



# 2020

Can Do Canines  
**ANNUAL GRATITUDE REPORT**

# Mission

Can Do Canines is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities by creating mutually beneficial partnerships with specially trained dogs.

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# Vision

We envision a future in which every person who needs and wants an assistance dog can have one.

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# Values

- Client Commitment
- Teamwork
- Integrity
- Respect for People
- Respect for Animals



## Can Do Canines Annual Gratitude Report 2020

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## Those Who Served on the Board of Directors During 2020

Mitch Peterson, President

Dianne Ward, Vice President

Ross Thorfinnson, Treasurer

Ann Curme Shaw, Secretary

Andrew Brust

Steven Novotny

Kevin Florence

Mary Rhatigan

Elizabeth Grey

Connie Roehrich

Kathryn Hoy

Judy Sharken Simon

Sharon Hughes

Scott Thomas-Forss

Beth Klingelhofer

## Contact

Can Do Canines  
9440 Science Center Drive  
New Hope, MN 55428

Phone: 763-331-3000  
Email: [info@candocanines.org](mailto:info@candocanines.org)  
Website: [candocanines.org](http://candocanines.org)

## On the Cover

Ava with Autism Assist Dog  
Alfred, one of our 2020  
certified teams

# A Letter From **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JEFF JOHNSON & PRESIDENT MITCH PETERSON**

It is probably an understatement to say that 2020 was a unique and challenging year. World events prompted a new normal for how people conduct their daily lives and how organizations operate, and Can Do Canines was no exception.

Yet, through it all, our staff graciously adapted and all of you who so generously supported us helped us carry our mission forward. Not only did we continue to receive and process applications for those needing our special dogs, but we equalled 2019's pace by certifying 51 assistance dog teams during 2020. Your unwavering support made this possible, and we couldn't be prouder of this achievement.

While we missed seeing everyone in person through much of this last year, we were able to conduct all of our usual events virtually, beginning in the spring. One advantage this different format provided was a beautiful recording of the many ways our assistance dogs are changing lives. If you haven't yet viewed the videos from the 2020 Fetching Ball Gala, the Tails of Independence, the Woofaroo or our summer and fall graduations, please take a moment to find them on our YouTube channel or on our website. You'll certainly be inspired.

As we closed 2020, we did so by wishing our founder, Alan M. Peters, our best wishes for his retirement. Part of this annual report includes a tribute to Al, who, since 1987, has been monumental in making Can Do Canines the highly respected organization it is today. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all Al has done.

This annual report is physically a little smaller this year because, like we did for our recent events, we're using online resources more. You'll be able to find lists for all of our 2020 donors and volunteers on our website with that link displayed on an upcoming page of this report.

As we look to the future, we are concentrating efforts on building a strong strategic plan with the help of an outside consultant. We are striving to enhance the experience for our clients and volunteers, raise our profile and become a more inclusive and diverse organization. And, of course, we want to serve even more people than ever before.

All of this will allow us to keep improving the quality of life for hundreds of adults and children with disabilities. We value your partnership on this important journey.

Thank you!



Jeff Johnson  
Executive Director



Mitch Peterson  
President



Jeff Johnson  
Executive Director



Mitch Peterson  
President



## After 33 years as the founder and executive director of Can Do Canines, Al Peters retired in December 2020.



Al began work on the project that would become Can Do Canines in 1987 and incorporated the organization two years later under the name Hearing Dog Program of Minnesota. What followed was a legacy of innovation and expansion for the organization spanning decades.

When asked what he is most proud of over the past 33 years, Al shared, “I think the thing I’m most proud of is our ability to respond to individual needs to train dogs to do specific things for people that they could never get from another organization who train in a cookie-cutter method of every dog is the same...We could make that dog personalized and meet the needs of a particular individual.”

Al’s passion to address unique challenges led Can Do Canines to branch into training other types of assistance dogs to meet the needs of people with disabilities. In 1995, our program added the first Mobility Assist Dog team and rebranded to Hearing and Service Dog of Minnesota.

In 2009, after 301 teams graduated from our program, we became Can Do Canines. We were now also training dogs to assist with seizure disorders, type 1 diabetes, and children with autism. Through these name changes, and over the past 30 years, one can see how Can Do Canines has changed. When there were unmet needs in the community, we adapted to try and meet those needs.

Al’s leadership has led the organization to make a significant impact in the community. Can Do Canines is proud of its international reputation among Assistance Dogs International member organizations. Al’s passion for helping people became a cornerstone of the organization’s mission to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities by creating mutually beneficial partnerships with specially trained dogs. To date, we have provided more than 750 high-quality assistance dogs to people with disabilities, all free of charge.

Leaving an organization you founded is no easy task. When asked what he is going to miss most, Al shares, “I think the thing I’m going to miss most is being able to visit with the graduates at graduation on the day...being here and going person-to-person and being able to ask them how their dogs help them.”

In his final month on staff, he reflected, “You know even all these years later people still say, ‘Hey Al. This Can Do Canines. This is your baby.’ And I’ve come to begin saying to them, ‘Well, it’s not really my baby anymore, it’s our baby. It’s staff. It’s volunteers. It’s contributors. All the people who come together to make this happen.’”

In retirement, Al plans to spend more time with family, embark on a writing project and pursue some long-overdue travel. We wish him happiness on his new journey.

# 2020 AT A GLANCE



## **Donations from 3,302 people**

totalled \$1,530,542 and helped us match more teams.



## **352 Active working teams**

received ongoing training and support from staff.

# 808

## **Volunteers**

helped us in a variety of ways.



## **Approximately 629,450 hours**

were clocked by volunteers.



## **51 New teams certified**

in 2020, a new annual record for our organization.

# 144

## **Inmate handlers**

raised and trained our dogs-in-training.



In her childhood, Nancy experienced physical trauma that caused her equilibrium and hearing to be impaired. She tends to miss certain sounds that are meant to keep her safe. Due to nerve damage, her balance is unstable and she loses it easily. Leaning over or reaching usually result in a continuous motion without the ability to steady herself. Additionally, she lives with fibromyalgia and arthritis, making it incredibly painful to lower herself and get back up when retrieving an item on the floor.

At home, Nancy has learned to pick up some items with her toes, but in public, she relies on cautious movements or other people to help with dropped objects. Living independently but limited by mobility and fear, Nancy decided to prioritize her well-being by applying for an assistance dog from Can Do Canines.

Apollo is a 2-year-old Labrador Retriever, small in stature and buttery blonde, with a truly unique soul. Apollo alerts her to noises or to go to the source of a sound she would otherwise miss. He eagerly retrieves anything Nancy needs from lower surfaces, tugs and closes drawers and cleans up his toys to the bin where they belong. Nancy also lives with post-traumatic stress, which has become much more manageable since Apollo came into her life. She was barely able to sleep, but now his life-saving companionship allows her to fully rest. Nancy says that before having an assistance dog, "I never left my apartment,...but because of Apollo, I've met so many good people!" Previously unable to trust strangers enough to go out on her own, Nancy is now enthusiastically active in her community.

Nancy shares a profound appreciation with everyone who contributes to Can Do Canines and shaped Apollo's life saying, "They did a wonderful job! Thank you so much because he's a wonderful boy; he is so good for me and does so much for me."



# Certified Teams

## Mobility

Mobility Assist Dogs work with people who have mobility challenges and other needs. They pick up and carry objects, pull wheelchairs, open doors, and help pay at tall counters.



Addyson & Aggi



Bette & Issa



Bobbi Jo & Hogan



Chandler & Gaffney



Cindy & Kroix



Daniel & Mallory



Amy & Ezra



Gary & Elena



Hannah & Newton



Josh & Hunter



*With Xio I feel safer and more comfortable in my surroundings—so we go outside and do things.*

- Greg & Xio



Katy & Iceley



Kevin & Earl



Kim & Axl



Kim & Icon



Melissa & Crush



Mike & Maddox



Patty & Daphne



Roni & Eunice



Sharmaine & Marie



Valerie & Gaelen



Karley & Jetson

# Hearing

Hearing Assist Dogs alert a person who is deaf or hard of hearing to sounds by making physical contact with them and leading them to the source of the sound.



Doug, Ellen & Ily



Gary & Marly



Jack & Polly

***Now I can set my alarm, and I know he will wake me. It's pretty nice to be awakened by a happy tail-wagging friend, versus an electronic bed shaker.***

- Glenice & Yates



Janet & Kona



Jessica & York



Brady & Olli



Charity & Fabian



Halle & Binx

# Diabetes

Diabetes Assist Dogs detect low blood sugar levels by sensing a change in their partner's breath odor. The dog alerts their partner by making physical contact.



Isaac & Xulla

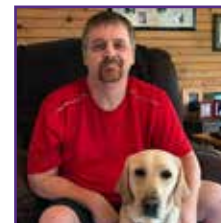


***Leah is so much more than just a dog. She's my partner, my teammate, my best friend, and the best glucose alarm possible!***

- Annika & Leah

# Seizure

Seizure Assist Dogs respond to a person having a seizure by licking their face, retrieving an emergency phone, and alerting other family members.



Rich & Jedi



Ryan & Gallagher

***I thought I'd have to depend on my parents forever. But with Bronson, I'm independent and will be able to live on campus during college. He's my hope for the future.***

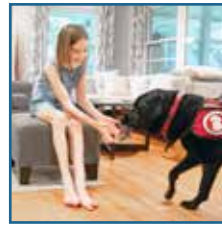
- Cole & Bronson





# Autism

Autism Assist Dogs keep children with autism safe in public settings and help them experience the world more fully by offering comfort and assurance. These special dogs also serve as a social bridge between the family and the public.



Ava & Alfred



Braylee & Norton



Carson & Zag



Declan & Oma



***Within the first month of Ginny being here, Draven blossomed. This is not the same kid. Having Ginny here makes the house feel like home—and whole again.***

- Draven's Mother, Katie & Ginny



Gavin & Nana



Jackson & Zing



Jaxson & Natalie



Nolan & Nitro



Preston & Nelson



Callie & Ultra  
*Mobility and Seizure*



Nancy & Apollo  
*Mobility and Hearing*



Scott & Oxley  
*Mobility and Seizure*

## Combination Skills

Combination Skills Dogs assist their partners with tasks from at least two of our five types of assistance dogs. A label below the person's name will indicate each unique combination.

***I don't know how to describe the evolution from the uncertainty of the stay-at-home suddenness to the blessing of having Jackie at home with me. Gratitude.***

- Cheryl & Jackie  
*Hearing and Mobility*



Suzanne & Miya  
*Mobility and Hearing*

# THE NUMBERS

## Financial Statements

For the year ended December 31, 2020

### Income Statement for the year ended December 31, 2020

#### Public Support

|                                    |    |                  |
|------------------------------------|----|------------------|
| Individual and corporate donations | \$ | 1,171,952        |
| Service club donations             |    | 148,931          |
| Foundation grants                  |    | 527,616          |
| Federated fundraisers              |    | 106,885          |
| Earned Income—net                  |    | 8,626            |
| PPP Grant                          |    | 386,965          |
| Special events—net                 |    | 343,915          |
| In-kind contributions              |    | <u>90,460</u>    |
| <b>Total public support</b>        |    | <b>2,785,350</b> |

|                                       |  |                  |
|---------------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Investment income (loss)              |  | 27,961           |
| Net assets released from restrictions |  | <u>-</u>         |
| <b>Total support and revenue</b>      |  | <b>2,813,311</b> |

#### Expenses

|                               |  |                  |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Program expenses              |  | 2,297,815        |
| Support services              |  |                  |
| Management and general        |  | 212,329          |
| Fundraising                   |  | <u>242,337</u>   |
| <b>Total support services</b> |  | 454,666          |
| <b>Total expenses</b>         |  | <b>2,752,481</b> |

|                          |           |                  |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Increase in net assets   |           | (60,830)         |
| Net assets—beginning     |           | <u>5,628,176</u> |
| <b>Net assets—ending</b> | <b>\$</b> | <b>5,689,006</b> |

### Balance Sheet for the year ended December 31, 2020

#### Current Assets

|                              |    |               |
|------------------------------|----|---------------|
| Cash and investments         | \$ | 2,942,344     |
| Accounts Receivable          |    | 29,900        |
| Pledges receivable           |    | 101,995       |
| Prepays and inventory        |    | <u>10,100</u> |
| <b>Total current assets</b>  |    | 3,084,339     |
| Pledges receivable-long term |    | 174,100       |

#### Property and Equipment

|                               |  |                    |
|-------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Vehicles and equipment        |  | 210,990            |
| Land and building             |  | 3,537,451          |
| Less accumulated depreciation |  | <u>(1,111,408)</u> |
| <b>Total assets</b>           |  | <b>5,895,472</b>   |

#### Liabilities and Net Assets

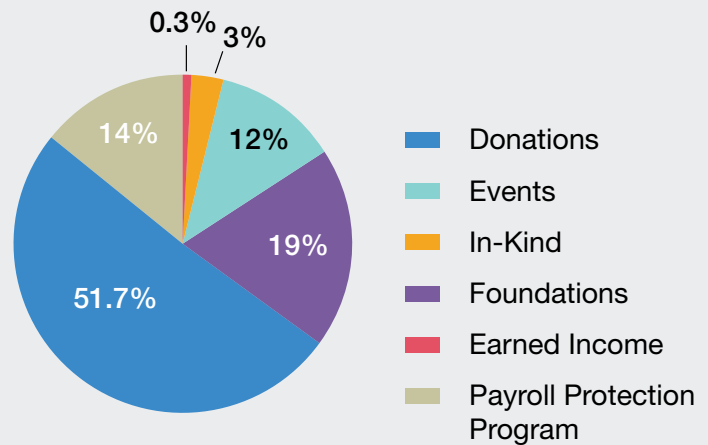
##### Current Liabilities

|                                  |  |               |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Accounts payable—trade           |  | 74,497        |
| Accrued expenses                 |  | 102,069       |
| Deferred revenue                 |  | <u>29,900</u> |
| <b>Total current liabilities</b> |  | 206,466       |

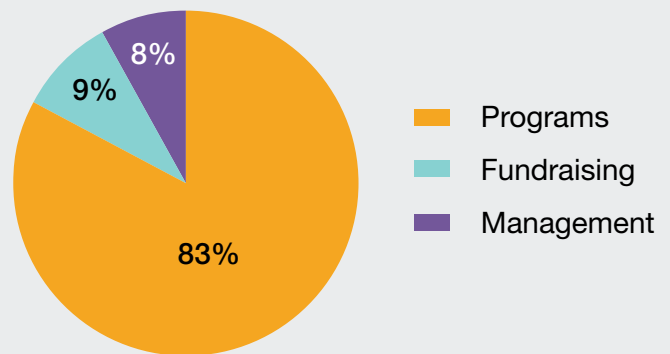
##### Net Assets

|   |           |                  |
|---|-----------|------------------|
| Net assets without donor restrictions   |           | 3,612,911        |
| Board designated donor restrictions     |           | 1,800,000        |
| Net assets with donor restrictions      |           | 276,095          |
| <b>Total net assets</b>                 |           | <b>5,689,006</b> |
| <b>Total liabilities and net assets</b> | <b>\$</b> | <b>5,895,472</b> |

## Revenue



## Expenses



# CONTRIBUTORS & VOLUNTEERS



# THANK YOU.

Can Do Canines relies on volunteers and donors to help make our mission a reality. Every single contributor makes a difference. Thank you for helping us provide life-changing assistance dogs.

**To view a list of volunteers and donors involved in 2020, please visit**

<https://candocanines.org/2020-volunteers-donors>





# Can Do Canines

9440 Science Center Drive, New Hope, MN 55428  
763-331-3000 | [info@candocanines.org](mailto:info@candocanines.org)  
[candocanines.org](http://candocanines.org)

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