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PURDUE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE WELCOMES SERVICE DOG

WESTFIELD, IN Mac Mendell, a recent graduate from Purdue University, received a service dog in August. Golden, a male yellow Labrador Retriever, will help Mac by tugging doors open, retrieving dropped items and providing companionship. *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. Mac received Golden free of charge from the organization in August.

Mac and Golden graduated together after completing an intense two week Team Training course at one of the Canine Companions' five regional centers. During Team Training, students are strategically matched with assistance dogs and learn how to work with them effectively. The dogs are trained for two years, learning 40 commands before they are ready to become someone's 24/7 partner. Thanks to Canine Companions' generous supporters, the dogs, their training and ongoing follow-up support are provided free of charge.

"I felt having a dog would give me more independence," shares Mac. "Also, having to exercise the dog daily will encourage me to exercise too." Mac decided to apply for a Canine Companions service dog after seeing a commercial for the organization on television.

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 people and dogs. For more information, visit www.cci.org or call 800-572-BARK(2275).

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