



Media Release

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For Immediate Release

January 15, 2010

NFB-NEWSLINE available to blind Arkansans via phone or web ***DSB-sponsored service expands news service for blind residents***

The National Federation of the Blind's NFB-NEWSLINE® is now available to all print-disabled Arkansas residents. NFB-NEWSLINE® is a free service that allows those who cannot read conventional newsprint due to a physical disability to listen to the newspaper over the telephone, on the web, or by download to a digital talking-book player. Through the service, blind Arkansans can now independently access more than 300 newspapers and magazines and decide how, when, and where they wish to read their favorite publications.

Dr. Marc Maurer, president of the National Federation of the Blind, said: "For many years, those unable to read the printed word were barred from attaining access to information, which is vital to full participation in society and affects individuals in all of the roles they play in their communities. The availability of NFB-NEWSLINE® truly places the keys of access in the hands of all members of the print-disabled community. With these keys, the blind themselves can open doors to the world and become aware of the matters both large and small that are covered in their daily newspapers."

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Matt Lyles, who serves as president of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas and a DHS employee, is excited to have this revolutionary service available to him. “I love knowing what’s going on in the world around me, and NFB-NEWSLINE® affords me that ability. Further, I very much appreciate that with NFB-NEWSLINE®, blind people are not dependent on others to read the news to us; instead, we have the same flexibility and autonomy that we would with a traditional print newspaper. Finally, the news is not what someone else decides is important; rather, NFB-NEWSLINE® subscribers get to make the choice of what news is important to them.”

Katy Morris, director of Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Services for the Blind (DSB), said, “We are excited to welcome NFB-NEWSLINE® into the family of services sponsored by DSB. NEWSLINE offers valuable opportunities for individuals who do not read print to independently access information they need. In many ways NFB-NEWSLINE® mirrors the same goals held by the Arkansas Division for Services for the Blind to facilitate the independence, choice, and engagement of persons who are blind. For the first time in DSB history, this partnership between the existing Arkansas Information Reading Services for the Blind and NFB-NEWSLINE® promises to raise the bar to enable Arkansans with vision impairments to compete globally by obtaining local, state, and worldwide information to manage their careers and their personal lives.”

NFB-NEWSLINE®, which began operation in 1995, offers TV listings in addition to newspapers and magazines to more than 70,000 subscribers through several delivery methods: a standard touch-tone telephone, over the Internet, or by download to a digital talking-book player or mp3-playing device.

To access the more than 300 publications offered with NFB-NEWSLINE®, Arkansas residents need to register to use the service by visiting www.nfbnewslineonline.org/signup.htm or [www.nfb.org/nfb/Newspapers by Phone.asp](http://www.nfb.org/nfb/Newspapers_by_Phone.asp) or by calling toll-free 1-866-504-7300.