

# The Companion

Spring 2021, issue thirty-eight



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# Leading the Way In 2021

Through innovation and dedication to the mission and the incredible support of our community, 2020 was an unlikely success. All of you inspire and motivate us every day. You have never wavered in your support, even in a global pandemic, and we are so very grateful. Thanks to all of you, we matched 362 teams through in-person and socially distanced Team Trainings, held over 70 virtual events and raised over \$28 million!

If we learned anything in 2020, it is that adaptation is necessary for growth, and innovation is possible AND helpful. Thanks to the creativity, dedication and flexibility of our staff and community, our mission is stronger than ever. Last year brought a new customer relations management (CRM) system, which is reinventing our internal and external communications, making our communication with all of you more impactful and relevant. And there is so much more to come in the next year. We will break ground on a new state-of-the-art Canine Health and Wellness Center that will expand our breeding, veterinary and

socialization facilities for our amazing dogs, allowing us to expand the reach of our mission. This summer, our brand will evolve, enabling us to lead and reach more people than ever before. While we are excited about the future and our continued commitment to improvement, we are also taking the time this next year to make sure we are managing change and allowing for periods of normalization.

Our mission remains the most important focus of every day. We are grateful for all you do to support our employees, clients and each other. Together we will emerge from this chaotic time stronger, more resilient and ever ready to spread that ripple.

More than anything...we can't wait to see you all in person!

With gratitude,



Paige Mazzoni, Chief Executive Officer



John McKinney, Board Chair





## Team Training During a Pandemic

We made many changes to our programs and processes beginning in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Socially distanced Team Training classes were a huge success thanks to the perseverance and dedication of our incredible staff, volunteers, students and supporters. **While placing 362 teams in 2020, 100% of our constituents stayed healthy during their time on campus.** Safety protocols will continue to be implemented in 2021, and we are eager to match more incredible teams.

## Teamwork Makes the Dream Work

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Give Kids The World Village, a whimsical resort in Central Florida that provides wish vacations to critically ill children, opened their space to Canine Companions® for Team Training. **Give Kids The World Village provided fully furnished private villas, along with meals, entertainment and space for training and learning in a socially distanced manner.** This collaboration allowed Canine Companions to expand our class sizes and positively impact the lives of more individuals with disabilities.



## New Look, Same Strong Mission

Over the past 45 years, our brand has evolved to fit the needs of the organization. As part of our strategic plan, we have set the goal to become the most recognizable organization in the service dog industry. In mid-2021, we will be debuting our new brand. **Our new visual identity will be bright, approachable, friendly and timeless. We are eager to utilize this new brand to stand out from the pack and generate recognition and awareness for our mission.** With more recognition, our organization can serve even more people with disabilities. While our look and feel may be different, our mission remains as strong as ever.





## The Key to Our Future

As part of our strategic plan, Canine Companions is expanding our breeding capabilities, veterinary health care and research programs with the goal of providing dogs to serve more clients, decreasing our wait list and extending the reach of our mission. A Canine Health and Wellness Center is key to this future. **Our program is nationally recognized for its excellence in maintaining dog health, optimal dog behavior and traits aligned with successful service dogs.** This new facility will allow us to lead the way in the service dog industry and continue changing the lives of people with disabilities.

### Key benefits will include:

- Highest standard of care for mothers and neonatal litters.
- Expansion of research benefiting the service dog and disability communities worldwide.
- Optimal healthcare for the puppies and dogs within our community.
- Ability to train nationwide volunteers on our highest standard of care and training.

For information on naming opportunities and ways to support the center, email [vision@cci.org](mailto:vision@cci.org).

## Joy and Ian Join Forces

Joy Rocker is one of Canine Companions' newest graduates, and it has only taken a brief time for her to know that Service Dog Ian was meant for her.

Joy shares, "When Ian and I went on our first outing after Team Training, he was amazing. He was ready to work and so attentive. His tail was wagging with happiness, and it made me truly feel we are a team."

Joy's life changed more than 20 years ago when a car accident left her with a spinal cord injury. She worked hard to remain independent, but as her mobility changed, she knew she would need help and applied for a Canine Companions service dog.

Ian has helped Joy regain her independence. He is there to help her tackle new challenges, and he helps Joy with tasks throughout each day. Ian is expertly trained to carry grocery bags, pick up dropped items and pull Joy's wheelchair. All these tasks help Joy conserve her energy.

"He loves to have fun, but when he has that vest on and is by my side, he shines."

**"When I am out in public with Ian, I have much more confidence and my heart could explode with happiness and appreciation," Joy says.** "He loves to have fun, but when he has that vest on and is by my side, he shines. He is so happy and ready for whatever I ask. That makes me so proud to be a part of the Canine Companions family."

Read more about our teams at [cci.org/stories](https://cci.org/stories).



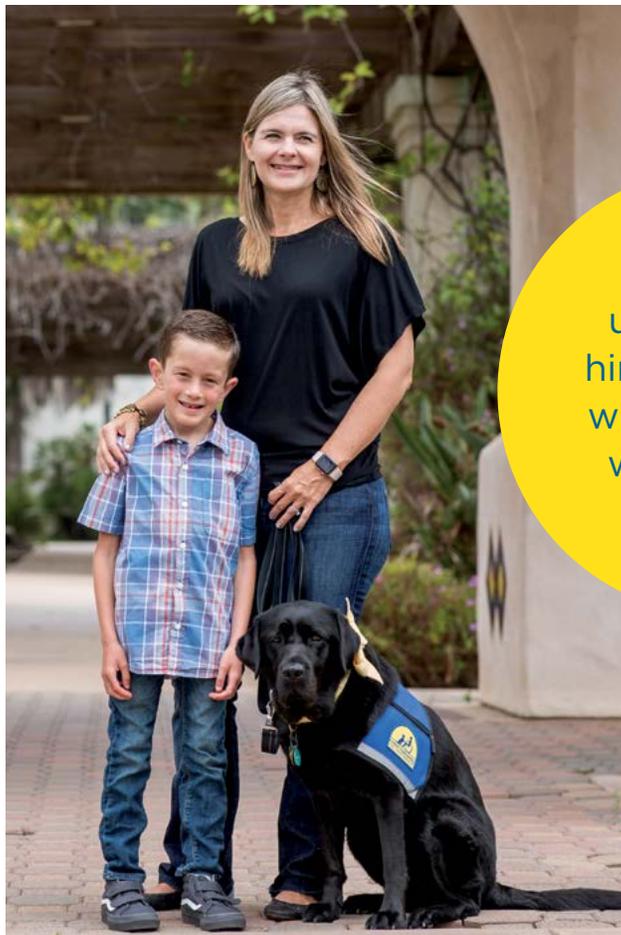
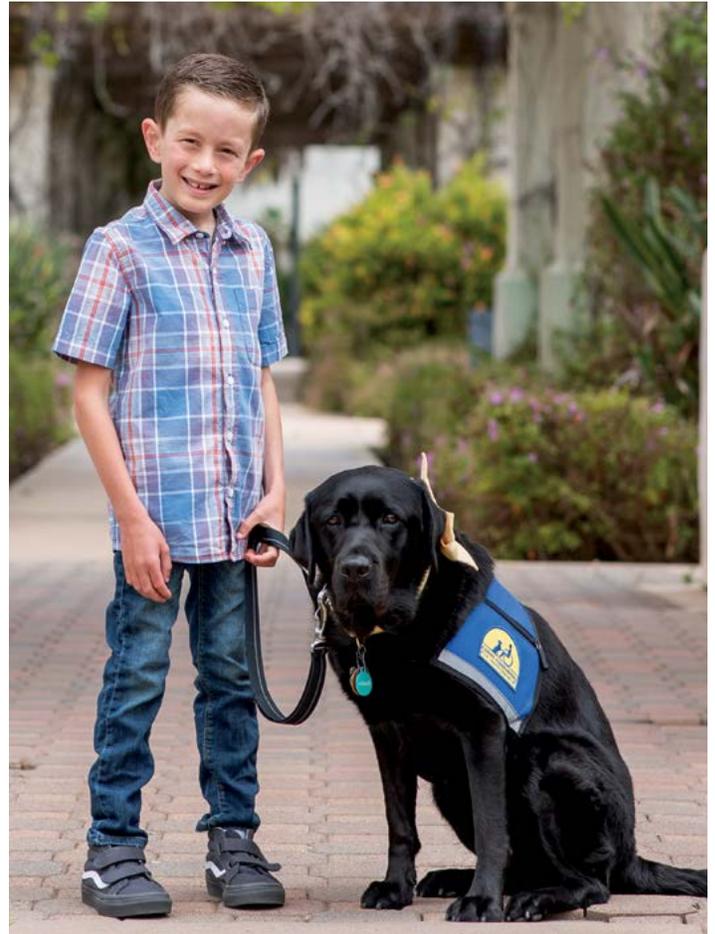
# Life Is Good with Maitai

Every time 9-year-old Mateo's parents saw him interact with a friend's service dog they watched him light up. After they learned about the commands Canine Companions service dogs are trained to do and saw firsthand how much Mateo could benefit, they couldn't wait to apply.

Mateo was born with a brain malformation called agenesis of the corpus callosum and other disabilities impacting his mobility and development. Mateo was matched with Skilled Companion Maitai in August 2018, and the two have been inseparable ever since! Maitai helps Mateo pick up items, stay still and calm during doctors' appointments, and helps him get his torso brace on each day. She is a positive distraction during his therapies and a social bridge with other children his age.

"Maitai is Mateo's best friend and gives him unconditional love," says Mateo's mom, Monika. "And most importantly, she understands him and knows what he needs when others don't."

Tasks or outings that used to be difficult for Mateo now come easy with Maitai by his side. She encourages him to participate in morning and bedtime routines, like brushing his teeth and eating. One of Mateo's favorite things to do is read to Maitai before bed.



"She understands him and knows what he needs when others don't."

Monika believes Maitai's most important quality is the sense of calmness she provides. Maitai helps Mateo regulate his emotions when he has a hard time calming down on his own. Monika shares, "She will nudge and lick him until he is calm and can always manage to get a smile and laugh out of Mateo. She has taught Mateo that everything will be okay; she will always be by his side to help."

For more information on service dogs for children, visit [cci.org/skilledcompanions](https://cci.org/skilledcompanions).

Help create more teams like Mateo and Skilled Companion Maitai.

Donate today at [cci.org/independence](https://cci.org/independence).



## Leading the Way for Veterans



Northeast Region  
board member  
Colonel E.  
David Woycik  
Jr., (USA Ret.)  
Esq. has been  
a leader in our  
organization for over

a decade. Since 2013, Col. Woycik has helped organize our annual Veterans Day event, Salute Independence, each year presenting the Col. E. David Woycik Jr., (USA Ret.) Esq. and Lance Corporal Matias Ferreira (USMC Ret.) Outstanding Service Award to local veterans who continue to serve their communities. Thanks to the colonel's tireless work, the event has raised more than \$500,000 to support our Veterans Initiative.™

**“When I see a veteran with a Canine Companions service dog, it still gives me goosebumps,” says Col. Woycik. “I see the satisfaction these veterans get... the fulfillment of their lives through these dogs.** The service dogs are not just partners, they are their right hand, their left

hand, their legs and more. We can't pay the veterans back enough, and I'm proud to be part of an organization serving them.”

Col. Woycik is a senior trial partner at Sanders, Sanders, Block, Woycik, Viener & Grossman, P.C. of New York. He served overseas in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for Operation Desert Storm and most recently for Operation Enduring Freedom in the war on terrorism. He is a highly decorated retired army officer who has been awarded the Bronze Star, the Distinguished Service Medal and Meritorious Service Ribbon.

“It's been a tough year, but we've worked hard to raise funding through events like Salute Independence. I like to use the quote, 'All gave some, and some gave all,' and it's extremely important to recognize and thank these heroes for their service. I also want to make sure every veteran who qualifies can have access to one of our life-changing service dogs. Canine Companions dogs are the best!”

We thank Col. Woycik for all he does for Canine Companions. Learn more about our Veterans Initiative at [cci.org/veterans](https://cci.org/veterans).

## 1975 and Beyond

Nearly 45 years ago while exploring the booths at the county fair, Kathy and Frank Tetzschner stumbled upon Canine Companions. Being animal lovers, the couple was very interested in learning about our organization and mission.

“We began donating to this wonderful cause and later put Canine Companions on our monthly donation list,” shares Kathy. Canine Companions is grateful for each gift we receive. Every dollar makes a difference!

Thank you, Frank and Kathy, for your incredible dedication to our mission. Because of you, lives have been changed.

Receive two packs of notecards when you become a monthly donor of \$25 or more. Visit [cci.org/givemonthly](https://cci.org/givemonthly).



Top: Robert Madden (USN Ret.), Ken Hernandez (USAF Ret.) with Service Dog Miller, Col. E. David Woycik Jr. (USA Ret.). Image taken before pandemic.

# Pups Return to Duke University

The Duke Puppy Kindergarten research study resumed in late 2020 with safety measures in place after the pandemic required the program be put on hold.

Canine Companions puppies Rainbow and Sassy lived with Professor Brian Hare, the director of the Duke Canine Cognition Center, and his wife and research scientist for the program, Vanessa Woods. Puppy Sparky lived with Lab Coordinator Madison Moore, and Stanley lived with Morgan Ferrans, a graduate student at the university.

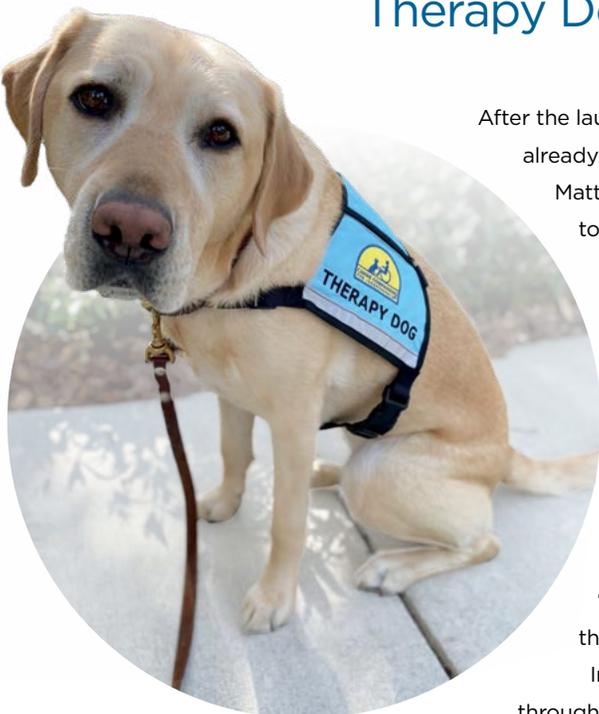
**The puppies have a full testing schedule and go to the campus every two weeks for a complete set of cognitive games designed to assess their brain development.**

“It’s fun to see the different cognitive profiles of the puppies emerge,” says Vanessa. “Sassy was particularly good at the ‘physics’ games that tested causal reasoning.” These cognitive measures may help predict success in service dogs.

Learn more about our studies at [cci.org/science](https://cci.org/science).



## Therapy Dog Program Hits the Ground Running



After the launch of our pilot program in 2020, Canine Companions therapy dogs have already made a significant impact working with professionals in different environments.

Matt Jenkins and Therapy Dog Leo are one of the first teams to be certified, working together this past year at the police department in Healdsburg, CA.

“Leo had arrived at the department about two weeks before the Kinkeade fires,” shares Matt. “His presence was monumental in relieving stress and anxiety for first responders and emergency workers.”

This program would not be possible without the funding from Steve Weiss and Mary Caldwell who also serve on the steering committee along with Richard Cawood, Carol Weldin and Katrina Winsor.

**Mary Caldwell and Steve Weiss share, “We have seen the impact that released Canine Companions dogs have had as therapy dogs, so we explored setting up a program within the organization.** We are very proud to donate the ‘seed’ funding to get the program off the ground. After the hard work of many on the Canine Companions staff, the program is now a reality.”

In addition to the impact they will have on their communities, dogs certified through Canine Companions as therapy dogs will also be eligible to earn AKC therapy dog titles. To learn more about our therapy dog program, visit [cci.org/therapydogs](https://cci.org/therapydogs).



## The Start of a New Partnership

New Canine Companions team Brenda and Service Dog Clint live in Auburn, Maine, where Clint is fitting right in with Brenda's active lifestyle. Clint's journey to service began in 2018, when PenFed Credit Union began an innovative program encouraging employees to raise Canine Companions puppies at home and at work. Volunteer puppy raiser Emma was one of the first to sign up.

"I think service is a very important thing. Not only for me as a person, but also to show my family and others that it really is about giving back to the community," says Emma. "I'm so proud and grateful to be able to go through this process with Clint and learn so much from him."

The entire PenFed organization was thrilled to hear of Clint's success. **"Our continued commitment to Canine Companions is made even more exciting by the news that Clint has been placed in a new home and is now making a difference in the life of an individual with a disability,"** says PenFed CEO James Schenck. "PenFed is proud to continue our partnership with a mission-driven organization like Canine Companions."

After completing his professional training in an unusual environment due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, Clint was matched with Brenda in September. "We wore masks whenever we were not in our rooms and practiced the new norm of social distancing. But we did get to go on several field trips, which were fun and exciting! It was exhausting, but I was very grateful that we were able to do so many things," shares Brenda.

Brenda thanks Emma for raising Clint and providing him with the foundation to become an amazing service dog. "I'm grateful for the gift of independence that you have given me through Clint."





## From Puppy Raiser to Graduate

Nearly 30 years ago, Penni Lightfoot began her journey with Canine Companions when she raised her first puppy. Penni went on to raise 11 Canine Companions puppies, enhancing independence for people with disabilities along the way. Unbeknownst to her, one day she would be receiving the very same gift she helped give to others.

Penni always had some hearing loss, but in 2006 it took a turn for the worse, leaving Penni with no hearing in her right ear and limited hearing in her left. Penni decided to apply to receive a hearing dog from Canine Companions, the very organization to which she'd dedicated so much of her heart and efforts.

In 2007, Penni was matched with Hearing Dog Capria, who acted as her "ears" for over a decade. Penni applied for her next hearing dog, and early last year, she was matched with Hearing Dog Hartley. Hartley is expertly trained to alert Penni to important sounds in her environment like her cell phone, the doorbell, fire alarms and more. This helps Penni feel secure and live more independently. Penni proudly shares, "My husband no longer has to tell me that the tea kettle is whistling or the microwave is sounding; I have my four-legged girl to do that."

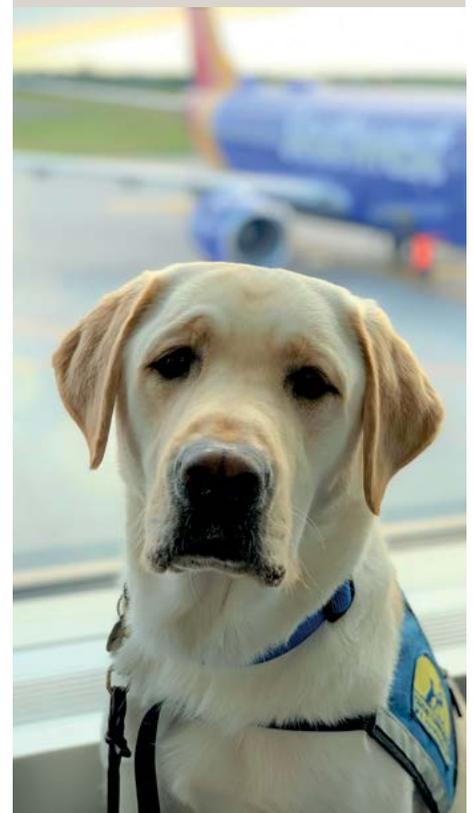
Learn more at [cci.org/hearingdogs](https://cci.org/hearingdogs).

"My husband no longer has to tell me that the tea kettle is whistling...I have my four-legged girl to do that."

## Big Changes at 36,000 Feet!

New changes to the Air Carrier Access Act were passed in January by the Department of Transportation. We asked our constituents to provide feedback to go along with our organization's position, and we received over 7,000 responses! **The updated law no longer considers emotional support animals to be service animals — rather, they are treated as pets — and must be in a carrier to travel.** In addition, most airlines now require a standardized form attesting to the health and training of the service dog. Forms are required 48 hours before the date of travel, unless booked last-minute. Check with your airline for more information.

Your voice matters! You can join our future advocacy efforts at [cci.org/stopfraud](https://cci.org/stopfraud).





## A Gift to Others

After learning about Canine Companions from a friend in 2008, Joanne Cellar and her family were eager to get involved. In 2009, Joanne and her four sons raised their first puppy. Twelve years later, she has raised five puppies for our organization, served on the Southeast Region Board, volunteered at events and so much more. Joanne shares, **“I wanted something long term – not just a weekend activity. I love this mission and being able to give opportunities to others.”**

Joanne has been a very generous donor to our organization. “After becoming a puppy raiser, it became clear the number of hours and money it takes to create these teams,” shares Joanne. “I wanted to relieve that financial burden so more people with disabilities can be matched with a service dog from Canine Companions.” Joanne is passionate about helping others, and we are grateful to have her be a part of our community. To learn more about supporting our mission, visit [cci.org/donate](https://cci.org/donate).

## Texas A&M Students Support Prison Program

The Canine Companions community brings people together in unique ways. In Texas, college students and inmates of a local prison work together to train future service dogs.

Inmates at Federal Prison Camp Bryan have been raising puppies for Canine Companions for over 10 years and work with the Collar Scholars — a group of Texas A&M students — for socialization opportunities.

“The inmates do a wonderful job building a foundation and teaching the dogs the commands. We then work with the dogs in situations that they would not get inside the facility,” says Jessica, Collar Scholars club member.

Typically, the inmates have primary responsibility for the training, while the students focus on taking the puppies into the community and exposing them to new environments.

Due to the pandemic, dogs were no longer able to come and go from the prison. **Without hesitation, the members of the Collar Scholars shifted to full-time puppy raising to ensure the dogs would be prepared for their futures. This meant learning new skills such as training obedience commands, grooming and adjusting their schedules to care for a dog full time.**

“I have gained a huge appreciation for the inmates who work so hard to give the puppies their foundation,” says Jessica. “These are incredible dogs and are going to go help people who deserve them.”

Learn more about our puppy raising programs at [cci.org/puppyraiser](https://cci.org/puppyraiser).





## Excellence in Volunteerism

Canine Companions has had amazing volunteers since our founding in 1975. Twenty years ago, the national board of directors established the Canine Companions Jack Warnock Award. Created in honor of longtime volunteer and graduate Jack Warnock, this prestigious award honors volunteerism at Canine Companions. Each year, Canine Companions receives nominations from each of our six regions for individuals who show outstanding volunteerism. **We are pleased to honor our 20th Jack Warnock Award winner, volunteer Chris Newbern of Conroe, Texas, along with the five national board of directors regional volunteer award winners.**

Chris graduated from the South Central Region in 2018 with Service Dog Powers and recognized a need for a volunteer chapter in his area. Chris founded the Gulf Coast Chapter and helped lay the groundwork for multiple events and fundraising opportunities.

Chris has been one of the most vocal advocates for Canine Companions in the South Central Region, taking the time to speak with anyone who is interested in what Powers can do for him. Chris is always striving to advance the visibility and mission of Canine Companions.

Learn more about the impact Chris and the other honorees have made at [cci.org/warnockaward](https://cci.org/warnockaward).

### Regional Volunteer Award Winners

#### NORTH CENTRAL

Tom Clements has been volunteering since 2013 and served as the North Central board chair and Capital Campaign committee chair.

#### NORTHEAST

Stacey Lucchino joined Canine Companions as a donor in 2001. She and her husband Larry have cultivated many opportunities for Canine Companions in partnership with the Boston Red Sox. Stacey also helped make DogFest New England a great success despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### NORTHWEST

Jan Ellis found Canine Companions in 1995 and has been a tireless volunteer, bathing and walking dogs, providing office support, assisting in Team Training and serving as a breeder caretaker to retired sire Orent.

#### SOUTHEAST

CJ and Vickie Smith are active puppy raisers and Jacksonville Chapter officers. They have been involved in planning all DogFest Jacksonville events and have made it a priority to make their chapter's event one of the organization's most successful.

#### SOUTHWEST

Carol and Read Miller have been supporters of Canine Companions for over 10 years. Carol started bathing dogs and raising puppies with Miramar Naval Brig. Carol and Read created an important relationship allowing Canine Companions to use North Coast Church for graduation ceremonies.



# A Life-Changing Partnership

Canine Companions and Baylor Scott & White Health formed the first collaboration of its kind, bringing together a premier service dog organization and a major healthcare system. Over the years, the relationship has grown in many ways.

## Meet four Canine Companions facility dogs working in Baylor Scott & White facilities across Texas



### Lorenzo and Gigi at Baylor Scott & White McLane Children’s Medical Center — Temple

Facility Dog Lorenzo works with child life specialists Ashley and Leah and has helped thousands of patients cope with difficult procedures and achieve treatment goals.

“The way patients connect with Lorenzo is different than any connection I can provide,” says Ashley. “He allows me to better do my job.”

Facility Dog Gigi supports patients who have experienced trauma by working with handlers and social workers Laura and Rebecca to make the hospital experience less scary.

### Orbit at Baylor Scott & White Institute for Rehabilitation — Dallas

Occupational and recreational therapists Caitlin and Lance work with patients with a variety of injuries and disabilities with Facility Dog Orbit by their side to provide motivation and support.

Orbit’s skills are regularly incorporated into therapy exercises. He has also elicited responses from patients emerging from brain injuries and for patients who are away from home, become an extension of their family.

### Wailor at Baylor Scott & White Institute for Rehabilitation — Frisco

Facility Dog Wailor works with handlers Carla and Christie, recreational and physical therapists. His expert training allows him to work with patients in many ways, including strength and balance exercises, speech therapy and activity tolerance.

Carla says, “Patients have shared that having Wailor as our facility dog made their decision to come to the rehab facility much easier and motivates them to work harder.”

Canine Companions is grateful for the support of Baylor Scott & White Health. Many lives have been changed through these four dogs, as well as the hundreds of service dogs that have been placed as part of this partnership.

# Serving Those Who Have Served

Bryan Jenkins served our country as a sergeant in the United States Air Force. Now, it's our turn to serve.

After retiring from the military, Bryan received a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis that changed his life. This progressive disease impacts his mobility and energy level and often makes daily tasks challenging.

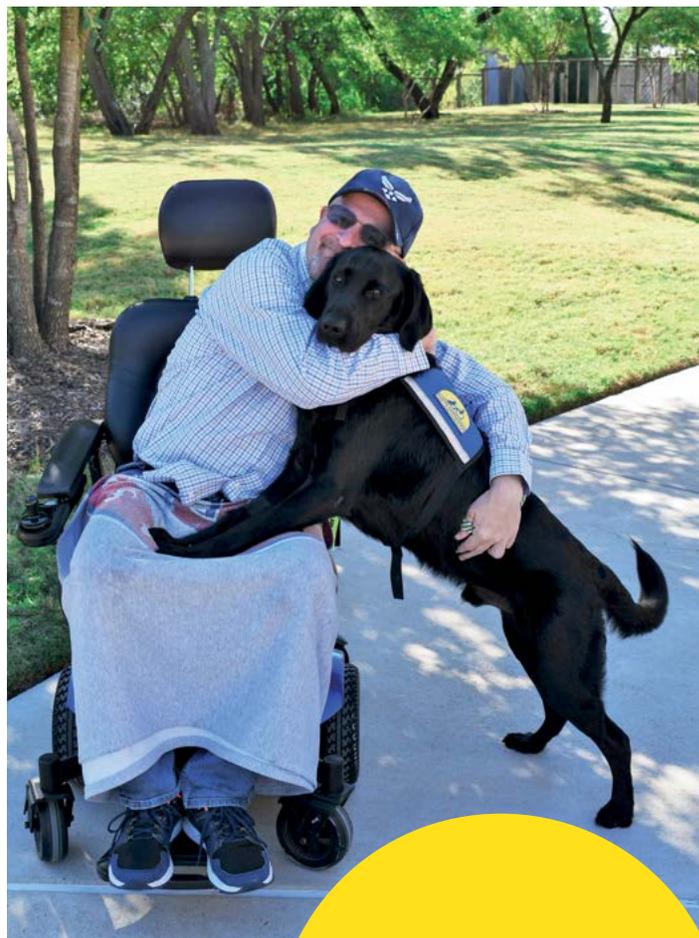
When he saw one of his close friends utilizing a Canine Companions service dog, Bryan knew he could also benefit from the training and assistance a service dog provides. As timing would have it, the two friends attended Team Training together last year, and Bryan was matched with expertly trained Service Dog Nash.

"My first impression meeting Nash was, 'Man this is going to be so great,'" says Bryan. "Not only can he do things that I can't, but he's also going to keep me company and keep my mind a little sharper."

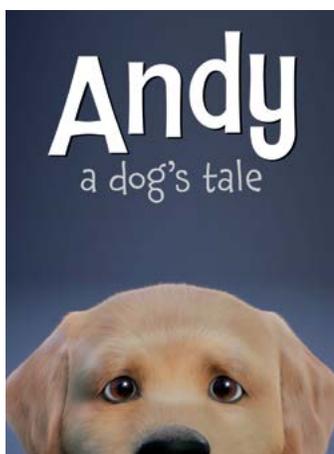
**Service Dog Nash is trained in over 40 commands to assist Bryan daily, including picking up items he drops from his power chair, opening heavy doors and allowing Bryan to conserve energy that is depleted as a result of his disability.**

"Canine Companions has allowed me to look forward to each day eagerly, instead of having to mentally prepare for required daily tasks," shares Bryan. He says knowing Nash is by his side gives him confidence he hasn't had in years. "This veteran is thankful!"

To learn more about service dogs for veterans, visit [cci.org/veterans](https://cci.org/veterans).



"This veteran is thankful!"



Coming Soon...

## NORTHEAST REGION



### Hogan the Hero

"I don't think I could have gotten any luckier than to be matched with Hogan," shares Emmanuel Jenkins. "He's not only smart, but he's patient. He knows it takes me time. We are doing as well as we can with the pandemic."

Born and raised in Delaware, Emmanuel is living his dream life despite the pandemic. He has a loving family. He loves his job as the community resource officer for the State of Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council, and last year, another dream came true when he was matched with Service Dog Hogan. "Hogan is one of a kind," says Emmanuel.

As part of his daily responsibilities, Emmanuel is in charge of social media and public relations outreach for the Delaware DDC, helping people with disabilities find programs and resources that are available to them. **"I'm always fighting for the rights of all people, and I'm thankful to everyone at Canine Companions who strongly believes in what they are doing."**

Read more about our teams at [cci.org/stories](https://cci.org/stories).



### Special Delivery

Volunteer pilots are continuing their flights to bring our 8-week-old Canine Companions puppies into the arms of waiting puppy raisers. A recent flight into Farmingdale, New York brought eight puppies to volunteer raisers from New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island. The volunteers greeted pilot Josh with gift bags loaded with snacks for the return trip home! We are grateful to the pilots for sharing their wings!



### Celebrating 45 Years

What could be better than dogs, fine wine and chocolate? Thanks to all who helped make our virtual gala The Perfect Pairing such a smashing success! Vincenzo and Chef Paul from Wine-U-Design and Marnie the Kron chocolatier gave our audience fantastic insight into fine wine and chocolate pairings. We want to thank our host Linda Schmidt from Fox 5 NY as well as auctioneer Fred Granados. A special thank you to sponsors Ann Gittinger, John Miller and family, and Nancy and Terry McGraw. This year's virtual gala honored the memory of long-time Northeast board member Bari Taylor.

## Upcoming Events

**April 17**

DogFest Orlando

**April 26**

Chip in for Canines, Atlanta, GA

**October 16**

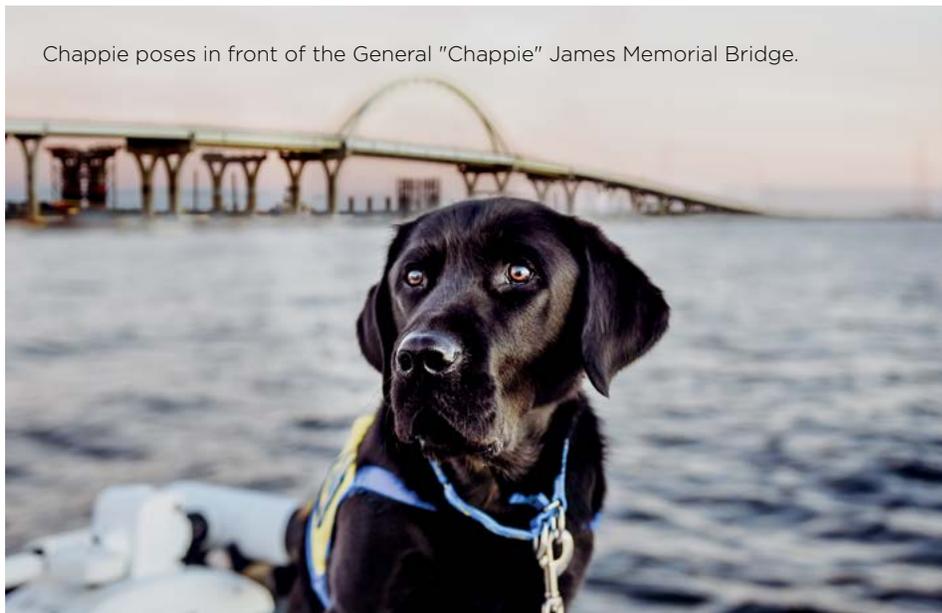
25th Annual Tales & Tails Gala

## Celebrating 25 Years

In 1996, 80 people attended the first Tales & Tails Gala in a tent at SeaWorld Orlando. That gala raised \$180,000. In 2020, the highly acclaimed and popular event was presented virtually and raised \$600,000 for Canine Companions.

The gala's success would not be possible without the dedicated volunteer committee members and co-chairs. Stay tuned for more information about this year's 25th Annual Tales & Tails Gala.

Robin Sanchez, Paul Richards, Trish Walsh and Mary Taylor Jacobs have co-chaired the gala for the past three years. They celebrated in 2019 following a committee meeting.



Chappie poses in front of the General "Chappie" James Memorial Bridge.

## Good Luck in Professional Training

We are honored to have a Canine Companions puppy named after a hero. Chappie was raised in Pensacola by WEAR-TV meteorologist Kathryn Daniel and was named after Gen. Daniel "Chappie" James Jr. who became the first African American to reach the rank of four-star general in the United States Air Force.

Canine Companions puppy Chappie entered professional training in February and fans eagerly await updates on his progress to become a service dog.

## Welcome New Executive Director Kathleen Tagle

Kathleen Tagle brings more than 30 years of experience to Canine Companions and is known as a professional with a passion for successfully generating multi-million-dollar revenue streams and donations and building brand loyalty. Most recently she served as the chief development and marketing officer for Give Kids The World Village in Kissimmee, FL.





## Buckeye Finds His Purpose

In August 2018, Canine Companions puppy Buckeye stole the hearts of the central Ohio community when he joined the NBC4 morning team. After working with his volunteer puppy raiser and then completing Canine Companions professional training, Buckeye is now a service dog for new partner and best friend, Kian.

**Buckeye has made a huge impact in Kian's life. He is utilizing his commands and playtime to help Kian with his physical therapy and range of motion. Kian's (and Buckeye's) favorite way to do this is to throw a frisbee.**

Buckeye's impact isn't just physical. Kian's mom shares that Buckeye has made a difference emotionally too. "Buckeye gets up in Kian's lap and allows him to pet him and love on him. It has always been hard for Kian to have an affectionate relationship with an animal because of his equipment, but Buckeye has changed that." Kian's mom also went on to share, "Kian has really shown a whole new side to himself. He is very loving; he has a cute voice that he does when he talks to Buckeye."

Kian and Buckeye have created an amazing bond, and it can be summed up by Kian in three words, "I love him."

"Kian has really shown a whole new side to himself."

## Board Transition

Canine Companions would like to recognize Tom Clements who has served as the North Central Region's board president for over five years. During his time as president, Tom led by example, always happy to help and eager to share his passion for our mission. We are grateful to Tom and his many contributions to our work, including the role he played in making the new North Central campus a reality. In honor of all of Tom's hard work and leadership, he received the 2020 National Board of Directors Regional Volunteer Award.

We are also happy to announce Todd Bailey is the new North Central Region board president. Todd has served on the board since 2010. We are excited for the impact that Todd's continued enthusiasm, creativity and leadership will create within the region.



## New Job With Search and Rescue

Some Canine Companions dogs find their perfect job outside of the extensive training to become a service dog. For one dog, the journey came full circle when his family decided to raise a puppy.

Silas' energy and temperament may not have been ideal for a service dog in our program, but it turns out he makes the perfect working dog in search and rescue. His handler, Lynne, is forever grateful to Canine Companions for bringing them together.

**“It is extremely difficult to find canines that fit the profile to be a successful search and rescue dog,” says Lynne. “To have a dog donated to our team that is already highly trained is invaluable.”**

Silas is an air scent live find canine, trained to search for a person in a designated area. Silas not only loves his job but continues to make a difference by saving lives.

When Lynne's daughter Addie learned about Silas' history at Canine Companions, she knew she wanted to be involved with our mission. Soon after, she began her puppy raising journey with puppy Butler. Addie says she is impressed with Canine Companions' ability to find the perfect role for each individual dog.

Learn more about the dogs we train at [cci.org/dogs](https://cci.org/dogs).



## Meet the New Staff

The Canine Companions South Central Region continues to grow. Over the last year, many new staff have joined the team. We look forward to being able to connect with you all in person as soon as possible. In the meantime, meet a few of our newest team members at the Kinkeade Campus:



**Dan Rollings,**  
Program Director



**Ryan Barrera,**  
Senior Development  
Director



**Alexandra Walch,**  
Client Services  
Manager



**Devin Ortiz,**  
Training Manager



**Laura Gray,**  
Volunteer and Events  
Coordinator

## Miller and Jac Give Back

13-year-old Sacramento resident Miller, who has a rare neurodegenerative disease, received Skilled Companion Bahama at no charge in 2019. Bahama helps Miller be more confident in public, uses her skills to play therapeutic games with him, attends medical appointments and hospital stays, and more. **After receiving Bahama, Miller knew he wanted to give back to the organization that gave him his favorite helper.**

Miller and his sister Jac both asked for donations to Canine Companions in lieu of birthday and Christmas presents. They ended up raising over \$10,000 and were given the honor of naming a Canine Companions puppy! Miller is an honorary sergeant at the Sacramento Police Department, and he and Jac decided to name Canine Companions puppy O’Sully in honor and memory of fallen



Sacramento Police Officer Tara O’Sullivan, who was killed in the line of duty last year. We look forward to following puppy O’Sully on her journey to become a service dog on Instagram at @puppyosully.

We’re thrilled that Miller and Bahama make such an amazing team and are extremely grateful to Miller and Jac for generously raising money for our mission! To read more, visit [cci.org/stories](https://cci.org/stories).

## Welcome to the Team



**Rachel Meyer,**  
Executive Director

We are excited to welcome Rachel Meyer to the Northwest Region. Rachel, a Northern California local who attended U.C. Berkeley and an executive strategic planning program of Stanford School of

Business, comes to Canine Companions with years of nonprofit leadership and fundraising experience. We are thrilled to have her join our team and look forward to her leadership and expertise in the years to come.



## Bella’s Fund

Jerry Levendowski, Ph.D., spent many happy years with the Canine Companions puppy he raised, Bella. After being released from our program, she became the canine mascot for the U.S. Navy’s WWII-era Sino-American Cooperative Organization (SACO). To honor Bella and serve future veterans, Jerry donated \$100,000 to create Bella’s Fund, which provides veterinary care and graduate equipment for new service dogs for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). With Bella’s Fund, her legacy of service to veterans continues.

Above: Navy veteran Ron Lebda with Service Dog Holiday were matched in 2020 with the help of Bella’s fund.



**Jamie Roach,**  
Community Events  
Coordinator



**Katie Parker,**  
Client Services Program  
Manager — Applicant



## Facility Dog Gregory's Power Wheelchair

It's a common sight at Fletcher Miller Special Education School to see young students learning to drive an adapted Wild Thing — a power wheelchair trainer. The wheels are configured the same as a power chair, so the trainer is a great building block to teach students how to handle a power wheelchair. **When Gregory became the school's facility dog last year, his handler Jenna instantly knew she wanted to teach him to drive a Wild Thing!** The trainer moves when the individual presses a switch, which Facility Dog Gregory already knew how to do. Jenna partnered with one of the school's physical therapists and the lessons began. Within four lessons, Gregory was already driving without needing her to stand in front of him with a treat!

This new skill will give Gregory yet another way to be a motivator for students. He has already been an anxiety-reducer for a preschooler's first driving lesson as they drove in the same room. Gregory loves this fun new way to visit his favorite people at school, and we are excited to see where his driving takes him!

## Purdue CARES

In 2019, a new study was launched by researchers at the Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine to determine whether service dogs are beneficial for children with autism. Canine Companions was able to match children with service dogs who will participate in the study thanks to the generous \$100,000 donation from Bob Sturm through the Robert B. Sturm Foundation.



Robert B. Sturm Foundation's Bob Sturm generously donated \$100,000 to fund the Purdue CARES study.

"I am happy the placements that I am funding are not only going to experience the human-animal bond, but they will be part of a study that will have a lasting effect on the entire industry," says Bob.

Dr. Brenda Kennedy, Canine Companions national director of canine health and research, shares, "The size and scope of this study will allow us to quantify this impact using clinically relevant outcomes and validated assessments. Having the science to back up what we've seen firsthand for many years about how our dogs provide benefit to not only the child, but also the entire family, will lead to greater acceptance and support among health professionals to use service dogs in this capacity."

We have been able to place eight of the 10 teams and hope to have the last two placed in the first quarter of 2021. To learn more about the studies we are involved in and our research partners, visit [cci.org/research](https://cci.org/research).



# Enhancing Quality of Life Through PetSmart



PetSmart Charities awarded Canine Companions with a \$300,000 Enhance the Quality of Life Through Pets grant. Over the past three years, PetSmart Charities' generosity has enabled us to expand facility dog placements across the country within hospitals, health care centers, rehabilitation centers and courthouses.

The six teams funded directly impact hundreds of clients weekly and more than 40,000 individuals a year. Collectively, the 455 active Canine Companions facility dog teams impact the lives of more than five million people annually.

Lisa Morgan, supervisor of occupational therapy at Mayo Clinic Health System shares, **"It has been magical to see just how well our patients have taken to Luna. She adds a depth to our care we can't otherwise provide on a physical or emotional level — it's a sixth dimension of care."**

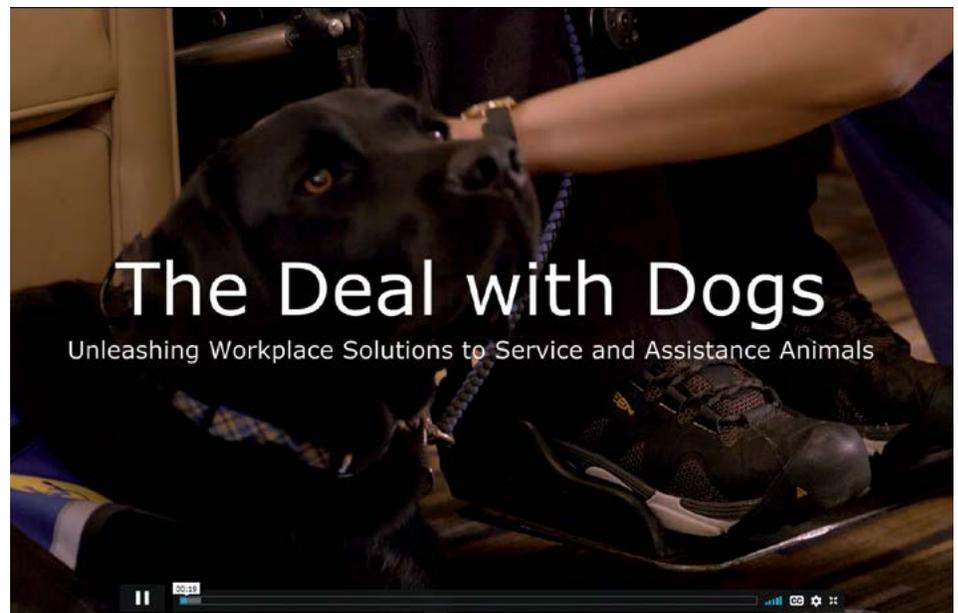
Canine Companions extends our deep appreciation to PetSmart Charities for their commitment to providing greater independence to children, adults and veterans with disabilities.

For more information on becoming a corporate partner, please visit [cci.org/partners](https://cci.org/partners).

## Unleashing Workplace Solutions

Canine Companions and Littler, which specializes in employment law, have formed a strategic partnership to address complex issues related to accommodating service dogs in the workplace and in public. We've teamed up to create a 30-minute, vignette-based training video to provide simple strategies and guidance for companies on managing service animal accommodation requests in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Our joint video is now available at a 10% discount to our supporters using the promo code DEALDOG10. In addition, a significant portion of sales benefit Canine Companions! Learn more at [cci.org/littler](https://cci.org/littler).



# Leave a Legacy



The Heritage Society was formed to honor dedicated individuals who are committed to changing the lives of people with disabilities by including legacy gifts benefiting Canine Companions in their estate plans.

#### Legacy gifts include:

- Bequests in wills and trusts
- Charitable trusts
- Beneficiary designations on 401(k)s, IRAs and life insurance
- Charitable gift annuities
- Pooled income fund investments

Over the years, Gordon and Joyce Spainhower have seen our mission in action and the people who have been served by the good work of our organization. “Seeing the joy graduate teams experience when they are perfectly matched with a Canine Companions service dog shows we are spending our time on the right thing,” shares Joyce.

As long-time supporters, they wanted to do more. “Canine Companions has become part of our DNA. We believe the best way to help continue the mission of Canine Companions is to endow the future of Canine Companions.”

To learn more about legacy gifts and the Heritage Society, visit [cci.org/plannedgiving](https://cci.org/plannedgiving).

## Bolt at the Puppy Bowl

Animal Planet’s Puppy Bowl has become a fun Super Bowl tradition, and this year our very own Canine Companions puppy Bolt was featured during the show! Although Bolt wasn’t physically at the Puppy Bowl, Animal Planet featured Bolt’s story during the broadcast ahead of Super Bowl LV.

We are grateful that Bolt has been able to be part of so many fun opportunities involving the Los Angeles Chargers and the NFL, even during a worldwide pandemic. He is now 11 months old, and his volunteer puppy raiser Angela says he has been such a joy to raise. Some of his favorite commands are “here,” “roll” and “bed.” He also really loves to get dressed in his Chargers jersey or Canine Companions puppy vest and say “hi” to all his fans on social media. You can follow Bolt’s journey on Instagram at @chargerspup!



# 2020-2021 Team Training Yearbook

## Northwest Region

**1 October:** Alexandria with Steffy; Amy with Veronica V; Danna with Nessa III; Kitty, Jon & George with Peirce; Lori with Omega VII; Marv with Goose II; Sharon & Bill with Zari; Tyler with Troubadour II



**2 November:** Carrie with Raquel IV; Cheryl with Wizard IV; Faith with Claude II; Jan with Tux; Laurie with Grady VII; Peggy with Russ V; Steve with Promise III



**3 December:** Cason & Jennifer with Bentley III; Daryl with Adria II; Luke with Taffy V; Melody with Serissa; Nicci with Dubs; Rachel with Locket



**4 January:** Caren with Honey IV; Lynne with Trudy III

## North Central Region

**5 October:** Connor, Jennifer & Wayne with Olani II; Levi, Rob & Megan with Rhine III; Joshua & Jennifer with Olena IV; Garrett & Deborah with Viego



**6 November:** Meredith with Vienna VII; Julie with Amalie II; Richard with Star V; Michael with Whimmy



**7 November:** Ashlyn, Greg & Laura with Raynor; Gabby & Laura with Lucas V; Christina with Dotty; Grace & Jennifer with Beatrice IV; John, Mike & Kelly with Keanu II



**8 December:** Jerry with Fernando III; Vickie with Gable IV; Melanie with Dasher III; Lori with Nuela II



## Northeast Region

**9 October:** Stephan with Buckner; Christopher with Wadsworth II; Tarik with Walter VI; Robert with Furino



**10 November:** Brenda with Bessie III; Bruce and Swain; Michele with Virgil II; Stacey with Estrella



**11 January:** Janet with Oona II; Noah & Lisa with Floyd II; Samantha with Fairfax III; Ashley with Oberon IV; Eileen with Ephron; Beth, Kathy & John with Gromit; Amiracle with Irvine III; David with Zynga; Gerry with Duke VI; Randy with Smitty IV



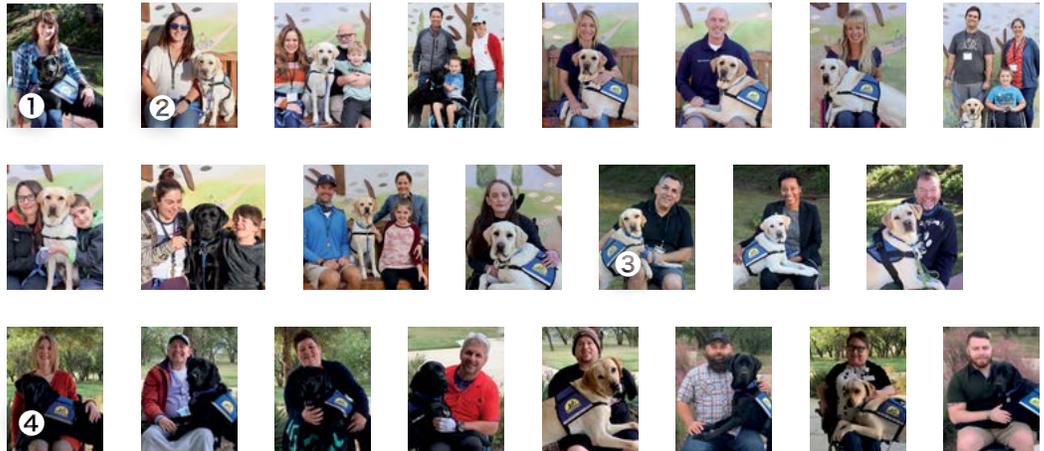
Each team is matched free of charge, thanks to your donations. Visit [cci.org/donate](https://cci.org/donate) or return the enclosed envelope to bring greater independence and confidence to adults, children and veterans with disabilities through the love and help of an expertly trained service dog. Thank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

## Southwest Region

**1 October:** Sabrina with Nessy

**2 November:** Amy with Jeanine II; Beck, Melinda & Tim with Jackson VIII; Jacoby, Lisa & Nick with Liberty IX; Jen with Edgar III; Tim with Edgar III; Kara with Venture IV; Micah, Megan & Jonathan with Shuffle; Michael & Martha with Danny IV; Mikko & Juliet with Irma IV; Morgan, Erin & Jake with Lammon; Tammy with Panther II

**3 December:** Greg with Havana VI; Nicole with Trixie VIII; Stewart with Gallagher IV



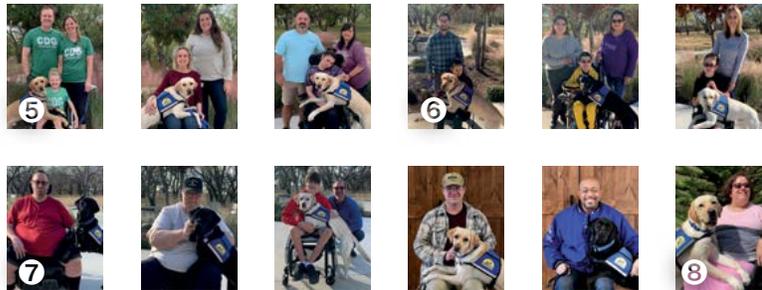
## South Central Region

**4 October:** Brandilyn with Platano; Bryan with Nash IV; Holly with Odelia III; Jason with Iago II; JD with Sprout II; Joe with Puget IV; Lisa with Leianne; Stephen with Sven

**5 November:** Kieran, Rebecca & Nick with Ozzie IV; Laura & Rebecca with Gigi VIII; Laynie, Tracy & Lance with Bleu II

**6 December:** Everly & John with Richie III; Londen, Fabiola & Isabel with Numa II; Zachary & Shelly with Polo III

**7 January:** Geoffrey with Zyra; James with Adora; Strother & Darin with Abba II; Phil with Kira III; Rodney with Novella IV



## Southeast Region

**8 October:** Barb and Bogo

**9 October:** Brianna, Cathy & Bob with Zorba III; Deegan, Connor & Rossie with Boomerang; Amelia with Spencer V; Joey & Jess with EmmyLou; Jake with Tripp II; Erin & Kathy with Chance V; Abigail & Mandy with Sonoma IV; Rylee & Doug with Ramsey V

**10 November:** Annalise with Braelynn; Alexis with Eada; Joy with Ian VI

**11 November:** Mary Ann with Daley; Deborah with Woody V; Beth with Fischer II; Katherine with Miso III

**12 November:** Nancy with Ashton III; Paul with Newsome

**13 December:** Kirsten & Kim with Olympia VI; Brittney with Rudy VIII

**14 January:** Cristina with Yan II; Diana with Opus IV; Hank & Kathy with Ion II; Trey & Franchesca with Galway II



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