generations

THE HADLEY SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND – EST. 1920

March 2005

Through the generosity of others, building on the past, bringing life-changing services to future generations
NEW COURSES

Safety in the Home

Recent global events have shown that no one is immune to potential disaster. Yet, many people remain unprepared for emergencies when they do occur. To fulfill that need, the Hadley School recently introduced a new course, “Safety in the Home,” which is designed to help visually impaired people and their families prepare for emergency situations.

Based on U.S. safety standards, the course begins by outlining preliminary steps in emergency planning, then describes home safeguards and modifications. Fire preparedness is included, as is general disaster planning. Natural disasters, such as earthquakes and tornadoes, are covered, as well as weather conditions involving extreme heat and cold.

“Students are presented with a wealth of practical advice and information covering all aspects of home safety,” explains Ed Haines, Hadley instructor who teaches the course. “It is structured so that every student can create his or her own comprehensive home safety plan.” Now available online as well as in braille, large print and audiocassette, the course is open to students in the Adult Continuing Education and High School Programs.

Macular Degeneration

Have you or has someone you know been diagnosed with age-related macular degeneration (AMD)? You may wonder how AMD will impact your life or that of your loved one. Hadley’s new course, “Macular Degeneration,” explains the diagnosis and shows how people with AMD can continue everyday activities with limited vision.

The course covers various aspects of AMD. It not only compares 20/20 vision with AMD’s symptoms and progression, but also lists risk factors for the condition. In addition, the diagnosis is discussed in light of the doctor-patient relationship. Ways to maximize vision and continue activities are suggested. Finally, the emotional impact of AMD is explored.

“AMD, by itself, does not signify blindness,” says Don Golembiewski, Hadley instructor who teaches the course. “Informing yourself about the disease and the many resources available can help immensely in the rehabilitation process.” This course is available in large print and will later be available on audiocassette. It is open to students in the Adult Continuing Education and High School Programs as well as the Family Education Program.

One of the amazing qualities of The Hadley School for the Blind is its ability to evolve over time, in response to the changing needs of our students and the changing realities of our world. It is this quality that has allowed the school to continue to meet its goal: to promote independent living through lifelong, distance education programs for blind people, their families and blindness service providers.

This quality is apparent in the ‘multi-generational theme’ of this issue of Generations. For it is the Hadley School’s ability to cross time lines, to impact and be impacted by family members of different generations, that has allowed it to grow and prosper. Our evolving student body now encompasses a wide range of ages, individual needs and lifestyles—some, of course, spanning generations. In fact, our Hadley logo, which depicts family members learning together, reflects this multi-generational theme.

At the same time, many of you in our donor family span different generations as well. And it is you, our generous donors, who give us the opportunity to change the lives of so many visually impaired people, from one generation to the next.

In this issue, we present just a few examples, beginning with a look at the Brown family. Ophthalmologist Dr. E.V.L. Brown co-founded the school along with William Hadley. His leadership was critical to the school in its early years; in fact, he served as chairman of the Board of Trustees from 1921 until 1953. His wife, also a member of the Board of Trustees, was equally committed to the school’s mission. Today, the third generation of the Brown family sits on Hadley’s Board, alongside the second generation. This family’s impact on the school has been and is profound.

Also featured is a profile of Byram and Sue Dickeys, who have contributed their time and efforts to Hadley for more than 30 years. Sue is a Life Trustee who has served many years on the Woman’s Board; Byram has also served on the Board of Trustees. Most recently, their son Scott became a Trustee.

Our presentation of multi-generational contributors would be incomplete if it did not include a profile of the Woman’s Board. Founded in 1953, this amazing group of women has been our financial cornerstone—the school’s largest donor. We review some of their important contributions and other bits of history. As these stories indicate, Hadley owes much of its success to the dedication and hard work of the Woman’s Board, which has worked its magic—generation after generation.

Over time, Hadley has taught different generations of the same families—parents and grandparents of visually impaired children, as well as siblings, aunts and uncles—who truly learn together. This issue features profiles of three such families. These multi-generational Hadley students explain how the school’s distance education approach to learning has helped them, and their loved ones, achieve greater independence.

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue of Generations, which pays homage to the many people who have made valuable contributions to the school since it was founded in 1920, as well as the multi-generational students who have benefited from our distance education programs. We anticipate that future generations will continue to impact, and be impacted by, The Hadley School for the Blind.

Jeanne M. Denison
Chairman, Board of Trustees
A BROWN FAMILY TRADITION

Ophthalmologist Dr. E.V.L. Brown co-founded the school along with William Hadley. His leadership was critical to the school in its early years, as he served as chairman of Hadley’s Board of Trustees from 1921 until 1953. His wife, also a member of Hadley’s Board of Trustees, was equally committed to the school’s mission. Today, the third generation of the Brown family sits on Hadley’s Board, alongside the second generation. This family’s impact on the school is profound.

Dr. and Mrs. Brown’s dedication and intimate involvement in the early days of the school was not lost on the younger generations. Their son, David, also became an ophthalmologist and served on Hadley’s Board of Trustees. His commitment to medicine and to Hadley carries on through his son Steven. Today, Steven Brown is an ophthalmologist and serves on Hadley’s Board.

Nancy Jones, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Brown, along with her husband, Clarence Boyd “Bud” Jones, followed in the footsteps of the Browns. Nancy recalls a meeting in their home in 1953 that solidified their commitment to the school. “After my father died, the school only had $500 in the bank. Several couples met to decide what to do. We wanted people to care about Hadley,” she reflects. “We voted unanimously to keep the school going and from that moment on, there was no turning back. In our hearts, we knew we wanted to keep the dream of my father and Mr. Hadley alive.”

The commitment of Bud and Nancy Jones was critical to the school’s survival and growth. Together, they spearheaded the building campaign that resulted in the creation of Hadley’s current home. Bud became chairman of the Board of Trustees in 1953. Nancy was instrumental in initiating Hadley’s Woman’s Board and she remains an active member today. In addition, she is a valuable member of the Board of Trustees and has been since 1941. And, Nancy is credited with starting the Woman’s Board braille holiday card sale, which remains a key fund-raiser for the school today.

Nancy and Bud’s children have fond memories of the important place Hadley had in their growing-up years. Stuart Jones remembers the frequent dinner-table conversations about Hadley as well as helping out at a bowling alley fund-raiser. Ted Jones has been an active member of Hadley’s Board of Trustees since 1975. Gwen Jones McConnaughy has followed in her mother’s footsteps, first as an active member of the Woman’s Board, then as a Trustee since 2001. Gwen has chaired the Woman’s Board holiday card sale three times! Her husband, Tom McConnaughy, joined the Board in 2003.
When Ed passed away in October of 2003, Hadley lost the importance of philanthropy from their parents. The Donnell children, Bill, Mark and Sally, have grown up fierce champions of maintaining Hadley’s endowment. Ed Donnell was the first woman to chair the Board of Trustees in 1976. Ed joined the Board of Trustees together. She became the Board vice chairman. Rose and her husband Ed, then Board president, and receiving great exposure to visually impaired people early on. He remembers lots of visits to the school and being very impressed with how technology was helping people who are blind. It always seemed like “Hadley was part of the family.”

Byram, still a Trustee, and Sue, now a Life Trustee, have been giving to Hadley for more than 30 years—30 years of meetings and time commitments, 30 years of contributions bringing them to E.V.L. Brown Giving Society status and 30 years of rearing children with a philanthropic bent, like their parents.

Recently, the Dickes’ son Scott was asked to join the Hadley Board of Trustees. According to Sue, when Scott was four or five and Sue was the Woman’s Board benefit chair, Scott’s picture appeared in the Winnetka Talk as part of the promotion for the benefit. As Sue recently remarked, “We start recruiting some of our trustees rather young.”

When asked for anecdotes on how Hadley impacted his life, Scott said, “Hadley was just always there.” He remembers dinner parties with Dr. Robert J. Winn, former Hadley president, and receiving great exposure to visually impaired people early on. He remembers lots of visits to the school and being very impressed with how technology was helping people who are blind. It always seemed like “Hadley was part of the family.”

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But what really makes the process come full circle is the discovery of Scott’s investment company – Hadley Capital.

Donnell Family Values

Rose and Ed Donnell have been a part of the Hadley family since the 1960s. Rose says that serious volunteer work has always been important to her. She remembers learning about Hadley for the first time through a curling acquaintance at the Indian Hill Country Club. Rose had run a sheltered workshop, organized cultural and recreational programs for blind teenagers in Mexico City, and transcribed Spanish braille for the National School for the Blind as a volunteer in a junior league project. So a local organization that focused on blindness seemed like “Hadley was part of the family.”

Rose headed the album division of the holiday card company, Montgomery Ward, were subsequently invited to join the Board of Trustees by Carol’s husband Tom. The generations and the families just keep on coming!

The Dickes Clan Grows

Sometimes things are just “meant to be.” When Sue Dickes was first invited to join the Hadley Woman’s Board back in the early 1970s, it was almost as if she were fulfilling a prophecy. After all, her maiden name was Hadley. Sue had been asked to become a member by Carol Stratton. Shortly thereafter, Sue’s husband Byram was invited to join the Hadley Board of Trustees by Carol’s husband Tom. The generations and the families just keep on coming!

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HADLEY STUDENTS IN FAMILIES CROSS GENERATIONS

Catherine and Marilyn Gold

Catherine Gold of Oak Ridge, N.C., has taken “Reach Out and Teach” and “Learning Through Play” to better communicate with Elizabeth, her visually impaired three-year-old daughter who has multiple disabilities.

Marilyn Gold, Catherine’s mother-in-law, has taken “Reach Out and Teach” and “Child Development: Early Childhood,” so she, too, can be a more active participant in her granddaughter’s life. A resident of Rockville, Md., Marilyn is a special education teacher who works with multi-disabled students, many of whom have visual impairments.

Catherine, a 32-year-old pediatric nurse practitioner, discovered Hadley while searching online; soon after, she recruited Marilyn. Catherine says Hadley has truly helped her be a better mother to Elizabeth. “It’s so overwhelming facing life with a multi-disabled child. My Hadley instructor helped me focus on the whole person in Elizabeth,” she explains.

Catherine has also shown that Elizabeth is a special part of the family who should participate in all activities. “The school has taught me how to move slowly and use her strengths,” Catherine adds.

Although they live in different states, Catherine and Marilyn are both able to use the knowledge gained through Hadley. “It’s nice to have someone in the family who has read the same textbooks and can brainstorm solutions based on this knowledge,” Catherine says. Marilyn adds that, thanks to Hadley, she is able to choose appropriate toys that her granddaughter will enjoy.

John and Hayley Crawford

John and Hayley Crawford offer another example of Hadley’s multi-generational student body—a father and daughter who are both visually impaired, and who both benefit from Hadley courses. Residents of Tullahoma, Tenn., John (35) and Hayley (15) use the courses to complement her home schooling activities.

“Dad realized that Hadley offered high-school-level courses and that these courses could be very helpful in subject areas that I found difficult. He was right. The courses have helped me to live more independently,” Hayley says. As someone who is home-schooled, Hayley appreciates the fact that Hadley provides a positive alternative to the traditional classroom. She prefers self-paced study to the public education system.

John has completed six Hadley courses. “I am very proud of Hayley,” he notes. “As a parent and a home-school teacher, I have watched her grow into a well-educated person. I feel good about the fact that Hadley is there to help us provide Hayley with the best education possible.”

Hayley says there are advantages to studying together. “It’s great,” she says, “When Dad and I don’t understand something in a course, not only can we go back through the material, we can work together to understand it.”

Laura and Hannah Mort

Laura and Hannah Mort add an international flavor to the multi-generational theme. Laura Mort and her husband, Jerry, are missionaries who relocated from Fort Wayne, Ind., to Japan 13 years ago. They are “tent makers” who teach English as an outreach tool. Daughter Hannah is 18 years old. Son Joshua, just two years old, is visually impaired. Therein lies the family’s connection to Hadley.

“I discovered Hadley while doing research on the Internet,” Laura explains. “I enrolled immediately and asked if Hannah could also.” Since then, mother and daughter have completed “Reach Out and Teach.” In addition, Laura has completed “Learning Through Play.” The courses have helped them both facilitate Joshua’s development.

“Hadley courses have given me lots of ideas and things to try as well as an understanding of how a child with special needs develops,” Laura notes. “They have especially helped me understand things that the doctors here do not communicate very well. ‘Reach Out and Teach’ has given me knowledge that has certainly helped. Joshua seems to be able to see things just beyond his reach now, and is busy trying to move them.”

Laura and Hannah also help each other with their Hadley homework. “Because we are taking the same course, we notice things that Joshua does and immediately apply it to what we are learning,” Laura notes. “One of us may catch something the other misses and yell, ‘Hey, Joshua just did ___. Did you see that?’”•

CROSS GENERATIONS

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Hadley makes a Florida Connection…

Looking for ways to broaden our base of support, we are beginning to focus on other parts of the country. Hadley serves a significant number of students in Florida and many of their donors and friends reside on Florida’s coasts for a significant period of time each year.

Thus, one of the current year’s fund-raising plans is to begin, with the help of Trustee Joanie Kasten, an annual Winter Program in Florida. Our goals are to connect with Trustees and current donors vacationing there from Chicago, to meet additional friends through Trustee-hosted events, to introduce the school to regional foundations and corporations, and to invite area students to attend events for the purpose of telling their stories and interacting with the larger Hadley community.

Trustees help Hadley Connect…

Hadley Trustee Sally Wood arranged for us to make a presentation about the school at Moorings Park through the Campus Life Program and its director, Margaret Bill. Sally recently moved to Moorings Park, a lovely community in Naples on Florida’s west coast. It was a privilege for us to be part of their annual schedule for residents, which includes lectures and concerts.

Hadley students join in…

On January 12, Hadley student Bill Thibault and his wife Patricia participated in our presentation at Moorings Park. Bill is 82 and began taking Hadley courses in January 2002. A Navy veteran, he was referred to Hadley through the Veterans Administration. He started with “Introduction to Typing,” took braille courses and eventually moved on to “Chess for Beginners.” Bill became so involved with the game that he is now playing chess, by email, with another Hadley student who lives in Istanbul, Turkey. Patricia credits Hadley with helping her husband adjust and adapt to macular degeneration. After the presentation, they attended participants’ questions. Janet Kennedy, program manager at Moorings Park, now plans to establish a macular degeneration support group and will distribute Hadley materials on a regular basis to interested residents.

The chance to catch up…

I had the privilege of visiting with Hadley trustee Rose Donnell and her pug, Rosie. The Donnell family has had an ongoing love affair with Hadley, which is chronicled on page 5 as part of this issue’s section on families who have impacted Hadley.

Meeting more students…

I had the opportunity to meet with two other Hadley students, both big fans of instructor Linn Sorge. Ron Kropp and his wife Thelma have had wonderful experiences with Hadley. After developing macular degeneration, Ron, too, was referred through a Veterans Administration program as a result of his career in the Marine Corps. He started with Hadley’s “Introduction To Typing” course so he could become proficient with computers. Ron is anxious for Hadley to develop more computer courses and is excited about the online opportunities available through e-Hadley. Several of the Kropp’s friends are visually impaired and Ron is a member of a local Lions Club. The Kropps are happy to help spread the word about Hadley!

Molly Fromm had the chance to meet her Hadley instructor when Linn Sorge paid a visit to Molly’s summer home, a houseboat on Lopez Island, Wash. Molly spends the rest of the year in Miami Beach and was referred to Hadley when she took part in a training program at Miami’s Lighthouse for the Blind. She has three grown children and one granddaughter who live in Miami Beach. Molly contracted macular degeneration suddenly, first in one eye and later in the other. She has traveled extensively to American Samoa and Morocco and would love to take her entire family to see those parts of the world. She is now taking “Internet Basics” and is grateful for Hadley’s technology access help. So far, she has taken 12 courses. Hadley has begun a process in which students are asked to write thank you letters to donors; Molly’s letter is one of our most heartfelt.

The groundwork is laid for 2006…

Hadley’s students and their guests will provide the focal point for events in Winter 2006. When the schedule is set, we will provide you with information in Generations so that you can attend and meet these wonderful students in person. *
The Woman's Board has had a major impact on The Hadley School for the Blind and its ability to grow and change with the times. Through both lean and prosperous years, this amazing group of women has remained the school’s largest donor. Members of the Woman’s Board crisscross generations so, as in other areas of the school’s evolution, the success of the Woman’s Board reflects a multi-generational theme.

Attend a Woman’s Board meeting or event today and you will see young women alongside those who have been involved since the inception of the group and even earlier. Today, the Woman’s Board includes the category of Associate Member available to those women who, after many years of involvement, want to continue to support Hadley but reduce the time commitment necessary to be an active Woman’s Board member. In this way, the history of this group stays alive, even as the newer members take on the leadership.

Founded in 1953, the Woman’s Board has spearheaded a number of fund-raising efforts such as holiday card sales, galas and other events, always keeping Hadley in the public’s heart and mind. Early on, this group was instrumental in keeping Hadley’s doors open. At a time when donations were in short supply, the group hosted teas on the North Shore to encourage donations to the school. That was just the beginning. Since then, the Woman’s Board has put their fingerprint on Hadley in a wide variety of ways. Perhaps the best-known example of the group’s fund-raising prowess is the annual Holiday Card Sale. The Woman’s Board began selling braille holiday cards, a project that was initially managed by Nancy Jones. In 1968, they expanded on this success. In order to reach people to whom the braille card might not appeal, Rose Donnell, then a new member of the Woman’s Board, opened shop in the George B. Everitt Memorial Room, selling holiday cards from a variety of albums, thus supplementing the income derived from the sale of the braille cards. The sale continues today, each year bringing a fresh design for the braille card and with sales still being supplemented by many album cards. Different Woman’s Board members chair the event each year. This past year, Nancy Jones’ daughter, Gwen McConnaughy, chaired the sale along with Jennifer Weaver.

The annual Woman’s Board benefit is always an eagerly anticipated event and each year, this group comes up with an exciting theme, location, decorations and entertainment. The success of this event requires the efforts of many Woman’s Board members and the multi-generational dimension of the group is always apparent at the gala. You can read more about this year’s benefit on the back cover.

And, although the benefit and the holiday card sale are the big annual Woman’s Board events, the impact of this group doesn’t stop there. In recent years, new fund-raising ideas have emerged, including an annual book fair at the Book Stall in Winnetka and a shopping day at the Lake Forest Shop. As new members have joined the group, new ideas have come to light and been embraced, and the positive impact of each new generation of Woman’s Board members takes its place in the history of this incredible group of women.

As you can see, the Hadley School owes much of its success to the dedication, commitment and hard work of the Woman’s Board, which has worked its magic—generation after generation—for more than 50 years.
You’ve Got Mail!

After much success with this year’s braille holiday card, the Hadley School’s Woman’s Board is already busy working on their next project, “You’ve Got Mail.” That is the theme for this year’s benefit, which will be held at the Skokie Country Club in Glencoe on May 14th.

This year’s benefit chairs, Melanie Stahl and Christy Fowler, have a fun evening planned that will include a silent auction, dinner and dancing. Wine as well as the work of local artists will be featured in the silent auction. The theme, “You’ve Got Mail,” will first appear on the creative invitations inspired by invitation co-chairs Ladd Mengle and Anne O’Brien-Prager. The decorations will elaborate on the theme. Proceeds of the event will go toward e-Hadley, the school’s initiative to advance online learning for Hadley students. Those attending will learn more about the school in a 10-minute video that features Hadley students.