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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOCAL GROUPS TO OBSERVE NATIONAL BLIND AMERICANS EQUALITY DAY

Promoting Inclusion and Pedestrian Safety for Visually Impaired

ORLANDO, FL. (October 16, 2019) – A coalition of local organizations will convene this week to observe National Blind Americans Equality Day and promote pedestrian safety and inclusive transportation options for the region’s residents who are visually impaired.

Formerly referred to as *White Cane Safety Day*, the annual observance was renamed *National Blind Americans Equality Day* by presidential proclamation in 2014 under the Obama administration.

“While we seek to promote equality and inclusion on a daily basis, *National Blind Americans Equality Day* offers an opportunity to raise awareness and educate the public on how issues, like reliable transportation and pedestrian safety, impact commuters and pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired,” said Sheila Young, president, Greater Orlando Council of the Blind.

Members of the coalition include, **Greater Orlando Council of the Blind, National Federation of the Blind Central Florida Chapter, Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety, MetroPlan Orlando, Orlando Police Department, Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX) and Lighthouse Central Florida/Lighthouse Works.**

The event, scheduled for **Friday, October 18th**, from **11 AM to 1:30 PM**, will be held at the **Beardall Senior Center** in downtown Orlando, and will include a resource fair and proclamation ceremony with officials from the City of Orlando and Orange County.



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Attendees will also have the opportunity to participate in a variety of family-friendly activities, street crossings (Gore/Orange) and assistive technology demonstrations.

Each year this event is organized to build awareness and reaffirm Central Florida's commitment to improving access to basic pedestrian safety for individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

Though the name of the annual observance has changed, it is important for motorists to understand the safety implications of Florida's *White Cane Safety Law*:

- A pedestrian with a white cane or a guide dog ALWAYS has the right-of-way.
- DO NOT honk your car-horn at anyone using a white cane or guide dog.
- Always be courteous.

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