



Graduate Cornor

Kayden & Kansas are top of the class

By Andrea Drake, mom to Kayden:

Kayden and Kansas have been a working Dog Guide team since they graduated in April. Kansas started attending school with Kayden at the end of September, and we have seen a huge difference in Kayden ever since Kansas has been able to go with him.

Kayden is calm and regulated at the end of the school day. He comes home with a smile on his face instead of having a meltdown in the car or upon walking into the house after school.

He gets his schoolwork done during the day at school, so that he doesn't need to bring it home with him, and all of this is a direct result of Kayden feeling less anxious, and calmer at school because Kansas is there to help support him throughout the day.

Kansas has also helped Kayden socially, by drawing other kids over to him for a conversation at recess, or a quick hello while passing by in the hallway. Everyone loves Kansas at school, and when we see someone out in the community, the kids will come up and say hello.

In November, an incident occurred at school, which in previous years would have resulted in Kayden running away from school or needing to be picked up early. Instead, Kayden was able to take Kansas to a quiet space and use the special commands "Hugs" and "Visit" to help



calm himself down, and turn his day around, without needing adult intervention. Kansas provided all the support he needed in that moment to have a successful completion of his day!

This is just one example amongst hundreds, where Kansas has made a positive change in the life of our family, and he's only been with us for less than a year! We have been able to attend big fairs and festivals, birthday parties, family dinners, social events, and all kinds of family outings; all because Kayden had Kansas at his side. Kayden is better able to tolerate big crowds of people, loud environments, standing in line ups, and so much more. But the biggest success has to be how well he is doing at school this year.

"Kansas helps me a lot when I'm at school," says Kayden. "He keeps me happy and he's really fun and goofy! He keeps me calm and makes it easier for me to do my work. He lets me hug him when I am sad or upset or feeling stressed out. He makes me laugh and feel happy. I think fundraising for Lions is a really good idea because then more people can get a fun goofy dog like Kansas that can help them like he does for me."

We can't thank the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides enough for their gift of an Autism Assistance Dog for Kayden, which was provided free of cost to our family.

Guardian Sniffer Domino Protects Marieve

Every day, Diabetes Alert Dog Guide Domino puts her many skills to work. She uses her strong sense of smell to keep Marieve safe from blood sugar lows she may not be able to feel due to hypoglycemia.

"Life before Domino was definitely scarier, as I would get dangerously close to very bad lows, sometimes multiple times a day," says Marieve. "Now that Domino is always by my side, life is much less stressful. She can smell the lows coming and prevent the bad symptoms I would usually get. She's quicker than any of the devices I use to manage my blood sugar."

Marieve recalls one instance where Domino saved her life:

"Only after a few weeks of being back home together in Quebec, Domino caught a dangerous low of 1.9 after crashing from 15.7. I drank so many juice boxes, but I was just not able to get my blood sugar back up in the normal range. I stayed low for three hours and felt extremely weak, laying on my bathroom floor. She used her skills of fetch



juice, fetch kit, and stayed by my side throughout the stressful event. I even asked her to “go get Tim”, my partner, which was a skill we had not practiced yet in the home, and she successfully got him in a completely different room. I still look back on that night and feel very proud of her.

Domino has made day-to-day activities much safer for me. With Domino by my side, I do not have to feel constantly scared to go to the mall or a restaurant and worry about having a bad low. I can enjoy my time when I’m out, while my guardian angel watches, or should I say sniffs, over me.”

Dog Guide Teams in Action!

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aero_the_alert_dog



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LFCDG Happenings

Dog Guide Program Updates

Facility Support: From January 2nd until January 31st, LFCDG will be reopening the waitlist for the Facility Support program. If you are interested in applying, please visit Dog Guides' [website](#) and read the Discovery Package for this program.

Facility Support Dogs are trained assist Canadian professional agencies working with vulnerable people who have experienced trauma which could be a result of criminal behavior. These dogs can work at police departments, child and youth advocacy agencies and victim services agencies.



Diabetes Alert: Starting on February 2nd at 9 am (EST), LFCDG will be reopening the waitlist for the Diabetes Alert program. If you are interested in applying, please visit Dog Guides' [website](#) and read the Discovery Package for this program.

Diabetes Alert Dog Guides are trained to assist Canadians (16 years or older) diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes with hypoglycemic unawareness by providing specific tasks and advanced scent work. These Dog Guides are trained to detect sudden drops in their handler's blood sugar and alert them.



Please note that waitlists are currently closed for other programs. We will, however, continue to accept re-applications from our successor clients who have previously had a Dog Guide from us.

Welcome to the new Events Manager

Welcome to the new Manager of Events, Travis Forbes! Travis will be overseeing the Pet Valu Walk for Dog Guides as well as our Events Program. He joins Dog Guides with extensive event management experience. Welcome to Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides (LFCDG)!

Career Change Dogs Looking for Homes

Interested in giving a Dog Guide a new home?

Not all our puppies are meant for a career as a Dog Guide. Some dogs may not have the right personality or temperament for life as a working Dog Guide. Right now, we have a few dogs up for adoption looking for loving homes.

Please visit our Career Change section on Dog Guides' [website](#) to learn more about these wonderful dogs.

Donor Recognition

Become A Dog Guides Guardian for the New Year

Embark on the New Year with purpose by becoming a Guardian for LFCDG. The foundation relies on contributions from monthly donors to continue to provide life-changing Dog Guides at no cost to recipients. Make 2024 extraordinary with a resolution that truly makes a difference in the lives of Canadians coast-to-coast.

Like Facility Support Dog Jillie who works with the team at Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre in Ottawa. Isabelle (Jillie's handler) says:

"Words cannot express how much Jillie has impacted the lives of people around her. Jillie is a very social dog who loves nothing more than meeting new people. At Crossroads we work with children with serious mental health challenges and often a history of trauma. Like Dog Guides, we provide services at no cost to families and Jillie is part of our clinical treatment team - she will often accompany children in therapy sessions to help make therapy a safe place to be. Jillie helps to lower children's heart rates and provides a soothing response for



children while they are petting her, which enables them to access the thinking and talking part of their brains. Sometimes the kids get through the door for Jillie and then they are able to create relationships with therapists because of Jillie's presence."

By becoming a Dog Guides Guardian, you don't just change lives; you change them one paw at a time. Help make miracles for those who need it most and become a Dog Guides Guardian today at www.dogguides.com.



Pawtners in Success: Rexall Care Network & Ronald McDonald House

The journey of raising, training and placing each Dog Guide teams requires an investment of \$35,000. This beautiful journey is made possible through the support of an incredible community that comes together to fund each Dog Guide team. We want to extend our heartfelt appreciation to the Rexall Care Network, a valued member of our community. Their generosity has brought joy and companionship for two Autism Assistance Dog Guide teams, Joseph with Dog Guide, Robin and Hadley with Dog Guide, Rose.

This partnership blossomed into a connection with another charity championed by the Rexall Care Network - the Ronald McDonald House (RMH). RMH acts as a home away from home for families of sick or seriously ill children being treated at nearby hospitals. LFCDG has been privileged to extend the warmth by bringing our Dog Guides in training and future Dog Guides to the RMH in Hamilton, creating moments of joy for the families. Not only does this provide our canine companions with essential training experiences, but it also offers families a stress-relieving visit filled with cuddles. A true win-win for everyone involved.



Heartwarming Donation from Owen & Uler and friend Declan

Autism Assistance team, Owen with Dog Guide Uler as well as Owen's friend Declan, visited LFCDG to donate \$500.

A few months ago, the boys had their birthdays, and their request was donations for Dog Guides. Instead of receiving gifts, the boys collectively raised \$500 for the Autism Assistance program.

They were able to meet some Dog Guides in training to get an idea of how the money would be put to use.

Thank you, Owen and Declan, for this special gift!



Volunteer Corner

New Volunteer Opportunities at Dog Guides!

We are thrilled to share our newest webpage listing a variety of volunteer opportunities. From fostering to helping out in the office or providing Dog Guides in training with enrichment and care, there is something for everyone.

Please visit Volunteer Opportunities on Dog Guides' [website](#) to see all the ways you can help.

Volunteer Spotlight: Lee Simons

For the past seven years, Lee Simons has gone above and beyond for Dog Guides. She is a volunteer with Canine Vision program and comes in twice a week to walk Dog Guides in training, groom them, and attend outings with instructors. She also is a dog sitter and takes home a Dog Guide most weekends to look after them and give them a break from the kennels. Lee and her husband love the dogs and all the affection they give.

"I can't think of a place to volunteer I'd enjoy more," says Lee. "This is my happy place."



Recently, Lee and her husband looked after Bravo during his training at the facility. She would bring him home every Friday and would bring him back for training on Tuesdays. Lee is overjoyed that Canine Vision Dog Guide Bravo has graduated with his client and had the chance to meet them before they traveled back to Quebec.

Even before becoming a volunteer, she donated regularly to Dog Guides.

Thank you, Lee, for all your support and hard work over the years!

Medical Watch Sitters Needed

Are you a compassionate animal lover with a flexible schedule and a nurturing home environment? LFCDG Vet Clinic is seeking dedicated individuals to assist in the care of our special dogs in training. If you live close to Oakville and can commit to 10 to approximately 14 days for spays/neuters, or 4-6 weeks for other medical procedures, we need your help!

Your support can make a significant difference in the lives of these remarkable dogs, helping them on their journey to becoming life-changing canine companions. If you are ready and willing to open your home to a dog in need and can meet the qualifications mentioned above, we urge you to reach out.

For more information or to fill out an application to become a volunteer Medical Dog Sitter, please visit Dog Guides' [website](#) or contact Evelyn Marshall at emarshall@dogguides.com.

Diabetes Alert Dog Guide Transitional Home Program

Do you want to help us prepare Diabetes Alert Dog Guides for their careers?

We are looking for volunteers who have type 1 diabetes for the Transitional Home Program.

Transitional Homes are volunteer households where at least one person has Type 1 Diabetes and is willing to bring home an adult dog nearing the completion of training for approximately 7-14 days. This is a vital step to prepare the Diabetes Alert Dog Guide to alert to live lows in a home environment.

Please visit our [website](#) to read more about the opportunity and volunteer requirements.

Litter Updates

We are pleased to announce the arrival of 39 new LFCDG puppies. Welcome to the Dog Guide world little ones!

- S Litter: Bubbles (black lab/golden X) and Ozzy (black lab/golden X) – 9 puppies – 5 black females and 4 black males born November 13th
- T Litter: Charlie (yellow lab) and Emry (black lab) – 6 puppies – 3 black females, 1 yellow female, and 2 yellow males born December 2nd
- V Litter: Willow (yellow lab) and Emry (black lab) – 9 puppies – 3 black females, 6 black males born December 3rd
- W Litter: Nuala (black poodle) and Grits (poodle) – 8 puppies – 1 cream female, 3 cream males, and 4 black males born December 5th
- Y Litter: Dahlia (black lab) and Ollie (golden retriever) – 7 puppies – 2 black females, 1 black male and 4 yellow males born December 16th

Would you be interested in helping us raise these little pups? We're currently looking for fosters that live in the GTA, Hamilton, Niagara, Kitchener and Guelph. Foster families play a crucial role in setting up a future Dog Guide puppy for success. To apply to become a Foster Family to a future Dog Guide puppy, visit the [Foster Puppy Program](#) web page.

