



## Impact Report March 2017

*Your investment in  
focused training yields  
life-enhancing results.*

### Meet Belle and Vanessa

Meet one of the newest additions to our Foster Puppy Program, Belle! The beautiful black Labrador puppy was provided to us by Guide Dogs for the Blind. After a long drive from San Rafael, California, Belle arrived at Dogs for the Deaf in November 2016 and was placed in her new foster home with Vanessa.

Vanessa and Belle have begun their new journey together and are attending puppy training classes. Though she was fascinated by the Christmas trees and holiday lights, Belle's first class during the holiday season was a success! We have high hopes for this team, and we are thrilled that Vanessa has joined our crew of [foster puppy](#) raisers.



Vanessa and Belle

### Partnering with Guide Dogs for the Blind

We are incredibly fortunate to have partners like [Guide Dogs for the Blind](#). Through this remarkable organization, we've received quality dogs like Dinero, Judy and Belle! We look forward to expanding our Assistance Dog Program and continuing our collaboration with Guide Dogs for the Blind.



Dinero, Autism  
Assistance Program



Judy, Hearing Dog



Belle, Future  
Assistance Dog

## Hearing Dog Zelda Lends Her Ears

Dogs for the Deaf trainer, Katie Ware, trained [Hearing Dog](#) Zelda for 6 months before spending a week helping her bond with client Annie. “We like to call their first year together a training year,” says Katie. “[The training year] serves to enhance the in-home placement week training.”



For Annie, Zelda provides a renewed sense of security. Zelda is trained to respond to specific sounds, such as Annie’s cell phone, her oven timer and her husband’s voice. “It feels so good to know that she will notify me if someone is in the house or if a car is approaching,” Annie says.



Congratulations to Annie and Zelda on their new partnership!

## Then & Now: Celebrating 40 Years of Leading the Pack

Forty years ago, Dogs for the Deaf was founded in southern Oregon by Roy Kabat. Roy’s original vision to **professionally train dogs to help people and enhance lives** continues on today through the guidance of Dogs for the Deaf’s leaders.



Roy Kabat, Founder

Roy retired 1981 due to failing health. He asked his daughter, Robin Dickson, to take the helm to ensure that his vision would live on. Robin’s leadership transformed the small “mom and pop” organization into an internationally recognized Assistance Dog training facility with a solid financial foundation. According to Marvin Rhodes, a past Dogs for the Deaf board chairman, “Robin devoted her life to rescuing dogs and improving the lives of people with disabilities.”

When Robin retired in 2013, a national search to find a new CEO was conducted. In 2014, Blake Matray joined Dogs for the Deaf as the new leader. Though Blake is continuing the legacy established by Roy and



Blake Matray, Current CEO

Robin, he is also making significant advancements. Blake is leading the revitalization of the organization’s [Autism Assistance Dog Program](#), expanding [Program Assistance Dog](#) placements, and guiding the approval, design, and construction of Dogs for the Deaf’s second training facility that is targeted for completion this Fall.



Robin Dickson, Past President & CEO

The impact of these past and current leaders is clear: Dogs for the Deaf has a bright future. By continuing the promise of fulfilling the lives of dogs and providing Assistance Dogs to clients throughout the U.S., Dogs for the Deaf continues to make a lasting difference.