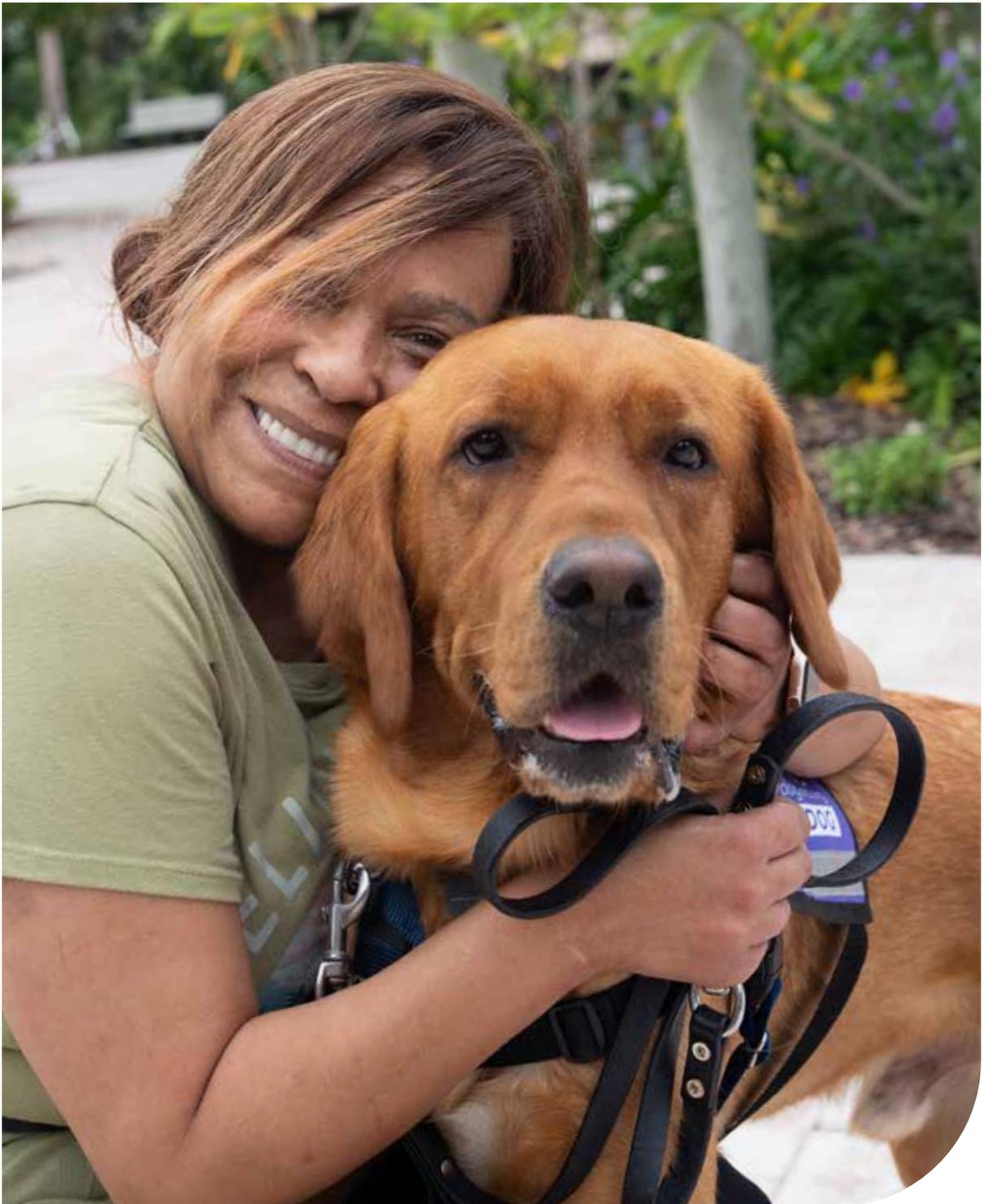


SIDE SIDE

dogsinc



ISSUE FOURTEEN

About Us

SIDE  SIDE is a publication of Dogs Inc.

Our dogs transform lives across the United States—
at no cost to the recipients—thanks to the generosity
of our supporters.

EXTRAORDINARY DOGS

Top-tier pedigrees, decades of research, and thousands
of hours of training, care, and love prepare our dogs for
life-changing destinies.

TRANSFORMING LIVES

Guide dogs light the way. Service dogs heal. Skilled
companion dogs comfort. And therapy dogs uplift.

AT NO COST TO RECIPIENTS

We provide our clients with their loyal companions, expert
training, and lifetime support, completely free of charge.



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dogsinc.org | 941.729.5665

Hello

from the CEO

Dear Friend,

Some moments divide
life into before and after.
Moments that change
everything.

You create those moments.

You turn fear into hope. Endings into
beginnings. Waiting into wonder.

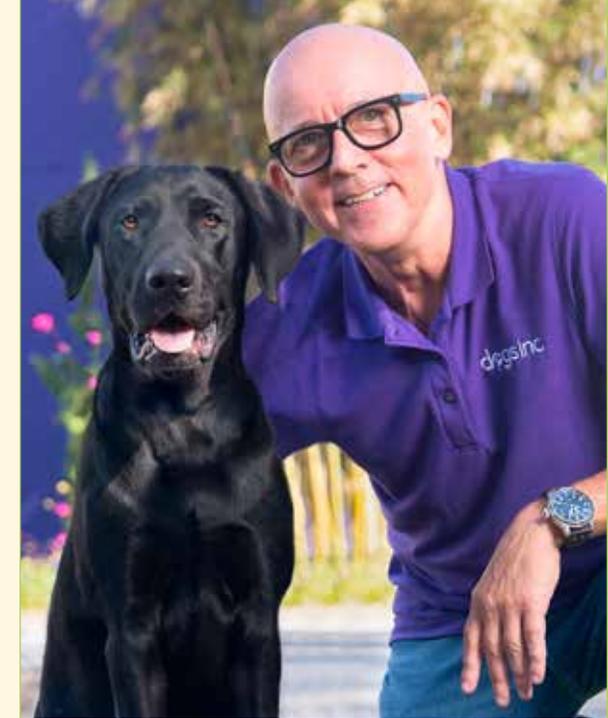
Our dogs change lives—but only because
you believe they can.

Thank you for believing in the after—the
place where light steps in and stays.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Titus Herman".

Titus Herman
President and CEO



Our Dogs



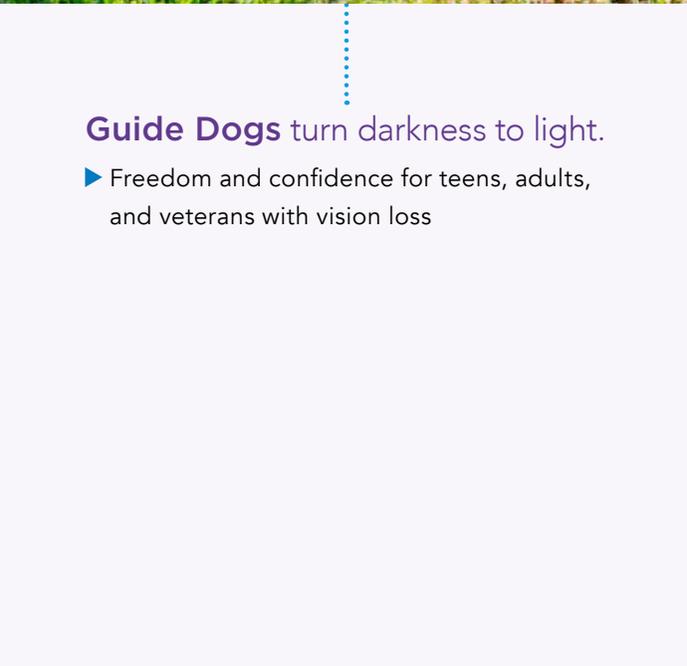
Service Dogs restore freedom.

- ▶ Hope for veterans healing from physical and invisible wounds
- ▶ Strength for Gold Star family members carrying the weight of sacrifice (coming soon)
- ▶ Lifesaving support for people living with diabetes (coming soon)



Therapy Dogs bring healing.

- ▶ Peace to patients and healthcare workers at military facilities across the U.S.
- ▶ Comfort to first responders at facilities in the Tampa Bay Area



Guide Dogs turn darkness to light.

- ▶ Freedom and confidence for teens, adults, and veterans with vision loss



Skilled Companion Dogs comfort in times of need.

- ▶ Friendship to children, teens, and adults with vision loss facing isolation
- ▶ Hope to veterans battling with loneliness
- ▶ Relief to military families grappling with stress
- ▶ Love to Gold Star families coping with grief



 We provide our dogs and services at no cost.



Our Latest Graduates

New companions. New Hope.

A moment that changes everything that's what our graduates experience when they first embrace their extraordinary dogs. And we know that this is only the beginning. Because every day, they'll find peace in their companions' presence, steadfast love in their eyes, and newfound freedom in their service.

Chad | Skilled Companion Dog Shanti

U.S. Air Force Veteran 🇺🇸

"Shanti is always happy to see me, and my kids are so excited about Shanti, too. It makes me happy seeing them happy. He's part of the family."

Shanti was raised by the Rosenberg family.



Nora Wilcox | Service Dog Dexter

U.S. Navy Veteran 🇺🇸

Pensacola, Florida

"Every time I look at him, I go, 'Is this real? Is this a dream?' I'm so happy and so grateful. He's really good for me."

Dexter was raised by Karen Kuperberg.



Ellen Van Houten | Guide Dog Biggs

Louisville, Kentucky

"People would always remark how independent I am . . . but how you appear and how you feel are two different things. Biggs makes me feel as independent as I appear to others."

Biggs was raised by Anistan & Cassie Doyle and Kylen Buley.





Steve | Service Dog Buddy

U.S. Navy Veteran 🇺🇸
Portland, Tennessee

“I can’t imagine living without Buddy now. He’s always got his eyes on me. He knows what I need.”

Buddy was raised by Marcia Gosline.



Luis Rodriguez | Guide Dog Eddie

Miami, Florida

“Eddie is fearless. He knows exactly what to do. I just step outside and go. It’s liberating.”

Eddie was raised by Dennis & Kathy Spence and Laurel McDevitt.

Shawn Chapman | Guide Dog Freddie L.

St. Petersburg, Florida

It felt like trying to hold onto sand—vision, safety, and time slipping through Shawn’s fingers. Fear kept her home, afraid to move, to fall, to be left behind. Then Freddie L. came along. With every step they take together, he brings back trust. Now, she’s returning to school—ready to guide others, just as he guides her.

Freddie L. was raised by Anna Ferentinos.



Richard Davies | Skilled Companion Dog Shana

U.S. Army Veteran 🇺🇸
Bradenton, Florida

“Shana is everything we wanted to a T. We are looking forward to the future.”

Shana was raised by Wendy Royal and Michele & Chris Koelsch.



Jessica | Gold Star Family Dog Freda

Coeur d’Alene, Idaho

“We’re just so in love with Freda. She’s everything we need her to be.”

Freda was raised by Ella-Grace Zingaro.

John Courchaine | Guide Dog Weber

Sussex, Wisconsin

John had always been a problem solver.

As an engineer, he thrived on precision. Transforming ideas into structures, fixing what others couldn't. But vision loss didn't come with blueprints.

Bit by bit, it chipped away at his confidence. Eventually, it took his career.

"I realized I couldn't do it anymore, and that was hard," John says. "I enjoyed all the challenges of work, but without vision, it was too much."

His world narrowed to a three-foot bubble of vision. He walked tentatively with his cane. Retirement didn't feel like a new chapter, it felt like a stalling point. John stayed careful. Cautious. Slow.

Until Weber.

A confident pup—with a flair for the dramatic—Weber makes sure it's safe for John to pick up the pace again. To look up from the ground as they speed along. With newfound confidence flowing through their bond, John's figuring out something new: a life with movement, momentum, and meaning.

"Weber's given me new hope for change," John says. "He's expanded my world. It's a great feeling."

Weber was raised by Jerry Denne and Donna Becker.





Heather Tuck | Guide Dog Dino

Spring Hill, Florida

“Dino has fit into our family like he’s always been here. I’ve been lucky twice with my dogs.”

Dino was raised by Teresa Tebib, Shelly Honsberger, and Jessica & John White.

Sue Spicer | Guide Dog Halo

Sun City Center, Florida

“When you see Halo, it’s just joy. It’s just happiness.”

Halo was raised by Ky Sullivan.



Meaghan | Gold Star Family Dog Spooky

Houston, Texas

Meaghan was still holding the phone when it went silent. In that moment, she lost her fiancé, Joshua. Sixteen years later, gunfire at her daughter’s cheer competition brought the trauma rushing back—until Spooky arrived. She’s a steady presence, sensing pain before it’s spoken and offering comfort without being asked. “She is the piece that finished the puzzle for our family.”

Spooky was raised by Lori Hupp.



David Charnley | Service Dog Campbell

U.S. Navy Veteran 🇺🇸

Plant City, Florida

“Campbell connects with me on a level that’s not typical in a veteran’s day to day life. It feels like having what we call in the field a ‘battle buddy.’”

Campbell was raised by Ann & Paul Fortier.



Rich Krejsa Skilled Companion Dog Higgins

U.S. Air Force Veteran 🇺🇸

Franklin, Tennessee

“My life has changed. Higgins is giving us that little spark that we lost.”

Higgins was raised by Sarah Byrd, Emily Skywark, and Jennifer & Leah Mortensen.

Jeremy Curry | Guide Dog Diesel

Leo, Indiana

“Just having a partner to work with again—it’s more freedom and confidence than anything else.”

Diesel was raised by Judy McKerlie, Linda & Tom Wilson, Susan Lynn, and Maelynn Beevers.





“Jessie Mae’s helped me become more confident. It’s so cool to see how one dog can change someone’s life.”

Alissa | Guide Dog Jessie Mae

Jessie Mae was raised by Henrietta Brown.

Kaitlyn Deverson | Guide Dog Richie

Port St. Lucie, Florida

“Richie makes me feel so happy. He’s my best buddy and my superhero.”

Richie was raised by Gail & Patrick Gagliardi.



Andrew | Skilled Companion Dog CeCe

U.S. Marine Corps Veteran 🇺🇸

Coeur d’Alene, Idaho

“CeCe doesn’t even feel like a dog. She just feels like a friend that listens. She’s amazing.”

CeCe was raised by Jessica Keifer.



Ken Leff

Skilled Companion Dog Dee

U.S. Navy Veteran 🇺🇸

Rotunda West, Florida

“Dee’s just a bright spot in my life. She makes me laugh, and I learn something new every day from her.”

Dee was raised by Paula & Jeff Herr.





Dennis Benham | Guide Dog Delta

Tampa, Florida

“Delta makes me feel more confident. I can trust him to get me around. He’s been a godsend.”

Delta was raised by Cailin Winokur.



Debbie Dixon | Service Dog Lucky

U.S. Army Veteran 🇺🇸

Warren, Michigan

Only the span of an ocean could bring her peace.

The trauma was too raw. The social circles too small. The risk of running into the people who ripped her world apart was too great. So, Debbie fled to the Middle East. For 30 years, she built a life half a world away from the pain. But distance doesn’t always mean escape.

When Debbie returned to the U.S., the past was waiting for her. Every crowd, every man—a threat. She shut out the world. She funneled her vibrant, outgoing personality through her keyboard, the screen the only safe window she had left to society.

“I became reclusive, living life through a computer,” Debbie says. “I thought, I’m

going to die inside this house, and no one would even know unless they checked online.”

Enter Lucky.

With Lucky’s gentle presence, Debbie stepped outside—and fear loosened its grip. Life came back in a rush: in-person yoga classes, stained glass workshops, farmers markets. She’s reclaiming the decades she lost, everything she missed out on. She doesn’t need an ocean between her and the past anymore—just Lucky by her side.

“Lucky is an oasis of peace for me. She gives me a sense of purpose,” Debbie says. “This is a whole new life, like I’ve been reborn.”

Lucky was raised by Jennifer & James Szabo.

Niki Walker | Guide Dog Libby

Fort Pierce, Florida

One moment Niki was working. The next, her vision became distorted—and life changed. “I worked there for 28 years . . . and that was the last day I worked,” she says. With Libby by her side, she moves freely now. “I don’t feel like I’m constantly focusing anymore,” Niki says. “This is freedom.”

Libby was raised by Minda & Marten Weldon.



Anonymous | Therapy Dog Thompson

Washington, D.C.

“Marines light up when they see Thompson. He brings a sparkle to people’s eyes.”

Thompson was raised by Annie & Anthony Camacho.





Rebecca | Service Dog Lola

U.S. Army Veteran 🇺🇸

Sarasota, Florida

“Lola is the second heartbeat in the house. She’s made all the difference in the world.”

Lola was raised by Terry Rosnick.

**Bob Putnam
Skilled Companion Dog Carter**

U.S. Army Veteran 🇺🇸

Sun City Center, Florida

“He isn’t just a pet to us. Carter is family.”

Carter was raised by Kelly Roberts.



**Lara & Family
Skilled Companion Dog Ellie**

U.S. Army 🇺🇸

“It’s impossible for any of us to rush past Ellie without stopping for belly rubs and snuggles. We tell her all the time: God knew exactly what He was doing when He gave us you.”

Ellie was raised by Amy Glisson.

Eric | Skilled Companion Dog Electa

U.S. Navy 🇺🇸

San Diego, California

“The emotion I feel for Electa right now is joy, bordering on euphoria. She has become a part of our family. Everyone is beyond happy. We are looking forward to what adventures await us.”

Electa was raised by Jocelyn & Carl Hargrove.



Reagan Waycaster | Guide Dog Tony

Canton, Georgia

“Tony gives me the freedom to go—without someone telling me where to step next. We’re figuring it out together. And I’m excited to see where we go.”

Tony was raised by Carolyn Baugh and Patty Watts.

Whitey Adams | Guide Dog Cindy

U.S. Army Veteran 🇺🇸

Rock Hill, South Carolina

“Cindy is precision personified. She is calm, cool, and collected. Cindy is dynamite!”

Cindy was raised by Sharon & Jim Skiles.





Mark Thornsborough | Guide Dog Grace

Lakewood Ranch, Florida

“Grace gave me the belief that I can lead a normal life. She’s given me so much confidence. When I’ve got Grace in the harness, I feel proud. I feel like myself again.”

Grace was raised by Missy & Maiya Wise.

Jazmine McCall | Guide Dog Birdy

Ardmore, Pennsylvania

Jazmine spent her life caring for others—17 foster children, four of her own, and her veteran uncle—all while slowly losing her sight. When the cane couldn’t keep up, Birdy stepped in. Now, this soulful, spunky guide helps Jazmine reclaim the little moments: safe school drop-offs, french fries after karate, and joy. “There was a before Birdy,” Jazmine says. “And now... there’s living.”

Birdy was raised by Marya Turley, Tiffany Walters, and Sharon & Julie Michael.



William Tugie Skilled Companion Dog Abby

U.S. Coast Guard Veteran 🇺🇸

Enfield, Connecticut

“When I got Abby, it was like she flipped a switch in me. She has made a world of difference. Abby has brightened my life. I’m a happier person because of her.”

Abby was raised by Marti Phelan.



Nichole Gruber | Therapy Dog Captain

U.S. Air Force Veteran 🇺🇸

114th Fighter Wing, South Dakota Air National Guard

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

When airmen return to the 114th Fighter Wing from deployment, they’re carrying more than just their gear.

They wear fatigue on their faces. Responsibility lies heavy on their shoulders. The uniform comes off—the weight doesn’t. There’s always another mission, another call, another load to carry.

Nichole Gruber knows that load well. A 27-year Air Force veteran, she now works in prevention at the base, supporting commanders and helping airmen handle the stress and intensity of military life.

“I kept thinking—something different could help lighten the burden for a minute,”

Nichole says. “A distraction from the intense mission that we have.”

That’s when Captain stepped in.

With tail wags like a propeller and a heart as open as the sky, Captain brings a smile to everyone on base. She softens the blow of hard conversations, offering love and comfort. Captain draws people together while boosting morale. Steady and intuitive, she brings calm where it’s needed—and joy where it’s been missing.

“Captain’s a gift to this base. Hundreds of people are excited about her being here,” Nichole says. “And I probably need her as much as they do.”

Captain was raised by Trish Schwarzkopf.



Dave Denton | Service Dog Stella

U.S. Air Force Veteran 🇺🇸
Oakland, Florida

“She protects my left flank. My wife would always stand on my left and run interference. Well now Stella does that. That’s been the biggest blessing I have with her.”

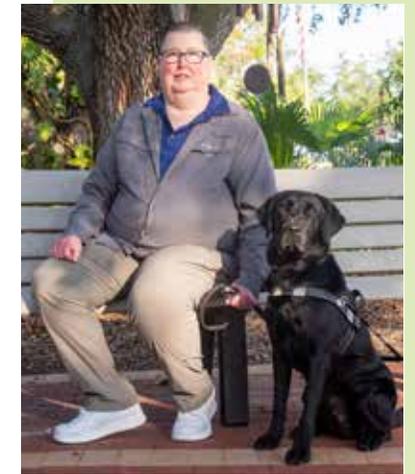
Stella was raised by Paula Sedita.

Robin | Guide Dog Riley

Florida

“When I look at Riley, I think about how lucky I am to have such a great dog. I’ve never felt as bonded to a dog as I feel with Riley. He gets me.”

Riley was raised by Haley Mannil and Aydin Anbarci.



**Matthew Swift
Skilled Companion Dog Honor**

U.S. Air Force Veteran 🇺🇸
Lithia, Florida

“He wants to please, and he’s always looking to see what he can do for me. I so appreciate his companionship.”

Honor was raised by Fran Sirvio & Mike Smith and Sandra Terranova.

**Michael Muzio
Skilled Companion Dog B.J.**

U.S. Air Force Veteran 🇺🇸
Guffrey, Colorado

“It’s like finding a new best friend. It’s kind of a whole new excitement. B.J. gives me purpose.”

B.J. was raised by Karl & Sharon Whitehead.



**Anonymous
Skilled Companion Dog Chubb**

U.S. Marine Corps Veteran 🇺🇸

“Calm and reassured. That’s how I feel when I look at him.”

Chubb was raised by Kim Chowning.

Steven Byrd | Guide Dog Trishee

Washington, D.C.

“Trishee’s exactly the one for me. She makes everything better.”

Trishee was raised by Ally Cagle.



"I'm a happier person. This is the start of a new chapter. It has finally started."



Ray Wilson | Guide Dog Lulu

Summerville, South Carolina

Lulu was raised by Jennifer & Jimmy Ross and Paula Zamudio.



Denver | Skilled Companion Dog Tammy

She didn't need perfection. She needed a friend.

Denver stood at the top of the slide, but her vision loss kept her frozen. Hearing echoes of laughter from the kids who made it to the bottom, she longed to be like them.

"I think she gets frustrated she can't see certain things," Denver's mom, Jaclyn, says. "She loves life. Denver just loves getting out there, so she doesn't want her vision to hold her back."

Enter Tammy, her warm and encouraging companion.

Knowing she has Tammy for friendship and support has allowed Denver to take on new adventures. Together, they go outside to play fetch and take walks with mom through the neighborhood.

"I tell her, when you're upset, you know that you have Tammy here to comfort you," Jaclyn says. "I hoped that she would always have someone. A forever friend. And now Denver has Tammy."

As Denver grows, she will accomplish, strive, and make mistakes. And no matter what, Tammy will be there, not to make things perfect, but to be the friend she's always needed.

Tammy was raised by Sylvie Keller.



Shirley Tracy | Guide Dog Eddie

Sun City Center, Florida

*“With every walk, I trust Eddie more.
And I think he trusts me more, too.”*

Eddie was raised by Kim & Blair McFarlane.

Tammy | Service Dog Dargo

Winter Garden, Florida

U.S. Army Veteran 🇺🇸

At first, it felt safe—familiar walls, quiet routines. But over time, comfort turned to confinement. Tammy stopped making plans. Even opening the door felt impossible. Then came Dargo. He didn’t just help her through the day—he helped her reclaim her independence, her confidence, her future. “He’s given me hope. I can face the world because he’s at my side,” Tammy says.

Dargo was raised by Dorrie LaBianca & Anthony Simone.



Gwyneth Arace Service Dog Stevie

U.S. Army Veteran 🇺🇸
Rotonda West, Florida

*“It’s just kind of this silent agreement.
She’s like, ‘I’m here, you’re good.’
Stevie is giving me a gift. I feel like
I’m starting to get some of my
autonomy back.”*

Stevie was raised by Eleanor “Sissy” Scharf.

Hildegard Skilled Companion Dog Sunny

Dahlonega, Georgia

*“Sunny is giving Hildegard her
independence back. Sunny has helped
Hilde find herself again.”*

Sunny was raised by Tracey & Scott Kaplan.



Kristen Quinn | Guide Dog Ember

Miami, Florida

*“I’ve got an incredibly good girl by my side.
And I know she’s definitely going to lead me
on the right path.”*

Ember was raised by Rhiannon Roe & Jared Ramos.



Thank You!

Your thoughtful and compassionate gift is making a difference and creating a lasting impact through meaningful giving.

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Make a Lasting Difference

The Dogs Inc **Cornerstone Society** is an exceptional community of like-minded friends. Members make a profound impact on our mission through a multi-year commitment.

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Membership Levels

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Benefactor | \$5,000–\$9,999 per year

Visionary | \$10,000–\$49,999 per year

Guardian | \$50,000–\$99,999 per year

Founder | \$100,000+ per year



Enjoy exclusive events and other benefits.
Join at dogsinc.org/CS or call **941.729.5665**.



Alumni Update

Where are they now?

One dog can change a life — just ask our alumni. New adventures, days of hope, nights of peace — the change these exceptional dogs make doesn't end when they meet their soulmates. It grows. With every smile, act of love, and moment of freedom, these special bonds reach greater depths and soar to new heights.



Peggy Wilkins & Service Dog Faith
Matched 2016

"She is always close by. If I had known what a godsend she would be, I would have applied years earlier."



Darren Godwin & Service Dog Coach
Matched 2024

"Coach is part of me—who I am and what I'm able to achieve. Our partnership is seamless. She makes it possible for me to spend more time with my family. Even falling in public is not bad anymore. Instead of being an embarrassment, it's an opportunity to show off Coach's skills."





Tony Ortiz & Service Dog Donna Matched 2023

"I've been able to attend in-person support group meetings. I've even been able to handle long trips I never would have taken without Donna. People treat me better when she's around. She's better than advertised."



John & Skilled Companion Dog Kelce Matched 2024

"Kelce is a wonderful companion to my whole family. While hiking in Vermont, Kelce swam with us in streams and lakes. He is always eager to please and always knows when to step in and give a nudge or a kiss. He keeps getting better all the time."



Joe Bogart & Guide Dog Pomp Matched 2024

"Pomp has made a big difference. When I'm out traveling routes, I can relax and enjoy the walk, knowing he's got me covered. Pomp guides me effortlessly. He is ecstatic to greet me each morning, and I'm more relaxed just by his presence. He isn't just a guide dog. He is Pompey the Great!"



Michael Harrell & Guide Dog Honor Matched 2016

"My guide dogs have been the only way in which I have been able to live a fully independent life. Not only have they provided stress-free mobility, but they have been wonderful, faithful companions. Honor is always at my side. If for some reason we are separated for a time, she does zoomies when I return."



Jackie Schiemann & Guide Dog Tyrus Matched 2023

"Recently we went to New York City. We flew there all by ourselves and wandered the city on our own. I wasn't afraid to go out or go to the top of the Empire State building. We did it all together. Two feet and four paws. Together as a team. It was a trip to remember. I'm not afraid to go out on my own with Ty by my side. I know he has my back no matter what! Tyrus is my world, and I believe I am his."



Adriane Reese & Service Dog Esther Matched 2024

"Esther has helped me more than I can say, guiding me, grounding me, giving me back parts of my life I thought were lost. She's an unwavering presence that brings me joy every day. From the first moment that she came to me, her joy became mine."



Larry France & Service Dog Shadow Matched 2018

"My dog is my life. Our love for each other is the best part of our world. We are never separated—we take on life side by side. Shadow knows me, and I understand him. We are a team."



Callie & Guide Dog River Matched 2024

"I went on a walk as the sun was setting, after dark. I had no idea where we were going, but River never hesitated and was practically strutting because of how proud of himself he was. He guided me without breaking stride. I never would have been able to do that without clinging to a friend before. I was so proud of him and myself. I'm going to college in two weeks, and I know I can rely on him to keep me safe."

Painting the world BRIGHTER



A canvas not yet painted.
A palette of purpose.
A life longing for the purple
of laughter, the blue of
independence, and the happy
hue of something new.

For the one whose landscape
may feel gray, I fill her heart
with shades of hope.

You hold the brush, adding
coats of love and strokes of
change to someone's future.



Help paint the picture.

dogsinc.org