



Guide Dogs
of America



Tender Loving
Canines

FACTS AT A GLANCE

Transforming lives through partnerships with service dogs

Our Organization

At Guide Dogs of America, we transform lives through partnerships with service dogs. We breed, raise, and train guide dogs for individuals who are blind/visually impaired and service dogs for veterans and children with autism. We also place facility dogs with professionals in hospitals, schools, and courtrooms.

Our highly skilled canines become trusted companions that increase people's confidence, mobility, and independence. All programs and services, including transportation, personalized training, room/board, and postgraduate support, are provided at no cost to the recipient.

Cost \$60,000

Breeding, raising and training of each team—service dog and student

Our Community

- 50 Employees
- 250 Volunteers
- 150 Puppy Raisers

Our Dogs



OUR GUIDE DOGS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND/ VISUALLY IMPAIRED

improve our clients' mobility and bring new opportunities for life experiences and social interaction. These highly trained canines help our clients travel safely from one destination to the next. They avoid obstacles, stop at elevation changes, keep their partner on a straight line, stop for all oncoming traffic, and even remember common routes.

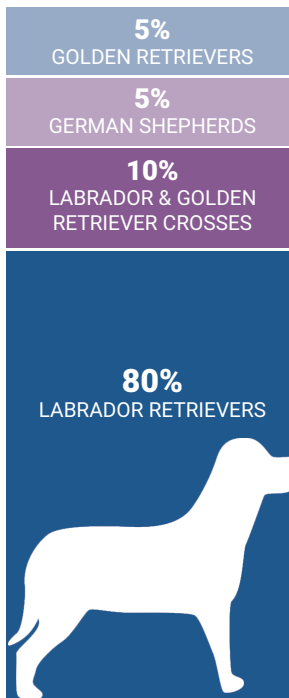
OUR SERVICE DOGS FOR VETERANS help heroes reintegrate into society by alleviating their PTSD symptoms and assisting with mobility limitations. They are trained to provide grounding or sensory input to decrease the physiological symptoms of stress/anxiety. They are also trained to interrupt or alert to early signs of hypervigilance or escalated anxiety brought on by triggers. For our veterans with mobility issues, our dogs can retrieve/carry items, brace for balance, and help with prosthetics.

OUR SERVICE DOGS FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

become trusted companions that create hope and usher confidence and independence into our clients and their families' lives. They are trained to provide sensory input like laying in a child's lap or on their feet to help deescalate stressful situations. They can also perform cues like visit, wave, bow, and fist bump to welcome new opportunities to help improve communication skills.

OUR FACILITY DOGS PROVIDE ANIMAL ASSISTED INTERVENTION AND THERAPY

to individuals with disabilities, victims of crime, and other vulnerable populations. Our facility dogs can also help individuals feel calm and secure during a difficult courtroom trial or testimony. In educational settings, facility dogs can encourage children to attend class, motivating them to stay engaged. In healthcare settings, grooming, feeding, and playing with our dogs can help facilitate the healing process.



Our Program Requirements

Guide Dog

- Legally blind
- 18 years of age
- Orientation and Mobility training



Veterans

- Suffer from a diagnosed disability; Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), mobility (e.g., amputations)
- Separated from the military -- Document of Discharge (DD-214)
- If suffering from PTSD, which occurs in a majority of cases, applicants must be receiving treatment for their PTSD
- Sobriety for one year

Autism

- Diagnosis of autism-related learning disability
- Must be between 6 to 16 years of age
- Ability of a parent/caregiver to attend team training and be the primary handler of the dog

Facility

- Approval from employer for use of a facility dog
- Identify a secondary handler
- Ability to care for and manage a dog
- Must be able to attend Team Training



OUR GRADUATES

GUIDE DOGS 231

VETERAN DOGS 17

AUTISM DOGS 17

FACILITY DOGS 8



Our Classes

Guide Dog Class

- 3 weeks on campus
- 6 times a year
- 10 students per class
- Roughly 3:1 student to teacher ratio

Service Dog Class

- 3 weeks at home online
- 1 week on campus
- 4 times a year
- 5 students per class
- Roughly 2:1 student to teacher ratio

Puppy Raising

Our volunteer puppy raisers are the cornerstone of our training program. **Our guide dog puppies** are placed with carefully screened foster families, known as "puppy raisers," when they are eight weeks old. Puppy raisers teach our young canines basic obedience, proper house manners and help them gain confidence as they mature. The dogs return to GDA at 14 to 18 months of age for formal training.

Service dog puppies are raised and trained in a two-year prison program.

Our staff teaches carefully selected inmates how to train their dogs using only positive reinforcement techniques. Each service dog puppy grows up to learn over 50 commands. Our prison program dramatically aids in rehabilitating incarcerated individuals, providing an opportunity for education and community improvement—while helping meet the ever-growing demand for service dogs.

Every successful guide and service dog team starts when someone embraces the opportunity to raise a puppy.



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