

2022

ANNUAL REPORT



Making a Difference, One Life at a Time



One day, a man was walking along a beach when he noticed a girl pick something up and gently throw it into the ocean. Approaching her, he asked, "What are you doing?" She replied, "Throwing starfish back into the ocean. The surf is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die." "My dear," the man said, "don't you realize there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish? You can't make a difference!"

The girl bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it back into the surf. Then, smiling at the man, she said, "I made a difference for that one."

Each NEADS Service and Assistance Dog makes a profound difference in someone's life. We are inspired every day by our dogs' selfless dedication to their partners. In this annual report, we celebrate the impacts they make on the lives they touch.

– Adapted from "The Star Thrower" by Loren Eiseley

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Celebrating 45 Years of Changing Lives



Since our modest founding in 1976 as a hearing dog program, NEADS has grown to offer the widest array of programs while still holding true to our core mission of producing Service Dogs for individuals with disabilities. We are proud of our reputation as pioneer, leader, and innovator. Most important, however, is that NEADS has matched over 1,900 clients with World Class Service Dogs, bringing a degree of independence that would otherwise not be possible.



World Class Service Dogs
fueled by world class food



NEADS observed its 45th anniversary of providing World Class Service Dogs to civilians and veterans across the United States on September 13, 2021. Our observance of this milestone was purposely low key as we remain focused on our mission while wrestling with the continuing impacts of Covid. Perhaps the most obvious impact is to our accepted clients who are waiting for their Service Dog or Assistance Dog. While we continued to train and place World Class Service Dogs as we have for the last 45 years, client placements have been down this past year.

One way we are working to increase the number of clients we can serve is by increasing our pool of purpose-bred Service Dogs. Breeding for temperament, health, and overall suitability for Service Dog work enables us to get more dogs through training and place more dogs with people in need. Five years ago, we started a breeding program with the goal of becoming as independent and self-sufficient as possible by producing most of the purpose-bred puppies that enter our program. The opening of our new state-of-the-art NEADS Breeding Center this past June puts us well on our way to fulfilling that ambitious goal.

The Breeding Center was built thanks to the support of many generous donors. NEADS is deeply grateful to them and to all who contribute to our mission. We are committed to being responsible stewards of our donors' philanthropy. Thus I am extremely pleased to report that NEADS has been ranked a 4-star charity—its highest accolade—by Charity Navigator for



the 20th consecutive year. NEADS is one of only half a dozen charities across the country to have earned this distinction, a clear reflection of our years-long commitment to financial accountability and good governance.

A few years ago, our current Board Chair, Geoff Worrell, shared with us the allegory of a starfish and a young girl. The concept that everyone—and every NEADS dog—can make a difference, even if that difference affects only one person, is prominently featured in this year's annual report. I hope you enjoy reading about our clients and the canine partners who have made such a difference in their lives, as well as the many others who are integral to the success of our organization.

On behalf of everyone at NEADS, thank you to our wonderful supporters and amazing volunteers who make it possible for us to fulfill our mission, one incredible World Class Service Dog at a time.

Sincerely,
Gerry DeRoche
Chief Executive Officer

NEADS Events

OCTOBER 2021

A fabulous event for a fabulous cause—the 6th **Get Dressed. Give Back.** fundraiser at The Exchange Center, Boston.



NOVEMBER 2021

NEADS' 82nd Graduation celebrated 17 new Service and Assistance Dog teams.



Patrick and Service Dog Knight.
Photo by Rich Prager.

JUNE 2022

Fun in the sun with NEADS Nation and a WooSox game at **NEADS Day at Polar Park.**



Above: 15 NEADS dogs along with clients, volunteers, and staff helped kick off the Worcester Red Sox game against the Charlotte Knights. This was the second year that NEADS Day has taken place at the fully accessible Polar Park in Worcester. A portion of ticket sales from the game was donated to NEADS. Thanks for a great day, WooSox!

Left: NEADS Service Dog Ambassadors Loring and Verna on the field at Polar Park.

Photos by AJ Drenzo.

AUGUST 2022

Eight runners raised over \$10,000 running the **50th Annual Falmouth Road Race** for NEADS. Thank you to Deb Lally, Joseph Contreras, Rose Solomon, Morgan Ryan, Siobhan Ryan, Jill Maneikis, Chantal Desgagne, and Scott Knapp.



SUMMER/FALL 2022

Eight NEADS Service and Assistance Dogs were honored on the field at Fenway Park in the **Boston Red Sox Service Dog of the Game** program.



NEADS clients honored during the 2022 season: Danielle & Assistance Dog for the Classroom Morrissey; Samantha & Assistance Dog for the Courthouse Chief (top row, right); Bill & Service Dog for Hearing June; Danielle & Assistance Dog Dusty (second row); Tracey & Assistance Dog Gleason; Patrick & Service Dog Knight; David & Service Dog Vegas (top row, left); and Christine & Assistance Dog for the Classroom Jonesy

JUNE 2022

NEW BREEDING CENTER OPENS

In what CEO Gerry DeRoche called a “watershed moment” several years in the making, NEADS hosted a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in June to celebrate the opening of its new state-of-the-art Breeding Center.



Lead Donors Larry and Nanine Costa

Lead contributors Larry and Nanine Costa, donors, and friends of NEADS joined us for a festive day marking an exciting new phase for NEADS. We are profoundly grateful to the many donors who made this achievement possible.

Tracey Stoll spoke about the transformative effect Assistance Dog Gleason has had on her young clients, and former MA Attorney General Martha Coakley shared her thoughts. MA Representative Megan Kilcoyne joined MA Senator Anne Gobi and Assistant House Minority Leader MA Representative Kim Ferguson to present proclamations from the Massachusetts House and Senate congratulating us on this milestone.

A time capsule in the new building capturing NEADS at 45 will be opened in 25 years (see back cover). We may not know what NEADS will look like then, but we do know that the NEADS Breeding Center will play a pivotal role in driving us forward.



Above: NEADS hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the grand opening of the Breeding Center on June 11. Photo: AJ Drenzo

Opening Up the World

Raylan & Celine

Building on their intensive training after a new team leaves the NEADS campus together, NEADS Service Dogs often find unique ways to support their partner. We love hearing about the things NEADS dogs learn as the team's partnership develops.

Take Raylan, for example, who's given a new meaning to the term "water dog." Raylan's partner, Celine Stahl, swims laps several days a week. Raylan and Celine have a pool routine—Raylan helps her in the locker room and carries her towel and goggles, supports her as she gets out of the pool, and ends every session by thanking the lifeguard. Raylan has expanded his duties by walking up and down poolside as Celine swims, eyes on her every minute. He knows immediately if she deviates from her regular practice. He's even jumped in to help her when she's fallen in the pool. It's no wonder that he is, according to Celine, the pool's most popular visitor.

Swimming is just one of the many ways Raylan has made it easier, and safer, for Celine to do the things she loves. "I was a hermit before Raylan," she says. Her health conditions cause her to be unsteady and prone to falling as well as affecting her vision, making her reluctant to go out on her own. Now that she has Raylan, they are a dynamic duo heading to lectures, museums, concerts, and all the many cultural activities that enrich Celine's life. He's helped her travel to San Francisco and visit the Empire State Building. "He's opened up my world," says Celine.

Raylan keeps Celine safer at home, too. Because she falls and can break bones easily, many of the daily tasks he performs for her lessen the risk of falling, whether he picks a dropped water bottle off the floor so she doesn't have to bend down, or retrieves a television remote so she doesn't have to get up and cross the room. Recently, she did fall and injured her ankle. She gave Raylan the command "phone," and called 911 when he brought it to her. Having Raylan has made it possible for Celine to continue to live alone and to feel confident doing so.

"I cannot function without my Service Dog helping me with my neuromuscular challenges," Celine says. "He loves to work. He's on guard all the time, and he's supported me even in the ICU and coronary care units in the hospital.

"Words can't describe what Raylan means to me," she goes on. "The strength of the bond, the depth of the relationship—I talk to him every day more than anyone else." Celine takes building their partnership seriously. She and Raylan continue to practice task work, despite having been together for six years. "I think that practicing routinely is really critical to establishing trust and developing that bond. He's absolutely pristine in both behavior and commands."

"Words can't describe what Raylan means to me," she goes on. "The strength of the bond, the depth of the relationship—I talk to him every day more than anyone else."

Celine credits NEADS' exacting matching process with finding her the ideal dog for her needs. "In my initial interview, [Director of Canine Operations] Kathy Foreman and [Client Services Specialist] Katy Ostroff asked me many, many questions that firmly established just what I needed in a Service Dog," she recalls. "I'm tall; that meant a male dog, because they're bigger and I needed a dog that would be at least 24" at his withers. I have low vision; that meant a light-colored dog. I have trouble with both my hips; that meant a dog that could work well on both left and right. They explained that NEADS would train a dog to my specific needs. All that care and thought put in meant Raylan was the perfect match."

Raylan is still learning new things, Celine says, and everything he learns opens up her world a little more.



In 1988, NEADS placed its first Service Dog, Kendrick, with Teddy, a 13-year-old boy born paralyzed below the shoulders. The team continually found new ways that Kendrick could support Teddy, and they developed a powerful bond. Kendrick's boundless loyalty was demonstrated dramatically on the day that Teddy's wheelchair rolled backwards into the family pool. Kendrick guided Teddy out of his wheelchair and to the edge of the pool, saving his life. Teddy and Kendrick were both an inspiration to NEADS staff and confirmation that Service Dog training was an important, life-changing role for NEADS. Service Dogs like Raylan (see photo) follow in Kendrick's footsteps - and change lives.

Service Dog Raylan
and Celine

Building a Partnership, Again

Ivy & Mary



Mary Moro fell in love with Service Dog for Hearing Ivy before they'd ever met. Watching a NEADS video, Mary was enchanted with the skip in Ivy's step and her energy. When she learned she'd be matched with Ivy, she exclaimed, "I get the skipping dog?!"

It's continued to be a joy-filled relationship. "She's so sweet and wants to please," Mary says fondly, "and it's a joy to watch her when she does sound work."

Ivy is Mary's third NEADS Service Dog for Hearing. After her most recent Service Dog, Roxy, passed on, Mary, who is deaf, felt vulnerable. She has alert systems set up for the fire alarm, doorbell, and the like, but those flashing lights aren't always obvious. If the electricity goes out, they fail. She's more sensitive to touch than light, she says, so Ivy's gentle nudges are more valuable to her.

Each of her Service Dogs has had a unique personality and has done their job a little differently, Mary says, yet each dog has been a perfect match. Ivy is her first Labrador, and she's teaching Mary about labs. She's the most affectionate dog Mary has had—"she's a super kisser"—and explores the world with her nose.

Ivy starts off their days with her "lick alarm," telling Mary it's time to rise and shine. At home, her ears are always on, listening for the phone, the doorbell, the oven timer and nudging Mary to the source. She's become a friendly face at Mary's work as a State of Indiana vocational rehabilitation counselor working with the deaf, alerting Mary to new arrivals in the office and recognizing frequent clients. She's a calm, confident, graceful dog, says Mary, and she still skips.

In the two decades since Mary was matched with her first NEADS dog, Camden, NEADS has grown and expanded. The Kathy Foreman Client House is a luxury upgrade, says Mary, and the on-campus


training is longer and more intense than it used to be. What hasn't changed is NEADS' dedication to its clients. "If anything it's even stronger. The training is even more comprehensive and the commitment is tremendous."

As when she trained with Camden, Mary worked with Kathy Foreman, Director of Canine Development, during her on-campus training with Ivy. "I feel a special bond with her because we go all the way back to Camden," Mary says, "and she's such a wealth of information. She gave me so many tips that really worked, and she stayed in close touch over the first six months, helping me refine Ivy's skills and learn the best ways to communicate with her."

What hasn't changed is NEADS' dedication to its clients. "If anything it's even stronger. The training is even more comprehensive and the commitment is tremendous."

Kathy says it's Mary's own hard work that has made her relationships with her Service Dogs so rewarding. "She does all the necessary things as her part of the partnership; practicing sound work, building a strong bond through play, exercise, and work. It gives me great satisfaction to see how each of her dogs has been so greatly appreciated and given her security and confidence, which has grown with each relationship."

NEADS is in it for the long haul with every client. We are here to support the team for the life of the dog. And when the time comes, we love to help clients, like Mary, transition to the next Service Dog who'll change their life in a whole new way.



Over the years many clients have come to us for successor Service Dogs as their partner dogs have aged. They are often surprised when they are matched with a dog with a very different personality. Kathy Foreman explains. "People change," she says simply. "Their lives and lifestyles change, they age, their disability may evolve. We work hard to make sure that their next Service Dog is very much the right match now."

Mary Morois says that's been her experience. Each of her NEADS dogs was the right dog at that particular point in her life, and the NEADS Client Services and Training teams were able to see how her needs had changed and help her with the transition to her new Service Dog. She says, "I trust NEADS: they know!"



A Big World Impact

Bentley & Ken

Some NEADS dogs—Assistance Dogs—make a difference in many lives. When you ask Mansfield School Resource Officer Ken Wright what, exactly, Assistance Dog Bentley does every day, he smiles. “A lot more than I ever expected,” he says. “The most important thing he does is bring people together.”

In his three years as Ken’s right-hand companion, Bentley has built relationships with students from kindergarten through high school, appeared at community events, walked in parades, inspired a student service award, and even served as a calendar model. He’s a busy dog! And, says Ken, “he’s very well loved around the schools and the town—he’s a lot better known than the guy at the end of the leash.”

Mansfield’s school campus encompasses about 4,000 students in elementary, middle, and high school, and Bentley creates a positive atmosphere throughout, Ken says. He often visits classrooms; he helps students with special needs get back on track when they’re struggling; he comforts kids when

they’re upset. Because everyone wants to be Bentley’s buddy, he also helps students make new connections. Ken recalls watching a girl play alone on the playground, isolated from her peers. When Bentley went to visit with her, her classmates followed, and suddenly she was talking and playing with them. “He’s a conversation starter, encouraging kids who wouldn’t normally interact to talk. He breaks down barriers,” says Ken.

In the elementary school, Bentley has given his name to an award for good citizenship. Ken explained to the students that Service and Assistance Dogs, like Bentley, are specially trained to do selfless things for others. When a teacher sees a child doing something kind, the child receives the weekly Bentley Award. The award is announced school wide and even comes complete with a wee plush Bentley. The Bentley Awards have become highly sought after, and have made a tangible difference in the school environment, says Ken.

Bentley is even teaching students about the importance of giving back. It all began when the photography club asked if they could use Bentley as a subject. The resulting photos were so good that the club had the idea of making a Bentley calendar. The student-led project has become a fundraiser for NEADS, raising enough money over the last three years to name two puppies.

That’s not the only way that Bentley and Ken have devised to support NEADS’s work. The Mansfield School and Police Departments joined forces to create a special patch featuring Bentley. Sales of the patch support NEADS’ Service Dogs for Veterans with PTSD program.



A dog best suited for Assistance Dog work is, as Client Services Specialist Katy Ostroff puts it, “a dog who likes to greet the world.”



Bentley's impact keeps growing. He and Ken inspired Samantha Dias, a forensic interviewer working with traumatized children at the Children's Advocacy Center in Bristol County, MA, to partner with NEADS Assistance Dog Chief.

Assistance Dogs like Bentley and Chief enjoy working with many people, in contrast to Service Dogs who are devoted to working with a single partner. That reflects a fundamental difference in their personalities. A dog best suited for Assistance Dog work is, as Client Services Specialist Katy Ostroff puts it, “a dog who likes to greet the world.” During training, Assistance Dog candidates show us that they are happiest interacting with groups. Even then, different dogs are better suited to particular settings. A dog like Bentley, who is busy all day long in different classrooms and frequently works after hours at all kinds of town events, is what Katy calls a “big world dog.” Another dog, like Chief, might be a better fit for a counseling role working with many people but on a smaller scale. Determining the perfect placement for each NEADS dog is a painstaking process, with the Client Services and Training teams working closely together to make the right match. Bentley and Ken are a powerhouse partnership because of that painstaking work.

The children in Bentley's big world will tell you: Bentley makes a big difference.



Love in Action

Kacey & Gabe

Gabriel Bachour always seemed to know that a dog could give him something no one else could—support he desperately needed. At five, he told his mother, “Sometimes I don’t want anyone near me. I just want a dog.”

His mother, Angélica, listened. She began to research how a Service Dog might support Gabriel, who is autistic. She knew it had to be a dog with just the right training. When she met a NEADS representative at a conference for people with disabilities, the light bulb went on: a NEADS Service Dog was what she, and Gabe, were looking for. As soon as he was eligible, they applied. They were matched with Service Dog for a Child Kacey when Gabe was eight years old.

“It’s been joy from that point on,” Angélica says.

Over the many months of her training, Kacey’s inmate handler and Puppy Raiser, along with the NEADS Training staff, could see that her personality and strengths made her ideally suited for a young person with autism. She let them know that she loved working one on one and devoting herself to her person, as a Service Dog should, and that she absolutely loved children. Every NEADS dog is unique, and a deep understanding of each dog makes matches that work as beautifully as Gabe and Kacey’s.

Before Kacey came into his life, Gabe would frequently get so upset that he was inconsolable. Now he knows when he needs Kacey—and Kacey knows too, frequently coming to him even before he gives the command—and his episodes of dysregulation have dropped from half an hour to virtually no time at all. Gabe used to have trouble putting his experiences, especially negative ones, into words. Now he tells Kacey about them.

“I don’t even know how Gabe would be without her,” says Angélica. “Having her has cut down on a lot of his therapy. We often didn’t know what to do for him. But Kacey knows. And Gabe knows when he needs Kacey.”

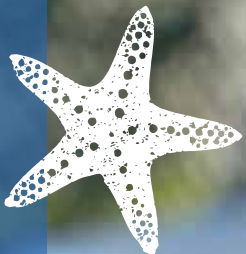
Angélica and Gabe treasure Kacey’s quirks—she loves bananas and snow, hates swimming in cold water, and destroys every toy except the plush whale she carries everywhere—and say that her loving, playful personality makes her the perfect dog for Gabe.

“Sometimes I don’t want anyone near me. I just want a dog.”

“I like when she plays and is energetic,” says Gabe, showing off how he and Kacey ‘dance’ together as he holds her paws. “I love giving Kacey love.” Love, says his mother, is what the relationship is all about. Kacey wants to be wherever Gabriel is, and is always attuned to his moods. On a recent trip to New York City, Gabe felt trapped and anxious while on the subway—“too many people looking at me,” he explains—and was able to calm himself by maintaining eye contact with Kacey.

This relationship is a little different from other Service Dog partnerships in that when the Service Dog and child are out in public, a parent is always holding a second leash. Service Dogs partnered with children with autism, such as Kacey, do not accompany their young friend to school. During the day, Kacey naps at Angélica’s feet while she works until Gabe gets home from school and it’s time to work and play with him.

“She’s my buddy but she knows she’s Gabe’s dog,” says Angélica. Gabe says simply, “She’s perfect.”



Angélica and Gabe think Kacey may be NEADS' first polyglot dog—"she speaks dog, English, and now Portuguese!" reports Angélica. The Bachours are teaching both their sons to speak Portuguese, and Kacey is getting language lessons too.

Kacey's learned quite a few commands including senta, sit; bola, ball; pega, get it; pode comer, take it, meaning she can eat. They're working on things like Vamos la fora? Do you want to go outside? and Cadê o Gabriel? Where is Gabriel?, a free time command for Kacey to find Gabe when they are playing hide and seek.

"I say it in Portuguese first and let her process it, then say it in English and let her process it, and repeat it in Portuguese, and do the action with her so she can connect what is being said with action. We use both languages the same amount daily so she is exposed to both constantly," Angélica explains.

It's always interesting to see how our World Class Service Dogs and their partners develop their skills after they leave NEADS together. These dogs love to learn new things. Bom trabalho (nice job), Kacey!



On the Job, Home and Away

Vali & Cindy

Every NEADS Service Dog is a star, and just like stars, every Service Dog is unique. We're pretty sure, for example, that Service Dog for Hearing Vali is the only NEADS dog ever to be named a Thunderdog—an honorary member of the elite flight team, the United States Air Force Thunderbirds.

Vali's partner, Cindy Thompson, is not only a US Army veteran, she's a military mom, too. Of her four children, two are on active duty, and through her Air Force pilot son she's become the Team Mom for the Thunderbirds. "That started with a batch of peanut butter fudge," says Cindy. From there, she's developed a close relationship with the team, and now that Vali is a part of her life, Vali's part of the team, too. "They get down on the floor, loving on her," Cindy says affectionately.

In addition to traveling to see the Thunderbirds perform, Vali and Cindy have journeyed across the United States from their home base in North Carolina. Cindy leads a very active life as a business owner and volunteer. Vali, she says, is always by her side. "She's very loyal and committed, always ready to work," Cindy says. Vali is quick to learn new things, picking up Cindy's husband's name and looking for him if she hears it, alerting Cindy to cars when they walk near traffic, and learning to let Cindy know when the oven timer goes off.

Cindy has had moderate to severe hearing loss since she was a child. Knowing she often missed sounds and voices kept her on constant high alert. She began to realize a few years ago that she needed the help of a Service Dog for Hearing. Vali keeps her safer, she says, and that lets Cindy relax and feel more confident. "Vali's on the job," says Cindy.

Service Dogs for Hearing were the first dogs NEADS trained. In the early 1970s, a professor at Holliston Junior College conducted a study to determine if dogs could help those with hearing loss in the way that Guide Dogs worked with the blind. The answer was yes, and NEADS grew out of that

work. Founded in 1976, NEADS became the first organization on the East Coast to train Service Dogs for Hearing. Today, we're the oldest continuously operating hearing dog organization in the US. We've expanded our training program over the years—in fact, NEADS trains the broadest variety of Service Dogs in the industry—but we remain committed to our deaf and hard of hearing clients.

And now we've trained our first Thunderdog. Who knows where our Service Dogs will go next? Wherever it is, we know they'll make a memorable impact.

Founded in 1976, NEADS became the first organization on the East Coast to train Service Dogs for Hearing. Today, we're the oldest continuously operating hearing dog organization in the US.

Director of Canine Development Kathy Foreman has been with NEADS almost since the very beginning and is a nationally acclaimed expert on hearing dog training. She points out that in 45 years, the world has changed greatly for our clients with hearing issues. "There are so many more things for our dogs to alert to now," she explains. "Phones, security systems, all our electronic gadgets—so many things beep. But also, things have changed generally for our clients with disabilities, and for the better. Many of our early deaf clients were not able to find employment. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990, opportunities opened up for them to work and engage more fully in community life. So our dogs' skills had to increase too. They work in a broader range of environments now."





A Year of NEADS by the Numbers



* Starred programs serve a total of 98 veterans.



Congratulations to our clients who completed their training in FY 2021/2022:

Joanna Lubkin & Sully
Christine Brouillard & Jonesy
Cynthia Miller & Collins
William Thurston & Bessie
David Cohn & Mickey
Cindy Thompson & Vali
Mary Morois & Ivy
Sarah Snow & Marley
Samantha Dias & Chief
Theresa Lane & Cooper
William O'Connell & June
Gary Grimes & Webster
Nicole Toscano & Porter
Zachary Meffen & Wally

What did it take to support our 112 Service Dogs in Training this year?

PRISON PUP PROGRAM

6 prisons
38 inmate handlers

Did you know? NEADS Trainers travel to prison weekly to work with the inmate handlers. In FY22, NEADS Trainers traveled 23,192 miles to the prisons to provide 832 hours of inmate handler instruction.

NEADS BREEDING CENTER

BREEDING COLONY

11 broods (females),
6 added in FY22
3 studs (males)
all added in FY22

LITTERS

16 litters whelped

Did you know? In addition to ongoing daily care of the moms and puppies, NEADS staff provide puppies with 24/7 care for their first 5 days of life. In FY22, NEADS staff provided 1,920 hours of round-the-clock care.

HAWKINS CANINE CENTER (HCC)

136 dogs cared for

Did you know? Kongs filled with a vegetable/fruit mixture are a midday snack that dogs really enjoy—even frozen in hot weather. In FY22, HCC staff filled a total of 9,125 Kongs (no days off).

Dogs also receive plenty of one-on-one and small group exercise. In FY22, staff spent 4 hours a day with dogs in the play yard totalling 1,460 hours!

PUPPY RAISERS

79 Weekend Raisers
118 Full-Time Raisers

Did you know? NEADS Raiser Instructors organize classes and one-on-one and small group instruction for the Puppy Raisers. In FY22, Instructors arranged visits to 130 venues and provided 728 hours of instruction.

OUR SUPPORTERS

Foundations

We would like to thank the following organizations for their generosity*:

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IAM Strong Foundation

LEAVING YOUR LEGACY AT NEADS

Making a bequest gift to NEADS lets you touch the future. When you name NEADS, Inc. in your will, trust, life insurance policy, or retirement plan, you keep your assets available today—and help World Class Service Dogs change lives for years to come.

For more information, visit neads.org/plannedgiving or contact Melissa Baern at mbaern@neads.org.

SUSTAINING NEADS

Sustainers Circle members donate to NEADS on a monthly basis, providing consistent support that funds the ongoing raising and training of World Class Service Dogs. Members can make automated payments of any amount by credit card or by mailing in monthly donations.

It's simple to set up, saves time and effort, and helps NEADS change lives month after month. Visit neads.org/sustainers to learn more.

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Jolyn Foundation, Inc.
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The Kay Family Foundation
Kenrose Kitchen Table Foundation
The Donna M. Kletjian 2014 Charitable Lead Trust
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DAV Charitable Service Trust
The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts
Merck Animal Health
Payden & Rygel
RAWZ Natural Pet Food
TJX
VCA Charities
Worcester 6K Memorial

SPONSORS

Advisors Mortgage Group, LLC.
Blue Pearl specialty + emergency pet hospital
D'Ambrosio Eye Care
Embark
Oliver Inc.
Red Sox Foundation
Tegna Foundation
The Tower of Hope
Wachusett Brewing Co.

* Funding received from foundations in FY 2022 (Sept 1, 2021 through Aug 31, 2022)

Ten Years of Ducks for Dogs



When Boston Duck Tours came onboard as a NEADS supporter, it was the beginning of a special partnership that has only grown stronger over the last decade.

"When we partner with someone, we don't just write a check," says Cindy Brown, Boston Duck Tours CEO. "We work with them, we spend time with them, we visit them, we invite them into our world. And in true Boston Duck Tours fashion we find ways to make it fun."

Cathy Zemaitis remembers how it all began. "It was ten years ago last spring and I'd just started my new position at NEADS. The phone rang, and it was Cindy Brown. 'This is kind of a cold call,' she said. 'We'd like to partner with your Canines for Combat Veterans [now Service Dogs for Veterans] program.' To get this call was such a thrill for me. It was at that moment that I really understood the impact of NEADS—so profound that an iconic company like Boston Duck Tours sought us out because they wanted to get involved. It was the beginning of a fantastic partnership."

Cindy explains what motivated her to reach out to NEADS. "One Veterans Day, I walked past the State House during a presentation. I remember watching gentlemen in full uniform with glistening eyes remembering their service, and you could hear a pin drop. I felt in my heart that veterans were a cause



"It's easy to write a check, but it's more purposeful when we have our staff involved, not only in understanding what philanthropy is and sharing it with the guests on board, but also doing the work."

that Boston Duck Tours needed to get involved in. So we said, well, how do we support veterans?

"The next day I got to work. We looked for a service dog company that worked with veterans. NEADS fit perfectly."

For a decade, Cindy and Boston Duck Tours' commitment to NEADS has never wavered. They sell rubber ducks wearing camouflage vests, with two dollars of each one going to NEADS. Those little ducks started out giving a dollar back to NEADS; after Cindy spoke at a client graduation, she was so impressed by NEADS' work that she doubled it. The company never misses a creative opportunity to support NEADS. In addition to their fundraising, Boston Duck tours hosted NEADS puppy raisers for a private duck tour in April, making the front page of the Boston Herald.

"We like to live our giving as well," says Cindy. "Around the holidays our employees spend hours at the Prudential Center wrapping presents for shoppers and the money goes to NEADS. It's easy to write a check, but it's more purposeful when we have our staff involved, not only in understanding what philanthropy is and sharing it with the guests on board, but also doing the work."

"I'm proud of our relationship with NEADS and I look forward to ten more years."

We're grateful to Cindy and to Boston Duck Tours for their steadfast support. We, too, look forward to many years to come!



OUR SUPPORTERS

THE BLACK DOG

Once upon a time a Martha's Vineyard ship captain rescued a black dog, named her Black Dog, and then named a tavern after her. The Black Dog Tavern became an iconic presence on the island, and eventually grew into a beloved retail and hospitality brand. For many years, NEADS Puppy Raisers have ridden the ferry with dogs in training to visit the flagship Martha's Vineyard store—ferry rides and restaurant trips are great socialization activities!

In honor of that first Black Dog, the Black Dog has a long-standing commitment to organizations working with dogs. "We look for organizations where our help can make a larger impact," says Jess Fiedler, marketing manager. "And organizations that go above and beyond, like NEADS."

The Black Dog and NEADS have partnered in many ways over the years. The company has a long-standing commitment to NEADS Service Dogs that burgeoned with NEADS' Pawsitively Strong initiative in response to the Boston Marathon bombing. With seed funding from Boston Duck Tours and the Kenrose Kitchen Table Foundation, the fund was established to provide Service Dogs for victims of the bombing or other violent crimes in Massachusetts. The Black Dog participated in the 2014 Copley Place flash mob thanking first responders and honoring those injured in the bombing. They followed that up with dedicating a portion of retail sales to Pawsitively Strong. Today, the Black Dog is a contributor to our Get Dressed. Give Back. fundraising evening and their products are sold in the NEADS Shop. It's a strong relationship that honors The Black Dog's legacy and helps generations of NEADS World Class Service Dogs help others.

GARDINER HOWLAND SHAW FOUNDATION

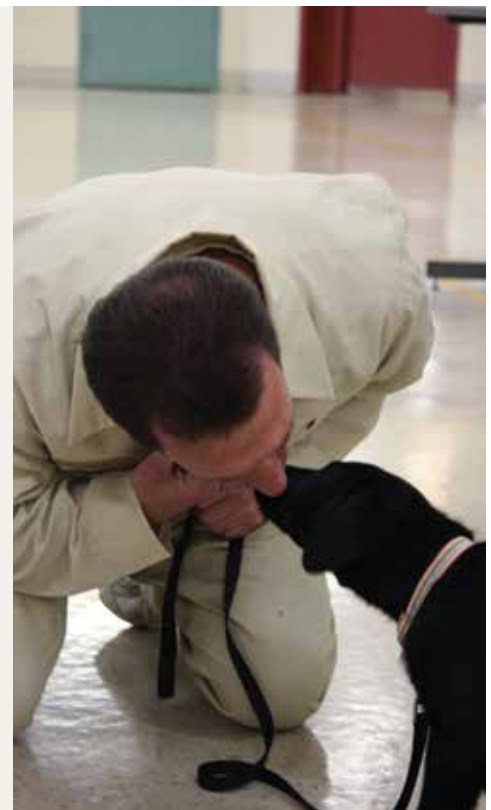
Gardiner Howland Shaw spent much of his life crusading for prison reform, inmate education, and offender rehabilitation. In the 1960s, he established a foundation that bears his name with the aim of furthering that work. Decades on, the Boston-based Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation steadfastly supports the work he was passionate about across Massachusetts.

The Foundation has supported NEADS' Prison PUP Program for the past decade, helping us expand into new prisons and fund the inmate-based training of NEADS Service Dogs. Inmate handlers are vital to our training program, building intensive training

relationships that ready NEADS dogs for their important work.

"I saw that the Prison PUP Program gave offenders a purpose," says Tom Coury, executive director of the Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation. "People need a purpose in life, or they wander. This program helps inmates make a real contribution to humanity."

Inmate handlers make an important impact at NEADS, and as Tom points out, the program is important to them, too. Thank you to the Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation for sharing our commitment to the Prison PUP Program.



NEADS Puppy Raisers

Volunteers like these Full-Time and Weekend Puppy Raisers play a vital role in the development of a NEADS dog. Thank you to all our Puppy Raisers!

Marianne Lackey

Full-Time Puppy Raiser

How long have you been a Puppy Raiser?

Since July 2022 when I got Minnie.

What are your favorite activities?

I have had so many fun times with her! We especially love our local wine shop where we go to wine tasting every Friday evening. The owner, the employees, and the locals love seeing Minnie every week.

What's been your most memorable experience?

So far, the most memorable experience was when we went to a nursing home with several Weekend Puppy Raisers and pups. It was so touching to see how happy the elderly ladies were to see all the NEADS dogs.

What's the most fun you've had with Minnie?

Our most fun day was taking her to Block Island this summer. We rode on the ferry and explored the island for the day—the dunes, the beaches, the farm, the outside



bars. She was so well behaved, and it was fun seeing her experience so many new things and so many people.

I also enjoyed meeting people and educating them about the NEADS Service Dog program.

What do you like best about raising NEADS dogs?

I wanted to be a part of NEADS and this community to not only do something that I am super passionate about, but also to be part of a bigger purpose. I am truly passionate about a dog's ability to help and serve.

Jamie & Lisa Griffith

Weekend Puppy Raisers

How long have you been Puppy Raisers? How many dogs have you raised?

We have been Raisers for five years and we have raised three puppies: William, Zoey, and now Laurel, who has been selected to enter the breeding program.



What is your most memorable experience?

We once took part in a Massport mass casualty exercise with William, where we simulated being passengers who needed to be evacuated from an airliner. It took place on a runway at Logan Airport and was a great experience for both of us.

What's the most fun you've ever had with a NEADS dog?

Teaching the puppies water manners and watching their first swim is always a fun time.

How do the NEADS dogs fit in with your family?

NEADS puppies are always a fun addition to our home on weekends. Our resident cat Luther may disagree at first, but by the end of a year or so with a puppy even Luther begrudgingly accepts the NEADS puppies.

What do you like best about raising NEADS dogs?

Knowing they will go on to do a greater good and be life-changing for someone in need.

Weekend Puppy Raiser Council

The Weekend Puppy Raiser Council is a group of experienced Weekend Puppy Raisers who mentor newer Raisers and facilitate communication between NEADS and these valued volunteers. Created to enhance our Puppy Raisers' experience and deepen their engagement with NEADS, the council plays an important role. Recently the council has expanded its mentoring capacity, welcoming new Raisers into NEADS nation and helping them acclimate to their new role. These dedicated volunteers go above and beyond to help the all-important Puppy Raiser program run smoothly.



Carole & Brian McDonald

Full-Time Puppy Raisers

How long have you been Puppy Raisers? How many dogs have you raised?

We have been Puppy Raisers for over a dozen years and have hosted over 40 puppies. Recently we were lucky enough to be full-time raisers for Dancer, who was selected for the breeding program. She has had one litter to date - seven beautiful puppies! We then volunteered to become Full-Time Raisers for another puppy, Dolly.

What is your most memorable experience?

Seeing Dancer develop from a small but confident puppy to a fully trained dog and then delivering a litter of "little Dancers" to provide a next generation of Service Dogs.

What's your favorite place to take a dog?

We live on a lake and love having the dogs play on our beach and dock and experience the wildlife there. We also love taking them to Putnam, CT, which has a quaint downtown with lots of shops and outside restaurants. The dogs get lots of exposure and attention.

What's the most fun you've ever had with a NEADS dog?

Meeting Dancer's new puppies at the Breeding Center and

watching her "mother" them. Also, meeting and greeting people when we take Dancer and Dolly on outings and promoting NEADS' work in developing these incredible Service Dogs.

How do your NEADS dogs fit in with your family?

Dancer, and now Dolly, go everywhere with us and the two of them have integrated well.

What do you like best about raising NEADS dogs?

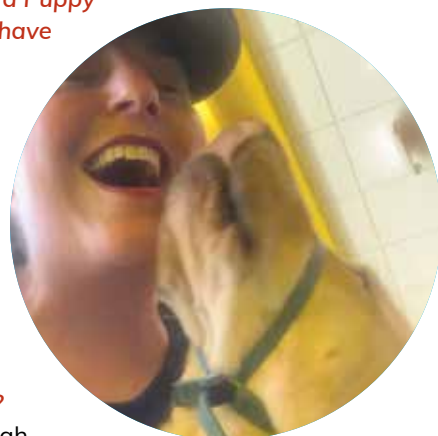
The challenges, the joys and, sometimes, the frustrations of raising a little puppy to become a life-changing companion for someone who really needs their help. It's a way of giving back.

Rachel Gould

Full-Time Puppy Raiser

How long have you been a Puppy Raiser? How many dogs have you raised?

My husband, Josh, and I, with our sons, Elijah, 12, and Max, 10, have raised Porter, Buckley, Murphy and, most recently, Rocky and Robert.



What is your most memorable experience with a dog you've raised?

Going back to teaching high school in person in September 2021, everyone was masked and spaced apart. Porter walked around each class greeting all and then carefully arranged himself on the feet of the most anxious kid. His snuggles were the only contact anyone was able to share. So many students said that they came to school just to see him; he was the only unmasked creature in the building.

How do the NEADS dogs fit in with your family?

Easily. They love outings, going to soccer games, swim meets, grocery shopping—they are celebrities at Trader Joe's! People often ask if it is hard for our kids to say goodbye when they go on to advanced training. Our boys are just so proud of the pups. We all know they are destined for great things.

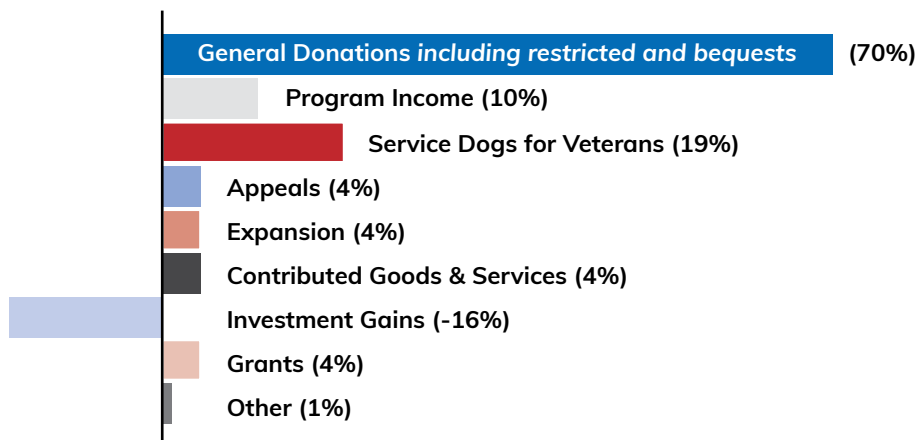
What do you like best about raising NEADS dogs?

We love our time with the pups. Knowing that we can help them on their path to serving their person is incredibly rewarding.

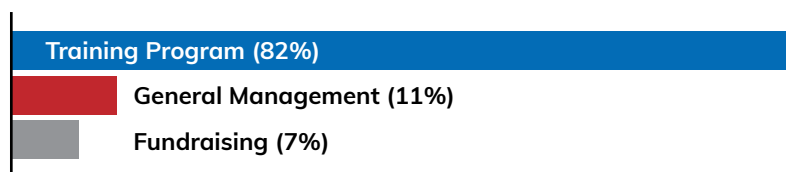
2022 Financial Highlights

OPERATING REVENUE	2022*	2021
General fees and contributions	\$3,313,577	\$4,509,800
Contributed goods, services and property	187,688	265,611
Grants and foundations	1,465,158	1,436,611
Interest income	3,403	4,291
Investment gains (losses)	(704,438)	587,869
Other income	783	1,962
(Net assets released from restrictions)		
Total support and revenue	\$4,266,171	\$6,806,144
OPERATING EXPENSES	2022	2021
Training program	\$3,047,740	\$2,773,422
Management and general	437,689	373,504
Fundraising	299,805	233,993
Total expenses	\$3,785,234	\$3,380,919
Change in net assets	\$480,937	\$3,425,225
Net assets, beginning of year	\$12,988,739	\$9,563,514
Net assets, end of year	\$13,469,676	\$12,988,739

SUPPORT AND REVENUE BY CATEGORY



EXPENSES BY CATEGORY



NEADS® Board of Directors*

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Vanessa Brown

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Tracy Kelly, Rich Prager,

Audrey Trieschman, Cathy Zemaitis,

NEADS clients & volunteers

20 CONSECUTIVE 4-STAR CHARITY NAVIGATOR RATINGS

Strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency have earned NEADS its 20th consecutive 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator. NEADS is one of the longest-standing nonprofits to hold this rating.



*Audited financials have been reviewed by the Board of Directors Finance Committee. Their recommendation is for full Board approval at the January 18, 2023 Annual Meeting.

A REMEMBRANCE:

NEADS Service Dog Ambassador Currahee

Whether as a valued partner helping to share the NEADS mission in the community or working on campus with prospective clients, NEADS Service Dog Ambassadors exemplify World Class Service Dogs in action – calm, confident, and demonstrating impeccable task work.

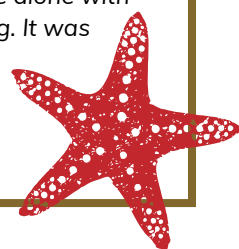
No dog better embodied these traits than Currahee. Currahee was a Service Dog Ambassador from 2012 to 2016, during which time he worked with Chief Development and Programs Officer Cathy Zemaitis. "He was so well trained," says Cathy, "and he loved to work." He was a valued partner, helping Cathy share NEADS' mission in many ways. Currahee lived as a pet with Cathy after he retired until his passing in August 2022.

Says Katy Ostroff, Client Services Specialist, "I was fortunate to have had the chance to see Currahee work his magic with applicants who were coming in for their initial interview for a Service Dog. The clients are often anxious, and our interviews are long. Working with Currahee was a welcome relief. He would come into the room, in all his majesty, and clients would melt. As Currahee would 'say hello,' they would visibly relax.

"I have memories of two clients in particular in which the power and magic of our Service Dogs were so abundantly clear after they worked with Currahee. The first was a 10-year-old girl with autism. She was unable to make eye contact and her hands frequently flapped up and down. And then, in came Currahee. She was immediately drawn to this gentle soul and worked and played with him for about 20 minutes. When Currahee left the room, her hands had

stopped moving, she more easily engaged in conversation, and her eye contact had improved. It was astonishing the impact Currahee had in such a short interaction.

"The second client was a woman in her 30s who had horrific injuries from a hit and run car accident. Her life had been turned upside down; she needed to leave a career she loved because of her injuries and resulting disabilities. During her interview, her sadness permeated the room. And then, Currahee arrived. Her face lit up and she just came to life as she worked with him. He helped her see that when she was matched, she would no longer be alone with what she was enduring. It was magical."



NEADS Staff

Our talented, dedicated staff of 46 brings NEADS' mission to life. Together, the team works to change lives, one NEADS dog at a time.

Kate Albertini
Tori Allen
Janet Anderson
Melissa Baern
Lori Barrett
Riley Bazinet
Rachael Bell
Leah Bell
Susan Berry
Lisa Braley
Sam Bramson
David Buteau
Sean Carroll

Amanda Charbonneau
Gerry DeRoche
Madison Dolan
Corinne Donohue
Kathy Foreman
Emilie Gagne
Jennifer Girardin
Tyler Gribi
Katie Hanna
Sarah Heinrich
Michelle Kati
Tracy Kelly
Megan Kropf



Hannah Kump
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Katy Ostroff
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Doreen Sheridan
Andy Shusta
Bailey Sullivan
Anna Tepe
Erin Toomey

Audrey Trieschman
Julie Vautour
Tyler Vincent
Cathy Zemaitis

*Employed by NEADS
as of 8/31/22

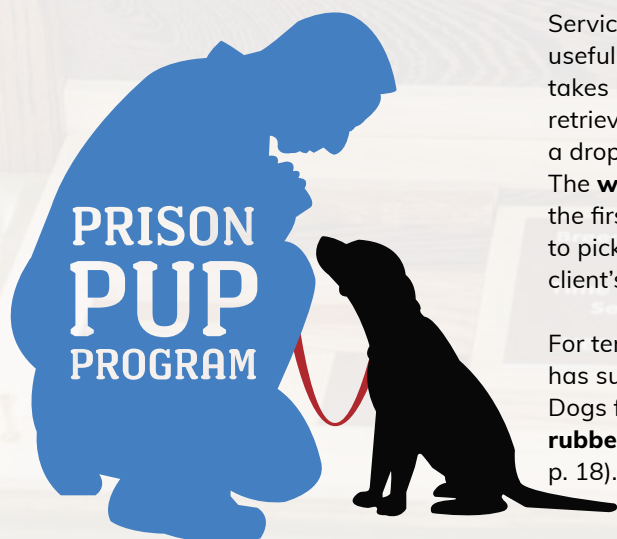
Photo: Kristen Chalmers

NEADS Now & Then



When we opened the Breeding Center in June, we placed a time capsule in the basement, to be opened in 25 years. We don't know what NEADS will look like in a quarter century, but we do know we'll still be picking starfish off the beach, changing lives one World Class Service Dog at a time.

Here are a few things we chose to illustrate NEADS today for NEADS tomorrow.



With the opening of the NEADS Breeding Center, the breeding program, started in 2017, has reached a new level. Thanks to the Amelia Peabody Charitable Fund, **ultrasounds** confirm our broods' pregnancies and herald more pups for the training program.



Task work is fundamental to Service Dog training. The most useful task—and the one that takes longest to teach—is the retrieve, where the dog picks up a dropped article for the partner. The **white training dumbbell** is the first item that the dog learns to pick up, hold, and deliver to the client's hand.

For ten years, Boston Duck Tours has supported NEADS' Service Dogs for Veterans with sales of **rubber duckies** (see related story p. 18).

When our clients come for on-campus training, they receive **Service Dog and Hearing Dog Client Manuals**. These guidebooks help them learn how to work with and care for their new partner, and will serve as references in the years to come.

Each Service Dog in Training wears an **identifying tag**.



The NEADS Prison PUP Program has been an integral part of our training program since 1998. Inmate handlers train a NEADS World Class Service Dog under weekly guidance and instruction by NEADS Trainers. Handlers are provided with a **Prison Pup T-Shirt**, which they wear with great pride.



NEADS® World Class Service Dogs Change Lives
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