now available in Spanish. The "Family Information Guide to Assistive Technology and Transition", published by the Family Center on Technology and Disability, includes an illustrated glossary of assistive technology. Read it online [here](#).

The Pacer Center has published [Early Childhood Transition Guidebook](#) (download for free) in Spanish, English and Somali. This guide helps parents understand services for infants and toddlers and the transition to early childhood services.

UPCOMING EVENTS



January 21, 2012

BLIND LINK

12:30-2:30 p.m.
Colorado Center for the Blind
2233 W. Shepperd Ave.
Littleton, CO 80120

BLIND LINK is a mentoring program for blind kids and their families. The kids are matched 1-on-1 with blind mentors. Family members meet at the same time for roundtable discussions to provide support and information about raising a blind child.

Brent Batron, program coordinator, has prepared a survey* to better understand the interests of both parents and kids. Your input is requested. If you haven't already done so, please complete the survey to help Brent make Blind Link 2012 the best ever!

*Survey is an email attachment.

