








LEADER DOG AMBASSADOR GUIDE

Inspire Others to Follow You.



FOLLOW THE LEADER     
LeaderDog.org



LEADER DOGS
FOR THE BLIND



WHY WE CREATED THIS AMBASSADOR GUIDE

Leader Dogs for the Blind's mission would not be possible without your dedication and commitment to our organization. To sustain our efforts for years to come, and to serve as many people as possible, it is important for more people to know about Leader Dog. Our goal is for everyone who encounters us to understand:

- Our mission
- What we stand for
- Why we matter
- How we do what we do better than anyone

Together, we need to communicate a consistent message to family, friends and the surrounding communities. The kind of message that sparks a conversation, ignites passion and motivates people to take action.

As a result, Leader Dog will be able to continue to impact the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired, extend our outreach to new areas and build a bigger community of supporters. With this guide, you will be equipped with the information to help us succeed and make the people we serve unstoppable.

Everyone who talks about Leader Dog should be using the same language. Our goal is to have one powerful voice that is clear and consistent with every audience so our efforts can stand out above the rest. That is why we have taken the guesswork out of what to say.

ELEVATOR SPEECH

Leader Dog helps thousands of people who are blind, visually impaired or Deaf-Blind and in critical need of developing the skills required to travel safely and independently. Our services have a positive impact on our clients' confidence, health, employment opportunities, families and communities. Because we believe every person deserves equal opportunity, all programs are provided at no cost. Leader Dog is 100% funded through philanthropy and donations without federal, state or insurance support.

HOW WE COMMUNICATE OUR MESSAGE



HOW WE HELP





CONFIDENCE & INDEPENDENCE

By learning how to travel with a white cane or guide dog, people regain their sense of independence and confidence. Those who were afraid to walk down the sidewalk alone now travel without limits.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

After completing white cane or guide dog training, it is easier for our clients to live a healthy lifestyle. Their newfound confidence and ability for unlimited travel encourages mental and physical wellbeing.



EMPLOYMENT

Whether it is helping to provide our clients with the confidence to go to school or improve their ability to use mass transit to get to a job interview, Leader Dog programs position people to join the workforce or advance their career.



FAMILY & COMMUNITY

When people who are blind can travel safely and independently, the burden of care lifts from family and friends and peace of mind is restored. People who were isolated are now able to actively participate in their communities.



CONFIDENCE & INDEPENDENCE

Every year 75,000 people become blind or visually impaired in the United States. When this occurs, people who were independent must now rely on others for assistance.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

People with vision loss have a greater risk of health and wellness issues, both mental and physical. 43% live with depression. Many stay home out of fear resulting in social isolation, little physical exercise, family stress and multiple health conditions.



EMPLOYMENT

Due to travel limitations, a startling 60% of working age adults who are blind in the U.S. are unemployed. This causes financial hardship and can have negative psychological effects.



FAMILY & COMMUNITY

When someone loses their vision, the impact is far reaching. Family, friends and community often fear for their loved one's safety and wellbeing.

WHY IT MATTERS





**HOW WE
DO IT BETTER**



WE INNOVATE

When we see a need, we address it. We were the first organization to provide dedicated guide dog training for people who are Deaf-Blind, free GPS and training, an accelerated program to teach white cane travel and a leadership-based summer camp for teens.

WE LISTEN

Our services are not “one size fits all.” Our delivery models meet clients where they are. We customize services for clients who cannot leave work or family for an extended timeframe.

WE IMPROVE

We believe that just because something works does not mean we cannot do it better. We strive for the most effective, up-to-date ways to train our dogs and serve our clients.

WE COLLABORATE

Working with others lets us achieve things we could not do alone and inspires more creative solutions.

Shannon Columb was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa when she was just two years old. This disorder severely limited her peripheral vision and caused night blindness.

To seek help, she came to Leader Dog for our Summer Experience Camp when she was 16. While there, she was able to get independent travel skill training, leadership development, an introduction to guide dogs and the opportunity to spend time with peers who faced similar challenges.

Shannon's time with us was so invaluable she returned for more programs, including Accelerated O&M Training and Guide Dog Training. She was paired with Leader Dog Frasier, a friendly black Labrador retriever, who matched her pace perfectly and offered her the independence she needed.

Shannon credits her Leader Dog experiences for allowing her to fulfill her desires and accomplish her dreams. In college, she's part of several student organizations, writes for the newspaper and has her own radio show. Her aspirations include becoming a journalist after she graduates!

A CLIENT STORY: SHANNON COLUMB



HOW YOU CAN HELP



Talk about Leader Dog
with your family and friends



Encourage people to
donate to support the mission



Post about Leader Dog on your social
media accounts, or share ours



Host a fundraising event



Invite people to visit LeaderDog.org

OUR MISSION, VISION AND VALUES:

Our **MISSION** is empowering people who are blind or visually impaired with lifelong skills for safe and independent daily travel.

Our **VISION** is that every person travels safely and independently.

Our actions are guided, supported and measured by our **VALUES**:

- > Do What is Right
- > Show Respect and Compassion
- > Demonstrate Passion for the Work
- > Deliver a Superior Experience
- > Work as a Team
- > Seek Innovation
- > Practice Safety



LET'S BUILD LEADER DOG TOGETHER

Our mission comes alive through your commitment, achievements and passion. As an ambassador, you are an advocate for our cause, an inspiration to others and a force for change in the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired.

Thank you for helping us spread our message and for helping us make people unstoppable.

For more information or additional ambassador materials, visit leaderdog.org/ambassador.