



## **NextGen Insight**

**Volume 5, Issue 4  
November 2025**

Publications Committee Chair: Greg Lindberg

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Title Page Image Description: Background - Black night sky with dim stars in a horizontal rectangle. Foreground - All text is in white font. NextGen spans the width of the image with the N and G capitalized. ACB is in capital letters above the word Next. A yellow star is shooting out of the top right corner of the letter x and hovering over the word Gen. Underneath and spanning the width of the word NextGen are the words Develop Lead Elevate (1/3 of the font size of ACB NextGen) with a dot between each word.

Did You Know? Eyelashes have a five-month lifespan and are primarily there to keep dirt out of your eyes (but they look nice, too!).

(Source: <https://www.drarthurhaley.com/9-fun-eye-facts-in-observance-of-world-sight-day/>)

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## **President's Message**

Season's Greetings!

As I type this message on a cool autumn day, I can't help but reflect on the things we have done as an affiliate this year. When I took over as president of this great organization, I had mixed feelings. I was both excited and nervous about my ability to take on such a vital role. Being in this position has challenged and provided me with opportunities for growth and development.

Just as I've grown during the first half of my first term as ACB NextGen's president, this affiliate has seen its share of growth. Several new members have stepped up to serve on committees and on the board of directors. For the first time in the history of our organization, memberships have been awarded to 24 ACB and CCLVI scholarship recipients. In doing this, we have provided college students with opportunities to grow and develop

skills they can use while they're in college and beyond. Additionally, we have offered educational programming on a range of topics aimed at developing, leading, and elevating the next generation of leaders who are blind and visually impaired.

As the year comes to an end, I wanted to take some time to encourage members of ACB NextGen to consider their own aspirations. Whether you aspire to be a leader or simply want to learn a new skill, I encourage you to consider joining one of our committees. Joining a committee offers you an opportunity to learn skills that you can utilize in all aspects of life. If you are aspiring to sharpen your leadership skills, consider running for the Board of Directors or chairing one of our amazing committees.

I hope you will all join us for our annual business meeting on Monday, December 1, 2025, at 8 p.m. ET, 5 p.m. PT and celebrate all that we have achieved this year.

Warmest regards,  
Kristen Kelling  
President, ACB Next Generation

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## **2025 ACB Next Generation Candidates Forum**

By ACB NextGen Nominating Committee

Save the date! The ACB Next Generation Nominating Committee invites you to our Candidates Forum on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at 8 p.m. ET, 7 p.m. CT, 5 p.m. PT. This forum will provide an opportunity for members to meet the candidates for our board of directors and hear their vision for the future of ACB Next Generation. Be on the lookout for the Zoom info on the ACB NextGen email list.

ACB NextGen will hold a live election and take nominations from the floor during the annual business meeting on Monday, December 1, at 8 p.m. ET, 5 p.m. PT, and elect by acclamation if there are no contested elections. If we have more than one individual running for a position, this position will go directly to a ballot via ElectionRunner. Voting on ElectionRunner will open on Thursday, December 4 at 12 a.m. ET and close on Sunday, December 7 at 11:59 p.m. ET. We must have at least 15% of the members entitled to vote in this election – or at least 19 members present in voting – for this election to be valid.

To ensure you stay informed, make sure you're subscribed to the ACB NextGen Announce list. To subscribe, send an email to [announce+subscribe@ACBNextGeneration.groups.io](mailto:announce+subscribe@ACBNextGeneration.groups.io).

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## **2025 ACB Next Generation Annual Business Meeting**

By Greg Lindberg

This year's ACB Next Generation annual business meeting and elections will be held on Monday, December 1, 2025, at 8 p.m. ET, 5 p.m. PT, 3 p.m. HT.

During the meeting, we'll reflect on the year in our affiliate and what we've achieved as an organization. We will also kick off the live election for several positions. Once we reach a contested election, we will move into an election with an online ballot. (Refer to the Candidates Forum article for more details on the voting process.)

Be on the lookout for the Zoom info coming out on the ACB NextGen email list. We look forward to seeing you there to celebrate ACB Next Generation!

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## **Shop the Season, Support Our Vision!**

By ACB NextGen Fundraising Committee

The holiday season is the perfect time to give, and what better way to do it than by supporting ACB Next Generation while checking off your holiday shopping list!

From Friday, November 21 through Friday, December 5, 2025, ACB NextGen invites you to take part in our holiday fundraiser, “Shop the Season, Support Our Vision.”

This special event brings together nine exciting fundraisers — all featured in one convenient location on our fundraising landing page. Most of our featured partners offer shop-to-home shipping, making it easy for you to support. Whether you’re looking for thoughtful gifts, festive treats, or meaningful ways to give back, there’s something for everyone!

### **What You’ll Find**

Our landing page will include links and short descriptions to a variety of shopping opportunities, from delicious snacks and cozy holiday favorites to creative and practical gifts.



We'll also include links to:

- Our Facebook fundraising page for direct donations
- Our ACB NextGen cookbook
- RaiseRight gift cards — perfect for holiday gifting and everyday shopping

## **How It Works**

Simply visit our fundraising landing page (coming soon!) between November 21 and December 5, choose your favorite fundraiser(s), and start shopping. Each purchase helps our affiliate continue our mission of empowering young blind and visually impaired individuals to develop, lead, and elevate.

## **Spread the Cheer**

Help us make this fundraiser a success by sharing the landing page link with your friends, family, and social networks. Every purchase, every share, and every donation makes a difference. Together, we can make this holiday season brighter for our community and beyond!

Be on the lookout on our email list for the landing page link. For questions or assistance with placing an order, email [fundraising@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:fundraising@acbnextgeneration.org) or call 202-524-0909. Please leave your name, phone number, and time

zone, and we'll get back to you as soon as possible to assist with any questions you may have.

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## **KCBNG Update**

Hi everyone,

As you're reading this, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very happy holiday season.

KCB Next Generation held its first-ever bridge walk across the Big Four Pedestrian Walking Bridge to Indiana to a local eating establishment. We also had our elections which are held annually. Our new members of the board of directors include Joseph Hernandez and Amanda Selm. Congratulations to them! Both of these director positions are two-year terms.

We are looking forward to another great year in 2026.

Best regards,

Joey Couch

President, Kentucky Council of the Blind Next Generation

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## **Meet Us in St. Louis**

By ACB NextGen Convention Committee

Our convention planning season has officially kicked off. Our wheels are turning, and our creative juices are flowing as we prepare to bring you some amazing programs.

Mark your calendars now and plan to join us for the 2026 American Council of the Blind Conference and Convention in St. Louis, MO. ACB committees and special interest affiliates will hold virtual-only programs from Thursday, July 16 through Saturday, July 18. Details regarding ACB business will be decided over the next several months. The hybrid dates of the convention are Friday, July 24 through Friday, July 31. All onsite programming will take place at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch. If you are interested in learning more about the hotel, click here: <https://www.hyatt.com/hyatt-regency/en-US/stlrs-hyatt-regency-st-louis-at-the-arch>.

To keep up with the latest details regarding the 2026 ACB Conference and Convention, we encourage you to subscribe to the ACB Convention Information list. You can do so by sending a blank email to [acbconvention+subscribe@acblists.org](mailto:acbconvention+subscribe@acblists.org).

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## **Building the BRIDGE to Tomorrow: A Message from the President of Blind Information Technology Specialists (BITS)**

By Jeff Bishop, President, BITS

When we talk about leadership, we often think about those who came before us — the pioneers who built the paths we now travel. But real leadership isn't only about the past; it's about the bridges we build toward the future.

That's what Blind Information Technology Specialists, or BITS, stands for: building bridges across generations, experiences, and abilities to shape the future of accessibility, technology, and inclusion.

As we look toward tomorrow, you, the members and emerging leaders of ACB Next Generation, are the beating heart of what comes next. You are the coders, creators, advocates, educators, and visionaries who will carry accessibility and innovation into places we can only imagine. At BITS, we see you not only as the leaders of tomorrow — but as our partners today.

## **The BRIDGE We Build Together**

The BRIDGE principles of BITS — Belonging, Respect, Inclusion, Diversity, Growth, and Empowerment — define how we lead, how we serve, and how we grow together.

### **Belonging**

Every person deserves to feel that they belong — to know that their voice matters and that their contributions shape our shared future. In BITS, whether you're exploring your first line of code, launching a career in IT, or mentoring others, there's a place for you. We believe that belonging begins when you feel seen, supported, and celebrated for exactly who you are.

### **Respect**

Respect is the foundation of collaboration. It means valuing each person's lived experience and expertise—whether that comes from decades in the technology field or the fresh perspectives of someone just starting their journey. We thrive because we listen, learn, and lift one another up.

### **Inclusion**

Technology can either create barriers or break them down. Our mission is to make sure it always does the latter. Inclusion means ensuring accessibility isn't an

afterthought — it's the design principle guiding every innovation. Through mentoring, advocacy, and partnership, BITS members work every day to make sure blind and low-vision individuals are full participants in the digital age.

## **Diversity**

We celebrate the diversity of thought, background, skill, and identity that makes our community strong. Within BITS, you'll find programmers, web developers, educators, testers, writers, musicians, and entrepreneurs. Diversity drives creativity—and together, we shape solutions that reflect the richness of our experiences.

## **Growth**

Growth happens when we're willing to step outside our comfort zones—to learn something new, to teach someone else, and to imagine what's possible. BITS offers countless opportunities for personal and professional growth: training programs, mentoring networks, study groups, and collaborative projects that help you build both skill and confidence.

## **Empowerment**

At the heart of everything we do is empowerment — helping each member gain the tools, knowledge, and

courage to lead. Empowerment is more than skill-building; it's confidence-building. It's realizing that your contribution can change lives, systems, and futures.

## **Leading the Next Generation Forward**

We in BITS believe the next wave of leadership is already here — and that it begins with partnerships between today's and tomorrow's visionaries. We invite you, the members of Next Generation, to join us in leading this movement. Not later. Not someday. Now.

We need your energy, creativity, and ideas. We need your voices in our committees, your talents in our projects, and your vision in our planning rooms. Whether your interests lie in artificial intelligence, web accessibility, assistive technology development, education, or community building — there is a home for you in BITS.

Together, we can create pathways that make technology not only usable, but empowering for all. Imagine a future where accessibility is the default, where innovation is guided by lived experience, and where mentorship flows in every direction — where those who have led for decades walk hand in hand with those just beginning to lead.

## **An Invitation**

So, here's our invitation: step forward. Become part of the BITS community. Help us guide today's users and leaders into the future we're building together. Bring your imagination, your courage, and your belief in what's possible.

Together, we can be the bridge between generations — the link between what accessibility once was and what it can become. We're ready to walk that bridge with you.

Join us at <http://www.bits-acb.org> and help us lead the next generation of accessibility, innovation, and inclusion.

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## **Gift-Giving for All!**

By Jessica Dail

Gift-giving is easy when we know the recipient's likes and dislikes. For those who are blind or visually impaired, understanding their visual acuity is key. Can they read large print, see light, or are they totally blind? These insights help in choosing the perfect gift.



My top five gift recommendations for 2025 are as follows:

1. The new Blind Barbie, purchase from:  
Barbie 12.7" Fashionistas Doll Brown Hair/brown Eyes  
Blind Doll Wearing Pastel Outfit With Cane And  
Sunglasses : Target or Amazon.com: Barbie Fashionistas  
Doll #228, Blind Doll Wearing Pink Top and Ruffled Skirt  
with Cane and Sunglasses in Partnership with The  
American Foundation for The Blind : Toys & Games

I received one from my mom and absolutely love it. We both believe that this item could be a useful toy for young children, as well as an educational tool for older kids, teenagers, and even adults. This item came out last year.

2. Apple products, such as the new iPhone 17 Pro or a new Apple Watch, can be purchased at <http://www.apple.com/store>. The great news with devices like these is that they all offer built-in accessibility features, such as VoiceOver for users who are blind or have very low vision, like myself. There is also Zoom (not to be confused with the online meeting platform), which allows the user to magnify content. Speaking of magnification, the iPhone and iPad also have a standalone Magnifier app, which makes use of the device's camera to make objects larger to help low vision users see them. Devices such as the iPhone 17 Pro, also come equipped with lidar. This allows the user to detect doors and other objects,

using only their phone. If they do come upon a door and this feature is in use, VoiceOver will tell them how to operate the door. For example, they may hear, “Turn the knob.” This feature has improved my independence, and I hope it does the same for whoever is receiving this device this holiday season.

3. For the podcaster or audio enthusiast in your life, I recommend the Zoom H1 Essential recorder. As long as the item title contains the word “essential,” these devices speak every menu item. You can purchase one from [www.zoomcorp.com](http://www.zoomcorp.com) or AT Guys and this item typically runs between \$99 and \$350. At the time of this writing, the file list is not accessible on the device by the accessibility feature, but that can easily be worked around by plugging it into your computer using a USB-C converter. You can also use this cable to connect to your iPhone or iPad and record using the recorder as your mic. Plus, you can manage files via the files app.

4. For the person in your life who is enthusiastic about Braille and also needs to take notes for work or school, the BrailleSense 6 would be my recommendation. I received one in February and absolutely love it! This device runs Android 12, and the firmware is updated frequently. Learn more and purchase from <https://selvasblv.com/product/braillesense-6/>.

The firmware on these devices was just upgraded to version 3.0 and, while it does not upgrade the Android version any further, there are some much-needed improvements, such as the ability to create outlines using the Word Processor.

5. If the person you're buying for happens to be a ham radio operator like myself, the radio I recommend is the TH-D75A, which can be purchased from <https://www.kenwood.com/usa/com/amateur/th-d75a/> for \$699.

I hope the above information has been helpful and that your recipients enjoy the items they receive from you this gift-giving season. If you have any questions about anything listed in this article, please don't hesitate to reach out to me via email at [jldail13@outlook.com](mailto:jldail13@outlook.com).

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## **Blog and Podcast Roundup**

In addition to publishing the NextGen Insight, the Publications Committee also produces blog posts and the Next Up with NextGen podcast. Below is a roundup of recent blog and podcast content.

### **Blog Posts**

Passion Project Portal: Lisha Pottackal (by Greg Lindberg):

<https://acbnextgeneration.org/2025/10/30/passion-project-portal-taking-a-skate-with-lisha-pottackal-by-greg-lindberg/>

### **Next Up with NextGen Podcast**

Notetaking Tips and Tricks for the Blind and Visually Impaired:

<https://acbnextgeneration.org/2025/09/18/notetaking-tips-and-tricks-for-the-blind-and-visually-impaired/>

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## **Calendar of Events**

Everyone is welcome to attend these events by accessing the Zoom mobile app, visiting the Zoom website at <https://zoom.us>, or calling (312) 626-6799, and entering the appropriate meeting ID and passcode.

You may sign up to receive reminders and Zoom details by subscribing to the ACB Next Generation email list.

Please send a blank email to

[main+subscribe@acbnextgeneration.groups.io](mailto:main+subscribe@acbnextgeneration.groups.io)

In addition, many ACB Next Generation events are listed on the ACB Community Call schedule. Please watch your email for program details and possible updates.

### **November 2025**

5 - NextGen 101 – 8 p.m. ET

10 - ACB Next Generation Board Meeting – 8 p.m. ET

15 - November NextGen Insight published

23 - Game On with NextGen: This Is JEOPARDY!

American History Edition - 8 p.m. ET

## **December 2025**

1 - ACB Next Generation Annual Business Meeting and Elections – 8 p.m. ET

8 - ACB Next Generation Board Meeting – 8 p.m. ET

9 - Tuesday Night Huddle: When Interviews Come Mocking – 8 p.m. ET (postponed from November)

14 – Game On with NextGen: A Worldwide Celebration – 8 p.m. ET

16 - Tuesday Night Huddle: Scams and Spams - 8 p.m. ET

## **January 2026**

12 - ACB Next Generation Board Meeting – 8 p.m. ET

20 - Tuesday Night Huddle: TBD – 8 p.m. ET

25 - Game On with NextGen: TBD – 8 p.m. ET

## **February 2026**

4 - NextGen 101 – 8 p.m. ET

9 - ACB Next Generation Board Meeting – 8 p.m. ET

15 - February NextGen Insight published

17 - Tuesday Night Huddle: TBD – 8 p.m. ET

22 - Game On with NextGen: TBD – 8 p.m. ET

\*Topics and speakers are subject to change. Please reference ACB Next Generation emails and the ACB Community Call schedule.

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DISCLAIMER: The opinions expressed in the content of this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of ACB Next Generation as an organization.

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The NextGen Insight is published four times per year: (February 15, May 15, August 15, and November 15) in a digital format via email and posted to our website the following month. Send newsletter items for consideration to [publications@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:publications@acbnextgeneration.org).

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## **ACB Next Generation Board of Directors**

President - Kristen Kelling

1st Vice President - Maria Kristic

2nd Vice President - Megan Meigs

Secretary – Dakota Birch

Treasurer - Moe Carpenter

Immediate Past President – Amanda Selm

Director - Michael Babcock

Director - Justin Graben

Director - Amber Grant

Director - Lindsey LaVere

Director - Vika Trussell

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## **How to Reach Us**

Email Address: ACBNextGen@gmail.com

Phone Number: (202) 524-0909

Website: <http://www.acbnextgeneration.org>

Social Media:

<http://www.acbnextgeneration.org/contact-us>

ACB NextGen Blog:

<http://www.acbnextgeneration.org/blog>



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## **ACB Next Generation Committees**

Interested in joining a committee? Fill out the committee interest form at <https://forms.gle/kNpzgMBW3ZWzPS7S6>

### **Advocacy / Legislative Committee**

Chair: Aaron Espinoza

Contact: [advocacy@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:advocacy@acbnextgeneration.org)

### **Awards Committee**

Chair: Joseph Hernandez

Vice Chair: Winter Renfrow

Contact: [awards@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:awards@acbnextgeneration.org)

### **Budget / Finance Committee**

Chair: Moe Carpenter

Contact: [treasurer@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:treasurer@acbnextgeneration.org)

### **Constitution and Bylaws / Resolutions Committee**

Chair: Matt Selm

Contact: [constitution@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:constitution@acbnextgeneration.org)

### **Convention Committee**

Chair: Amanda Selm

Contact: [convention@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:convention@acbnextgeneration.org)

### **Fundraising Committee**

Co-Chairs: Moe Carpenter and Lindsey LaVere

Vice Chair: Justin Graben

Contact: [fundraising@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:fundraising@acbnextgeneration.org)

## **Membership Committee**

Chair: Matt Selm

Contact: [membership@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:membership@acbnextgeneration.org)

## **Nominating Committee**

Chair: Megan Meigs

Contact: [elections@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:elections@acbnextgeneration.org)

## **Programs Committee**

Chair: Amanda Selm

Contact: [programs@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:programs@acbnextgeneration.org)

## **Public Relations and eCommunications Committee**

Chair: Vika Trussell

Contact: [pr@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:pr@acbnextgeneration.org)

## **Publications Committee**

Chair: Greg Lindberg

Contact: [publications@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:publications@acbnextgeneration.org)

## **Website Committee**

Chair: Michael Babcock

Contact: [website@acbnextgeneration.org](mailto:website@acbnextgeneration.org)