

# The Companion

Holiday 2020, issue thirty-seven



# Update from Our Leadership

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On the cover, Victor with Service Dog Violet

What a year 2020 has been. While we have faced uncertainty, anxiety and frustration, our community has stepped up, inspired by an inner drive and dedication to helping others, and kept our mission moving forward. We are so grateful. It's our commitment to the people we serve that inspires us to do more.

We've seen the emotional and financial repercussions from the pandemic and they are significant. Your support is needed to meet the needs of the hundreds of people — children, adults and veterans with disabilities — waiting for the service dog that will change their lives. Disability doesn't disappear in times of crisis, and neither do we. This year, we have continued to match service dog teams, place puppies with their volunteers, implement a new constituent relationship management software project, as well as activate creative fundraising initiatives. As an organization, we have increased our efforts to be more inclusive and transparent in our voice and outreach. Inclusion and diversity have always been a part of who we are as an organization, and we are eager to

learn, grow and improve. We continue to roll out our strategic plan confident that it will provide the foundation and resources needed to serve even more people.

We know the challenges will continue.

**The silver lining of 2020 is that it has shown we are a strong and vibrant community dedicated to an incredible mission. But our need for donations is great, and we hope you can show your commitment with an end-of-year gift.**

Every donation, no matter how great or small, helps enhance independence through a life-changing service dog. With the mission in our hearts, together we can continue to make great changes and do more to help people with disabilities.

This holiday season, we hope you and your loved ones are together and safe. We are incredibly grateful for our community and your commitment to our mission.



Paige Mazzoni, Chief Executive Officer



John McKinney, Board Chair



# Cultivating a Stronger Community



For 45 years, Canine Companions has worked to provide life-changing service dogs to qualified candidates regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status or background. In fact, this commitment is within our core mission. However, we are moving forward with reaffirmed promise and focus in our efforts.

Inclusion and diversity town hall meetings have taken place with staff at all our regions, setting the groundwork for actionable steps moving forward. A dynamic resource list for education and self-reflection has been created to deepen the engagement and understanding by our employees. We recognize that these efforts are ongoing, not a way to satisfy a requirement and move on. An internal national workgroup has been established to spearhead the development of an action plan that will be implemented at each of our six regions.

The internal workgroup is evaluating

and providing recommendations for review in all areas of our business processes, application materials, recruitment, marketing storytelling and community outreach. Our regional boards are developing committees to help with growth in our regions.

We recognize that meaningful change takes time, which is why every Canine Companions staff member is receiving eight hours per year to engage in activities in their community to further development in the areas of inclusion and diversity.

**This shift will be ongoing in awareness and efforts to improve our inclusion and diversity organization-wide and community-wide. It is an expansion of our efforts and a commitment to strengthen our organization with greater ability to include diverse points of view, experience, expertise and welcome more communities who can support and benefit from our mission.**

## Keeping Our Focus on the Mission

During the coronavirus pandemic, our organization has initiated numerous changes to protect the safety and well-being of all. We have continued to limit access to our campuses to essential staff only. Regardless of these setbacks, our instructors have continued their work, training and placing over 260 dogs with clients in the last 10 months! While in-person events are on pause, we have continued fundraising by hosting 31 virtual events. We are grateful to everyone who has continued to find new ways to support and promote our mission.

# A Gold Medal Life

"Everyone has obstacles in life. It's the positive attitude that helps you overcome those obstacles," shares Adam Page, a three-time gold medalist in Paralympic Sled Hockey. Adam is one of Canine Companions' newest graduates, and it has taken only a short time to adjust to his new life with Service Dog Laker. **"I decided to apply for a Canine Companions service dog to help maximize my independence and to help give me peace of mind when I'm alone. Laker makes tasks easier in my home.** And when I'm out in public, I'm not worried that I won't have help. Laker is always with me."

Growing up watching hockey, Adam always wanted the opportunity to play. He was born with hydrocephalus and spina bifida, undergoing surgery 10 times. His mind was set on achieving his goal of competing in sled hockey. At the age of 6, he began playing with the Buffalo Sabres sled hockey team.

Adam made his debut on the 2007-2008 U.S. National Sled Hockey Team as the youngest member of the squad at age 15. He quickly built an impressive list of athletic accomplishments, making his first Paralympic

Team in 2010. Following the 2010 Vancouver Paralympic Winter Games, he co-founded the Greater Buffalo Adaptive Sports Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides individuals with disabilities the opportunity to take part in adaptive sports. Competing in the 2010,



"When I'm out in public, I'm not worried that I won't have help. Laker is always with me."

2014 and 2018 Paralympic Winter Games, he won gold medals in each of the men's sled hockey tournaments.

In his spare time, Adam also enjoys adaptive lacrosse and downhill skiing. "Laker loves sports, and he and I have

already created an amazing bond," says Adam. "It's incredible how these dogs are making a difference in all of our lives."

Your gift today will provide the support needed to advance our powerful mission. Make a donation at [cci.org/independence](https://cci.org/independence).

# Violet's Turn to Serve



“Violet’s the best thing that ever happened to me. She is amazing and so well-trained. Since I’ve had her I’ve been calmer and more relaxed.”

Victor with his wife, Veronica, and Service Dog Violet.

Army veteran Victor Greene loves spending time with his family, playing the drums and piano, and singing in his local church choir.

In 2005, Victor served in Iraq in a transportation unit, escorting troops all around the country. On a seemingly normal day, Victor last remembers being in a convoy. A week later, he woke up recovering in a hospital in Germany.

As a result of Victor’s service, he has a traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and is a Purple Heart recipient. When Victor was looking for a way to help reduce his PTSD symptoms, a psychiatrist at his local VA medical center suggested he apply for a service dog from Canine Companions.

In February 2020, Victor was matched with Service Dog Violet, who is trained in commands specifically designed to help mitigate the symptoms of PTSD.

Victor shares, “She’s the best thing that ever happened to me. Violet is amazing and so well trained. Since I’ve had her, I’ve been calmer and more relaxed.”

**Expertly trained in over 40 commands, Violet wakes Victor from nightmares, interrupts his panic attacks, turns on and off lights, picks up dropped items and provides constant companionship.** In

return, Victor sings to Violet, takes her on long walks every day and brings her to work at his job in San Francisco, where she’s become quite popular. Violet has helped Victor work through PTSD flashbacks and panic attacks and allows Victor to be more comfortable in his everyday life.

Victor and Violet make an incredible pair. “She’s more than a best friend,” Victor shares, smiling. “She’s family.”

# Leaving a Legacy Together

We are honored to feature longtime donors, the Carl Jud Foundation, President Vicki Till and Board Officer Kjell Larsson this holiday season.

Founder Carl Jud was born in Switzerland in 1910 and immigrated to the United States in the 1930s. Jud was brought up with a love and respect for animals. He recognized the power of the human-canine bond and dedicated his life to supporting and giving to animal-based organizations. When he passed away, the Carl Jud Foundation was established. Since 1998, the Carl Jud Foundation has given over \$550,000 to fund our mission. When the pandemic hit, the foundation once again stepped up.

Foundation President Vicki Till has also personally given more than \$75,000 over the years. Vicki shares, **“Canine Companions was one of the first checks we delivered. Dale Payne, who served as the director and officer up until her passing in 2012, had a special connection to Santa Rosa and had a sister with a disability. Dale cultivated the relationship between Canine Companions and the Carl Jud Foundation.”**

After Dale’s passing, Vicki Till and Kjell Larsson have continued to strengthen the relationship with Canine Companions. Vicki says, “We have enjoyed traveling to events and look forward to the day we can resume in-person fundraisers.”

Canine Companions Chief Development Officer Barbara Barrow shares, “The Carl Jud Foundation has been a generous supporter for over 20 years. Their contributions have had a tremendous impact on our organization. President Vicki Till has been an amazing ambassador for Canine Companions and we so appreciate her wonderful philanthropy.” Because of organizations like the Carl Jud Foundation, our mission has been able to carry on even in times of uncertainty. Show your support with an end-of-year gift. Visit [cci.org/independence](https://cci.org/independence).



“The Carl Jud Foundation has been a generous supporter for over 20 years. Their contributions have had a tremendous impact on our organization. President Vicki Till has been an amazing ambassador for Canine Companions and we so appreciate her wonderful philanthropy.”

— Barbara Barrow, Canine Companions chief development officer



Above: The Carl Jud Foundation’s Board Officer Kjell Larsson with Canine Companions puppy Drax. Left: Canine Companions Chief Development Officer Barbara Barrow with the Carl Jud Foundation President Vicki Till.



## Beginning the Next Chapter

The doors to the future are open, and we are excited to start our next chapter with the completion of our new North Central Regional Training Center in New Albany, Ohio! We celebrated the grand opening on October 8 with virtual festivities that everyone across the country could participate in.

This new campus will serve many graduates and allow us to continue to grow our mission and make a bigger impact than ever before. Despite the challenges that 2020 has presented, we remained on budget and on schedule, completing construction in September.

The North Central Region now has on-site guest rooms for students, on-site Team Training space and space for all staff to be in one location. “We couldn’t be more excited for what the future will bring,” shares National Board Chair John McKinney. “Countless people will be positively impacted by our mission on our new campus.”

## Advocating and Creating Change

Early this year, Canine Companions submitted a public comment to the Department of Transportation encouraging changes to the Air Carrier Access Act on the issue of standards and guidelines for service and emotional support animals on planes. **We asked our community to stand with us, and over 8,000 people sent their own comments aligning with Canine Companions’ position.**

This summer, the Canine Companions Advocacy Initiative kicked off the volunteer grassroots advocacy program. More than

1,000 graduates, supporters, volunteers and even people new to our program registered to be our advocates on the local level. At the end of August, 100 volunteer advocates registered for our first grassroots advocacy webinar. We are grateful to have a new way for our community to amplify our voice on important issues affecting people with disabilities who rely on service dogs — including our graduates. Make your voice heard. Become an advocate by visiting [cci.org/advocate](https://cci.org/advocate).



Change  
a life!

Make a gift today at  
[cci.org/independence](https://cci.org/independence).





## University of Delaware Students Puppy Raise Through Pandemic

“Students remain committed to raising Canine Companions puppies, although meetings and events have been virtual.”

Before the coronavirus pandemic necessitated social distancing, the University of Delaware collegiate puppy raising club of Canine Companions always drew a crowd when they gathered on “The Green” at the center of campus. Northeast Region Puppy Program Manager Debbie Knatz shares, “They are the oldest college club in our organization, and we consider them the gold standard. We point to the UD group when other colleges are interested in setting up a club, because they are fantastic at organizing and coordinating their volunteers.”

When the fall semester of 2020 began, the school had re-opened, but with far fewer students on campus. Despite these setbacks, the University of Delaware puppy raisers stay committed to supporting our mission.

Lauren Zablo, puppy raiser and Canine Companions at UD president, says, “Students remain committed to raising Canine Companions puppies, although meetings and events have been virtual since most of the dogs are living at home instead of in dorms.”

Typically, UD’s puppy raisers live with their dogs in specially designated campus housing or in dog-friendly apartments off campus. In order to provide socialization, puppy raisers bring the dogs along when exploring the community, hanging out on “The Green” and attending class.

But with the spread of COVID-19, puppy raisers have been forced to pivot. **Now, they are training puppies from home, relying on virtual resources like Skype training sessions and one-on-one conferences organized by Canine Companions. They are also staying connected and sharing strategies via ongoing group texts and social media.**

“Every morning my puppy wakes up and does his best,” says Lauren. “And someday he’ll drastically change someone’s life for the better. So I must do my part, too. We’re a team, and we do everything together. We’ll get through this together, too — one day at a time.”

Learn more about volunteer opportunities at [cci.org/getinvolved](https://cci.org/getinvolved).

# Loyal Lolo Lends a Helping Paw

Denise Denn lost her hearing at age 4 from meningitis. While she had to adjust to the changes this disability created, she excelled in school and eventually earned her teaching credential.

After learning about our mission through a friend who had a Canine Companions hearing dog, Denise decided to apply for a dog that could help her at work and in her classroom. Denise received her first hearing dog named Shammie in 2006, and they worked together for 10 wonderful years. Denise has since been placed with Hearing Dog Lolo.

"I knew I needed another dog. I got Lolo and have been so thrilled with how much she helps me," says Denise. **Lolo alerts Denise to sounds like knocks on the front door, the dryer beeping, the "popping" of the toaster, the gas stove ticking, fire alarms, phone alarms, water boiling and someone calling her name.**

"Lolo has given me the security I needed at home and the comfort to know that I can depend on her for things I do not hear," shares Denise. Denise was able to retire from teaching after 33 years, and Lolo continues to help her feel safe and secure at home. Read more about our graduate teams at [cci.org/stories](https://cci.org/stories).

"Lolo has given me the security I needed at home and the comfort to know that I can depend on her for things I do not hear."



**2021 PUPPY CALENDAR**

COUPONS INSIDE  
SAVE \$60

**2021 Puppy Calendar Available Now!**

Share your love of Canine Companions all year long with our 2021 puppy calendar. As a bonus, every calendar includes \$60 worth of coupons for Eukanuba dog food. Receive yours with a donation at [cci.org/calendar](https://cci.org/calendar). These calendars make great holiday gifts!

# From the Battlefield to Canine Companions — Service Dogs Reunite Two Heroes



“I can’t adequately convey how personally meaningful it was to visit with Victor and to know that Canine Companions puppy WestPoint might go to a veteran one day.”

The last time U.S. Army four-star Gen. John “Mick” Nicholson heard about Capt. Victor Prato, the 24-year-old captain had been wounded in battle and was being evacuated to safety. Gen. Nicholson is the longest-serving commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan and NATO’s Resolute Support Mission, and Capt. Prato was one of tens of thousands of brave men and women under his command.

After retiring from the military in 2019, Gen. Nicholson has led the PenFed Foundation, a national nonprofit providing military service members, veterans and their families with the skills and resources to improve their financial well-being. But “Mick,” as he prefers to be called, never forgot the day in November 2017 when a convoy on routine patrol in Kandahar was struck by an improvised explosive device. Several soldiers were severely injured, including Capt. Prato, who received the Purple Heart several weeks later at Walter Reed Military Medical Center.

In 2019, the two soldiers had an unexpected reunion thanks to Canine Companions. PenFed is one of our national corporate partners, and Mick and his wife Norine decided to join four other PenFed employees raising Canine Companions puppies! When Mick and Norine arrived to pick up 8-week-old WestPoint, they also learned that Capt. Prato was in Team Training at the Northeast Regional Training Center being matched with his service dog Barbossa.

“I can’t adequately convey how personally meaningful it was to visit with Victor and to know that Canine Companions puppy WestPoint might go to a veteran one day,” says Mick.

This year, Mick and PenFed Credit Union employees will be honored by Canine Companions at our annual Saluting Independence Veteran’s Day ceremony on November 11. Visit [cci.org/salutingindependence](https://cci.org/salutingindependence).

## Find the Perfect Gift!

Check out all the wonderful gifts and holiday cards at [cci.org/shop](https://cci.org/shop).



## Honoring General Daniel James Jr.

It's fitting the name Chappie was chosen for a Canine Companions puppy who is being raised in Pensacola, Florida.

Daniel "Chappie" James Jr., was born and raised in Pensacola and would grow up to be a United States military legend. He became one of the famed Tuskegee Airmen during World War II, and after flying scores of combat missions in the skies over Korea and Vietnam, he would eventually become the nation's first African American four-star general in any branch of military service. James was a trailblazer for other Black senior military officers, and he was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame in 1993.

ABC's WEAR-TV meteorologist Kathryn Daniel is raising Chappie, and she hopes that he will serve long and well, just like his namesake.



Canine Companions puppy Chappie poses with the Gen. Daniel James Jr. Memorial plaque at the Chappie James Museum of Pensacola. This was his childhood home and is now an Historic Register.

## Innovative New Building Is the Key to Our Future

Our ambitious goal for 2025 is to match every single qualified candidate with an expertly trained Canine Companions service dog. A new Canine Health & Wellness Center is critical to our current and future goals. The planned 32,500 square foot building will ensure the highest standard of care for our puppies and breeder dogs. It will allow us to expand research benefiting the service dog and disability communities worldwide, as well as ensure optimal healthcare for thousands of dogs within our community.

It will cost \$19 million to fund our Canine Health & Wellness Center, and our impact will grow profoundly in the years to come with this investment. As a nonprofit, we rely on the generosity of our supporters to make this possible. To request information about our strategic plan and opportunities for transformative giving, please email us at [vision@cci.org](mailto:vision@cci.org).





## Two Sisters, One Amazing Dog

Ten years ago, Brittney Clark watched as her sister Te'a received Babette, her skilled companion from Canine Companions. Brittney knew in that moment she wanted to give back to the organization that had blessed her sister with an incredible service dog, so she became a volunteer puppy raiser.

When Babette retired, Te'a began her journey to receive her second Canine Companions service dog. She needed another dog that would be able to assist her day to day for the next chapter of her life. As fate would have it, Argos, the fourth puppy raised by Brittney, was in professional training and was looking for his partner, too.

During Team Training, the trainers knew that Skilled Companion Argos was the

best match for Te'a. Argos has a strong work ethic and a gentle nature that would be able to fulfill Te'a's desire for greater independence. "It's great to have him home with us and there's no telling what we will accomplish in the future together," says Te'a. **Argos is currently helping Te'a with virtual schooling for her senior year of high school. Whether he is picking up a dropped item or going with her on walks, he's always there for her.**

Brittney's puppy raising journey has been very successful. All four of the dogs she has raised have graduated with their perfect match. She is currently raising Romilly, puppy number five, and hopes that she will also go on to provide assistance to a person with a disability.

"It's great to have him home with us and there's no telling what we will accomplish in the future together."

Above: Sisters Brittney and Te'a with retired Skilled Companion Babette and Argos during his puppy raising years.

# Meet Yucca, the Furry New Member of the Phillips Avenue School

"I have already seen the huge impact that Facility Dog Yucca has made in the classroom," says Emilee Raynor, who teaches elementary students at the Phillips Avenue Elementary School in Riverhead, New York.

This year, because of the coronavirus pandemic, weekly classes are being split between in-person and online learning, but Emilee and Yucca are there to share a smile as the children enter the building each morning! "Students are so excited to come to class, and the overall vibe of the room is very positive. They work hard for Yucca and understand their responsibilities," shares Emilee.

This Eastern Long Island community has a large population of migrant workers, with many of their children attending the Phillips Avenue School. Yucca is incorporated into daily lessons, such as language practice, when students

read to her and describe the commands Yucca is following. **"Yucca**

**can do complex commands like closing drawers or open a fridge,"**

**says Emilee.** "These are the types of commands that encourage kids to help their parents at home."

She is helpful to kids with more than just their schooling. Yucca helps students that have issues at home, such as past traumas, or emotional or social issues. "Having a dog there to just talk to or pet can really help the children," explains Emilee. "Yucca loves our students, and they know she is not judging them, so they take more risks when working with her than with their peers."

"Yucca loves our students, and they know she is not judging them, so they take more risks when working with her than the students do with their peers."



Above left: Emilee and Facility Dog Yucca. Top and right-hand photos: Students enjoying time with Facility Dog Yucca before quarantine.



## 9/11 First Responder Returns to Ground Zero

“I wouldn’t have been able to return here without Valor by my side,” says retired Fire Department New York firefighter Paul Monfre. And that’s right where Service Dog Valor was when Paul visited the 9/11 memorial for the first time since spending weeks working at Ground Zero in the aftermath of the terrorist attack.

“I was off that day. After seeing it on the news, I called the firehouse, and we ended up all going in. We took buses into Ground Zero,” Paul recalls. “By the time I got there, the second building had already collapsed. We were there from 9:30 a.m. until the following morning. It was constant search and rescue. We did that every other day for weeks.”

His work at Ground Zero has caused Paul to have medical issues including fatigue and difficulty breathing. Valor has helped him regain some stamina by performing energy-saving tasks.

**Matched in May 2019, Paul needs Valor to help him with everyday chores around the house like picking up things that fall or grabbing items too low to reach. Before Valor, Paul says he didn’t leave home much because he was in so much pain.**

“It’s life changing for me because he’s just amazing,” the 52-year old Long Island, NY resident says. “He’s the best thing that’s ever happened to me. With Valor, now I’m looking forward to months, and years to come.”

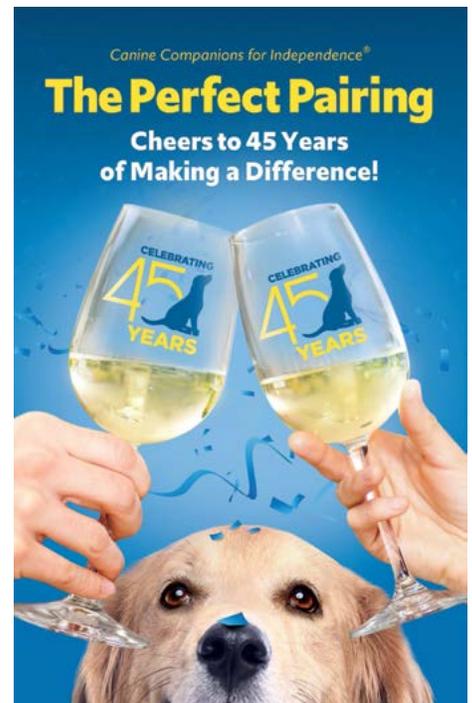
Paul and Service Dog Valor pay respects to fellow FDNY firefighters and first responders who lost their lives on 9/11.

## 45th Anniversary

Join us at The Perfect Pairing in celebration of our 45th anniversary on November 18. Enjoy fine wines paired with gourmet chocolate during this virtual event led by a sommelier and chocolatier, plus a live and silent auction!

To register, visit [cci.org/PerfectPairing](https://cci.org/PerfectPairing).

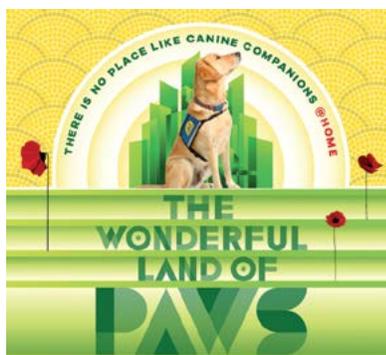
The first 150 registrants will receive two commemorative wine glasses.





## Puppy with a Purpose

Canine Companions puppy Max joined the Friday morning WFLA-TV news team as a 9-week-old puppy in November 2019. He has learned what it takes to be a newsroom star, as well as a future assistance dog. He loves spending time with his volunteer puppy raiser Heather and the WFLA family, and the greater Tampa community has fallen in love with him. To comply with social distancing guidelines, Max has been unable to visit the newsroom, but viewers have watched Max grow and learn his commands through the power of virtual stories. Thank you to the WFLA team and Heather for continuing to support our mission during challenging times.



## There's No Place like Canine Companions

Our 24th Annual Tales & Tails Gala went virtual this year on October 24th. This year's theme — The Wonderful Land of Paws — showcased the heart, brains and courage of our mission. This celebration was an extraordinary night of giving filled with uplifting stories, updates on our cutting-edge research and adorable puppies. Our virtual yellow brick road raised funds and captured the imagination of our supporters who were able to post photos, sentiments and tributes.

We are filled with such gratitude for

## Mark Your Calendars!

Our events offer you the opportunity to raise critical funds for our mission and help build awareness of our life changing mission. We hope you can join us for these exciting events in 2021.

### DogFest Jacksonville

March 28

### DogFest Orlando

April 17

### Chip in for Canines (Atlanta)

April 26

### 25th Annual Tales & Tails Gala (Orlando)

October 16

everyone who helped make the event such a success, including our major sponsors:

**Wonderful Land of Paws Sponsor**

**Baumann Family Foundation**

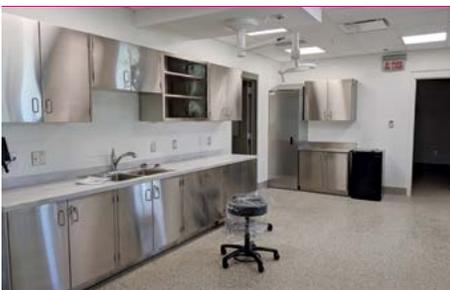
**Presenting Sponsor World of Beer**

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**Best Friend Sponsors Trish & Rick Walsh; Fonda & Don Cerenzio; ABC Fine Wine & Spirits; Nancy & Jeff Baumann**

**Special thanks to our creative partners MLB Creative and print sponsor; SunDance**

## NORTH CENTRAL REGION



## Thank You for Investing in the Future

“The new North Central campus has been a dream for many people for many years,” says Megan Koester, executive director North Central Region. “Beautiful, accessible, functioning spaces that were made possible by incredible donors across the country including cash gifts, in-kind services, product donations and handmade training equipment. Each gift will make an impact on the countless people that this campus will serve. We are so grateful for the commitments that built

this state-of-the-art campus and excited to be starting a new chapter.”

John Miller, immediate past chair of the national board of directors, shares, “I am thrilled to see the new North Central Region campus come to fruition. Having been involved with the establishment of the Northeast campus, I’ve seen the difference a well-designed campus, complete with dorms, can make for our clients and staff. I’m so excited that this important region will now experience that.

I had the honor of serving as chair of the national board when this project was approved and I know that it wouldn’t have happened without the full support of both the national and regional boards and the hard work of staff and volunteers and we’re forever grateful to all.

In these difficult times, we can all take pride in this important milestone event for Canine Companions and look forward to properly celebrating in Ohio when it is safe to do so.”



## First Graduates of Our Veterans Initiative Expansion

The Canine Companions South Central Region is proud to have placed our first class of service dogs under the expansion of our Veterans Initiative. We are grateful to the SRS Raise the Roof Foundation for their generous sponsorship of one of the teams, Jose and Service Dog Jill.

“We are honored to partner with Canine Companions,” says Dan Tinker, president of the SRS Raise the Roof Foundation board of directors and president and CEO of SRS Distribution. “We understand and appreciate how the unconditional support and daily assistance from a specially trained service dog can help our veterans. We look forward to welcoming this new team into the SRS family and are excited to see as they grow as veteran and canine partners.”

Service Dog Jill is trained in a unique set of commands to assist Jose and was provided completely free of charge. Jose says having Jill by his side is going to be life changing and allow him to live more independently.

Learn more about the Canine Companions Veterans Initiative at [cci.org/veterans](https://cci.org/veterans).



## Dak Pupdate

Canine Companions and NFL Dallas Cowboys puppy Dak has become a popular pup, featured in local media and on the Dallas Cowboys social media accounts. Now 14 months old and 70 pounds, Dak loves to learn! His favorite command is “here,” and he comes running when called. Dak also loves people and greets everyone with a happy tail wag. Dak will continue to work hard with his puppy raiser before he enters professional training in May 2021. Stay tuned to see where his journey leads!



## Happy Anniversary to the Kinkeade Campus

Time flies when you're changing lives! This November marks five years since the opening of the Canine Companions at Baylor Scott & White Health — Kinkeade Campus. In that time, we have placed over 150 service dogs and worked with over 350 puppies and hundreds of volunteers. But we could not do it without you. Thank you for five wonderful years of dedication and support. We look forward to many more! Get involved at [cci.org/southcentral](https://cci.org/southcentral).

## Thankful for Support

Canine Companions sends its heartfelt gratitude to the Ernest L. and Ruth W. Finley Foundation, which has generously cared for the Sonoma, CA community for over 50 years. The foundation has donated over \$650,000 to Canine Companions, including support for local assistance dog teams and toward the original construction of the Jean and Charles Schulz Campus and our new training building. With the legacy gift we received in July as they wind down operations, they have given even more Sonoma County clients the gift of independence. Thank you to Norma Person and all the Board members and staff who have made such a profound impact on our mission.



## Nothing Slows Luke Down with Rummy by His Side

Luke Eckenberg of Truckee, California was in a snowboarding accident that resulted in a spinal cord injury. Now, Luke uses a wheelchair for mobility and continues to participate in the snow sports he loves. Although extremely active, Luke still needed help with everyday tasks.

Last year, he was matched with Service Dog Rummy, and they've been inseparable ever since. **"Rummy helps me daily with picking things up, pulling me in my wheelchair and so much more," Luke explains. "His ability to pull me is nothing short of amazing and it helps save my shoulders from overuse, allowing me to keep up with my active lifestyle."**

## Virtual and Absolutely Successful!

Events in the Northwest Region went virtual in 2020, and though we missed seeing you in person, they were successful, thanks to you!

Virtual DogFest events in the region included fun dog-centric activities, local graduate speakers and appearances from famous local puppies and personalities. Together, the events raised over \$230,000 for our mission!



Guests at our virtual Sit. Stay. Sparkle. gala enjoyed an incredible evening that included the premiere of a new heart-warming documentary short and exciting auctions. This event raised over \$550,000 and we couldn't be more grateful!

Thank you to all the volunteers, sponsors and donors who helped make these events so successful.

## Training Camp with Bolt

Canine Companions puppy Bolt, who is being sponsored and followed by the Los Angeles Chargers, is growing up fast! He is learning new commands and getting smarter every day. Bolt even got to make some new friends who are much bigger than he is at the Chargers Training Camp during the summer. You can follow along on his journey to becoming a service dog on Instagram at @chargerspup.

Chargers players petting Bolt on the field after practice.



## Thank You for Showing Up Virtually!

This year has brought many unexpected challenges and changes, but we are so proud of our community and its spirit to help continue moving the mission forward. A huge thank you for all the support from our wonderful donors, graduates, volunteers, puppy raisers and partners. Your dedication inspires us, and we hope to see you in person, on campus or at an event in 2021!

## Make a Tribute

We are launching a new Tribute Tile Garden to commemorate and honor the love and heartfelt memories of a special dog or person. To learn more about this opportunity or to purchase a tile, please contact Senior Development Director Piero Berlonghi at [pberlonghi@cci.org](mailto:pberlonghi@cci.org) or 760-822-4039.



# Partnering with Nickelodeon

The Nickelodeon PAW Patrol team welcomed a new addition to the pup pack this year named Rex! Rex is a Bernese Mountain Dog with a disability who uses a wheelchair for mobility. He officially joined the PAW Patrol crew over the summer and worked with our very own Indy to help raise awareness around “real working dogs” and the amazing jobs they do to help children and adults with disabilities have greater independence. Together, they provided a platform for parents to engage their kids in conversations about disabilities and service dogs.

Nickelodeon and the PAW Patrol pups from Adventure Bay and Dino Rescue have been partnered with Canine Companions since 2016 including partnering with the PAW Patrol Live Tour. Children and their parents can meet real working dogs — both service dog teams and puppies — and learn

about the Canine Companions mission.

“Unfortunately, many kids with disabilities don’t see images of themselves in the shows they watch and media they consume. When they don’t see themselves, they get the message about their value and place in the world,” expresses Kit Boyer, vice president, partner solutions, ViacomCBS. “That’s why we are absolutely thrilled that Rex has partnered with the Canine Companions team to help open the door for parents to talk to their kids about disabilities and service dogs. Rex demonstrates ViacomCBS’ commitment to diversity and inclusion, and most importantly, he shows kids that they matter.”

Check out our special PAW Patrol page to engage your kids in conversation about disabilities and service dogs at [cci.org/pawpatrol](http://cci.org/pawpatrol).

**nickelodeon**<sup>™</sup>

A promotional banner featuring a young boy in a wheelchair on the left, surrounded by the PAW Patrol pups. The background shows a green field and a blue sky with a lighthouse. The text "Rex and Canine Companions chat about dogs and wheelchairs" is prominently displayed in white. Below the text is the URL "cci.org/pawpatrol". Logos for Canine Companions, PAW Patrol, Spin Master, and Nickelodeon are visible in the top right corner.

**Rex and Canine Companions  
chat about dogs and wheelchairs**

[cci.org/pawpatrol](http://cci.org/pawpatrol)

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## Giving to Others for Good

Sara and David Ball have been incredible supporters of our mission for over a decade. From volunteering on the Southeast Region gala committee, dog walking programs and foster sitting, you can count on them to lend a helping hand!

In 2007, Sara was at an event in Orlando to learn more about Canine Companions for a grant the organization was to receive. Sara shares, “I had always had a dog, and I was so impressed with the work and mission of Canine Companions, I wanted to know more. My husband and I went to graduation that November and saw full circle how the puppies are raised, trained and how excited the recipients were with their new furry partners. We saw how the dogs changed their lives and we knew we wanted to be more involved.”

In 2016, Sara and David Ball adopted Wiley, a Canine Companions dog released from our program. Wiley is a certified therapy dog and visits Arnold Palmer Children’s Hospital in Orlando. Sara proudly shares, “He has made such a difference at the hospital. He brings joy and smiles to patients and staff. The power of the paw is amazing. Everybody knows Wiley!”

In addition to all the incredible contributions Sara and

“I would encourage others to join the Heritage Society to be a part of this great, caring organization to support and ensure Canine Companions can continue their much-needed work of helping people with disabilities.”

David make, they are proud members of our Heritage Society, a program created to honor those who have included legacy gifts benefiting Canine Companions in their estate plans. “We want to do all we can to help Canine Companions continue their mission because we know how these dogs change lives. I would encourage others to join the Heritage Society to be a part of this great, caring organization to support and ensure Canine Companions can continue their much-needed work of helping people with disabilities,” shares Sara.

Thank you, Sara and David, for all you do for our mission! We are so grateful to have your support. To learn more about our Heritage Society visit [cciplannedgiving.org](https://cciplannedgiving.org).

# 2020 Team Training Yearbook

## Northwest Region

**1 July:** Acey with Natasha IV; Hayden with Gumdrop; Lucinda with Tally IV; Mason with Dior



**2 August:** Blain with Brendan II; Bruce with Kairos; Kathy with Ducky III; Kelley with Ripple; Kevin with Elwood IV; Melissa with Devin II; Patti with Brigit II; Sarah with Taiko III; Stephen with Maddie IV



**3 September:** James with Lyla; Jeff, Jory & Dawn with Joey; Jennifer with Ellie VII; Kyle & Jenny with Pomona; Laura with Meeks; Malia & Michaela with Kimi II; Mary with Whimsy; Nadia with Halo III; Rich with Rosaly; Sara & Sena with Rumba II; Shirley with Victoria V

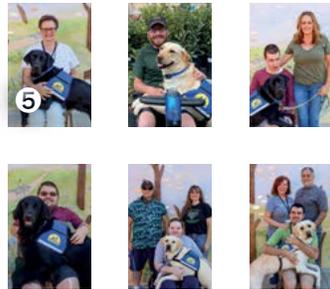


## Southwest Region

**4 July:** Andraea with Goji; April & Laurie with Augustine II; Carson & Theresa with Sherley; Frank with Hope VII; James, Annie & Brian with Willa VII; Karen with Raven V; Karolina with Constance II; Mary with Tarka; Naomi, Stephanie & Cedric with Inga V



**5 September:** Ashley with Rachael II; David with Nolina II; Jordan with Tanker II; Michael with Noodle; Skylar with Drifter; Vico with Frampton



## North Central Region

**6 September:** Steven & Valerie with Neal VII; Valerie with Yolo VII; Liane with Porter VI; Nemo & Stephanie with Dezi

**7 September:** Annette with Donatello; Madison with Ona III; DeAnn with Horton II; Valerie with Yolo IV; Steven & Valerie with Holland V; Kian & Alicia with Buckeye

Each team is matched free of charge, thanks to your donations. Visit [cci.org/donate](https://cci.org/donate) or return the enclosed envelope to bring greater independence and confidence to adults, children and veterans with disabilities through the love and help of an expertly trained service dog. Thank you!

## South Central Region

**8 July:** Alanna & Suzanne with Granita; Anthony with Victor V (not pictured); Emma, Jay & Angela with Minnow; Jose with Jill VI; Virginia & Amanda with Radley



**9 August:** Andres with Dewey; Carla & Christie with Wailor; Carson & Carmen with Nyoko II; Grace with Verity VI; Shelby with Declan III; Taylor with King VIII



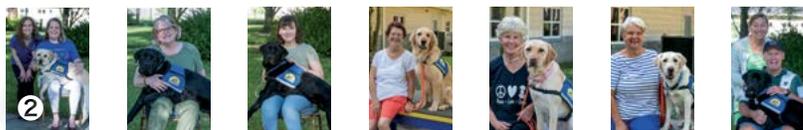
**10 September:** Lilia with Bart IV; Mary, Kate & Lisa with Orinda IV; Shylah with Freddy

## Southeast Region

**1 July:** Cooper, Jim & Becky with Ross VII; Deanna with Brooks II; Lauren with Aloha III; Naomi with Remi III



**2 August:** Christine & Anna with Errol V; Cindy with Treble; Hannah with Narwhal; Kathleen with Magpie; Marie with Humble; Roberta with Seltzer; Todd & Lisa with Webber



**3 September:** Alexis & Theresa with Cooper VI; Alexxis & Kathy with Morton III; Joy with Rance; Kellye & Dustin with Griffon II



## Northeast Region

**4 July:** Christopher & Cindy with Tierra II; Drew, Joy & Michael with Nelson VII; Elizabeth & Marianne with Jaycie; Kim with Naia; Nico with Jaffa II; Peter with Sugar II



**5 August:** Adam with Laker II; Dalila with Ganache; Dana with Ysette; Hannah with Nutmeg V; Isabella with Hayes V; Krista with Basil III; Mary with Dodger IV



**6 September:** Brenda with Clint; Debbie with Royce; Nelyn with Korbel; Emmanuel with Hogan; Dawn with Irving; Heather with Peru; Cindee with Clara; Chris with Nola; Brian with Lewis



## Celebrate Our Graduates!

We are still making matches and changing lives. Watch our regional slide shows that celebrate these new teams! Visit [cci.org/graduation](https://cci.org/graduation) for more information.

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### National Headquarters & Northwest Region

Santa Rosa, CA

### Southwest Region

Oceanside, CA

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### Northeast Region

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### North Central Region

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### South Central Region

Irving, TX

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Web Site: [cci.org](http://cci.org)

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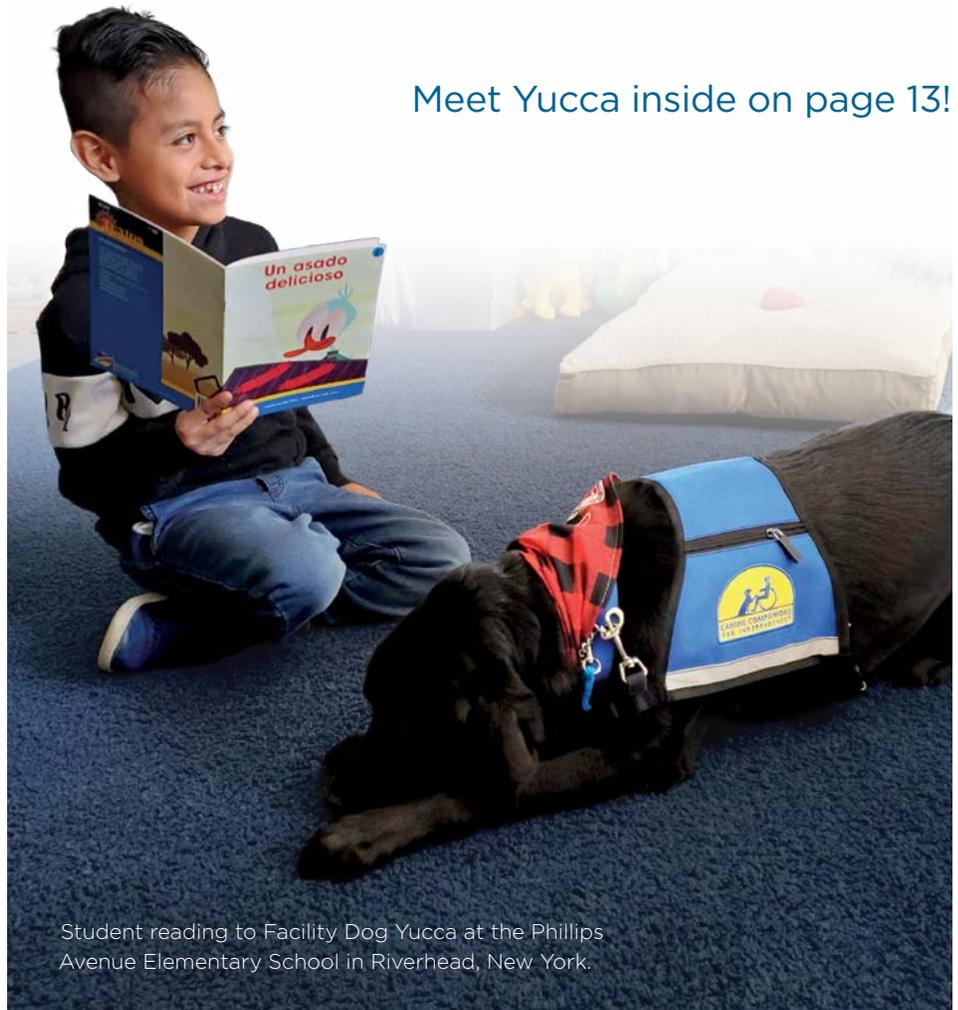


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Meet Yucca inside on page 13!

Student reading to Facility Dog Yucca at the Phillips Avenue Elementary School in Riverhead, New York.