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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CANINE COMPANIONS FOR INDEPENDENCE HOSTS OPEN HOUSE *Service Dog Organization Invites Public to Los Angeles Office*

LOS ANGELES Canine Companions for Independence will host a special open house at its Los Angeles office at 2312 Westwood Boulevard on Sunday, December 4, 2011 from 1PM to 4PM. *Canine Companions for Independence is a non-profit organization that enhances the lives of people with disabilities by providing highly trained assistance dogs and ongoing support to ensure quality partnerships.* The public is invited to enjoy assistance dog demonstrations, meet local human-canine teams and see presentations about the Canine Companions program at this free event. Potential assistance dog applicants, professionals serving people with disabilities, dog-lovers and charitable community members interested in getting involved are encouraged to attend. Light refreshments will be served and children's activities will be offered. Guests are encouraged to RSVP to (310) 446-5700 by December 2.

Open house guests will meet human-canine teams living in Los Angeles. Canine Companions trains four types of assistance dogs. Service Dogs provide assistance for adults with physical disabilities by performing daily tasks; Hearing Dogs alert the deaf and hard of hearing to important sounds; Skilled Companion Dogs enhance independence for children and adults with physical, cognitive and developmental disabilities; and Facility Dogs work alongside professionals in visitation, education or health care settings. Local clients will share how their Canine Companions assistance dogs have changed their lives. Dogs currently in Professional Training, with the guidance of staff instructors, will demonstrate how they can open doors, pick up dropped items and activate light switches, among many other practical tasks. Attendees will also have the chance to meet puppies in program that are being raised by volunteers in hopes that they will graduate to become assistance dogs.

The Los Angeles office of Canine Companions for Independence opened in May 2010, thanks to funding from The Shirley McKernan Courage Foundation. The office is open Monday through Friday from 11AM to 4PM. It allows Canine Companions to reach more Los Angeles residents with disabilities as well as better serve existing local clientele. There are currently 44 Canine Companions assistance dogs working in Los Angeles County. Thanks to generous supporters, Canine Companions provides all of the dogs, training and ongoing follow-up support free of charge.

About Canine Companions for Independence:

Canine Companions for Independence provides highly trained assistance dogs to children and adults with disabilities. Established in 1975, Canine Companions has five regional training centers across the country. Canine Companions is recognized worldwide for the excellence of its dogs, and the quality and longevity of the matches it makes between dogs and people. For more information, visit www.cci.org or call 1-800-572-BARK.

About Canine Companions' Los Angeles Open House:

Join us at 2312 Westwood Boulevard on Sunday, December 4, 2011 from 1PM to 4PM. Guests are encouraged to RSVP to (310) 446-5700 by December 2. Visit <http://www.cci.org/laopenhouse> for event updates.

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