



## Michael Hansen

I am pleased to have been given this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Mike Hansen and I am honored to represent the Blind of Nebraska as well as the National Federation of the Blind as a Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Board Member.

I was born in Omaha, NE on October 11, 1975 and grew up in Papillion, NE. As began to crawl and later walk my parents began to worry that I might have a vision problem. After several doctor visits it was determined that I had in fact been born with a condition in both of my eyes called coloboma of the optic nerve. This is a condition where the optic nerves never fully develop. The retinas in my eyes also had large portions that were non-functional. These conditions combined caused me to be very near sighted.

As I grew up I tried to not let my vision stop me. I attended Papillion / LaVista public school. I was very active in the Boy Scouts attaining the Rank of Eagle Scout and even working as a camp counselor during the summer. While I was growing up I worked with a vision teacher who taught me to use the tools that I needed to be successful in school. It wasn't until the spring of 1994 that I was introduced to what was then called Services for the Visually Impaired. The staff of SVI helped me prepare for the transition from high school to college. In the fall of 1994, after graduation, I attended the University of Nebraska in Lincoln for a few years eventually transitioning from a student to a full time staff member. In 1998 I went back to school at Southeast Community College where I received an Associate's Degree in Computer Network Management.

In 1996 I applied for a college scholarship through the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska. As a scholarship finalist I was required to attend their state convention. This was my first introduction to the Federation and I quickly discovered that this was a group that I wanted to be a part of. Since that weekend in October of 1996 it has been my honor to help support the efforts of the Federation including serving as the President of their student organization in Nebraska and

in various capacities in the local Lincoln chapter. Today I serve as a State Board Member and Chapter Vice President.

Today, I am still employed at the University of Nebraska Lincoln where I work as a Computer System Administrator helping to maintain the telephone systems of the University. I enjoy spending time with my wife, family and, friends. My interests include reading, movies and, technology

I believe in the staff and services of the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. I have been served well by them over the years and have seen the good they have brought to the lives of others. As a Board Member I will do my best to ensure that high level of service continues for years to come.