



NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND DREAM BUILDER CAMPAIGN

It is not enough to tell blind children they can do anything. We must help them know it in their heart through action, teach them the skills for success, and surround them with experienced blind mentors. Only then will this generation excel above the previous one and transform their dreams into reality.

President Mark Riccobono

Blind people continue to face significant barriers to success due to the misunderstandings of blindness, the low expectations that persist, inadequate educational resources, and the lack of high-quality training opportunities.

The National Federation of the Blind's (NFB) core purpose is to fully integrate the blind into society on a basis of equality. Success depends on removing legal, economic, and social discrimination; public education on new concepts; and the achievement by all blind people to exercise talents to their fullest. It involves blind people working with their sighted neighbors in professional settings, common callings, skilled trades, and other occupations. When we develop educational and employment opportunities and break down the artificial barriers between blind people and their dreams, it will happen. Working together, this future will become reality.

We can change the world in a nationwide *Dream Builder Campaign*. Through NFB's educational, advocacy, social, and employment networks, the next generation of blind youth need not face the same artificial barriers blind people have long endured. Led by NFB, all blind people can face the future with hope and determination knowing that blindness will not be the barrier between ourselves and our dreams. By making it right for the generation growing up today, we make it better for all blind people. We contemplate a campaign with four (4) components:

- 1. EDUCATION:** The NFB will deliver excellence to local communities by training teachers and blind mentors and providing educational best practices to blind children. We will broaden the network of training and support to parents of blind children. This nationally coordinated network of highly qualified teachers and community mentoring coordinators will create a community of practice to transform the education of blind children.
- 2. TRAINING:** Continuing to expand expectations that all technologies should be available to blind people, NFB faces a shortage of expertise and resources to train blind people to effectively use those technologies to compete on terms of equality. The NFB will develop a training program to put qualified trainers in the field to train professionals, families, and blind people on the use of accessible technologies. Leveraging expertise of the NFB's Center for Excellence in Nonvisual Access to Education, Public Information, and Commerce, the Federation's technology trainers will empower blind people with the training and technologies needed to pursue their dreams.
- 3. ADVOCACY:** A barrier to full participation is the systemic obstacles blind people face. We will strengthen and broaden our resource network by training local advocates to help blind people navigate the education, rehabilitation, and employment systems. Through these advocates, the Federation will gather data about the systemic barriers, generate best practice resources, and strengthen the priorities for change on a national basis.
- 4. EMPLOYMENT:** Building a career requires building a work history. Through the *Each One Teach One Program*, blind individuals will be recruited, trained, and deployed across our country. These experiences will contribute to the expertise in local communities while giving blind people the employment to pursue their dreams. Whether their career goal is web development, teaching, accounting, policy development, or other careers, the *Each One Teach One Program* will create real employment opportunities over 24 months while building capacity of blind workforce professionals.

Capacity Building - This campaign will enhance resources to build local capacity through national coordination. Every affiliate will be strengthened. Success will be measured by assessing the strength of our volunteer membership and engagement at the local level. Starting with a pilot project our goal is to know where every blind person is and connect them into our network. We will learn how to build the chapters and affiliates needed for our future:

1. Capacity-Building Team of Four People: Build and manage affiliate capacity-building teams and deploy them to specific projects under the direction of the President. This team would also manage our “Each One Teach One Program” participants. This team will deeply impact our campaign on the ground:

- A. Training/Communications
- B. Outreach Specialist
- C. Assistant
- D. Project/Team Manager

2. Teacher of Tomorrow Program: Future teachers of blind students

- A. Trained as teachers of blind students
- B. Assigned to summer employment in NFB programs
- C. Assigned to one affiliate-building project while pursuing their degree
- D. Obligated to thirteen months of service to the Federation in educational programs

3. Each One Teach One Program: Young blind individuals onboard for an NFB Corps-type experience, including:

- A. Comprehensive training at an NFB training center
- B. Train in Federation leadership and development and community organizing
- C. Two-year commitment to Federation project work, including training new recruits
- D. Work assignments will be targeted to provide career experience
- E. The NFB will support participants in finding jobs after the program

4. Training Team

- A. NFB will develop a team whose only job is to train the trainers. This could be a dedicated team of individuals to train technology program participants, teachers, parents, advocates, etc.
- B. These individuals could charge for training to school districts and rehabilitation agencies so that there is some degree of cost recovery.

5. Technology Infrastructure

- A. Tools to do data collection and community organizing (*i.e.*, when someone meets a blind person we should have their contact information in our database within ten minutes including follow-up).
- B. Our data collection on the ground in affiliates should help us better identify needs and opportunities.
- C. Provide corps of builders with cutting-edge technology. Use their feedback to test new technologies.

Targeted Project Expenditures

Year 1 Pilot	\$ 500,000
Year 2 Education and Training Implementation	\$ 1,250,000
Year 3 Refinement and Growth	\$ 1,750,000
Year 4 Building Sustainability	\$ 3,000,000
Year 5 Full Implementation of New Capacity	<u>\$ 3,500,000</u>
	\$10,000,000

Sustainability:

1. Identify strategic partners and new donors;
2. Capacity to build locally with national coordination;
3. Better tools for communication—internally and externally—and for sharing resources;
4. Implement our unified database with tools to help us manage the data to build NFB;
5. Better mobilize volunteers at the local level; and
6. New donors and the increased capacity to maximize our development program for generations to follow.

Substantial philanthropic support is needed to fulfill our *Dream Builder* opportunities. It is important to have your input before embarking on such a long-term community endeavor. We invite you to participate in a private discussion to share your insight and advice. Thank you.