# National Federation of the Blind National Association of Blind Students Regional Seminar

Holiday Inn Chicago O’Hare Area

5615 N. Cumberland Ave.

Chicago, IL 60631

March 7 – March 9, 2025

## Introduction:

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) National Association of Blind Students (NABS) has developed the Regional Seminar, a program specifically designed to provide pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) to blind students. The Regional Seminar is a weekend-long, immersive experience where students can gain exposure to insightful presentations, educational seminars, innovative services, quality training, and social and professional networking that will assist them to obtain competitive integrated employment in the career of their choice. The NABS Regional Seminar offers a unique opportunity for blind students to take advantage of a broad range of Pre-ETS and to immerse themselves in an exceptional, concentrated environment of programming, products, and services for the blind only available at this seminar.

## Overview of Pre-Employment Transition Services:

### Counseling on Opportunities for Enrollment in Comprehensive Transition or Postsecondary Educational Programs:

During this seminar, students will hear first-hand accounts from their peers, experienced professionals, and advocates in the community. Through education focused workshops, access technology presentations, and panel discussions highlighting useful resources, students gain insights into real-world challenges and the strategies to overcome them.

### Job Exploration Counseling:

This seminar is a testament to our commitment to empowering blind students to emerge as leaders in diverse fields. Through various career specific presentations and workshops, there are opportunities for students to hear from pioneers in their respective professional areas with a focus on establishing connections that will aid in their professional journey. The interactions here go beyond the four walls of this seminar, forming the foundation for lifelong professional relationships and mentorships.

### 3. Instruction in Self-advocacy:

The NFB has always been at the forefront of advocacy for the rights and potential of the blind community. Workshops that focus on identifying Reasonable Accommodations vs. Personal Services, knowing one’s rights on the college campus, and other advocacy related presentations reiterate this commitment, empowering students to stand up for their rights and break through societal barriers.

### Work-Based Learning Experiences:

The essence of these seminars is the extensive lineup of sessions targeted towards elevating the professional prowess of blind students. From understanding the nuances of "negotiation" to exploring diverse career paths, the Regional Seminar is a source of knowledge. Not just theory, the seminar also focuses on practical topics such as "Facing Fears of Formal Dining" or "Approaching the Job Interview", ensuring students are holistically prepared for their future careers.

### Workplace Readiness Training to Develop Social Skills and Independent Living:

Our seminar is an incubator for the development and enhancement of nonvisual skills. This large, diverse gathering of people tests the student’s ability to interact with a variety of personalities. Moreover, the seminar is a supportive environment for individuals willing and ready to assist blind students in learning from their experiences in a manner that enables the students to develop their own styles. Presentations conducted by graduates from our premier adult rehabilitation training centers provide students with information about the alternative skills of blindness that are important to master to optimize their potential for success.

## Logistics:

Each student will fully participate in the Student Seminar agenda, which will detail sessions and activities the student will attend. The agenda will be made available for students to review before attending the weekend-long event. Participants can expect:

* Friday, 5:00-9:30 p.m. – Welcome hour, ice breaker activities, networking activities
* Saturday 7:30 a.m.-9:30 p.m. –various Pre-ETS presentations and interactive workshops, formal banquet, evening social event
* Sunday, 7:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. –various Pre-ETS presentations and interactive workshops, and closing activities and remarks.

The students' experience will be facilitated by a group of blind adult mentors who will monitor their progress and provide the students with appropriate support and guidance throughout the seminar. Students and mentors will meet each morning to discuss the daily objectives and to debrief experiences from the previous day. Moreover, the students will be responsible for journaling at the end of each day to document their experiences.

The cost per student to participate in this formalized weekend experience is $2,500.00, and the student must be at least eighteen years old.

## Deliverables:

At the end of the experience, each student will provide a Regional Seminar experience summary that consists of:

1. A Regional Seminar journal
2. A post-secondary goal road map
3. A career track statement
4. A mentor network
5. A post-seminar survey

## Conclusion:

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) National Association of Blind Students (NABS) has created this Regional Seminar, which serves as an immersive experience that allows students to engage in insightful presentations, training, and networking to help them secure competitive employment. With personalized student seminar curriculums, mentoring, and a series of sessions ranging from job exploration to self-advocacy, participants finish the seminar equipped with tangible tools to assist them in their future endeavors towards successful integrated employment.