
2021 White Cane Safety Day - Common Myths and Misconceptions for a Helpful Tool -

WINNETKA, IL (October 13, 2021) — White Cane Safety Day is honored every year on October 15. Established as a day of observation in 1964, it brings attention to the ability of those with vision loss to move about on their own while using this important tool and the general public's need to be mindful of those using these canes to give them the right-of way.

As distance learning experts for more than 100 years, Illinois-based Hadley serves those with vision loss by providing services at no cost. Following months of development, Hadley recently reenvisioned its online educational platform, [Hadley.edu](https://www.hadley.edu) to include a wide selection of free how-to online workshops on things like how to [navigate unfamiliar spaces](#) and public places, live support from experts, timely discussion groups and the popular podcast [Hadley Presents: A Conversation with the Experts](#), on a variety of topics including using a white cane.

“Older adults who have lost some vision due to macular degeneration or glaucoma, for instance, may think they don't need a white cane because they aren't totally blind,” says Ed Haines, Hadley's Chief Program Officer. “There can be a stigma associated with the white cane, and it's not uncommon for folks to avoid use because of it.”

Larry Carlson, 63, was a former Las Vegas City traffic signal technician for nearly 30 years, before losing a portion of his vision due to a progressive genetic eye disorder. The irony isn't lost on Carlson, whose job with the City of Las Vegas would often involve installing talking traffic signals for the visually impaired. Carlson, like many new to vision loss, was reluctant to use a cane at first. Over time, and after more than a few bruised shins, he began integrating a white cane in his daily walking routine. “The cane tells me what's below my waist that I cannot see,” said Carlson. “I can tell, okay, there's a crack in the sidewalk, so rather than tripping on it, I am able to stop, post up, and feel around and get around without falling.”

“It's quite common for the general public to be confused if they see someone with some vision, wearing eyeglasses for instance, to be using a white cane on the street,” Haines continued. “But learning to use this simple tool can make someone with diminished vision much more confident and comfortable navigating their world with independence.”

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About Hadley

The mission of Hadley is to create personalized learning opportunities that empower those with vision loss or blindness to thrive --- at home, at work and in their communities. A 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, Hadley relies on contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations to fund its programs.