

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Contact:**

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### **NEWS ADVISORY:**

#### **National White Cane Safety Day Celebration!**

**Tuesday October 15<sup>th</sup> 2019, 11:00 am - 2:00 pm**

**Portland State University**

The Pedestrian Safety Action Coalition Committee advises the public that an outreach and awareness event is scheduled for Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup> from 11 am to 2 pm.

Convene at 11:00 am at Smith Memorial Student Union at 1825 SW Broadway Street. At 12:00 pm we will gather for a public announcement, followed by a community walk heading South on SW Broadway turning East onto SW College Street and walking to SW 4th Ave, where we will meet and cross SW 4th Avenue together with white canes and guide dogs. There we will share information with drivers, pedestrians and lunch goers nearby, then walk back to our Smith location to enjoy the festivities.

This event celebrates National White Cane Safety Day and is designed to inform the public of longstanding Oregon and Portland crosswalk laws, and the specific Oregon law that addresses pedestrians who are blind and crossing the roadway using a white cane or guide dog.

Community members are welcome to join us anytime between 11am – 2:00pm to participate in a guided walk, become acquainted with safety concerns about quiet cars and drivers not stopping for people who are blind, develop a deeper appreciation of how you “see” your environment through your senses.

According to the 2017 US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, an [estimate of over 14,030](#) people who are blind or vision impaired live in Portland. White Cane Safety Day, celebrated each October 15<sup>th</sup>, recognizes the achievements of people who are blind and visually impaired in the United States and reminds everyone about how the white cane is an important tool in helping people who are blind and visually impaired live with greater independence.

Oregon crosswalk law (ORS 811.035) states that “A driver approaching a pedestrian who is blind or blind and deaf, who is carrying a white cane or accompanied by a dog guide, and who is crossing or about to cross a roadway, shall stop and remain stopped until the pedestrian has crossed the roadway.”

The committee states; *“Just like anyone, the visually impaired community has needs and responsibilities that require independent travel. However, to a larger degree than fully sighted people, we rely on drivers to be aware of and honor laws put in place for our safety.”*