

Update

Leader Dogs for the Blind



Back to School
Tripp Gullede and Leader Dog Dakota

Fall Puts a Focus on Learning

Hello!

As we head into fall and are busy with “back to school” activities, we tend to think about our youth and the new and wonderful things they will learn during the school year. However, all of us are learning each and every day no matter our age, profession or background.

For example, our client/dog teams are continuously learning just like other “students.” For first time guide dog users this is especially true. Both client and Leader Dog continue to learn as their relationship develops and grows over time—traveling in new places, using GPS technology, etc.

Leader Dogs continue to learn about their human partners through observation. They learn to understand the slightest body movements and what these indicate—especially when it comes to meal or work times! As our clients begin to trust their Leader Dogs, they are continually amazed at how much the dogs retain. Many times after visiting a place just once, a Leader Dog will return to the location and remember which door they used previously, even if it’s been several months. That is truly amazing and I am sure many of us often wish our sense of direction was that keen!

Experienced guide dog users and their Leader Dogs are also continuously learning as they travel to new environments through changes in their home environment, working through challenges that arise during road construction or major weather changes.

This fall is also “back to school” for our dogs in training as they are now housed in the new state-of-the-art Canine Development Center. This world-class facility promotes learning by reducing stress and increasing human-dog interaction. An expanded veterinary clinic better serves the health needs of our dogs, and the new puppy and breeding stock areas give us the ability to provide specialized care.

So as you can see, it’s always “back to school” here at Leader Dog and we wouldn’t have it any other way!

Lastly, on behalf of the people we serve, I want thank each of you for your passionate dedication and continued support of Leader Dogs for the Blind and our mission. I specifically want to recognize the Lions and congratulate them on their 100-year anniversary. What an accomplishment! Leader Dogs for the Blind is humbled and honored to be founded by Lions and to be one of the many fine organizations that Lions support.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Update and take pleasure in “learning” more about our organization!

Susan M. Daniels

Susan M. Daniels
President and CEO



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One Person, Three Dogs and Four Degrees *By Rachele Kniffen*

“When I graduated from Central Michigan University with my undergraduate degree in political science, geology and anthropology...I guess I didn’t know what I wanted to be when I grew up,” laughs LDB Client Jennifer Tatomir. “My first Leader Dog, Rudy, was by my side.”

Like many Leader Dog clients, Jennifer received her first Leader Dog before heading off to college, and she was glad she did. “I don’t know how I would have made it through my undergrad or graduate school without a Leader Dog. They are emotional support, friendship and wonderful ice breakers that make professionals and students both more comfortable being around me,” explains Jennifer. She found that many people hadn’t spent much time around someone with a disability and didn’t talk with her out of fear of saying the wrong thing. “But having the dog gives people something to talk about when they approach you. It puts them at ease,” says Jennifer.

Jennifer’s second and third Leader Dogs, Blazer and Zeke respectively, were with her as she finished three masters degrees in Southeast Asian studies, library science and social work. One thing Jennifer appreciated during school was that her dogs provided a great deal of comic relief. Jennifer had one professor for several classes who had the habit of repeating her stories multiple times. The professor would preface the story by telling the students to stop her if she had told it before. “One time, there was dead silence because no one wanted to be the one to tell her we’d heard the story many times,” says Jennifer. “Then all the sudden from under the table you hear Blazer let out the loudest snore he’d ever given. Then the teacher said, ‘If I put the dog to sleep, then I guess he’s heard this one too many times.’”

Jennifer’s advice to someone contemplating getting a Leader Dog before college is to think seriously about if a dog will fit into the lifestyle you want to live. A lot of love and care is involved because you’re responsible for the emotional and physical well-being of another living being. “However, if you’re willing to put the commitment in, the rewards are so far beyond the words that I have to describe them. I’d need several books just to express what my Leader Dogs have meant to me,” says Jennifer.

Currently, Jennifer is working on an MBA. She also plays violin, enjoys creative writing and volunteers when possible with local veterans’ organizations.



Jennifer and LD Rudy

“I don’t know how I would have made it through my undergrad or graduate school without a Leader Dog. They are emotional support, friendship and wonderful ice breakers.”



Jennifer and LD Blazer



Jennifer and LD Zeke

Letters from our Alumni

Presented by



Kyla Miller and LD Winter

It has been a little over a year since LD Winter and Kyla Miller became a team.

LD Winter has given Kyla the confidence she needed to be independent as she embarked on college life. This year they are sophomores at SMC, have new classes, teachers and even suite mates that are now family. Thank you Leader Dogs for the Blind. I can't express my gratitude enough.

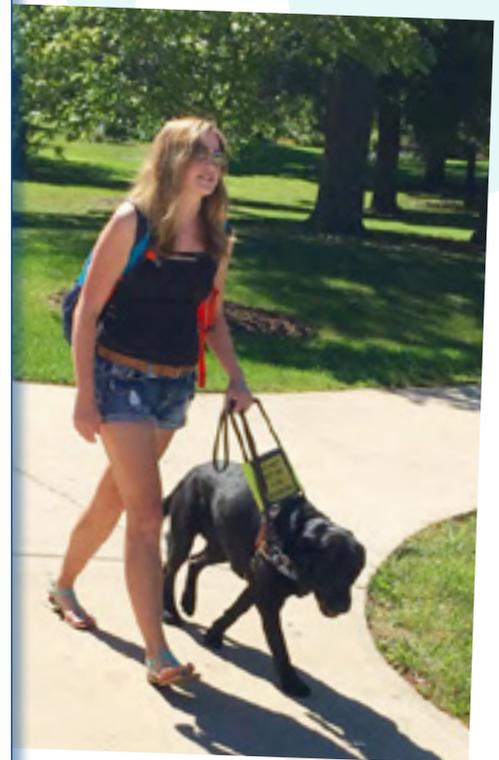
Lori Conrad-Miller
[Mother of LDB client Kyla]
Facebook message - September 22, 2016

I can't imagine college without [Leader Dog] Frasier. He makes navigating campus so easy and at times, I think he knows it better than I do. From my dorm I can say "Find Heide" and he'll take me across campus to Heide Hall. From inside I'll say "Find Journalism" and he'll lead me up three flights of stairs, weave me through the crowded hallway straight into the correct classroom and right to my seat next to the cute senior. I'll sit down and he'll crawl under my desk, where he'll remain until class is over. All of this happens in a matter of 10 minutes. With a cane, the same process would take double the time, and I'd probably end up in the wrong classroom.

Frasier gives me independence. I don't have to rely on others to guide me to a seat in the dining hall or ask to be led to the counter of the café. Frasier does it for me. I can take a 15-minute walk to Wal-Mart on my own agenda, instead of relying on my friends who can drive. Frasier can find the baskets and lead me to our frequently visited locations, then straight to the cashier and out the door.

Frasier is also great to meet new people. He's a conversation starter and since having him I've become a more outgoing person. Every now and then, he'll grab the attention of a cute guy, even if that means misbehaving, but I'm not complaining.

Shannon Columb



Shannon Columb and LD Frasier

... more letters

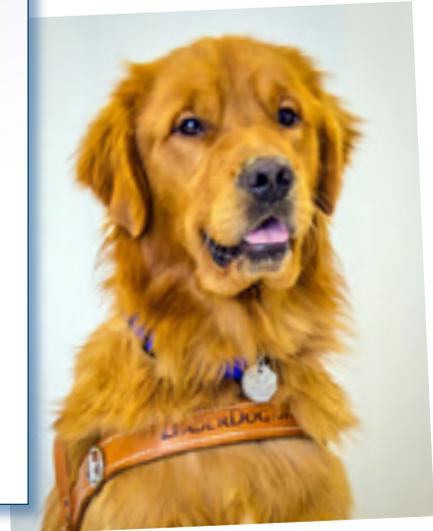
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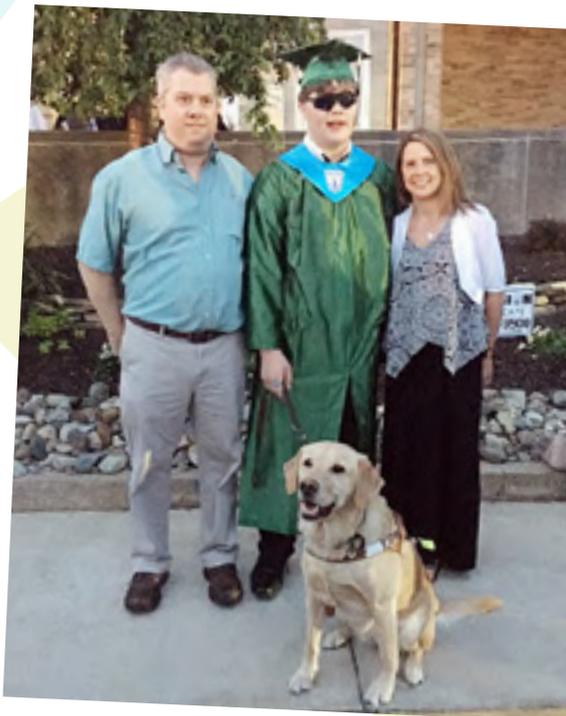
I want to thank you for the privilege of being able to raise Leader Dog Norm while at the Fort Dodge Correctional Facility (FDCF) from March 21, 2013 through March 20, 2014. I've recently read about him and it makes my heart swell with pride to think I had a part (albeit small) in his job as a Leader Dog. This program has impacted me, and brought me success in the last year since my release in June of 2015.

Your program inside FDCF is amazing and without it and Norm I would not be the successful man I am today. I'm working as a chef and attending Iowa Western Community College earning my degree in culinary arts and hotel/restaurant management. I owe you all my life, and that debt includes my puppy, Norm. So...thanks.

Michael Hardesty



LD Norm



Joshua celebrates his high school graduation with his parents, Tom Foreman and Judy Norwak with LD Pippa by his side.

I got my dog, Pippa, in June of 2015. She has been with me for over a year and has worked very well with me.

I got her in the summer before my senior year of high school. The idea was that I would get her before college and then we would already know how to work with each other. High school was a lot of trial and error for the both of us. We each had our mistakes, but overall it was a great experience.

In the few weeks I have been in college, Pippa and I have had our ups and downs. I would personally say its been more ups then downs though. The first two weeks or so were rough. We were both learning campus and we may have gotten lost a time or three. Around week three things got much easier. We knew where we were going, we felt more confident, and we stopped getting lost. She helps me get to class and it truly amazes me how intelligent she is. Pippa is a great Leader Dog, but she also likes to play in her off time.

Pippa is one of the most playful dogs I have ever met. She's a bundle of joy and energy, and enjoys running around when I take her harness off. Overall Pippa is one of the best things to happen to me, and I thank Leader Dog for all they have done for both of us.

Joshua Foreman



Full Speed Ahead *By Jennifer Wilkinson*

There is no shortage of preparation needed for heading off to college, but being unable to visually orient yourself to a large, busy campus adds another layer of complexity. “We spent three and a half days on campus and downtown,” Tripp Gullidge says. “Even that might not have been enough, but it’s what we had to work with.”

The adventure began last year, when Tripp and his Leader Dog, yellow Labrador Dakota, came to Auburn University. Tripp is studying music performance and music education, which means his schedule is packed. “Music majors have a lot of classes that are only one or two credits, so being a full-time student means you don’t have a lot of free time,” Tripp says.

“Everyone I talked to said such good things [about Leader Dog],” Tripp recalls. “I never really considered going anywhere else.”

Tripp was aware from a young age that he was likely to lose his vision. When he was just in grade school, a speaker came to his school and gave a presentation about guide dogs. Tripp knew from that moment that he wanted a guide dog, but he still had some residual vision, which can complicate working with a dog. When Tripp was a sophomore, a counselor recommended Leader Dog’s Summer Experience Camp. Tripp was intrigued, but the camp was already full. The next year, Tripp was unable to go. College was quickly approaching, but Tripp had already made his decision: he was going to get a Leader

Photo by Jeffrey D. Etheridge /AU Photographic Services



Tripp walks to class with LD Dakota.

If you could offer three pieces of advice to a person who's blind and headed to college, what would they be?

- 1 Don't be afraid to advocate for yourself.** You have to be comfortable going to people such as professors, administrators or RAs and talking about your needs.
- 2 Allot time to orient yourself properly.** With or without a guide dog, knowing your environment beforehand will save time and stress.
- 3 Branch out.** Don't just go to class and go home. You can't be afraid to branch out and try new things.

Dog. "Everyone I talked to said such good things," Tripp recalls. "I never really considered going anywhere else."

Tripp is a fast walker, and he met his match in Leader Dog Dakota. "In the beginning, he was sort of dragging me down the street," Tripp says. "But we found our balance."



Tripp plays the mellophone in the marching band.



Tripp relaxes with LD Dakota.

Even though Tripp knew how guide dogs worked, he was impressed by Dakota's skills as they trained together. "Probably the third or fourth day, I would get back from the routes, and people would be talking about the obstacles on the routes. Dakota was taking me around things I didn't even know were there, which is when I realized how gifted he was." Shortly afterward, during night travel training, Tripp and Dakota fell into sync. "He didn't miss a curb and I didn't miss a command, and that's when I knew we were going to be a good team."

At Auburn, Tripp continues to work on his partnership with Dakota as they traverse campus. "It's definitely made me a lot more responsible. My schedule is not just about me anymore. On a daily basis, I need to hold up my end of the communication. I need to make sure I'm doing everything right so Dakota can do everything right." In addition to the mobility and speed that Dakota gives to Tripp, Tripp also appreciates "the pure joy of having a dog."

Dakota is a popular sight at Auburn. "He attracts a lot of attention. He's a stud and he knows it," Tripp says. Tripp has made a tradition of taking Dakota to a

Photo by Jeffrey D. Etheridge /AU Photographic Services



Tripp *(continued)*

sitting area in the music hall during finals week, where he takes off Dakota's harness and lets his exam-stressed peers enjoy some Labrador love.

In addition to his classes, leading Bible studies and learning the guitar, Tripp is also a member of Auburn's marching band. Even though his list of activities doesn't leave him and Dakota with a lot of down time, Tripp thinks that's what college is all about. "You're on your own for the first time, and part of the beauty of that is meeting new people and testing the waters and finding different groups," he says. "Have no fear. Embrace college."



Photo by Jeffrey D. Etheridge / AU Photographic Services

Tripp (fourth from the left) enjoys playing in the marching band.



Three Ways to Give



MyLeaderDog Crowdfunding Pages

Create an online platform to encourage your network to donate in support of special occasions, events and various Leader Dog causes. Visit MyLeaderDog.org.



Host an Event

You can plan an event of any kind, for any occasion, of any size. Invite your friends, family and community and donate the proceeds to Leader Dogs for the Blind. Contact us at 888/777.5332 or events@leaderdog.org.



General Giving

Make a donation by making a small sacrifice—perhaps a day or week of morning lattes? Then visit LeaderDog.org and GIVE the money you save by clicking DONATE. Here are examples of what your generosity can buy: \$5—Microchip for one dog, \$10—One food bowl and \$50—Vaccinations.



Ribbon Cutting Celebrates New Canine Center *By Rachelle Kniffen*

Excitement was in the air as Leader Dog President and CEO Sue Daniels and Board Chair John Hebert cut the ribbon signifying the opening of our new Canine Development Center. Though portions of the building have been in use for several months, and portions are still under construction, it was important that we took time to celebrate the significance of the Canine Center project.

An excerpt from Sue Daniels' comments:

"I stood in almost this exact spot on August 4, 2014 to mark the groundbreaking for this 14.5 million dollar renovation project. A project that is the largest and most significant in Leader Dog's 77-year history.

But August 4, 2014 was not the beginning of this project. This project started in 2011 when Leader Dog employees collectively discussed hopes for the future of Leader Dogs for the Blind. One of the main themes to arise was the need for a state-of-the-art facility for our dogs—a facility that would provide them the ideal learning and living environment.

[Today] we get to celebrate that our dogs are now living in a facility that promotes learning by reducing stress and increasing human-dog interaction—we celebrate that we have an expanded veterinary clinic to better serve the health needs of our dogs—we celebrate that the new puppy area and breeding stock area give us the ability to provide the specialized care needed by our dogs in these critical stages of life.

Throughout the process of visioning, planning, designing, raising money and construction we didn't lose our drive, because we know that the ability to better equip our dogs for their life-saving work is essential to continuing our mission of empowering people who are blind or visually impaired with lifelong skills for safe and independent daily travel."



On September 14, Leader Dog President and CEO Sue Daniels and Board Chair John Hebert happily cut the ribbon signifying the opening of the new Canine Development Center.



Leader Dog's Online Gift Shop

Just in time for your holiday shopping, the Leader Dog gift shop is now online!

Browse a selection of items from t-shirts, polos, hoodies, hats, mugs, bags and more! Our holiday cards are just \$20 (plus tax) for a box of 20 cards.

Visit LeaderDog.org and click on the "Gift Shop" button on the left navigation panel to start your holiday shopping today.





The Love Keeps Growing *By Dani Landolt*

Though Sellers Subaru continues to amaze us with their support and dedication to Leader Dog, we certainly were not surprised to learn that they have been recognized by Subaru of America as a Stellar Care recipient, one of the greatest honors bestowed by the corporate office. Sellers has also been recognized by Automotive News as one of the Top 100 dealerships to work for.

If their partnership with Leader Dog is any indication, Sellers will continue collecting award after award. An official corporate sponsor of Leader Dog and the presenting sponsor of Lead in the Holidays, Sellers Subaru also loves learning. In partnership with Leader Dog and L'Anse Cruese Public Schools and in celebration of back-to-school, Sellers recently released a video with tips for children returning to the classroom.



The Sellers Subaru team in Macomb, Michigan.



Check it out at facebook.com/SellersSubaru and be sure to like their page because there are more Leader Dog/Sellers Subaru videos to come.



A snippet from the Sellers back-to-school video featuring Future Leader Dogs and tips on returning to the classroom.

TIME FOR A NEW CAR? SHARE THE LOVE! FOR EVERY SUBARU PURCHASED AT SELLERS SUBARU BETWEEN NOVEMBER 18-JANUARY 2, SUBARU WILL MAKE A \$250 DONATION TO LEADER DOG. LAST YEAR, SELLERS DONATED MORE THAN \$29,000 TO LDB! VISIT SELLERSSUBARU.COM TO LEARN MORE.

Flying Blind

Leader Dog client Jim Platzer was featured on “Fox and Friends” for returning to the cockpit as an airplane pilot, and the world has noticed. Ashton Kutcher and Lil Wayne reposted the video on their facebook pages where it has received more than 1 million views. To watch Jim’s inspirational story, visit <http://insider.foxnews.com/2016/09/12/blind-pilot-jim-platzer-flying-skies-again>.

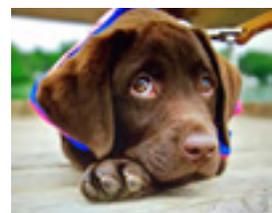
Jim Platzer also travels the country with his Leader Dog conducting speaking engagements. To learn more visit exceed2succeed.com.



Giving a Piece of Your Heart *By Cheryl Sacrates*

Robert Ingersoll once said, “We rise by lifting others.” This quote resonates in the hearts and minds of many puppy raisers, who raise a Future Leader Dog for a year, and then have to return it to Leader Dog to start its formal training.

As many people can imagine, raisers grow attached to the puppies they raise. It can be very difficult when the day comes for the puppy to be returned. While it’s not easy, they do it because they believe in the mission of Leader Dog. I can tell you from personal experience, one of the most common questions puppy raisers get when out with their puppies is, “How can you give up that puppy after having it for a whole year?” My answer is, “This dog will be the light in someone’s darkness. If you knew someone who was blind and could give them back their independence, wouldn’t you?” This is how some of our other puppy raisers respond to this question:



“It’s hard. I cry every time. But there is nothing like seeing that little puppy who peed on your carpet grow up to become someone’s eyes. These puppies are so much more than a dog to their partners—they are a lifeline. I raise so that someone else can have the freedom I have in my own life.” ~Kayla Dever

“Yes it is hard to give them up, but I keep reminding myself that there is someone who needs her help, and she will make their life so much better.” ~Marcia Bedard

“I remind them that there is someone else who needs the dog much more than I do and explain the impact that the dog will make in that persons’ life.” ~Mike Pikelis

“This is how.” [shows picture [below] of the first puppy she raised with his human partner]. ~AJ Rourke



“That’s the answer to someone’s prayer right there.” (as she points to her puppy) ~Julie Hogenson

“The great thing about Leader Dog is that the dogs get to choose if being a guide is the future they would like for themselves. Seeing the difference they make in the lives of the clients is amazing. Having a small part in making that working and personal relationship happen makes it all worth it.” ~Amy Schupska

“It’s like raising kids. You don’t raise them to live with you forever, but to go forth in the world and do what they can to make it a better place.” ~Suzanne Ramos

“It’s not like I’m dropping him off at the shelter. He’s going to the frat house to play and learn with friends. He had a destiny greater than sitting at home with me and he deserves the chance to live it.” ~Elizabeth Secumski Reinhold



So there you have it. A lot of good reasons to raise a Leader Dog puppy. If you are interested in learning more or applying to raise a Future Leader Dog, please visit LeaderDog.org/volunteers/about-puppy-raising.



Lions Celebrate 100 Years of Service

Lions Clubs International and Leader Dog A SHARED HISTORY

1917—Melvin Jones tells members of his local business club they should reach beyond business issues and address the betterment of their communities and the world. Jones' group, the Business Circle of Chicago, agreed.

1925—Helen Keller addresses the Lions Clubs International Convention in Cedar Point, Ohio and challenged Lions to become “knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness.”

1938—Three Lions established Leader Dogs for the Blind to train guide dogs.

1939—The first class graduates four clients and guide dogs.

1951—Leader Dog welcomes PDG Harold “Pock” Pocklington as Executive Director.

1953—Melvin Jones gives Leader Dog his personal endorsement.

1960—Leader Dog holds its first Summer Visits for Michigan Lion Leadership.

1970s – Leader Dog expands Summer Visits to Lion Leadership nationwide.

2002—Lions help Leader Dog reach capital campaign goal for a new residence facility.

2006—Leader Dog President Bill Hansen voted in as International Director for Lions Club International.

2013—A record number of Lions clubs (40) earn Top Dog status for donating \$5,000+ to Leader Dogs for the Blind.

2013—LION Magazine lists Leader Dog among the “10 Brilliant Breakthroughs in Service.”

2014—Leader Dog celebrates 75 years of service, having paired over 14,500 guide dogs with people who are blind, visually impaired or Deaf-Blind.

2016—LIONS Magazine counts visiting Leader Dogs' campus as #31 in their “How Lionistic Are You?” quiz.

2016—Lions helped Leader Dog reach its \$14.5 million goal on the largest capital campaign in Leader Dog's history to renovate the almost 100,000 square foot canine facility.

*Congratulations on
100 Years of Service!*





The Four P's of Leaving a Legacy *By Roberta Trzos*

Presented by



Plan, Procrastinate, Prepare and Purpose

It all starts with a plan. We may plan something small like a monthly budget or a week of meals, but we also have to plan for the big things like retirement or how to leave a lasting legacy.

Many people procrastinate when it comes to legacy planning. Instead, we spend time on what is immediately in front of us and leave legacy planning "for the future."

Planning a legacy takes preparation. You must think about what you want your legacy to mean, what you are passionate about and whose life you want to impact in years to come.

Here are a few tips to help you stop procrastinating and start planning and preparing a legacy with a purpose that is meaningful to you.



Tip #1: Prepare a Will or a Trust

This is the biggest step and the hardest to take. Once you take this step, you will find it easy to finalize the documents that carry out your legacy. In your Will or Trust, set aside one or more bequests for your favorite charities. One that makes your heart smile.

Tip #2: Don't forget your life insurance policies, retirement plans or bank-investment accounts

Include your favorite charities as beneficiary or owner of a life insurance policy. Talk to your agent to find out the dollar value of your policies. You might be surprised that you have more than you'll need; this excess can be part of your legacy. This will be covered further in a future issue of Update.

Naming a favorite charity as a beneficiary on your retirement accounts, bank accounts and investments is as easy as contacting your financial institution(s) and filling out some forms. This is a quick way to make a lasting legacy.

You don't need to procrastinate any longer. To learn more now, or to discuss how to start your plan, please contact Roberta Trzos, CFRE, manager of gift planning, at 248/659.5014 or rtrzos@leaderdog.org.

Mission Moment

"[My Leader Dog] allows me to get around better without having to rely on others. I can do things with my kids on my own. I'm more at ease."

Tina Gruchow



Tina Gruchow shown with her first Leader Dog, Jetta, walking her children to school.

John Hebert Receives Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser Award

John W. Hebert, outgoing Leader Dogs for the Blind board chair, was named the Edmund T. Ahee Jewel Award recipient for Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Greater Detroit Chapter. Nominated by Leader Dog, Hebert's more than three decades of philanthropic leadership, board membership and personal giving have benefited multiple nonprofits and educational institutions. His service to Leader Dog culminated in achieving 100% board giving to both annual and Canine Development Center campaigns. He also supports other vibrant nonprofits including the American Red Cross, Detroit Rotary Club and the Friends of Detroit Public Library. The John W. Hebert Accounting Scholarship award, established in 1988 at Hebert's alma mater, Northern Michigan University (NMU), is given annually. John also serves on the NMU Foundation board.



John Hebert thanks supporters of the Canine Development Center campaign at the ribbon cutting on September 14.

Leader Dog President and CEO Sue Daniels will present John with this honor at the AFP Greater Detroit's National Philanthropy Day celebration on Thursday, November 10. AFP of Greater Detroit, a membership resource utilized by fundraising and nonprofit professionals throughout southeastern Michigan, seeks to foster the development and growth of fundraising professionals, to preserve and enhance philanthropy and volunteerism, and to promote the highest ethical standards in the fundraising profession worldwide.



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Youth and University Fundraising Spotlight *By Maureen Smith*

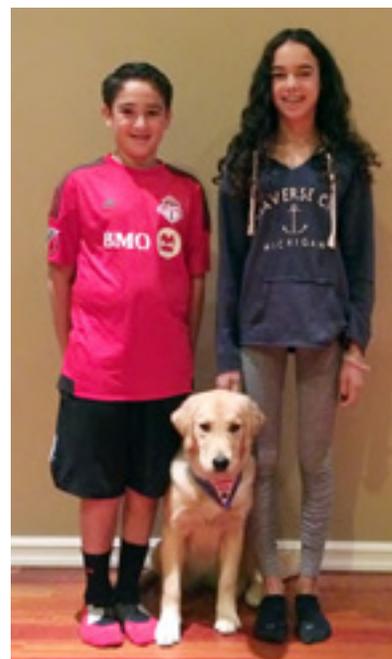
Every year school groups and related organizations host fundraisers to support Leader Dog. Whether it's a group of students, a scout troop, or an entire school or sorority, each support Leader Dog with unique events that provide much needed funds for our programs and services.

MacArthur K-8 University Academy in Southfield, Michigan has been fundraising for Leader Dog since 2012. Their "Pennies for Puppies" penny wars program has raised over \$7,700, just from students, teachers and administration contributing spare change. LDB Puppy Raisers Trudi and Joe Nowak help kick off their program each year with a visit and LDB presentation.

Delta Gamma at Michigan State University (MSU) hosted their first "Pizza and Puppies" fundraiser in 2016. Puppy raisers joined the sisters of Delta Gamma on campus, where students enjoyed a slice of pizza while learning about LDB and visiting with Future Leader Dogs. Delta Gamma has been dedicated to sight conservation since 1936 and is closely aligned with Leader Dog's mission and values. In addition to MSU, the Delta Gamma chapters at Albion College and the University of Michigan have fundraisers planned for the 2016-2017 school year.

Twins Mia and Miles Hirsch are raising Future Leader Dog Scarlette for their B'Nai Mitzvah. With the help of their parents, Mia and Miles attend monthly puppy classes with Scarlette and work on socializing her. Wanting to do more with their experience, the twins created a myLeaderDog personal crowdfunding page to raise money for LDB during their time as puppy raisers. They shared their page with family and friends through email and social media and have raised almost 90% of their \$3,500 goal.

To host a fundraiser or for additional information on how to get started on your own myLeaderDog personal fundraising page, please contact events@leaderdogsfortheblind.org.



LDB Puppy Raisers Mia and Miles Hirsch with FLD Scarlette

Legacy Society

Creating a provision for Leader Dogs for the Blind in your estate plans is a true partnership.

This prestigious society was established to recognize donors who have included Leader Dog in their financial or estate plans.

Please contact Roberta Trzos, CFRE, manager of gift planning, at 248/659.5014 to learn more about the Legacy Society.

New Legacy Society Members

Kathleen Latcha-Smith





1039 S. Rochester Road
Rochester Hills, MI 48307

Toll Free: 888/777.5332

Phone: 248/651.9011

leaderdog.org

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