



NABIP NEWSLETTER

Shaping the future of healthcare

April 2026

Dear Member,

Spring is here—and with it comes one of the most impactful seasons for our NABIP Illinois community. April is all about showing up, speaking up, and lifting each other up. Before we dive in, I want to take a moment to celebrate something truly worth recognizing—congratulations to NABIP Illinois for earning NABIP’s 2026 Silver Certification, along with NABIP Suburban Chicago achieving Silver Certification and NABIP Heart of Illinois earning Gold Certification. These accomplishments reflect the strength, dedication of our volunteers, and leadership across our chapters—and the real impact you’re making in the communities and clients we serve every day.

In April we kick things off with our Annual Illinois Insurance Legislative Day on April 14 in Springfield. This is our opportunity to advocate for our clients, our profession, and the future of healthcare in Illinois. If you’ve never attended before—this is your sign. It’s powerful, it’s energizing, and yes... it reminds you exactly why what we do matters.

And to wrap up the month, we head to Chicago for the BenefitsPRO Expo beginning April 28, with an optional NABIP Certification opportunity to sharpen your expertise and elevate your business. I’m also looking for volunteers to help support the NABIP booth in the vendor hall—if you’re attending, we’d love to have you be part of the action.

Sincerely,

Sara Walker-Hite, NABIP Illinois President

TJ Bullock, NABIP Illinois President-Elect

Missie Shepherd, NABIP Illinois Vice-President

Email us: info@NABIPIllinois.org



Insurance Industry Legislative Day allows attendees to learn about current issues affecting the industry and discuss their impact with Illinois’ decision-makers.

2:00 - 5:00 pm (central time)

Education Seminar

Inn at 835

835 S. Second St, Springfield

Hosted by:

5:30 - 7:30 pm (central time)

Legislative Reception



Register Online
www.insurancelegislativeday.org/



Account Based Health Plans

BenefitsPRO Broker Expo on Tuesday, April 28, 2026 | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM cst
NABIP Certification Program – Account-Based Health Plans
Instructor: Lisa Collins, Principal Advisor at Choice Plus Benefits Advisor

Course Overview

Rising healthcare costs continue to outpace wage growth, creating affordability challenges for employers and employees. This workshop provides benefits professionals with a practical and strategic understanding of account-based health plans and their role in addressing cost containment, consumer engagement, and regulatory compliance.

Participants will gain insight into the limitations of traditional managed care models and explore how account-based strategies respond to market pressures such as increased deductibles, prescription drug utilization, demographic shifts, and government intervention.

Why Take This Account-Based Health Plans Course?

- Compare HRAs, HSAs, and FSAs
- Review ICHRA and EBHRA models
- Evaluate adoption trends and regulatory guidance
- Understand compliance, eligibility, and contribution requirements
- Apply sales and implementation frameworks

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Participants will gain insight into the limitations of traditional managed care models and explore how account-based strategies respond to market pressures such as increased deductibles, prescription drug utilization, demographic shifts, and government intervention.

Tuition covers continuing education credits filed in each state, a final exam, and certificate of completion.

NABIP members \$ 246.40

Non-Members \$ 324.50

***BenefitsPRO Expo ticket + registration in course is required.**



Committee Reports:

Tickets –

Complimentary expo tickets are available exclusively for active NABIP Illinois Suburban Chicago members whom are...

- first time attendees to this expo.
- an agent, broker, or advisor

This offer is not transferable and is limited to eligible members of our local chapter.

BONUS OFFER - NABIP members can sign up for the pre-conference workshop and certification in Account Based Health Plans for just \$246.40

Mark your calendar and Snag your Ticket! Spring 2026 is shaping up to be a standout season for benefits professionals—and this one is happening right in our own backyard.

April 28–30, 2026 Hyatt Regency McCormick Place – Chicago, IL

BenefitsPRO Broker Expo 2026 features an expanded keynote lineup and thought-provoking track sessions, making it the only editorially driven conference program specifically designed to address the real-world needs of brokers, agents, and advisors. This is practical education, sharp insight, and peer-level conversation—no fluff, no filler.

The Broker Expo is the preferred destination for hundreds of the industry’s most influential benefits professionals to build meaningful relationships and gain practical, usable education to position their businesses for sustainable growth. If your 2026 goals include smarter strategy, stronger peer connections, and a clearer view of where the benefits industry is headed, this conference belongs on your calendar. Register early

BenefitsPRO. BROKER EXPO

April 28 - 30, 2026 Hyatt Regency McCormick Place Chicago

**Cultivate Relationships and
Obtain Practical Benefits
Industry Knowledge**



NABIP ILLINOIS STATE SYMPOSIUM + REGION 3 LEADERSHIP CONNECT SUMMIT

Monday, August 17, 2026

Oakbrook, Illinois - Details coming soon!

Where Collaboration Fuels Innovation & Leadership.

NABIP | REGION 3

HOSTED BY:



www.NABIPIllinois.org

Info@NABIPIllinois.org



This year's NABIP Illinois State Symposium will be especially exciting as participants of the NABIP Region 3 Leadership CONNECT Summit will be joining us, bringing together chapter leaders, volunteers, and members from across the region for a day of collaboration, professional development, and connection.

This event will create a dynamic opportunity to exchange ideas, strengthen leadership, and engage with fellow insurance and benefits professionals from across Illinois and NABIP Region 3 (IL, KY, WV, OH, IN, MI).

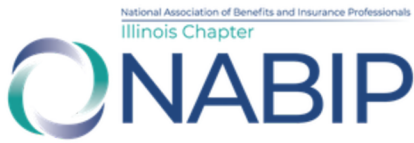
Stay tuned - the agenda is coming soon! In the meantime, mark your calendars and plan to join us for a great day with fellow NABIP members and guests.

We also encourage everyone to **"Ask One, Add One"**—invite a colleague or industry partner who would benefit from connecting with NABIP and learning more about our community.

Questions can be directed to TJ Bullock, NABIP Illinois President-Elect #312-210-9619; Laura Blomgren, NABIP Illinois Treasurer # 847-917-2138; Email: Info@NABIPIllinois.org

We look forward to seeing you there!
Register online at www.NABIPIllinois.org





NABIP Illinois State Symposium + Region 3 Leadership CONNECT Summit

Attendee Registration Form

Pinstripes 7 Oakbrook Center Mall Oak Brook, IL 60523
Monday, August 17, 2026 8:30 AM - 6:00 PM
Join us for this in-person event. IL-CE applied for.

Full Name :

Company Name :

Mailing Address :

E-Mail :

NPN # :

I am registering as a...

Early Bird Special
Sign up before 7/1/26!

- NABIP Member ~~\$50~~ **\$35**
- I am a current/incoming NABIP Chapter Board or Committee Chair

- IIA Member ~~\$100~~ **\$75**
- NAIFA Member ~~\$100~~ **\$75**
- Non-Member ~~\$150~~ **\$100**

What are you waiting for? Join us www.NABIP.org

Optional Add-On's:

- \$5 Five 50/50 Tickets
- \$20 Arms Length 50/50 Tickets

50/50 ticket profits raised at this event will go towards our PAC admin fund.

Join us for this in-person event. IL-CE applied for. Registration also available on our website NABIPIllinois.org

Questions? Please contact TJ Bullock, NABIP Illinois President-Elect #312-210-9619; Laura Blomgren, NABIP Illinois Treasurer # 847-917-2138; Email: Info@NABIPIllinois.org

Please visit our website for additional event and agenda updates
www.NABIPIllinois.org

NABIP Illinois State Symposium + Region 3 Leadership CONNECT Summit Sponsor Registration Form

Pinstripes 7 Oakbrook Center Mall Oak Brook, IL 60523
Monday, August 17, 2026 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Afterwards Happy Hour, Bowling, Bocce ball & more!!

Company Name :

Mailing Address :

Contact Name :

Contact Email :

Contact Phone :

Join us for this in-person event. IL-CE applied for.

Sponsorship level:

- Platinum \$7,500 (limit of 3)
- Gold \$5,000
- Silver \$3,500
- Bronze \$2000
- Mixer \$1000

Optional Add-On's:

- \$5 Five 50/50 Tickets
- \$20 Arms Length 50/50 Tickets

50/50 ticket profits raised at this event will go towards our PAC admin fund.

Please make your check payable to "NABIP Illinois" and mail along with this registration form.

Payment links are also available on our website NABIPIllinois.org

NABIP IL PO Box 59216 Schaumburg, IL 60159-0216

Please note: Sponsor approval is required by the NABIP Illinois Board of Trustees

Questions? Please contact TJ Bullock, NABIP Illinois President-Elect #312-210-9619;
Laura Blomgren, NABIP Illinois Treasurer # 847-917-2138; Email: Info@NABIPIllinois.org

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NABIP Illinois State Symposium + Region 3 Leadership CONNECT Summit

Sponsor Registration Form

Pinstripes 7 Oakbrook Center Mall Oak Brook, IL 60523

Monday, August 17, 2026 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Afterwards Happy Hour, Bowling, Bocce ball & more!!

Get in front of employee benefits decision-makers across the Midwest. Make sure your organization is in the room.

Bronze - \$2,000

- Standard booth location
- Logo on website, event program
- 2 complimentary ticket

Mixer - \$1,000

- Logo on website, event program
- 1 complimentary ticket

Silver - \$3,500

- Standard booth location
- Logo on website, event program
- 1.4 complimentary tickets
- Featured in pre-event email & social media post
- **Post-event attendee list**
- Featured in NABIP IL Newsletter

Gold - \$5,000

- Prominent booth location (high-traffic area)
- Logo on website, event program, event signage
- 6 complimentary tickets
- Featured in pre-event email & social media post
- **Post-event attendee list**
- Featured in NABIP IL Newsletter
- **Social media interview**
- **5-minute speaking opportunity**
- Invitation to present at future Continuing Education events
- Breakfast/coffee sponsor recognition

Platinum - \$7,500

(Only 3 available)

- Prime booth location (premium visibility)
- Logo on website, event program, event signage
- 10 complimentary tickets
- Featured in pre-event email & social media post
- **Post-event attendee list**
- Featured in NABIP IL Newsletter
- **Social media interview**
- **20-minute speaking opportunity**
- Invitation to present at future Continuing Education events
- Exclusive Lunch sponsor recognition

Join us for this in-person event. IL-CE applied for.

Please note: Sponsor approval is required by the NABIP IL Board of Trustees

Questions? Please contact TJ Bullock, NABIP Illinois President-Elect #312-210-9619;
Laura Blomgren, NABIP Illinois Treasurer # 847-917-2138; Email: Info@NABIPIllinois.org

Please visit our website for additional event and agenda updates

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The Annual Linda Erlenbach Lifetime Achievement Award -

Nomination deadline: June 30, 2026.

Linda Erlenbach, RHU, is a lifelong leader whose dedication to the agent community has left a lasting mark on our industry. Throughout her career, Linda balanced raising three children as a single mother, building her own agency, caring for her family, and managing health challenges—all while giving tirelessly to NABIP, her clients, and her community.

A passionate Region 3 leader, Linda played a pivotal role in membership and chapter development, ultimately helping create NABIP's Chapter Development Committee. She mentored countless leaders, helped establish and revitalize chapters, and served in numerous leadership roles, including two terms as President of the Ohio Association of Health Underwriters and as Region 3 Regional Vice President. In 2010, she was elected NABIP Secretary. Despite later stepping down due to a serious health diagnosis, Linda continued to serve at the state and regional levels.

In honor of her extraordinary service, NABIP Region III annually presents its highest honor—the Linda Erlenbach Lifetime Achievement Award, recognizing Region III's Person of the Year. The award honors individuals who have gone above and beyond in service to the profession without expectation of personal gain.

Nominations should include a completed online Nomination Form and a supporting statement outlining the candidate's leadership roles, industry involvement, and specific accomplishments.

Please scan the QR code below to complete the nomination form here or visit

<https://forms.gle/XP2ifpNGdrq6NTT77>



NABIP | REGION 3

Linda Erlenbach Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients

Linda Erlenbach

Lou Reginelli

Darlene Kaszmarek

Bill Robinson

Michael Deagle

Dwight Hall

Michael Embry

Suzy Alberts

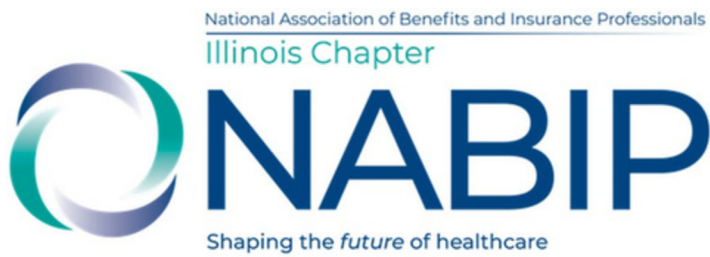
Patricia Griffey

SCAN ME



Please direct questions to Heather John, Region 3 Awards Chair at Info@NABIPIllinois.org

The award is presented at the discretion of the Region 3 Vice President at a NABIP event.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NABIP Illinois State Chapter Earns Prestigious Silver Certification

Schaumburg, Illinois (March 27, 2026) — The NABIP Illinois State Chapter has been awarded the 2026 Silver Certification through NABIP’s Chapter Certification Program, recognizing outstanding chapter performance and leadership. The Chapter Certification Program is an ongoing initiative that highlights NABIP chapters demonstrating excellence in leadership, member engagement, and chapter development throughout the year.

“The leadership demonstrated by NABIP members has a meaningful impact on helping individuals, families, and businesses navigate their healthcare needs,” said Susan Rider, President of the NABIP Board of Trustees. “We are grateful for the NABIP Illinois State Chapter’s commitment to chapter development and are proud to recognize their efforts with this well-deserved honor.”

“The NABIP Illinois State Chapter is committed to creating valuable opportunities for our members while strengthening our professional community,” said Sara Walker-Hite, President of the NABIP Illinois State Chapter. “This team work translates into a direct, positive impact on the clients and communities we serve as insurance and benefits professionals. One example of this commitment is our Greg Smith Memorial Scholarship fundraiser, held during our Annual State Symposium, which directly supports our industry succession planning by supporting scholarship students studying insurance at Illinois State University’s Katie School of Business.”

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About The National Association of Benefits and Insurance Professionals

NABIP is the preeminent organization for health insurance and employee benefits professionals, working diligently to ensure all Americans have access to high-quality, affordable healthcare and related benefits. NABIP represents and provides professional development opportunities for more than 100,000 licensed health insurance agents, brokers, general agents, consultants and benefit professionals through more than 150 chapters across America.

For more information, please call Lou Reginelli, NABIP Illinois Past President at 630-778-6471 or email Info@NABIPIllinois.org



Committee Reports:

NABIP Illinois Officer Ballot | July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027 term | June 1-15 E-Vote

Our Nominations Committee has assembled an outstanding slate of volunteers—truly a fantastic group. Thank you to each of you for your continued dedication, and to our members for supporting and uplifting these leaders. Voting will be open via email to active NABIP Illinois members via electronic voting June 1-15, 2026.

Officer Ballot (Elected Positions):

President - TJ Bullock

President Elect - Melissa Shepherd

Vice President - David Flores

Treasurer - Laura Blomgren

Secretary - Karley Hoagland

Past President - Sara Walker-Hite

Committee Chair Applicants (Appointed Positions):

Legislation - Joshua Garrett, Carrie Espinosa, Melissa Shephard

Membership - Donovan Dubois

Member Recognition/Awards - Heather John

Professional Development - Robert Slayton

* Continuing Education Administration - Tammy Riddle

Media and Communication - Katie Knox

* Newsletter and Social Media - David Flores

PAC - Jerry Jackson

Greg Smith Scholarship - Melissa Shepherd

Please reach out to TJ Bullock at info@nabipillinois.org if you would like to learn more. NABIP National along with the NABIP Illinois State Board will provide training to those elected and/or appointed.

Calendar at a glance | Visit www.NABIPIllinois.org for more information

Wednesday, April 8, 2026 8:15-10:am NABIP Suburban Chicago Chapter Member Meeting & Industry Education | Virtual & In-Person Options

Monday, April 13, 2026 3-4pm NABIP Illinois State Board Meeting | Virtual

Tuesday, April 14, 2026 NABIP, BIG I, NAIFA - Annual Illinois Insurance Industry Legislative Day 2-5pm seminar; 5:30-7:30 reception | Springfield, Illinois

Thursday, April 16, 2026 8-9am NABIP Illinois Pulse Webinar Series

April 28-30, 2026 BenefitsPRO Broker Expo Hyatt Regency McCormick Place

+ Optional NABIP Account Based Health Plans Certification Course 9am-Noon April 28th.

Wednesday, May 13th - NABIP Suburban Chicago Expo

Monday, May 11, 2026 3-4pm NABIP Illinois Board Meeting and Annual Strategic Planning - Part 1

Thursday, May 21, 2026 8-9am NABIP Illinois Pulse Webinar Series

Monday, June 8, 2026 3-4pm NABIP Illinois Board Meeting and Annual Strategic Planning-Part 2

Wednesday, June 10, 2026 8:15-10:am NABIP Suburban Chicago Chapter Member Meeting & Industry Education | Virtual & In-Person Options

Thursday, June 18, 2026 8-9am NABIP Illinois Pulse Webinar Series

June 27-30th Annual NABIP Convention | Harrah's Resort Atlantic City, NJ

Wednesday, July 8, 2026 8:15-10:am NABIP Suburban Chicago Chapter Member Meeting & Industry Education | Virtual & In-Person Options

Thursday, July 16, 2026 8-9am NABIP Illinois Pulse Webinar Series

Thursday, August 17, 2026 NABIP Illinois State Symposium + Region 3 Leadership CONNECT Summit at Pinstripes in Oak Brook, Illinois (in lieu of zoom NABIP IL Pulse)

Wednesday, September 9, 2026 8:15-10:am NABIP Suburban Chicago Chapter Member Meeting & Industry Education | Virtual & In-Person Options

Thursday, September 17, 2026 8-9am NABIP Illinois Pulse Webinar Series

Wednesday, October 14, 2026 8:15-10:am NABIP Suburban Chicago Chapter Member Meeting & Industry Education | Virtual & In-Person Options

Thursday, October 15, 2026 8-9am NABIP Illinois Pulse Webinar Series

Wednesday, November 11, 2026 8:15-10:am NABIP Suburban Chicago Chapter Member Meeting & Industry Education | Virtual & In-Person Options

Thursday, November 19, 2026 8-9am NABIP Annual Legislative Update Webinar (in lieu of our normal NABIP Pulse webinar)

Thursday, December 17, 2026 8-9am NABIP Illinois Pulse Webinar Series

Meet & Connect

<p>PRESIDENT'S TOWN HALL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Thursday of the Month • 4:00 PM EST <p>Members connect with President Susan Rider in a town hall-style event, focused on clarity and communication.</p> <p>Now - June 2026</p>	<p>NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4th Thursday of the Month • 12:00 PM EST <p>New members are welcomed to NABIP, and will be connected with people & resources.</p>	<p>MEDICARE INSIDER MOMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4th Thursday of the Month • 4:00 PM EST <p>Provides insight, actionable strategies, & latest Medicare updates.</p>
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Register to attend at nabip.org/events/calendar