

The Companion

Holiday 2019, issue thirty-four



CANINE COMPANIONS
FOR INDEPENDENCE®



Evolving with Intention and Gratitude

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Cover photo by Sharon Hallman
sharonhallmanphotography.com

This month marks the completion of our first year together as a team. We are grateful for the high level of support and engagement from our graduates, donors, volunteers and staff. Thank you for your input, ideas and patience as we work toward executing initiatives to move our mission forward.

We are very encouraged by what we have achieved as an organization and as a community. This year we re-engaged our national and regional boards meaningfully and made great strides on our technological systems to better support our constituents. We launched the Stand Against Service Dog Fraud advocacy campaign, broke ground on our state-of-the-art campus in the North Central Region, opened the doors of the new PTSD/sensory-sensitive training building in our Northwest Region and introduced an ambitious five-year strategic plan. It is through this planned, intentional growth and evolution that we lay the groundwork for our 2025 vision. In 2020, we will work to improve resources at our Canine Early Development Center, kick off a pilot therapy dog certification program, support our active graduate teams and place even more expertly trained assistance dogs with people with disabilities.

We value your incredible dedication

to our mission, and we are eager to move into the next stage to better serve our current and future teams. To all the graduates, thank you for trusting Canine Companions to enhance your independence through your assistance dogs. To the volunteers and donors, thank you for your continued support — your passion is what allows us to achieve excellence as an organization. Finally, to those on our waitlist, we are diligently working to match you with an expertly trained assistance dog, and your patience and excitement cannot be forgotten.

While we've accomplished much, there's so much more to do. We look forward to your feedback and value your thoughts on how we can continue to advance our mission.

As we celebrate all we've accomplished in 2019, please consider making an end-of-year gift to support more assistance dog teams. Because of your generosity, lives are being changed every day. Thank you so much for your unwavering support and commitment.

Sincerely,



Paige Mazzoni, CEO



John McKinney, Board Chair





New Building, New Possibilities

As Canine Companions continues to grow, we recognize our role in adapting our facilities and training to meet the needs of our participants.

Following significant growth at our Northwest Region, and in particular our expansion to place service dogs with veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), we were out of space. We commissioned a new building with these graduates, as well as children with

sensory processing disabilities, in mind.

“This special building on the Jean and Charles Schulz Campus was designed to accommodate the sensory needs of veterans with PTSD and clients with sensory issues,” Canine Companions CEO Paige Mazzoni remarks. “The space will help create a more comfortable Team Training experience for our clients and provide additional training space as we place even more expertly trained assistance dogs.”

We are grateful for the support of the volunteers and donors who made this space a reality. We look forward to students enjoying Team Training in our new building in the years to come. Learn more about our work with veterans at cci.org/veterans.

Above: Canine Companions instructors working with dogs in professional training at the new facility on the Schulz Campus.

Advocating for Our Graduates



In September, Canine Companions launched a campaign to Stand Against Service Dog Fraud raising awareness of the impact untrained pets and fraudulent service animals can have on task-trained service dogs. We asked new and current supporters to sign our pledge to show their alignment with the campaign.

When untrained pets or fraudulent service dogs behave poorly in businesses, restaurants and other establishments where pets are not allowed, the consequences directly impact our graduate teams’ access rights and safety. Our advocacy campaign has been able to raise awareness about our mission and provide information about ways to help stop service dog fraud.

We are grateful for the 7,500 plus supporters who signed our petition thus far. We are leading with a united voice to encourage change and to protect the independence of task-trained service dog teams, including our graduates’. We’ll share our results with legislators, national groups and associations in the hotel, restaurant and retail industries. Stand against fraudulent service dogs today. Show your support at cci.org/takeastand.

Brothers on a Mission

Forrest Allen seemed to have it all — he was athletic, smart and loved by family and friends. He was doing well in school and had ambitions of becoming a veterinarian. Then, in 2011, his life took an unexpected turn. At age 18 he suffered a catastrophic brain injury in a snowboarding accident that left him in a coma. Surgeons were forced to remove a large portion of his skull to save his life.

Over the following years Forrest had a number of serious setbacks, spent more than two years in hospitals and underwent 31 surgical procedures. He would have to learn how to swallow, speak and walk again — something his doctors doubted would happen. In 2013, his recovery team gained a powerful new ally when Forrest was matched with Toliver, his Canine Companions for Independence service dog. Toliver was at Forrest's bedside when he awoke from the most difficult surgeries and walked across the stage with Forrest when he graduated from high school in 2014. Since then, Forrest and Toliver have been featured in a documentary film, "Music Got Me Here," and have traveled around the country to speak with audiences about the power of faith, hope and resilience.

Forrest's brother Austin was so inspired when he saw how much Service Dog Toliver supported Forrest's recovery that he decided to become involved with Canine Companions and volunteer as a puppy raiser.

Austin was the first student puppy raiser at Duke University in North Carolina. Now a graduate student at Duke, he is currently raising his third puppy, Dune. Dune is part of the Canine Companions Puppy Kindergarten pilot program at the Duke Canine Cognition Center.

"What an incredible organization Canine Companions has been

for our whole family," says Austin. "Watching Forrest and Toliver overcome daily obstacles together, it is clear their teamwork has gotten Forrest to where he is now. Their bond has helped bring our entire community together around Forrest's journey. Additionally, raising puppies for Canine Companions has given me purpose and led to so many wonderful human and canine connections. Our family is thankful every day that Toliver joined our lives."

Forrest adds, "Without puppy raisers like my brother and the generous donors of this organization, I would not have Toliver. Toliver never let me give up. He helped me get through the really hard times and made it possible for me to find my new purpose in life."

After a seven-year detour for Forrest, he and Austin can now say they are both college students. Forrest started his second year this fall at George Mason University in Fairfax, VA with Toliver at his side! Forrest made a promise we can all get behind, to "help others find their way, to study hard, have fun and live each day as the gift it truly is."

"Our entire family gives thanks for Toliver, and our home is truly filled with joy, laughter and love."

Austin with Canine Companions puppy Martin and Forrest with Service Dog Toliver.



Skylar and McGraw

Skylar has a rare genetic disorder called DDX3X. One of the common traits of her disability is delayed speech due to low muscle tone and motor planning. In 2018, Skylar was matched with Canine Companions assistance dog McGraw, who has helped Skylar greatly increase her verbal communication, develop stronger motor skills, calm her anxieties in stressful situations and increase her independence.

Skylar's mother Lori reflects on the emotional day they received McGraw. "When we met McGraw's puppy raisers, it was as if we had known them for years. They had made Skylar a photo book of McGraw as a puppy through his first 18 months. It was incredible to have such a special and memorable gift."

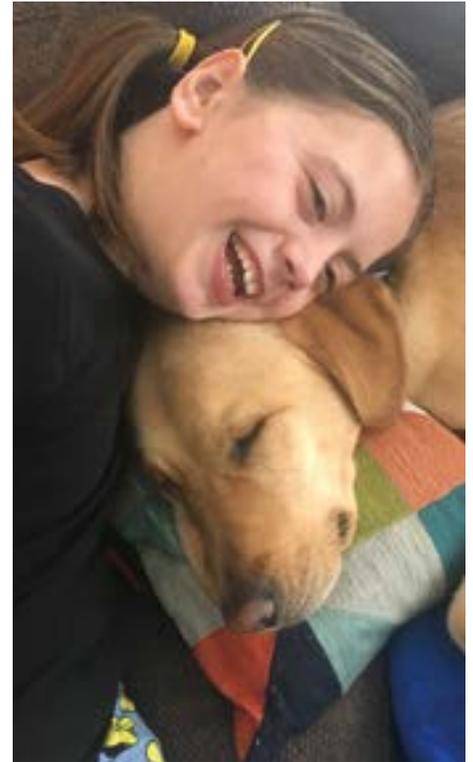
She continues, "I can't thank Canine Companions enough for changing our lives, for giving Skylar a voice, bravery and

"I can't thank Canine Companions enough for changing our lives, for giving Skylar a voice, bravery and independence."

independence. I can't thank the puppy raisers enough for bringing up McGraw and remaining in our lives. "

Assistance dog McGraw was provided free of charge and named in honor of Harold W. and Nancy McGraw III, who have generously supported our mission for many years.

Visit cci.org/skilledcompanions for more information on assistance dogs for children.



Newfound Independence

Chet McDoniel was raised to be completely independent, never needing to ask for help. He says it took getting older and being honest with himself to listen to those around him and accept assistance, specifically, from a service dog.

Since receiving Service Dog Miles from Canine Companions, Chet says his entire world has changed. Utilizing his feet for most activities, he regularly drops items such as his phone or keys. Before, this meant climbing down from his wheelchair, but now, Miles is there to help. While retrieving items and helping with doors has been life changing, Chet says the intangible things are beyond anything he imagined.

Chet reflects, "On one of our first public outings, I suddenly realized that no one was staring at me, they were staring at Miles." He



"I left the store with the greatest feeling, much like a weight had been lifted from me."

continues, "Instead of asking uncomfortable questions about my disability, they smiled and asked, 'What's your dog's name?' I left the store with the greatest feeling, much like a weight had been lifted from me."

Chet says he has Canine Companions to thank for increasing his independence. And as for everyone who told him that a service dog would change his life, he says, "They were right."

Learn more about service dogs for adults at cci.org/servicedogs.

What Are We Wearing?

Did you know that our assistance dogs have different equipment depending on the jobs they do? Even the colors Canine Companions dogs wear have a special meaning!



Canine Companions puppies use a **Gentle Leader™** as part of their working gear. Like a halter for a horse, this allows the handler to be aware of where the dog's head is located and provides extra control. The gear doesn't restrict the dog from opening its mouth, drinking or eating.



Blaze orange is the federally mandated equipment color for hearing dogs! While not required, many of our hearing dog teams prefer to use the **orange leash** to identify their dog as a hearing dog.



Service dogs that pull their handler in a manual wheelchair use a **harness with an adjustable length handle** to help during propulsion. This harness can also be used for skilled companions partnered with children with disabilities to assist with walking as a touch point.



Canine Companions puppies wear **yellow puppy capes**. When these adorable capes are outgrown, puppies switch to a **yellow puppy vest**.



Dogs that are in professional training and our assistance dogs wear **blue vests** with our logo.



Professional training and graduate dogs are carefully assessed by staff to determine which **training equipment** is appropriate for a given team. Participants are provided with detailed education and training on appropriate, safe and effective use of their equipment to facilitate a positive and responsive working relationship with their canine partner.

Elevate Your Etiquette

Want some tips on disability and assistance dog etiquette? We've got you covered!

- Don't assume a person needs help — ask how you might assist.
- Avoid touching assistive devices. Some people view these as extensions of their body.
- Speak directly to the person, not the parent, caregiver, interpreter or assistance dog.
- Always ask before petting a service dog.
- Don't distract a service dog — petting, making noises or feeding can cause the working dog to lose focus on their handler.

Find more information on disability and assistance dog etiquette at cci.org/etiquette.

Understanding Invisible Disabilities

Having a disability can make day-to-day life difficult. For people with invisible disabilities, there is an additional layer of complexity that comes from the frequent questioning from strangers and the occasional forgetfulness from coworkers, neighbors and even friends and family.

Many of our graduates have invisible disabilities. Some of these disabilities include deafness, muscular disorders or multiple sclerosis, just to name a few. Our graduates with invisible disabilities may face questioning regarding the legitimacy of their accessible parking pass, their symptoms or their need for a service dog. Without a constant visible reminder like assistive equipment, invisible disabilities can often go unnoticed and aren't treated with the same sensitivity, patience or credibility with which visible disabilities are treated.

Rex Vehrs is one of our graduates with an invisible disability. "It hurts. Because I don't have any visible disabilities, people think I am not in need or question my service dog's legitimacy," says Rex. "At the end of the day, my pain drives me to utilize

Inez in spite of the public's opinion. But it does stick in the back of my mind quite a bit. Hopefully, with education, we can help people understand that not all disabilities are visible."

After serving 21 years in the United States Army and seven years in federal law enforcement, Rex retired with lasting effects. His time in training and on deployment led to cumulative injuries including a traumatic brain injury, a spinal cord injury and complex regional pain syndrome.

"Daily tasks like laundry used to be a very painful process, but Inez has helped make it all easier."

Thanks to Service Dog Inez, Rex has the assistance he needs to manage the symptoms of his disability. Canine Companions assistance dogs perform physical tasks and provide awareness for our population of graduates with invisible disabilities. At Canine Companions, we know the life-changing impact our dogs can have for people with a variety of disabilities — visible or not.

Read more graduate stories at cci.org/stories.

"Because I don't have any visible disabilities, people think I am not in need or question my service dog's legitimacy."



Picking up items off the ground can be painful for Rex. Service Dog Inez is there to help.



Serving Those with Invisible Disabilities

Canine Companions serves children, adults and veterans with disabilities. Some examples of the more common invisible disabilities we serve are pictured in the word cloud below. We serve many more types of invisible disabilities beyond those listed. Interested in applying for an assistance dog? Visit cci.org/apply.

Arthritis **Autism** Complex Regional Pain Syndrome
Deafness Intellectual Disability
Chronic Pain Degenerative Disc Disease
Traumatic Brain Injury Lupus
Multiple Sclerosis Neuropathy **PTSD**
Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome Stroke
Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome



Kristen and Canine Companions puppy Ryland

Grateful for the Opportunity to Give Back

“Battling this illness is a real challenge, but from early on I knew that this must be happening for a reason. Now I know that I was being prepared for something more meaningful in my life,” Kristen Anderson shares.

“These people and dogs have changed my life, and now we all work together to change the lives of others.”

In 2005, Kristen was diagnosed with a debilitating neurological condition. She had always been active and healthy, but now she found herself struggling to function. The pain was excruciating, and she required a wheelchair for mobility.

It took many years of intensive treatment before Kristen was well enough to seek out that higher meaning.

“I realized that I wanted to help people with disabilities because of my own experience living with a disabling medical condition,” explains Kristen. That’s when she began volunteering for Canine Companions. From puppy sitting and fundraising to serving lunch during Team Training — Kristen was enjoying all the ways she could give back.

She was in the thick of DogFest preparations when life threw her another curveball. Kristen was diagnosed with breast cancer. One day after a disheartening oncology appointment, her friend and fellow volunteer, Mary Segall, stopped by to lend her support. Kristen was in tears when Mary arrived with Lolly, the puppy she was raising at the time. “Feeling Lolly’s love shifted my

energy and brought joy to my heart,” shares Kristen. “We were talking about these incredible dogs when suddenly Mary said, ‘Do you want to co-raise a puppy with me?’ In that moment I knew that all the stars had aligned.” A couple months later, Kristen and Mary started co-raising Canine Companions puppy Ryland.

Ryland, a Labrador/Golden Retriever cross, is already working his magic on everyone he meets. “I know Ryland is destined for great things, and I’m extremely grateful to be a part of his journey,” says Kristen. “I’m also grateful for my Canine Companions family. Everyone has rallied around me with tremendous compassion. These people and dogs have changed my life, and now we all work together to change the lives of others.”

Learn how to get involved at cci.org/volunteer.

A Dog Worth Waiting For

Lauren Armstrong was born profoundly deaf. Growing up with deafness was not always easy, and there were many times Lauren felt isolated from the hearing world due to the difficulties with communication. Without her cochlear implants, she can't hear everyday sounds like an alarm clock or phone. "When I don't have my implants on, if a jet engine goes over my head, I couldn't hear it. I could feel the vibrations, but I can't hear it," Lauren says.

The challenge of living in a silent world became more apparent when she started college at the University of Tennessee. Lauren knew she was going to need assistance to keep up with her lifestyle and help navigate the complexities of living on her own at school.

Lauren made a decision that made sense for her — she applied for a hearing dog from Canine Companions — and in May 2019 she was matched with Hearing Dog Elroy. Lauren is now more connected to the hearing world and no longer worries about missing an important sound.

Lauren waited almost two years to be matched with a hearing dog. After two weeks at Team Training, she knew Elroy was the perfect fit. Lauren smiles at Elroy and shares, "It was so worth the wait."

For Lauren, the physical tasks Elroy performs for her have been life changing — alerting her to a ringing phone, knocks on the door or her morning alarm clock so



“Elroy lets me know when my name is called in class.”

she's not late to classes. "He helps me, even when I'm driving," says Lauren. "He sits in the back and looks for cars. Recently, Elroy alerted me to a police siren long before the car passed me," she said. "He also lets me know when my name is called in class." Elroy makes Lauren feel more safe, independent, able to be away at college on her own and a part

of a community in which it can be hard for people who are deaf or hard of hearing to feel included. Elroy makes what can often be an invisible disability visible.

Canine Companions hearing dogs alert their partners to key sounds by making physical contact such as nudging the leg or arm. "It takes six to nine months with a Canine Companions instructor to identify the appropriate behavioral characteristics and train the tasks needed to become a hearing dog," says Mari Johnson, a Canine Companions hearing dog instructor. After being placed in the home, the graduates "customize" the dogs' alerting patterns to their own environments and needs.

Lauren is working on her doctoral in Audiology degree and is now on her way to becoming an audiologist. Being deaf is a part of Lauren's identity, and with Elroy by her side she can accomplish anything she puts her mind to.

Learn more at cci.org/hearingdogs.

Your support will help provide more assistance dogs, free of charge, to people with disabilities. Make a gift today at cci.org/donate.





Caring for the Future of Canine Companions

Every year, Canine Companions puppies begin their journeys in the loving homes of volunteer breeder caretakers. For over 20 years, volunteer-extraordinaire Connie Van Schaick has been a dedicated puppy raiser and breeder caretaker, all while working full time as a successful process engineer. Recently retired, Connie has dedicated even more time to our organization as a passionate breeder caretaker council member and event volunteer.

“As a breeder caretaker, you may never know if your puppies graduate or if they do, you may never know how they enhance someone’s life,” Connie reflects. “But when I do hear about how one dog has changed someone’s life and I realize that puppy was born in my home, it brings tears to my eyes to know they got their start with me. The reward is not about recognition for oneself, the reward is helping others,” she continues. “It’s not an easy job to be a breeder caretaker or puppy raiser, but it is very rewarding to see what these dogs do to improve the lives of people with disabilities. When you see what these dogs can do, how can you not want to volunteer?”

Connie has been a breeder caretaker for over 25 litters, with as few as four puppies in a litter to as large as 15 puppies in a litter. Thank you, Connie, for being part of the backbone of our organization. Learn more about our breeder caretaker program at cci.org/breeding.

Above: Volunteer breeder caretaker Connie cuddles with Canine Companions puppies from a recent litter born in her home.

Great Holiday Gifts

Check out all the wonderful gifts and holiday card packs at cci.org/shop



2020 Puppy Calendar

Share your love of Canine Companions all year long with our 2020 Puppy Calendar.

Receive yours with a donation at cci.org/calendar.

As a bonus, every calendar includes \$60 worth of coupons for Eukanuba dog food. These calendars make great holiday gifts!



Duke University Admits New Class of Puppies

This fall, Duke University admitted some special four-legged students. In the first program of its kind, the Duke Canine Cognition Center welcomed seven Canine Companions puppies. The puppies are part of a study funded by the National Institute of Health (NIH) to assess the impact of different puppy raising strategies on the behavior and cognitive development of future assistance dogs. The program just completed its year-long pilot phase before being awarded NIH funding for the five-year study.

“Becoming an assistance dog is like going to college,” says Dr. Brian Hare, from Duke’s Center for Cognitive Neuroscience and director of the Duke Canine Cognition Center. “It’s tough to get in, and not everyone graduates. The goal of the project is to increase the success rate of assistance dogs and to see more dogs graduate and serve more people. To do that we need to understand what experiences they need early in life to be successful.”

The program will be analyzing the puppies’ behavior with a range of cognitive games that will function as a form of early aptitude testing. The results will be used to determine early identifiers of puppies who have a higher likelihood of graduating.

“We want to identify those features that are going to be linked to success,” says Dr. Brenda Kennedy, Canine Companions national director of canine health and research.

“We are honored to continue our important partnership with the Duke Canine Cognition Center. This will help us make decisions at an earlier point, which means we can place more assistance dogs and help more people with disabilities.” Learn more about our studies and research at cci.org/science.



A Legacy for Independence



Since 1988, Ron and Joan Apatoff have been loyal donors to Canine Companions for Independence. Ron reflects on their journey with Canine Companions, sharing, “When I started donating, I had a golden retriever. Joan and I have always been huge dog lovers and remember seeing these dogs helping children and adults with disabilities and thinking how amazing these dogs are and what a tremendous organization Canine Companions is.” Ron continues, “This was before Canine Companions began providing service dogs to veterans with PTSD and before the prison programs. The growth of the organization in the past 30 years has truly been remarkable.”

In addition to being current donors, the Apatoffs have planned to leave their estate to Canine Companions. Thanks to donors like Ron and Joan, we have been able to grow our organization and the number of people we serve. We greatly value the dedication and generosity of our donors like the Apatoffs. You can touch the lives of others by creating a lasting legacy. Help Canine Companions for Independence achieve its goals for current and future generations. Visit cci.org/plannedgiving.

Supporting Our Mission

This fall, Canine Companions volunteers, staff and graduates gathered at Salesforce Tower in San Francisco for a day of fun to share Canine Companions’ important mission with their employees. Guests mingled with dogs, enjoyed a photo booth and more. In late October, Salesforce and Canine Companions came together on the Salesforce Ohana Floor for an intimate event with CEO Paige Mazzoni, guests and our friends at Whistle™, the maker of the canine activity tracker used in training service dogs for veterans with PTSD.



The Future is Taking Shape

The new Canine Companions campus in the North Central Region is quickly transforming, and it is with great pleasure that we share our progress. When we broke ground on April 3, 2019, the opening of this new facility seemed like a far-off day; however, just five months after the groundbreaking, the piles of dirt have been replaced by concrete pads, walls, plumbing and roofs.

The state-of-the-art kennel building was the first building to take form. You can now begin to see where each dog in the North Central Region will begin learning their tasks that will one day provide a person with a disability enhanced independence. You can see where our future assistance dogs will arrive at 8 weeks old and be introduced to the family that will help them grow in a home filled with love, before returning at 18 months old for professional training. This building is more than just concrete — it’s the foundation of a more independent life for countless individuals in the very near future.

The North Central Campus is located in New Albany, Ohio and set to open at the end of 2020. The project continues to remain on budget and on schedule. To find out more about our exciting future and how you can get involved, visit cci.org/invest.

Above: Artist rendering of the new campus in New Albany, Ohio.



NextHome Moves to the Next Level

NextHome and Canine Companions launched a national partnership earlier this year. After a nationwide search of thousands of charitable organizations, the progressive real estate franchise with over 385 offices across 45 states, selected Canine Companions for Independence as their official charity partner.

Our new partnership was revealed during NextHome’s annual conference in Las Vegas, where Canine Companions graduate team Brianna and assistance dog Emily, or better known to our Canine Companions family as “Team Bremily,” took the main stage and touched hearts with stories of courage, confidence and independence. During the three-day event, NextHome raised an astounding \$20,000! Their support and passion for Canine Companions continues to grow.

“As a firm believer in investing in your own team and giving back to local

communities, it made perfect sense to associate NextHome with an organization that is equally dedicated to society by delivering the greatest resources to individuals in need,” states Chief Executive Officer James Dwiggin. “Our hope is that our matchmade partnership with Canine Companions for Independence will enrich the lives of children, adults and veterans with disabilities through the support of our offices, agents, followers, friends and families.”

Corporations are integral to the growth of Canine Companions and we are grateful to NextHome and their members for their support and the endless enthusiasm they have for our mission to help more people gain greater independence.

Interested in becoming a Canine Companions corporate partner? For more information, visit cci.org/partners.



Top: Canine Companions staff and graduate team Brianna and Emily keynote at NextHome’s annual conference. Left to right: James Dwiggin, Wendy Langley, Brianna and Skilled Companion Emily, Wendy Heim, Scott Heim and Gayla Skates
 Above, right: Canine Companions staff visits NextHome headquarters in Pleasanton, CA. Left to right: Raechel Jackson, Wendy Langley, Margaret Sluyk and Sharmaine Tabo.



Above right: Heritage Society members with Executive Director Margaret Sluyk in front of the Winchester Mystery House in San Jose, CA.

Heritage Society

Canine Companions' Heritage Society was formed in honor of individuals who include legacy gifts benefiting Canine Companions for Independence in their estate plans. Heritage Society members receive a commemorative pin, our annual puppy calendar and acknowledgement in our annual report. They are also invited to Heritage Society and donor appreciation events hosted across their region.

These exclusive events feature a brief presentation by Canine Companions staff, a graduate speaker, supporters and assistance dog teams. Attendees enjoy drinks and bites while getting an in-depth perspective of Canine Companions' mission and meeting graduates who've been impacted by their generosity.

Northwest Region Executive Director Margaret Sluyk and National Director of Planned Giving Charmaine Stainbrook are happy to answer any questions you may have. For more information on planned giving or our Heritage Society, visit cci.org/plannedgiving.

Sharks Pupdate

Canine Companions puppy Finn, who is being followed by the San Jose Sharks, is doing a lot of eating, sleeping, growing and learning lately! He visited the Sharks arena, lovingly referred to as "The Shark Tank," where he met Sharks employees, had some videos and photos taken, and was loved by everyone he met, even Sharks mascot Sharkie! We're excited that Finn will be honored with his very own bobblehead for one day only — January 9. It will surely be a not-to-be-missed Sharks game! Follow Finn on his journey to become an assistance dog on Instagram and Twitter @sharkspup.



Volunteer puppy raiser Shari Rodenberger with Sharkie and Finn



The Big Sky Chapter leadership team and Volunteer Coordinator Michael King at their chapter's launch party.

Volunteer Chapters in the Northwest Region

Volunteer chapters consist of enthusiastic puppy raisers, graduate teams and dedicated volunteers in many areas all over the country. The chapters support Canine Companions through fundraising and community awareness activities. There are 44 volunteer chapters nationwide, including 10 in the Northwest Region. Newly formed chapters include the Inland Northwest Chapter in North Idaho and the Big Sky Chapter in Montana. The region also has longstanding chapters in California in Sacramento, San Francisco North, the East and South Bays; as well as in Seattle, Washington; Portland, Oregon; Reno, Nevada and Boise, Idaho. We are grateful for all the work our chapters do for our organization. To learn more or join a chapter near you, visit cci.org/northwest.

New Faces at the Southwest Region



Amanda Chaban,
Administrative Assistant

Amanda is the first smiling face you will see when visiting the Southwest Training Center. She joins Canine Companions with a strong background in administrative work and a bachelor's degree in Communication Science and Disorders. Originally from Pennsylvania, she says the transition to California life has been made easier by all the friendly folks at the Southwest Regional office. She has two dogs, Stella, an Italian greyhound, and Violet, a Chihuahua.



Kimberly Danker,
Development Associate

Kim is a native of Newark, Ohio and graduated from The Ohio State University. She moved to San Diego nearly two years ago. In addition to grant writing, Kim has development experience in annual funds, direct mail and telemarketing, special events and alumni retention. Most recently, Kim was a development director with the Muscular Dystrophy Association in San Diego. In her spare time she likes to read, make moonshine and kickbox.



Natalie Koeritzer,
Apprentice Instructor I

Natalie graduated from The Ohio State University with a degree in Communications and a minor in Design. While in college, she joined a club where she got the opportunity to volunteer and puppy raise for a non-profit that provides service dogs to kids with disabilities. After graduating, she decided to pursue a career in the service dog world with Canine Companions. She is so excited to join the Southwest Region staff and continue her journey to becoming an instructor!



Corrie Samaniego,
Community Events
Coordinator

California Bay Area native Corrie is the newest addition to our Southwest Training Center. Corrie was drawn to Canine Companions because of our mission, the amazing culture at the Southwest Region location and her love of dogs. She has a bachelor's degree in Psychology and has worked at several non-profit organizations helping coordinate events, working with volunteers and fundraising. Corrie is mom to two kids and two dogs and is a huge sports fan.

2020 Southwest Region Events

DogFest Phoenix
February 29, 2020

Imagine Independence
April 23, 2020

Sit. Stay. Sparkle. Vail Gala
August 2, 2020

To stay up to date on all Southwest Region events, visit cci.org/swrevents



The Helping Hands of Allstate

Allstate volunteer Janine Cline helps us enhance independence for people with disabilities. Her time as a Canine Companions volunteer puppy raiser at Allstate helps us receive financial support from the Allstate Foundation Helping Hands Grant. Janine is currently raising Mona, her second puppy for Canine Companions.

Many employers sponsor matching gift programs and will match charitable contributions or volunteer hours made by their employees. To find out if your company has a matching gift policy, please visit cci.org/matchinggifts.

Above: Canine Companions puppy Mona.

23rd Annual Tales & Tails Gala Was the “Must See Gala” in Central Florida

The 23rd annual Tales & Tails Gala was voted “two paws up” by critics everywhere, and more than 700 community leaders, valued partners and supporters agreed. On October 26, attendees gathered to applaud our mission at the Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando, Florida.

Themed “The Indies,” the event celebrated Canine Companions as the organization with the best assistance dogs, the best trainers and the best puppy raisers.

Guests enjoyed a night of delicious cuisine, live and silent auctions, entertainment and inspiring stories. And best of all, the event provided the chance to help adults, children and veterans receive enhanced independence.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our wonderful sponsors and guests who traveled near and far to celebrate the work and mission of our organization. The event shattered all fundraising goals and raised over \$800,000. It is the Southeast Region’s single largest fundraiser.

We would like to extend a special thank you to our major sponsors:

Presenting Sponsors



Anne Gittinger

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The Harris Rosen Foundation
Trish & Rick Walsh
Fonda & Don Cerenzio
BLD Group, LLC

Show Your Spirit

Spirit Clothing Company is excited to announce a partnership with the Southeast Region of Canine Companions by creating a custom Canine Companions Spirit Jersey®.

People are in love with these popular, stylish, long-sleeved shirts sold throughout Walt Disney World and Disneyland.

The Canine Companions spirit jersey retails for \$50, and because Spirit Jersey has generously donated 2,400 jerseys to Canine Companion, your purchase will help support our mission to provide expertly trained assistance dogs free of charge.

Please visit our Spirit Jersey online store at cci.org/spiritjersey to make your purchase or find it on campus at your regional Canine Companions gift shop.

Make sure to share your photo on Instagram with the hashtag #ccspiritjersey.



NORTHEAST REGION

Banjo Brings Joy to Calvary

Calvary Hospital in the Bronx, New York loves having Facility Dog Banjo as a member of its team. Facility dogs are expertly trained dogs who partner with a facilitator working in a health care, visitation or education setting. Canine Companions facility dogs are trustworthy in professional environments and can perform over 40 commands designed to motivate and inspire clients. Banjo works with his handler Shannon McCourt to perform specific tasks that can help with healing, physical therapy, decreasing stress and more. Like all Canine Companions assistance dogs, Banjo was provided to Calvary free of charge.



Above: Canine Companion Facility Dog Banjo meets new friends.



Honoring Long Island Heroes

It was a night for heroes at the sixth annual Veterans Day event honoring local veterans who serve their communities. Among this year's honorees are Canine Companions graduate, US Air Force veteran Ken Hernandez and Service Dog Miller. Ken shares, "Since Miller has come into my life, everyone has seen the change. I'm just happier again. I'm not scared to go out. I'm confident. I feel like he's got my back."

Darby Dental was once again lead sponsor for this year's event, which also honored veterans from World War II, Vietnam and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Landmark Program for Veterans Comes to the Northeast Region

In December, Canine Companions' Northeast Region will hold its first graduation ceremony for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). For the last several months, a handful of dogs in professional training have been learning tasks to help their future handlers mitigate symptoms of PTSD, including interrupting anxiety behaviors, turning on lights before the handler enters a room and creating a gentle buffer in crowds.

Northeast Participant Program Manager Jessica Reiss explains, "Veterans with PTSD can have trouble with social outings such as going out to dinner, buying groceries or attending a movie because of the noises and the crowds." She continues, "The dogs can really help those individuals who just need that extra step to be part of the community again."

Canine Companions Instructor Leah Jacobson works with assistance dog Boise in professional training.





Haute Dogs Hit the Runway in the Windy City

HAUTE DOG | CHICAGO is in its fourth year. This trendy and unique event has helped spread the mission of Canine Companions to new heights in Chicago and engaged many wonderful new friends. These friends have partnered with us to help spread our mission even further.

Television and radio talk show host Whitney Reynolds has participated in HAUTE DOG | CHICAGO for three of its four years. “Canine Companions is an organization I adore! I have seen Canine Companions’ mission lived out first hand, and it is truly amazing. The fact that Canine Companions dogs are provided free of charge floors me. This is why HAUTE DOG | CHICAGO is so special, because it combines so many different people that all come together to support an amazing mission,” shares Whitney.

Local TV personality Natalie Bomke and her husband, former “Bachelorette” contestant, Ed Swiderski, have partnered with Canine Companions for a second year to help raise awareness about a mission that they find important to the Chicago community.

HAUTE DOG | CHICAGO is truly an incredible event that is helping Canine Companions reach new levels and new friends.

Puppy Penguin

When you hear the words Pittsburgh and Penguin, you probably think hockey, but now you can also think “puppy!” Canine Companions is excited to be partnering with KDKA-TV2 in Pittsburgh to follow the journey of one very special puppy named Penguin. Arriving in Pittsburgh just two months ago, Penguin has already become a big part of the community. Joining the Pittsburgh Today Live family from 9-10 a.m. every Friday. Penguin loves helping get his community ready for all the weekend fun that lies ahead. You can follow Penguin’s journey on Facebook and Twitter by searching PenguinKDKA or Instagram by following @cccaninepuppy.

Above: Penguin and friends in the studio.



Above left: Whitney Reynolds snuggling with a Canine Companions puppy at HAUTE DOG | CHICAGO. Above right: Natalie Bomke with her husband, Ed Swiderski, at HAUTE DOG | CHICAGO.



Prison Puppies at The PARC

The PARC has been providing complete wellness care and 24/7 emergency/critical care for puppies raised by inmates at the Federal Medical Center Carswell in Fort Worth since 2011. In that time, they have cared for 34 puppies and provided over \$80,000 in services.

“Maximizing the life people share with their pets and celebrating each unique relationship is what drives us,” says Dr. Steve Hotchkiss, chief vision officer and owner of The PARC. He continues, “We know how special the bond is for a person with a disability and their service dog. Both organizations have similar missions rooted in the belief that our best friends bring great joy to our lives.”

Canine Companions is grateful to The PARC and Dr. Hotchkiss, as this complimentary care not only helps maintain the prison puppy raising program but allows Canine Companions to place more assistance dogs free of charge with people with disabilities.

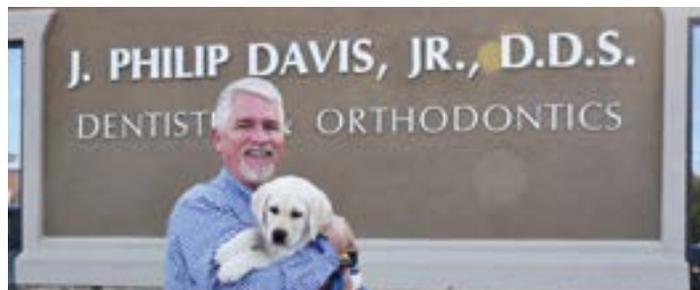
Above: Canine Companions puppies Sprout, Memphis and Polo with the staff of The PARC during a veterinary appointment.

A Dentist’s Puppy Raising “Journey”

Dr. Philip Davis is raising Canine Companions puppy Journey. Journey accompanies Dr. Davis frequently to his dental office in Temple, Texas. He says having a puppy in a dental office is a great way to socialize and prepare Journey for her special future.

“A lot of love goes on with Journey in the office, naturally,” says Dr. Davis. “These dogs have to be exposed to all different kinds of environments and people, so I figured, what better way?”

Dr. Davis says both staff and patients love having Journey around, and he hopes that all the love and hard work will prepare Journey to assist a person with a disability one day.



Above: Canine Companions puppy Journey meeting patients. Dr. Davis with Canine Companions puppy Journey.

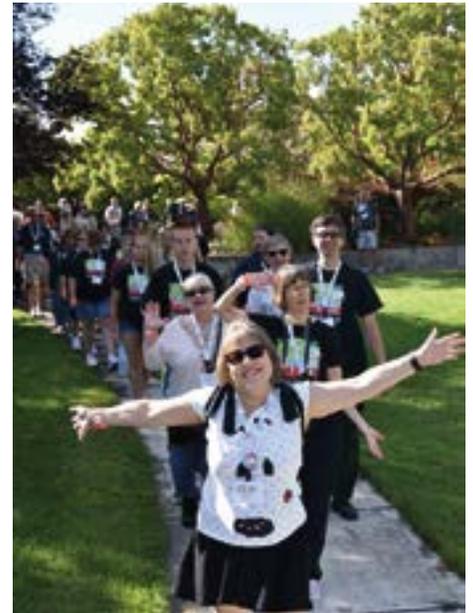


Announcing the South Central Region Board of Directors

The South Central Region is excited to announce the addition of a Regional Board of Directors to support continued expansion of our mission across the state of Texas. Over the last few years we have enhanced awareness of our expertly trained assistance dogs, brought in new puppy raisers, volunteers and supporters, and now serve nearly 150 graduate teams. The South Central Region board members join us from across the state and will be a valuable resource for ongoing growth and success.



Clockwise from left: Jean Schulz and a Peanuts collector; collectors visit Canine Companions Jean and Charles Schulz Campus; Canine Companions puppy at the East Coast Collectors Convention.



Nuts about PEANUTS™

Canine Companions has been associated with Peanuts for decades, thanks to the generous support of Jean and Charles M. Schulz. Jean and her late husband, Peanuts creator, Charles “Sparky” Schulz became involved with Canine Companions in the late 1980s, eventually donating the 12-acres of land that would become the National Headquarters and Northwest Region Training Center of Canine Companions for Independence in Santa Rosa, California.

Fittingly, the worldwide Peanuts Collectors Club and East Coast Peanuts Collectors have been ardent supporters

of the same passion project of the Schulz’. Together, the two popular collectors clubs have raised nearly \$400,000 for Canine Companions.

Peanuts collectors from both groups have visited the National Headquarters and Northwest Region Training Center in Santa Rosa, and the Northeast Region Training Center in Medford, New York to see the mission in action.

“It was Sparky who introduced me to Canine Companions, saying he ‘saw the most amazing thing this afternoon,’” says Jean Schulz. “Sparky was proud to be part

of this life-changing organization, and I remain passionately dedicated to this work. The Peanuts Collectors’ amazing support shows me that they have the same drive as he did — to support this wonderful mission as part of his legacy.”

Jean Schulz served as the national board president and vice president for Canine Companions. Today, she continues to serve as a board chair emeritus, helping to drive Canine Companions towards the future with the same zealotness as Sparky and the thousands of Peanuts fans and collectors who make our mission possible.



A New Kind of Ripple Effect

For decades, Canine Companions dogs released from our training program have gone on to other careers, including explosives and narcotic detection, search and rescue, and more.

In addition, we estimate that nearly one-third of Canine Companions released dogs serve their communities as therapy dogs. A therapy dog is a pet that helps provide comfort for people in need. Sometimes, those are victims of natural or man-made disaster, a child struggling to read with confidence, or a senior in an assisted living facility who needs a friend.

As we look to serve our community in better ways and increase our impact, Canine Companions is pleased to announce a small therapy dog certification pilot program launching in 2020.

“Therapy dogs play a major role in wellbeing during stressful times,” says Sarah Birman, director of training and client services. “We are looking forward to having a formal certification program for our dogs that aren’t suitable as assistance dogs, that can still have a huge impact on so many.”

Depending on the success of the pilot, Canine Companions will begin expanding the certification program to more puppy raisers in 2021. Dogs that are released from professional training will be evaluated for suitability as a therapy dog, and their puppy raisers or adopting family will have the opportunity to certify as a Canine Companions therapy dog team.

ADI conference



Canine Companions joined 300 members of Assistance Dogs International (ADI) in Indianapolis this summer. Our staff lead educational sessions on airline accessibility laws, training veterans with PTSD, and our maternal study that is looking at how mothering behaviors influence assistance dog success.

CEO Paige Mazzoni was presented with official recognition of Canine Companions' successful re-accreditation satisfying the rigorous ADI membership requirements. Canine Companions is proud to be a founding member of Assistance Dogs International and to have continually met the standards of accreditation.

Learn more about our history and contributions to the assistance dog community at cci.org/history.

2019 Team Training Yearbook

Northwest Region

1 July: Marcella & Elisa with Rinka II; Amy with Paloma III; Janet with Roberto; Carole with Dill; Bill, Linda & Robert with Rosetta; Winnie & Taylor with Purdue

2 August: Everett with Brie V; Greg with Hyden II; Alicia with Cleopatra II; Kim with Deandra (not pictured)

3 August: Becky with Daring; Tiffany with Bee II; Sean with Trevi II; Nancy with Buzz II; Pam with Tallene; Lisa with Kenna IV; Angela with Quake II; Glenn with Honcho; Sylvia with Nicola IV; Lee with Habiki; Dorothy with Tanveer

4 September: Brenda with Andy VII



South Central Region

5 May: Brandy with Rya II; Madison with Josette II; Valerie with Zuni IV; Grace & Jacolyn with Siesta; Ashlyn & Cindee with Russet II; Stephanie with Yaris; Riley with Caesar VII



Northeast Region

6 July: Melissa & Laura with Surf; Dennis & Ethan with Boise II; Liz with MacGyver II; Carolyn with Dave V

7 August: Max with Aladdin II; Mark & April with Langston II; Tyler, Jen & Tom with Everest III; Mikela, Lorena & Alexandra with Alaska V; Nick with Zach II; Ellie, Mark & Lauren with Faryn; Susan with Tidal; Maddie & Beth with JJ IV; Kylie with Cotton II; Gabriel & Heather with Sundance II; Elizabeth with Muriel II



Each team is matched free of charge, thanks to your donations.

Visit cci.org/donate or return the enclosed envelope to give the gift of independence and give a dog a job.

Southeast Region

1 August: Kate with Mecham; Linda with Omari III; Melinda with Forbes IV; Jay with Grappa

2 August: Joe & Tracy with Helios II; Leslie with Navi II; Shanna with Derek II; Luis & Elena with Callum II; Daniel & Jose with Dino III; Reed, Jennifer & Brett with Prue II; Mari & Lisa with Mesa II; Jailynn & Holly with Notch; Daniel, Larry & Susan with Bagheera; Joshua, Elisabeth & Chuck with Bongo; Ryan, Holly & David with Hern



Southwest Region:

3 August: Campbell, Tiffany Ann & Joel with Benji IV; Jim with Pronto; Betty & Sarah with Leno III; Dianne with Apollo IV; Austin with Thiago; Emerson & Dawn with Birdie III; Kristin with Grenache; Devan with Lola VI; Morgan, Lori & David with Palmina; Gabriella & Sharleena with Ollie V

4 Side placement: Lance with Elijah IV

5 Side placement: Michelle with Lammon



North Central

6 August: Jason & Brian with Dakota VI; Colt & Shannon with Wink III; Tonio & Kelly with Elvis V; Steven Jr. & Steven with Benton II; Mila & Sarah with Luna VI; Brielle & Sarah with Wrigley IV

7 August: Maddi with Vargas III; Victoria with Leon III; Catherine with Junior III; Jordan with Jethro V; Amanda with Calvin V; Laura with Plato IV; Jack with Stileau; Carol with Janessa II; Jimm with Zane III



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Southwest Region

Oceanside, CA

Southeast Region

Orlando, FL

Northeast Region

Medford, NY

North Central Region

Delaware, OH

South Central Region

Irving, TX

Email: info@cci.org Web Site: cci.org

Phone: 1-800-572-BARK (2275)

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“Feisty brings people to me. When I didn’t have a service dog, people didn’t even notice me. Now, I can tell others what Feisty does to help me.”

—Marv Tuttle (U.S. Army Ret.) and Service Dog Feisty

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