

# Letter from the Chief Executive Officer

I am often asked why I am so enthusiastic about NEADS: clearly it is the mission and our opportunity to fulfill the mission. Certainly we have challenges every day. And we usually find ourselves faced with trying to do more with less. I am only stating the obvious by mentioning that this past year was difficult for most not-for-profits. And NEADS was no exception. This was a challenging year financially. The economy continued along a rather sluggish path and people struggled with their philanthropic decisions. However out of those difficulties we are looking at the opportunities and feeling optimistic about the future.

We have 49 reasons to celebrate this past year. Our client/ canines graduate number is 49, which is an increase over the previous year. While the number is a great achievement, what is nicer is that we were able to help more individuals achieve a degree of independence that would not otherwise be possible.

When I reflect on all the activities both on and off campus I feel extremely optimistic about our future and our plans to get there. Everywhere I go, from Holden Days to Indian Ranch to an event in Boston or in a discussion with a client, I hear and see people talking about NEADS and our fabulous canines. We are so fortunate to have so many loyal donors, sponsors, foundations, corporations and individuals who help us year in and year out. So I would be remiss not to thank them for all that they do for NEADS. In addition, there is a legion of volunteers who work largely behind the scenes each and every day. Without our many dedicated volunteers NEADS quite simply would not exist. Our loyal volunteers sustain us in ways too numerous to mention.



As such, we dedicate this annual report to the multitude of volunteers who enable us to fulfill our mission every day. We asked them to answer the question, "why do you volunteer at NEADS?" and we have shared some of their answers so that you too can appreciate their work and get an understanding of the extent to which they assist us.

Truth be told, each volunteer has his or her own special reason for dedicating themselves to NEADS, and there is not enough space in this booklet to share each story. But that does not mean we value them any less. In her book Hillary Clinton said it takes a village. In our case it takes a nation: NEADS Nation!

Thank you so much for your interest and support of NEADS.

Gerry



Held the first annual *Unleash the Possibilities* ... Walk for NEADS

Opened a second prison in Concord, MA. This created our largest concentration of dogs in a single community as part of the Prison PUP Partnership Program. Capacity in all prisons averaged 83%

Sales in our Memorial Card program, in which veterinarians send NEADS sympathy cards to the owners of deceased dogs, increased by 33%.

Retail sales nearly doubled due to the range of new products including private label wines, an annual themed calendar, plush dogs with an ear tag story and more



Exceeded our original goal of 50 Advisory
Council members

# Major Accomplishments

Restructured the State Representative Program

Completed the Leadership Team with the hiring of a Director of Development and a Director of Canine Services Exceeded 2011 volunteer hours

Opened a second visiting veterinarian prison program

Officially adopted the NEADS Trauma Assistance Dog (TAD) Program



Four individuals sponsored Doggie Dorms, a new fundraising initiative that pairs donors with the dogs in our kennels

Awarded a Harvard CAP Project

Created Vision and Values Statements

Client fundraising hit an all-time high in our organization's history

NEADS has begun raising funds for the Foundations for the Future campaign to rehabilitate an existing building on campus. This building will become a state-of-the-art client house. Received the Gunny Bergeron Award from the Marine Corps League



# NEADS by the Numbers



# Our Assistance Dogs



### People with a Physical Disability

Service dogs assist people with a physical disability by performing tasks that their partner cannot do or has trouble doing, like picking up dropped items, opening doors, and turning lights on or off.

### Wounded Combat Veterans

Our Canines for Combat Veterans program provides dogs that are specially trained to help the growing population of veterans returning from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

### People who are Deaf or Have Hearing Loss

Our hearing dogs are trained to help people who are deaf or have hearing loss by alerting their human partner to the source of a sound.

### Children on the Autism Spectrum

With the help of a parent or facilitator, social dogs are trained to accompany their partner to doctor's appointments, restaurants, sporting events, and other public places, and help a child with autism or developmental delays feel calmer and more confident.

# Children with a Physical Disability

Service dogs perform tasks for children like: picking up dropped items, opening doors, and turning lights on or off, among many other things. Children under the age of 15 require the help of a responsible adult to control and care for the assistance dog while the dog is working.

### Therapeutic Service Providers

Service dogs for the classroom, ministry and therapy are matched with teachers or therapists who work with students or clients who have a mental or physical disability and ministers who seek to engage with their general community. The presence of a dog can put many people at ease and allows them to interact with service providers in a unique way.

### Trauma Assistance Dogs

Our Trauma Assistance Dog (TAD) program is a result of a two-year pilot program that placed dogs to assist OIF/OEF veterans with post traumatic stress who had served in Iraq or Afghanistan. TAD dogs are now being placed with veterans in New England and we plan to expand this service to other areas of the country.

# 2012 Assistance Dog Teams





Austin Burchard + Chase Molly Cahoon + Nilla Ellen Chenaux + Curly Mark Cherubim + Merlin Deborah Clark + Jeannie Cassidy Dufault + Trixie Doreen Dunn + Karla Noah Evans + Zoey Robert Feoli + Bella Randy Forant + Jethro Wendy Foster + Tippy Louis Fraulo + Moonstone
Erin Garceau + Freedom
Christine Goodreau + Addie
Rev. Kelly Harvell + Benny
Micah Hilton + Cashman
Dr. Vicki Jackson + Doris
Andy Kingsley + Richie
Jordan Klapp + Patriot
Lynette Litourneau + Sugar
Rev. Robert Livingston + Daisy
Michael Ljunggren + Lancer

Peter Lorange + Keddy
Debra Martell + Kashi
Rev. Jane Milaschewski + Ginger
Michael Mongelli + Foxy
Elaine Motta + Rudy
Paxton Moynihan + Weezie
Caleb Murphy + Grafton
Gus Nathan + Casey
Linda Nevulis + Buckles
Suzette Noel + Angie
Rebekah Pierce + Brent

Blair Reels + Radar
Amy Reay + Delancy
Celestine "Tina" Reid + Franklin
Maria Schoff + Laddie
Linda Secher + Rainier
Pat Sheely + Shadow
Katerina Simpkins + Graham
Robert Thompson + Zach
Laurie Wade + Gem
Dean Westwood + Badgett

# **Client Stories**

There is a new sign on our campus driveway that reads, "Welcome Home." This is particularly true for our clients. We welcome them home on their very first day here. The second they set foot on our campus they become part of the NEADS family, and by the end of their two weeks of training we like to think they feel the same way about us. With 49 clients this year, there are 49 stories that touched our hearts, inspired us, moved us, and reminded us why we do what we do. Here are just several of those stories.

# "Trixie will provide Cassidy with the comfort and confidence that only a dog can give because Trixie does not know Cassidy is different."

# Cassidy + Trixie

Thank you again for everyone involved in training Trixie. To most people she is just a dog, but to my daughter Cassidy who has autism she is much more than just a dog. She is a companion who will not mock her for having difficulty speaking, she will not think Cassidy is strange or different because she repeats things and has a lot of trouble reading and learning. She will not tease her, bully her, or leave her out when playing like her peers do. She will not scold her for being inappropriate and get angry at her for acting out like I do. Instead she will provide Cassidy with the comfort and confidence that only a dog can give because Trixie does not know Cassidy is different. All Trixie knows is that she loves my daughter, and my daughter loves her.

The positive effect of Trixie on Cassidy is quite noticeable. Cassidy is calm, focused, and happy around her. In contrast to the challenges of functioning in a world that requires communicating like everyone else, being with Trixie offers Cassidy a place where she is not judged and is unconditionally loved and accepted. Communicating intuitively through actions is encouraged in the world of dogs. I have also noticed it provides a positive outlet for Cassidy to practice using her words without judgement or evaluation. Trixie responds to Cassidy's words without the correction that she encounters throughout her daily life. The benefit of her self esteem cannot be understated. Without NEADS and everyone at the prison [who trained and worked with Trixie] this wouldn't have happened for Cassidy, so I can not thank you enough.

— Stephanie Slattery, Cassidy Dufault's mother



# Amy + Delancy

Ten months ago, I was matched with NEADS Hearing Dog Delancy, and my life was changed. I had been told about the bond between service dogs and their partners, but never imagined how amazing that would be. Delancy is more than my partner, he is an extension of me, and the reason I keep going forward each day.

Delancy does the usual hearing dog tasks, such as alerting me to the oven timer, a door knock, dropped items, my name being called, a smoke detector, and more. I watch his body language, his ears and his eyes and know from those cues when an airplane or flock of geese flies overhead, or when a child starts crying, or a car pulls into my driveway, or if someone enters a room. Little things that hearing people might take for granted are now a part of my world again.

Beyond those immediate things, Delancy provides a healthier life for me because I now walk every day, get out of bed when I don't feel like it and am overflowing with happiness just by looking at his adorable face. He has changed me in so many ways and I will always be grateful to him and to NEADS.

— Amy Reay

### **Client Stories**



# Erin + Freedom

I love my service dog Freedom. I received her at the end of April 2012 and I couldn't be any happier! She helps me even more than I thought she would when I got her.

I was hesitant to apply for a service dog because I am so independent, but my mom talked me into it. And I am glad she did.

My mom would get nervous if I was alone. No one was here if something were to happen. So with Freedom I'm not alone and she's right there with me if something were to happen. She will bark to get a person's attention for help. She'll even retrieve the phone.

She does so much for me and with me. She helps me do laundry by getting the clothes from the basket. She picks up things I've dropped. She turns lights on and off for me and opens doors that have a push button, but most of all she's my companion and best friend.

She knows when I'm not feeling well because she'll come snuggle right beside me and lick my face trying to make it all better. I love that about her. She senses everything with me. I couldn't ask for a better dog than her!

Thank you NEADS.

— Erin Garceau



# Randy + Jethro

A service dog is more than just a friend who is by my side wherever I go. No, a service dog is much more than that. A service dog is like being the mayor and having a key to every building in the city. A service dog is a door that leads to independence.

I first found out about NEADS when I was eleven years old in sixth grade. I had almost reached my goal of independence by then, needing help only with small things like getting objects under tables out of my reach and taking off my coat, but I still wasn't at my ideal goal. I was motivated and did research on the benefits of service dogs. It wasn't long after that that I was matched with a beautiful NEADS black lab named Dede.

Dede immediately became the best friend a guy could ask for. I instantly noticed a difference in my daily life. Those stubborn objects out of my reach suddenly became objects in my hand within seconds. We went to school together from sixth grade to my junior year in college. Most of all she was a friend that no matter what was by my side through the good days and bad. Unfortunately at the age of eleven Dede developed cancer and passed away last year. After ten years of independence I suddenly felt like that kid in sixth grade who was only 95% independent. Daily things I took granted of were now once again a challenge.

So the process started again. I went to NEADS and started over, discussing the basic tasks I struggled with and was matched with Jethro. I feel complete again and have regained my independence. We are without doubt best friends and we make a great team. I would like to thank all of those who donated and or gave their support to my independence. I would also like to thank NEADS, puppy raisers everywhere, and volunteers who dedicate themselves to training these special dogs. It's funny—when someone sees Jethro's shiny red vest and asks what NEADS is, my response is two words: my independence.

—Randy Forant





# Austin + Chase

When I first got injured overseas in Afghanistan, I never thought about getting a service dog to help me because I just wanted to be as normal as possible doing stuff on my own without any assistance. When I was introduced to NEADS, I submitted my application to see what would happen.

I was accepted and went through the training. Chase helps me get things off of the ground that I have dropped. He can open up doors and turn on light switches. He can get my phone if I fall out of my wheelchair. When I am in my chair and get too far forward, he can come and brace his body to help me get back into my chair.

Chase has eased my wife's nerves when I go to different locations without her. He has given me more confidence and I know that I can go anywhere without any fears. I have grown attached to Chase and I think that I am extremely lucky to have a dog that looks to help me and just wants to make me happy.

- Austin Burchard

# Our Volunteers

Volunteers are the very heart and soul of the NEADS community. We rely on the service of others for our organization to run. Quite simply put, we could not do what we do without them.

Our volunteers come in many forms—teenagers who work on our grounds during NEADS cleanup day, community members who come to our kennels and puppy house daily to care for our dogs, families who open up their homes to raise our puppies, Board of Directors members who provide a vision for the future of NEADS, prison inmates who give back by training a NEADS dog, veterinarians who offer their medical expertise, professionals who donate their skills to our office staff, Advisory Council members who propel us forward with their diverse talents ... the list goes on and on. In fact, there are so many ways to help NEADS that we can't possibly note them all—a thorough list would take up this entire booklet, and then some.

Each NEADS volunteer matters to us. No matter what they do, their devotion and commitment to the NEADS mission is present in the work that they do. When they feel fulfilled and inspired by their volunteerism, we do too. That's why we love our volunteers. Because together, we make up NEADS Nation!

### FEATURED VOLUNTEERS

# Bertolino/Amsden family

Most people travel through their life never realizing all they have and never giving back. I have never lived that way and I didn't want my children to grow up that way. I wanted them to understand a world outside of themselves and appreciate all the blessings we have, including the simplest of blessings: waking up each day with our family and being able to care for ourselves.

Our experience with NEADS over the last 4 years has touched each of my three children and myself in measures I could have never dreamed. My children, now 7, 9, 11 and I have worked with eight dogs as weekend puppy raisers. The simple act of stepping out into the sometimes unwelcoming world with a dog has taught me and my girls to stand up for ourselves and the rights of those with a service animal. It has also reminded me of the surprising impact an animal can have on just about anyone. I like to call us ambassadors to the NEADS organization. We walk through the world teaching people about the healing ability of animals and the importance of their place in our society. We give ourselves purpose through the purpose of NEADS.

Two years ago we had some personal experiences that caused our lives to change dramatically and now we needed a healing calming force. It was one of our NEADS dogs who gave us purpose and just like with NEADS recipients, gave us a reason to put our feet on the floor each morning. Our NEADS family was now comforting us, sending their positive messages of courage and strength to us. I could have never predicted such a challenging series of events in our lives and certainly would never have predicted we would be the recipients of the very care we have strived to give over the last four years.

The people of NEADS have become part of our extended family and people we refer to lovingly in our home. We are all proud to be a part of the NEADS family and grow with each dog we help to raise.

— Angela Bertolino, Alexandra Amsden, Katharine Amsden, and Isabel Amsden







I volunteer at NEADS because it is one of the best ways to help make someone else's life better! Just knowing that helping to raise a puppy is going to someday improve the quality of their life, makes it so worthwhile. LAURA BARASSI

I volunteer at NEADS to help people, to help the dogs, to have a purpose and do something meaningful, and to be part of a community:

NEADS Nation. CRYSTLE CHASE

My decision to volunteer for NEADS has made a huge difference in my demeanor and it has made *me* feel good about *me*. It is a stepping stone for me to make positive changes in my life. KAREN MELLO

I love dogs.

I volunteer at NEADS because of the staff. There is a sense of unity among the staff at NEADS which is unlike any other work environment. CRYSTLE CHASE



I believe in the power of the dog and human relationship to overcome obstacles for persons struggling with various disabilities. KERRY NORRIS

It's meeting the person who the puppy is ultimately paired with, and seeing just how life-changing these pups become. LARRY WHELPLEY

Since I specialize in treating panic, PTSD and other anxiety disorders, I am especially interested in the Canines for Combat Veterans program. What a wonderful way to give back to those who have served, and are now returning with physical and often emotional issues. KIMBERLIE KING

I'm so honored to be part of an organization that does so much to help people I consider to be true heroes—people who are going on with their lives despite great obstacles and challenges. KATHLEEN WHALIN

# volunteer at NEADS?

I believe that the act of training service dogs can help to heal prison inmates from their emotional issues and help them find a place of safety. KERRY NORRIS

I love being able to tell people I go to prison twice a week. LAURIE SABOL

Who doesn't love talking about puppies:

PAM + CHARLIE ROGERS

# Media Highlights





# Visiting with Martha Coakley, Attorney General

As part of our Dogs at Your Desk Day program, NEADS assistance dogs in training visited Massachusetts State Attorney General Martha Coakley's office. Our dogs experienced what it's like to be in an office setting—and it gave the Attorney General's staff the opportunity to participate in the training of our dogs. We were honored to be back at Martha Coakley's office for the third year in a row.



# Samsung Hope For Tomorrow award— Buckles the classroom dog

The Schoharie Central School District entered and won the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow Contest, in which they used technology to tell the story of their entire town being flooded during hurricane Irene. As part of their prize, their district won Buckles, an assistance dog for the classroom who has been partnered with Linda Nevulis, the Director of Curriculum & Pupil Personnel Services. Buckles works with K-12 students and is a partner, a motivator, a classmate and a friend to all!

# Growing a new generation

This year we made it a priority to grow a new generation of NEADS supporters by introducing our mission to some of Massachusetts' elementary and high schools. We gave presentations about the benefits of assistance dogs for veterans, disabled adults, and children. We were overwhelmed by the enthusiasm, commitment and support that we found in students of all ages.





# Strengthening our Ties to Indian Ranch

For the second year in a row, NEADS partnered with Indian Ranch, New England's most intimate live concert venue. This important and valuable relationship brought the NEADS mission to thousands of concert-goers and introduced NEADS to some of country music's biggest stars, like Wynnona Judd, Kellie Pickler, Montgomery Gentry, Sean Patrick McGraw, and others.

# Year in Review

# Development

NEADS continues to inspire philanthropy, from a young member of a swim team in Virginia raising funds at a swim meet, to a large Boston law firm holding fundraising events. Our efforts to increase the well-being of our neighbors, be it a wounded veteran, a child on the autism spectrum or an adult with a debilitating condition, continue to be the cornerstone of what we do. As we look to the future, we are motivated by our many donors and volunteers and are deeply grateful to those who have supported us through our programs, special events and outreach. We look forward to long and mutually beneficial relationships as we continue to do what we do best, place assistance dogs with the people who really need them.





# **Client Relations**

There was a 49% increase in the number of assistance dogs placed this fiscal year. Application submissions were at an all time high. Over one hundred prospective clients were interviewed as part of their application process.

The eleven veterans who received assistance dogs this year were supported during their stay at our center by the Blue Star Mothers. Since 2006, the Leominster and Worcester chapters of the Blue Star Mothers have provided a complete menu, including home cooked dinners for all veterans in training. A throw pillow with his/her dog's picture on the front is a surprise gift from the Blue Star Mothers. The Central Massachusetts Quilts of Valor club makes a quilt for each veteran, too.

Our Board of Directors has moved forward to transition our pilot Trauma Alert Dog for combat related PTSD to a regular program. The name has been changed to Trauma Assistance Dog.

### Canine Services

The past year in canine services might be characterized as a year of both expansion and introspection. A new prison, MCI Concord, was added to the list of facilities in which NEADS operates. Medical support for dogs at Concord's other prison, the Concord "Farm," was enhanced by the establishment of a new on-site veterinary clinic. An important consulting initiative was undertaken with the aid of a team of Harvard Business School professionals, who analyzed NEADS' current dog sourcing and training model in order to identify strategies for helping NEADS achieve its goal of increasing the number of client-dog teams that it trains each year.

# Programs and Communications

At NEADS, we see people at their best, every day. We see how individuals and businesses come together to support our organization with their time, talent and financial backing. Many people, from so many walks of life, help us in great and small ways, and we value their commitment to our mission and purpose. This past year saw an expansion of community service from those with a passion for helping others, including hundreds of those from 'a younger generation' who see service as a necessary and enjoyable component to their lives.

NEADS welcomes everyone who values the benefit of canine assistance!



# Program Revenue

The State Representative Program was expanded providing a conduit for NEADS opportunities nationally. Retail items sporting the new logo were unveiled. Private label organic wines provided a financial return with minimal staff involvement. New and expanded partnerships contributed to the sustainability of the organization. The Memorial Card Program efforts increased by 33%, due to the commitments of veterinarians who send NEADS sympathy cards to their clients. The second Annual Paddling Puppies Race and Fair surpassed last year's effort. Ticket outlets in surrounding towns and our direct mailing campaign contributed to increased revenue. Volunteer support was exceptional, providing assistance in a variety of areas. Green energy opportunities continue to be explored to reduce expenses and produce income.









# A Donor's Story

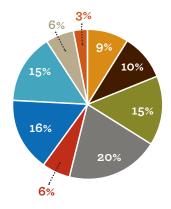
The Worcester Fire Department 6K Road Race began in 2000 following the December 1999 Cold Storage Fire where six of our firefighters were lost. In their memory we seek to give back to the community that supported us so well through that tragedy. In 2011 we identified the NEADS Puppy Program as one of our charities. Since our initial introduction to the program, we have been able to see very directly how uniquely positive and valuable this program is. In 2011 following our initial donation we named and quickly met "Blaze." During his training we were updated with pictures and his progress and really experienced his training first hand. He has attended our race and we have had the pleasure of meeting him and watching him grow into the mature assistance dog he will become. In 2012 we again named another two puppies, "Rescue" and "Maurice," and are excited and proud to have the opportunity to follow them through the program on their way to providing invaluable assistance to a deaf or disabled person. The WFD6K Race has donated to over one hundred charities since its inception but NEADS stands out to us through regular updates and firsthand knowledge of how our donation is being put to use. All of the people that we have met through the program have been wonderful to work with and it has been a great experience to become part of the NEADS extended family. We look forward to many years of continuing to support the NEADS program and look forward to watching their excellent work result in greater independence for people in need.

— Lt. John Franco, WFD6K

Clockwise from top: Blaze, upon his arrival at the NEADS puppy house; Blaze's weekend puppy raisers give him a fire hat; Blaze visits the fire station.

# Financial Report

### SUPPORT AND REVENUE BY CATEGORY



Contributed Goods + Services
Program Income
Appeals
General Donations
Bequests
Canines for Combat Veterans
Grants

Events/Sales
Interest/Investments

### **EXPENSES BY CATEGORY**



### SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

|  | 2012      | 2011      |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| SUPPORT AND REVENUE                      |           |           |
| General fees and contributions           | 1,728,245 | 1,703,770 |
| Contributed goods, services and property | 221,981   | 282,034   |
| Grants and foundations                   | 368,218   | 156,180   |
| Interest income                          | 9,101     | 6,225     |
| Investment gains                         | 68,014    | 251,828   |
| Other income                             | 4,932     | -         |
| Net assets released from restrictions    | -         | -         |
| Total support and revenue                | 2,400,491 | 2,400,037 |
|  |           |           |

| EXPENSES                      |           |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Training program              | 2,138,206 | 2,109,011 |
| Management and general        | 199,246   | 173,717   |
| Fund raising                  | 173,940   | 136,582   |
| Total expenses                | 2,511,392 | 2,419,310 |
|                               |           |           |
| Change in net assets          | (110,901) | (19,273)  |
| Net assets, beginning of year | 4,677,992 | 4,697,265 |
| Net assets, end of year       | 4,567,091 | 4,677,992 |

# **Board of Directors**

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Beverly Stewart Medical Services
Ira Kaplan DVM

Clerk

Meghan Maceiko Cynthia Crosson Winthrop Handy

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