

Hi, my name is Luke Uniack. I am 14 and a patron at the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library. I am in 8th grade and live in Seattle. I have nystagmus, which is an eye muscle condition that makes my eye muscles weaker than most people's. This eye disability impairs my vision and affects a lot of things I do. I have low vision because of my nystagmus and I struggle with reading and other activities because of it. WTBBL has helped me to persevere through my disability by giving me access to audio and large print books, and because of their services, I now love to read.

It is my pleasure to invite you to join WTBBL's new Teen Advisory Board. The Teen Advisory Board (TAB for short) is a way for teens like us to make a difference in our community through WTBBL. The TAB will be for us teens who are patrons of WTBBL and will be run by us with support from the WTBBL staff. The goals of the TAB are to share information with teen patrons and give us a voice, help us connect with and support each other, and find ways for us to give back to the community that has helped us. It will also be a lot of fun. No matter where in Washington you live, the TAB will help you connect with other teens just like you and help us bond over books and other interests.

Some of our ideas for the TAB include sharing ideas for ways the library can better serve teens, sharing book reviews and book recommendations, sharing technology tips and ideas, planning events where we can get together in person and connect, doing community projects, and forming an online community where we teens can talk to each other about issues that concern us.

Erin Groth at WTBBL is working on setting up an online platform in order to allow us to communicate with all the teen WTBBL patrons across the state of Washington. Erin's message below says more about the platform and how to access it.

I will be the first president of the TAB and I am looking for other teens who want to work with me on this new board. We need to form a leadership team and also to have as many teen patrons involved as possible. I'm sure that we'll have a great time working together to improve our community and help each other get past obstacles to achieving our common goals.

I hope you will join us as we launch the TAB this summer. We need your help so we make it the best board it can be. Let us know if you have any questions and contact Erin if you are interested in participating in the TAB or in being part of the TAB leadership team. I look forward to meeting you!

Sincerely,

Luke Uniack, TAB President