

# LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND

# Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2019–2020



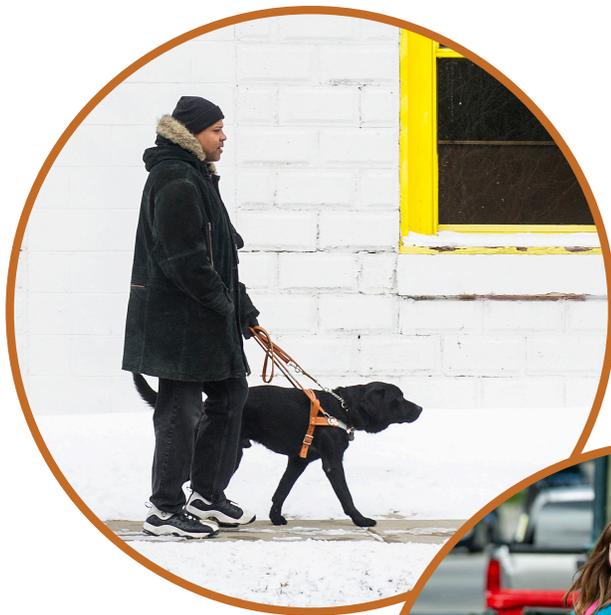
GUIDE DOG  
TRAINING



ORIENTATION  
& MOBILITY



SUMMER  
EXPERIENCE CAMP



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*Future Leader Dog Sequoia*

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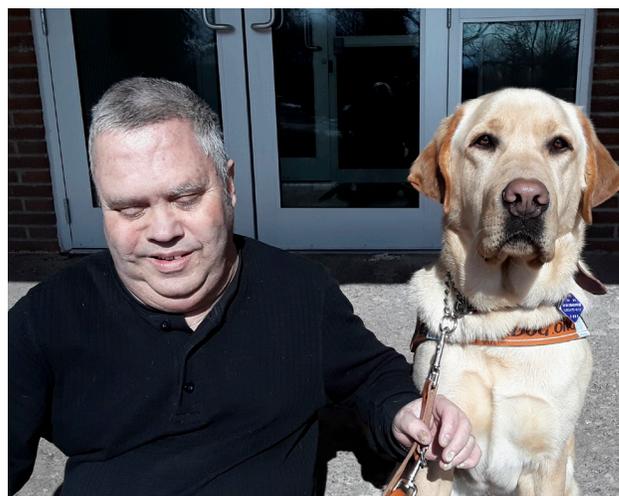
## Mission Moment

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I was born blind and in 1988 with the help of a local Lions club, I received my first Leader Dog. It changed my life. Soon, with my guide dog mobility instructor's help, Leader Dog Bo and I were going all over my hometown. We had challenges but we got through them together as a team. In 1998 I got my second Leader Dog, Jake. In 2008 came my third Leader Dog, Tad (he was in my wedding) and on March 11, 2019, I got my current Leader Dog, Casey. He is working out like the true pro he is, with a little ham thrown in.

I wouldn't be where I am today if it were not for Leader Dogs for the Blind. They are a first-class organization and I am so proud to be a part of it.

*~ John M and Leader Dog, Casey*



# A Message from Susan Daniels

Since 1939, Leader Dogs for the Blind has been the answer for thousands of people in critical need of our services. This need was made even more critical by a worldwide pandemic that stopped agencies and nonprofits, including Leader Dog, from providing services. For only the second time in our history, we had to cancel Guide Dog Training classes (in 1967 we cancelled one class due to extreme snow and cold). We also cancelled several Orientation and Mobility Training classes, and for the first time, our Summer Experience Camp was virtual.



Like the dogs we train, our goal is to be a leader, and this year confirmed that we are!

During a statewide shutdown, we quickly developed new protocols which enabled us to continue training and caring for our dogs. Our team began providing more support services to over 1,500 active guide dog teams and hundreds of puppy raisers via video chat, email and phone. The team also moved our Summer Experience Camp to an online format enabling us to expand the age range of participants from 16-17 to 14-17 and to host a record number of 38 campers.

Though our campus was quieter, an immense amount of work was happening as our team prepared for the day when we could again provide our life-changing services in person. We updated many operational protocols to resume in-person training while ensuring the continued good health and well-being of our clients and team members. We “masked up,” implemented daily health screenings and reduced class sizes. We made changes in our residence to promote social distancing and adapted our training equipment to create more distance between instructors and clients. This hard work and determination positioned Leader Dog to be the first U.S. guide dog organization to resume on-campus training.

Leader Dog remains steadfast in our belief that every person deserves equal opportunity for travel and independence, which is why all our services are provided at no cost. Thank you for your support of Leader Dogs for the Blind, as together we work to make people unstoppable.

Sincerely,

*Susan M. Daniels*

Susan M. Daniels  
President & CEO



# VISION

Every person who is blind or visually impaired travels safely and independently.

# MISSION

To empower people who are blind or visually impaired with lifelong skills for safe and independent daily travel.

# VALUES

Do what is right

*We act with integrity in every situation.*

Show respect and compassion

*We show empathy and kindness to every person and every dog.*

Demonstrate passion for the work

*We do more than just our job, we believe in our mission.*

Deliver a superior experience

*We exceed expectations for every person in the Leader Dog community.*

Work as a team

*We partner to achieve goals and advance the mission.*

Seek innovation

*We keep an open mind; we learn; we share our ideas; we drive change.*

Practice safety

*We provide a safe and supportive environment for ourselves and others.*



*A guide dog mobility instructor follows closely behind a client during 2019 warm weather training in Naples, Florida.*

## ENVISIONED FUTURE

# 2025



**By the year 2025, we at Leader Dogs for the Blind envision:**

- A national reputation for high quality
- Growth in the number of clients served in all areas
- A diversified revenue base
- The ability to serve Central and South America through partnerships with local providers
- A culture that attracts and retains high quality team members (both paid and volunteer)
- Continuing to pioneer advancements in technology through collaborations and client instruction

# HIGHLIGHTS 2019-2020

## Client Celebration Ceremonies

To mark the 80th anniversary of Leader Dogs for the Blind, we began holding client celebration ceremonies to honor our clients who complete our Guide Dog Training and O&M Training programs. The first ceremony took place on July 26, 2019. The ceremonies include achievement recognition, testimonials and a special luncheon.



## CliftonStrengths Training

The leadership team began CliftonStrengths Training in January 2020 to advance a strengths-based culture at Leader Dog. Our team learned how to apply their strengths when developing and executing action plans. In mid-March when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, our team was able to skillfully and efficiently negotiate the daily disruptions by applying their natural talents (strengths) to the constant changing environment.

EXECUTING	INFLUENCING
<p>Those with dominant themes in the Executing domain know how to make things happen. When the team needs someone to implement a solution, these are the people who will work tirelessly to get it done. Those with a strength to execute have the ability to “catch” an idea and make it a reality.</p>	<p>Those with dominant themes in the Influencing domain help their team reach a much broader audience. These individuals can sell the team’s ideas inside and outside the organization. When the team needs someone to take charge, speak up, and make sure the group is heard, look to someone with the strength to influence.</p>
<p>Achiever Arranger Belief Consistency Deliberative Discipline Focus Responsibility Restorative</p>	<p>Activator Command Communication Competition Maximizer Self-Assurance Significance Woo</p>

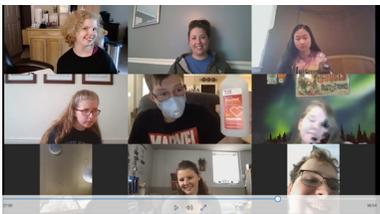
## Puppy #20,000

On February 19, 2020 the dog that will wear puppy tag #20,000 was born. To mark the occasion, we held an online fundraiser to choose his name. Over 340 people voted on five possible names for this milestone puppy. The winning name was Legacy. This fundraiser brought in almost \$10,000.



## Virtual Summer Camp

Our Summer Experience Camp moved to a virtual platform this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This allowed us to open camp to more teenagers from a wider age range. The 38 campers logged on and participated in a teen version of our Harness the Power of Leadership Training (HPL), learned about training with a guide dog and received important guidance on showing their best self. They connected with each other through fun activities including a scavenger hunt, trivia night and a Facebook group to further build lasting friendships.



## Puppy Training Goes Virtual

In April, our puppy development department started conducting online training classes for puppy raisers. All 440 raisers have the ability to join the meetings instead of just 55% who could participate in person before the pandemic. This format allows for a deeper dive into areas including training recommendations, veterinary practices and puppy manual review.



## Maintaining Revenue

We reached our reforecasted philanthropic revenue goal despite the COVID-19 pandemic. We exceeded our original revenue goal in the categories of foundation giving, major gifts and direct mail. A solid first half of the fiscal year including a strong December of year-end giving and a successful Dinner in the Dark event allowed us to finish the year in a strong position. Furthermore, FY 19–20 was another solid year for estate giving with \$8.3 million in revenue received.



# WHY I LOVE LEADER DOG REASON #241



“ To be a part of Leader Dog, helping the dogs with obedience so they can further their career as a guide dog is a blessing. To help someone who is blind gives me joy.

— REGGIE WILLIAMS



**LEADER DOG**  
AMBASSADORS  
#WalkwithLeaderDog



**LEADER DOGS**  
FOR THE BLIND

## PROGRAMS

## CLIENTS SERVED

### GUIDE DOG TRAINING



**Guide Dog Training** is a three-week residential training program matching hand-selected, highly trained dogs with people who are legally blind, or both deaf and blind.

141

- 10 Deaf-Blind
- 77 GPS\* devices issued

### ORIENTATION & MOBILITY TRAINING



**O&M Training** is the only seven-day residential orientation and mobility program in the U.S., providing clients with cane skills to become safer, more independent travelers.

94

- 5 GPS\* devices issued

### SUMMER EXPERIENCE CAMP



**Summer Experience Camp** is a unique summer camp for 16- and 17-year-olds who are legally blind, combining fun outdoor activities and leadership training with an introduction to guide dogs.

38

- 5 GPS\* devices issued

**\*GPS Technology** empowers clients to identify their current location and plan their own travel routes. Leader Dog is the only guide dog organization that provides GPS devices to clients free of charge.

**Note:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to hold three guide dog and 12 O&M classes. Our Summer Experience Camp went virtual, allowing for a larger age range and camp size.

## VOLUNTEERS



85

Breeding  
Stock Hosts



439

Puppy  
Raisers



508

On-Campus\*

\* Includes 24 Board Trustees

# WHY I LOVE LEADER DOG REASON #151



“ I have been blessed to have met so many people, from all over the world. I’ve heard their stories and am reminded how fortunate I am to be part of this incredible organization! ”

— SHARON DOUGHERTY



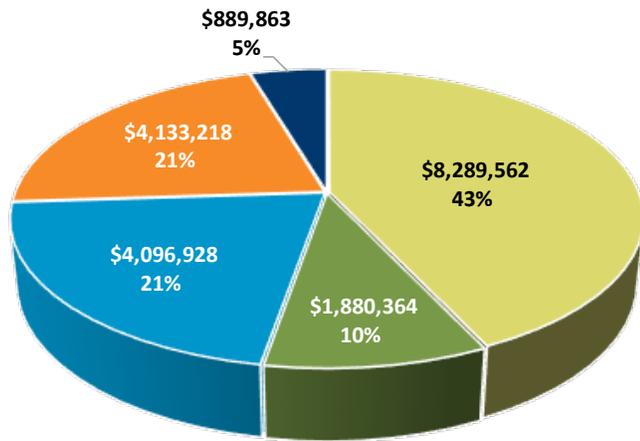
**LEADER DOG**  
AMBASSADORS  
#WalkwithLeaderDog



**LEADER DOGS**  
FOR THE BLIND

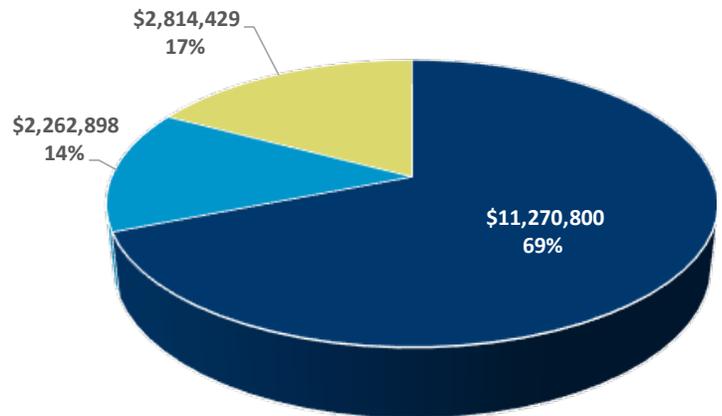
# THE NUMBERS

## Revenue



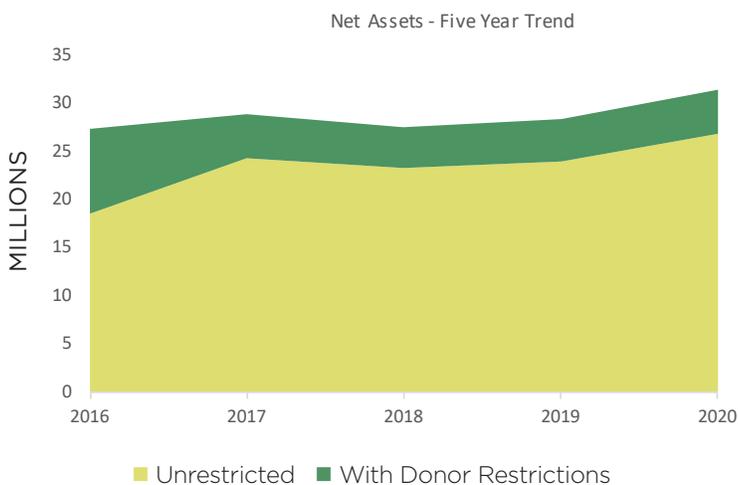
- Estates and bequests
- Grants
- Lions clubs donations
- Other contributions
- Investment and misc.

## Expenses



- Programs and services
- General and administrative
- Philanthropy (fundraising)

## Other



### LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND Summarized Statement of Activities

For the year ended June 30, 2020

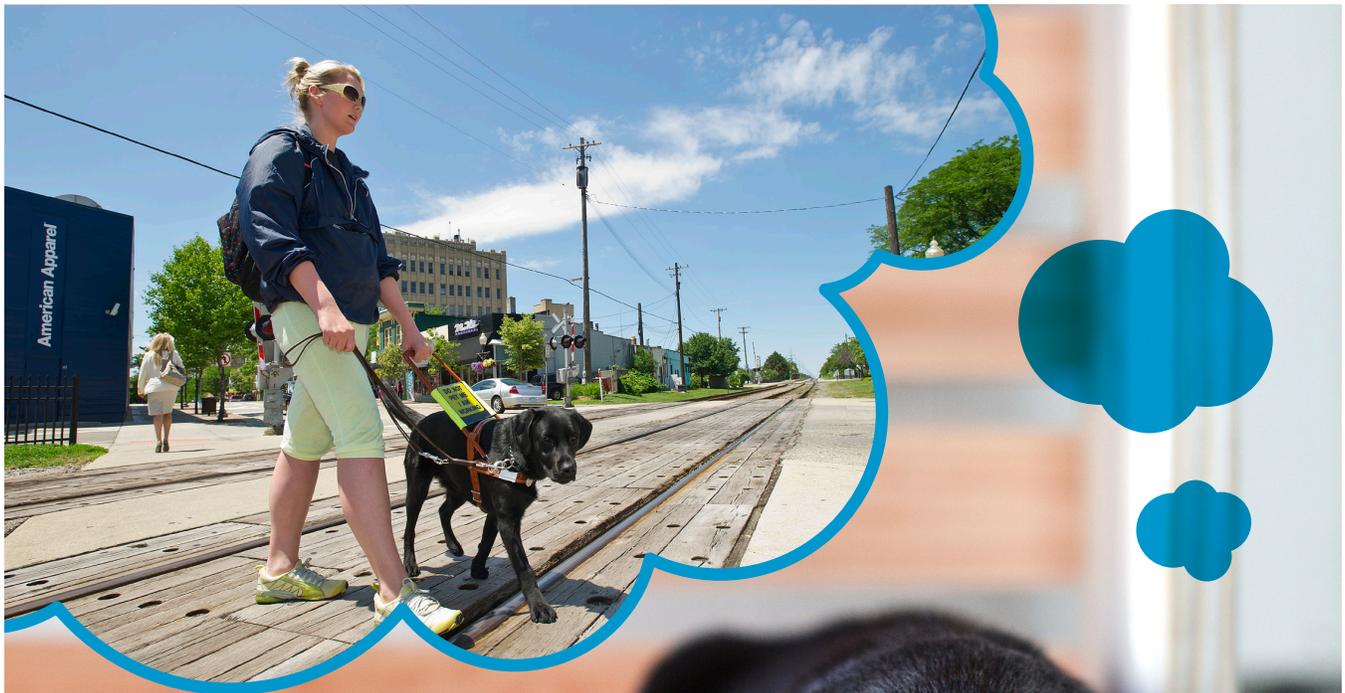
#### Revenue

Contributions	\$18,400,072
Investment & Other	889,863
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>19,289,935</b>

#### Expenses

Programs & Services	11,270,800
General & Administrative	2,262,898
Fundraising	2,814,429
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>16,348,127</b>

Change in net assets	2,941,808
Net assets, beginning of year	28,457,530
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	<b>\$31,399,338</b>



# Make a dream come true. **Become a volunteer puppy raiser.**

There's no doubt what these tiny puppies want to be when they grow up, but they need your help. As a volunteer puppy raiser, you'll provide the foundation a puppy needs to become a Leader Dog. And together, you'll help someone who is blind or visually impaired live a life of freedom, safety and happiness.



Sign up at [leaderdog.org/puppy-raise](https://leaderdog.org/puppy-raise).  
1039 S. Rochester Rd. Rochester Hills, MI 48307  
**248.651.9011**



**LEADER DOGS**  
FOR THE BLIND®  
FOLLOW THE LEADER   

# CURRENT BOARD OF TRUSTEES *(as of 10.15.20)*

## Executive Officers

Susan Daniels, President & Chief Executive Officer  
Lorene Suidan, Vice President & Chief Operating Officer  
Melissa Weisse, Vice President & Chief Philanthropy Officer

## Officers

Steve Guarini, Board Chair  
Margaret Dimond, Ph.D., Immediate Past Chair  
Kathryn Davis, Vice Chair  
Kim Gorman, Treasurer  
Mark Guthrie, Secretary

## Trustees

Arun Anand	Thomas O'Masta
Franklin Carmona, DVM	Paul Preketes
Paul Edwards, MD, FACS	John Reed
Jill Gaus	Avril Rinn
John Hebert	Mary Smith
Paul Hemeryck	Daniel Spriet
Michele Honomichl	The Honorable Paul Teranes
Justice Marilyn Kelly	Marc Wisniewski
Daniel Markey	Douglas Wright, CPA

## Honorary Trustees

Celia Domalewski	James Platzer
Lon Grossman	Hendrik Schuur



*(from left) Trustee John Hebert, Sarah and husband/Trustee Marc Wisniewski, CEO Sue Daniels, and Margo Hebert enjoy the 2020 Dinner in the Dark at MGM Grand Detroit.*



*Trustee Dr. Paul Edwards and friends take a moment to smile for the camera during the VIP reception at the 2020 Dinner in the Dark event.*

# BOARD COMMITTEES

## Audit Committee

Oversees the organization's annual external audit and its system of internal controls over financial reporting.

## Business Development Task Force

Researches and develops strategies to ensure the growth of Leader Dog in accordance with its goals and vision.

## Executive Committee (Board Officers only)

Conducts such business as is necessary or desirable during those periods when the Board of Trustees is not in session.

## Finance Committee

Oversees fiscal accountability and budgetary affairs.

## Governance Committee

Establishes and maintains a dynamic, diverse, engaged and knowledgeable Board of Trustees.

## Mission Assurance & Quality Committee

Oversees performance metrics, outcomes, quality, continuous improvement and strategic plan progress and ensures alignment with the mission statement of Leader Dogs for the Blind.

## Philanthropy Committee

Oversees development and fundraising activities, ensuring that the case for support is strong, current and based on the organization's mission and goals.

## Technology Committee

Serves as a strategic partner for the Leader Dog team, focusing on the alignment of core business and technology so that the organization remains in the mainstream of continually evolving technology and IT solutions.



## MISSION MOMENT

◀ *"This program is beyond amazing! Rod, my instructor, is top-of-the-line as far as I'm concerned. I feel like a new person with my cane. Everything was a grand success! I would highly recommend this program to anyone."*

*~Leslie H*

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## Accreditations

International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF)  
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER)



## Member

Assistance Dogs International (ADI)  
Council of US Dog Guide Schools (CUSDGS)  
American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)  
VisionServe Alliance  
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER)

## Leader Dogs for the Blind

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Email: [leaderdog@leaderdog.org](mailto:leaderdog@leaderdog.org)

## LeaderDog.org

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