



Paws With A Cause 2021

# ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



Read more about Anna and  
Service Dog GILMORE on page 8.



# PAWS training JOURNEY



# the road AHEAD

When I became Chair of the Paws With A Cause Board in the fall of 2019, we were looking ahead towards an ambitious and exciting future. PAWS had just celebrated our 40th Anniversary. We were talking with architects about ideas to renovate the campus and with new partners to expand the career possibilities for PAWS Dogs. And like everyone else, our plans changed in 2020.

It is a good thing “adaptability” is one of the guiding values at PAWS. I am proud of all the ways the PAWS Family adapted. Our Breeding Host Homes and Foster Puppy Raisers immediately adopted new social distancing guidelines. Our Research and Design Lab developed custom masks to make sure our clients who read lips didn't have to choose between safety and connection. Our Trainers even partnered with a local food co-op so that our PAWS Dogs-in-training could continue public access practice during the shutdown. PAWS never missed a beat.

It has been a tremendous honor to serve as the Chair of the PAWS Board of Directors during this time. I am grateful for your support and passion for PAWS, which encouraged us to adapt and continue to serve our clients.

With gratitude,



Greg Bonner  
Immediate Past Board Chair



Do you know where you want to be in ten years? Because PAWS does! We have a clear vision for 2030: We are going to increase the number of people we serve with Assistance Dogs and we are going to purposefully place 90% of all our dogs in working careers that change lives and communities. These are bold goals, and I am excited to be at the forefront, helping the PAWS Family reach them.

My confidence is grounded in my complete faith in the PAWS Family and the way we have exceeded previous goals. We are resilient, adaptable, and motivated to see even more people benefit from a PAWS Dog.

PAWS has a careful, detailed plan to make our goals a reality— one that moves us forward in sustainable ways each year and allows us to build on our history of success. I cannot wait to share more with all of you as the year unfolds. It's an exciting time to be a part of PAWS, and I want to thank you for investing in our organization, believing in our cause, and supporting our mission.

Sincerely,



Jane Hoggard  
Board Chair







Michele Suchovsky,  
PAWS CEO,  
with PROMISE.

## the journey of a **PAWS DOG**

When PROMISE was born, the first thing she knew was love. Her mother, ARYA, lives with a wonderful family of PAWS volunteers who take care of mama dogs and newborn puppies, like PROMISE. Even before she could open her eyes, she was surrounded by people who were committed to giving her the best start in life, so that she could grow up to be an Assistance Dog and change someone's life.

PROMISE was one lucky puppy because when she left her mama the next stop on her journey was to the home of PAWS CEO, Michele Suchovsky, and her husband, John. Michele believes in leading from the front, so she joined the ranks of our Foster Puppy Raisers. These dedicated volunteers spend between 12-18 months raising a puppy for

PAWS, putting in endless amounts of time, energy, and love.

It's a big job! Michele and John embraced it and PROMISE with gusto. "It was fun raising PROMISE," says Michele. "As a first-time raiser, I had to learn everything alongside her. Everything was an adventure—from learning to sleep through the night in her crate to obedience classes at PAWS!" Together, Michele and PROMISE went to Board meetings, hair appointments, and the grocery store. "I loved having PROMISE in my office at work with me," says Michele. "I still miss having her nose bop me on the arm when she wanted attention."

Eventually, it was time for PROMISE to return to



PAWS for her final evaluations and to move onto the next path in her career. “It was tough returning PROMISE back to PAWS,” remembers John, “Even though she is going on to do great things, it is still hard—but so rewarding, too.”

PAWS staff had watched PROMISE grow up first-hand and already had the perfect client in mind for her when she came back. As Senior Staff Trainer Crystal puts it, “The PAWS training process is so successful because it is so customized! We use a ‘Client First’ matching model. This means we work closely with our Client Services department to give the client an Assistance Dog that fits as easily as possible into their life.”

**“As a first-time raiser, I had to learn everything alongside her. Everything was an adventure — from learning to sleep through the night in her crate to obedience classes at PAWS!”**

PROMISE became part of Crystal’s training group, and she remembers PROMISE fondly. “She naturally wanted to touch me with her nose for attention, so it was easy to shape that into a task. PROMISE also had a slight independent flair that gave her a desire to seek out sounds, which made her training progress quickly!”

Once PROMISE was ready, it was time for her to go home with her new client. For the first few months, every new PAWS Client/Dog Team works with a Field Representative (FR) who lives in the area and acts as a bridge to help transfer a PAWS Dog to their new partner. They make sure the dog and the client understand what the other needs. Connie, a FR with 18 years of experience says, “The process works so well because we are working on the client’s home turf. This allows a FR to notice things in the client’s home environment the client may not even think about that can help the dog be more successful.”



PROMISE at 4 weeks



PROMISE’s birthday



PROMISE at turn in



PROMISE in training



PROMISE was placed with Patty Joe, a PAWS Successor Client, who has had two PAWS Dogs previously. Connie remembers, “PROMISE came right in with very solid sound skills, so we were able to start practicing those earlier than we normally do. Also, as a previous client Patty Joe knows what to expect.” Together, PROMISE and Patty Joe were able to complete their training and pass their ADI Certification quickly.

**“PROMISE came in with a happy work ethic and it didn’t take us long to become a certified team.”**

“I cannot say enough about our FR Connie, who worked with us and gave us training tips to help us get certified,” says Patty Joe. Patty Joe has been a PAWS Client since 2006, when she got her first dog, MUFFIN. Connie has worked with Patty Joe every time, and the two have a great relationship. “PROMISE came in with a happy work ethic and it didn’t take us long to become a certified team. PROMISE is very ambitious and loves to work. She would say her job is keeping her Mom safe from harm, and that she can show you where the treat jar is, along with her favorite toys!”

Patty Joe loves to travel and be active in her community, and she needs a big dog with lots of energy to keep up with her. She and PROMISE are a perfect match, and they field lots of questions from the people they meet out and about. “I wish more people knew that PAWS dogs are specifically trained for each individual client. I wish people knew that PAWS tries to have another dog for us as our older dogs cross the Rainbow Bridge or are ready to retire. And I wish that more people were educated about PAWS and would come take a tour to see all the hard work that goes into preparing a dog for a client!”



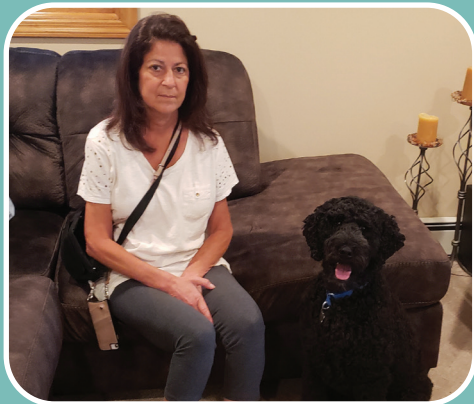
**PROMISE's graduation photo**



**PROMISE and her Client**



# many paths to SERVICE



## **Toni Ann and KRATER**

KRATER has become such a major part of my life as well as my family's and neighbors! His fun-loving personality helps me to stay focused and happy. His desire to work for me and please me encourages me to work just as hard and keeps me focused. I am truly grateful for him. Thank you Paws With A Cause, as I am forever blessed.

## **Christine and OXLEY**

OXLEY is my hearing dog and she alerts me to the door, the fire alarm, police sirens, and someone calling my name. She gives me the confidence to go places on my own and gives me such wonderful companionship! It amazes me and everyone else how quickly she goes from being a goofy 2-year-old dog to a serious work dog. She has always known what to do, it was me that needed the confidence. OXLEY taught me that we can do this together.



## **Le Le and BENNY**

BENNY is a love and is loved. She has brought our family together, helping Le Le to engage with us more. BENNY is her protector, her guide, her comforter and her friend. Le Le has severe insomnia so BENNY stays with her at night, which has improved her sleep significantly. BENNY protects her in public when she may want to wander and helps her socialization with others. BENNY has provided Le Le with increased independence and is helping her to develop more confidence.

## **Ellis Elementary and RITZ**

Our new Facility Dog program places PAWS Dogs in schools to support students and staff. Lisa, a teacher from Ellis Elementary Schools said "RITZ helps students when they need it, and even helps teachers when they need it. We all have our days when things aren't quite as good or maybe something has happened in our life - having a dog with us makes a difference."







## with your best friend **BY YOUR SIDE**

Anna and GILMORE are always on the move. When the weather cooperates, you can often find GILMORE loaded into his special dog cart as Anna and her husband head out on bike rides. Anna loves being on her bike, because three wheels gives her more freedom of movement. “My husband attaches it to the back of his trike and I ride behind so GILMORE can see me. He LOVES it,” Anna says.

And when they’re not out on the road, the two best friends are often in Anna’s garden. “PAWS did an outstanding job matching his personality to my activity level and household. GILMORE makes gardening possible by pulling a basket of garden tools and helping me up off the ground to my walker.”

Music is also a big part of their lives. Anna’s

husband has been in a ska band for 30 years, and he travels a lot. “We both feel safer with GILMORE here to help me when Colin’s gone! That has been a big relief for my husband, and it boosts my confidence to know I have a helper. He even drags my delivered groceries in a laundry basket from the door to the kitchen for me.”

Anna and GILMORE’s first meeting and month were all about bonding. But as they began to work toward becoming an officially certified team, he jumped naturally into learning training and commands with Anna. “Our Field Rep Connie taught us more each week, and he really seemed to love to work! We started with some basic manners like sending him to his bed and leaving things he shouldn’t get into, but he quickly evolved into picking things up off the floor,



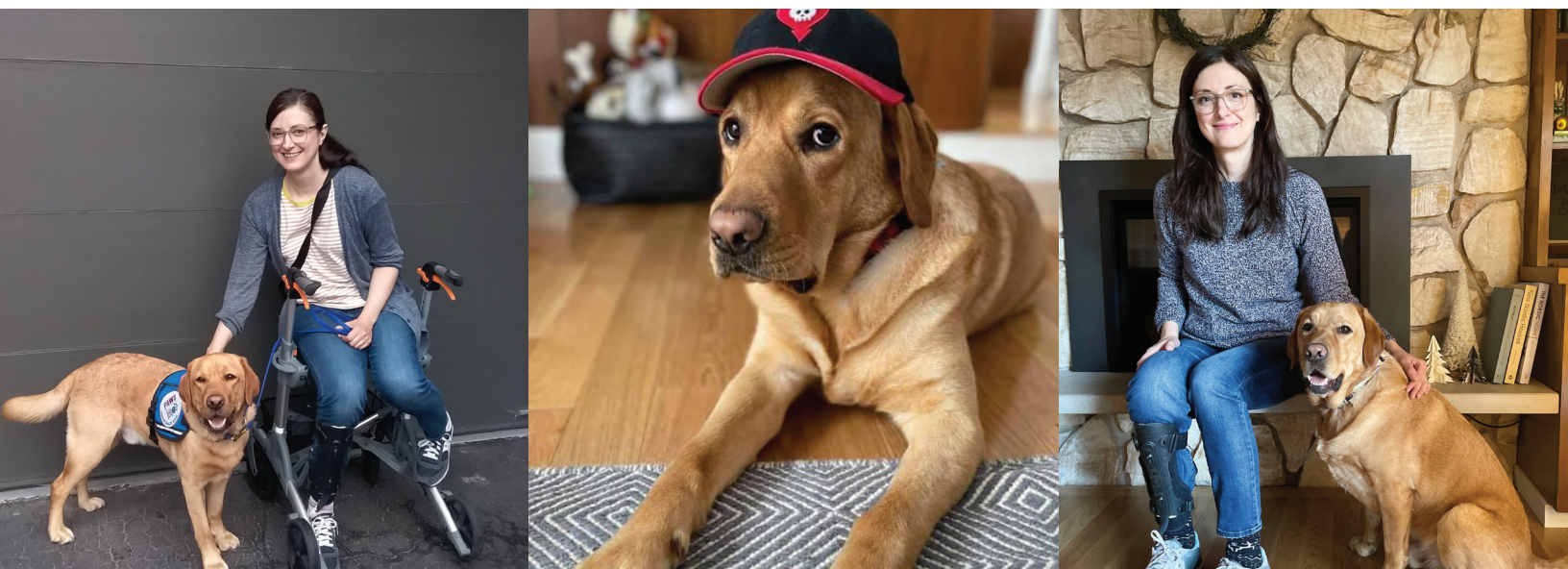
retrieving my crutches, opening doors, and so on.”

The toughest commands for GILMORE to master were the few where he had to leave Anna’s side, either by going under a table or bench or going into his bed when she wasn’t nearby. But with lots of practice, he finally felt comfortable leaving her on her own.

That makes sense, because when you ask Anna what GILMORE thinks his job is, she will laugh and tell you, “Making sure I don’t get into trouble or

overdo it! If he sees me trying to do something he comes over to supervise or help.”

As they travel the wide world together, Anna was surprised by one unexpected benefit of having GILMORE by her side. “He makes the outside world a friendlier place. People often tend to avoid eye contact when they see someone with a disability. They may feel uncomfortable or not know how to react. They wonder if they should help. With GILMORE, people look at us and smile and talk. I love that!”



## 2021 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

REVENUES	2020	2021
Contributions	\$ 1,460,362.00	2,117,136.00
Events	58,990.00	94,537.00
Direct Placements/Partnerships	78,616.00	122,750.00
Donor Restricted Funds	5,000.00	39,850.00
<b>General Contributions</b>	<b>1,602,968.00</b>	<b>2,374,273.00</b>
Local United Way Designations	483,998.00	322,157.00
Federal/State Combined Campaigns	55,896.00	45,108.00
<b>Workplace Campaigns</b>	<b>539,894.00</b>	<b>367,265.00</b>
<b>Planned Giving</b>	<b>1,000,854.00</b>	<b>2,080,368.00</b>
<b>Foundation Grants</b>	<b>512,181.00</b>	<b>436,558.00</b>
<b>In-Kind Contributions</b>	<b>91,368.00</b>	<b>167,754.00</b>
Investment/Gain/(Loss) Sale of Stocks	203,419.00	522,849.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	0	0
Endowment Revenue	5,750.00	10,177.00
<b>Miscellaneous Revenue</b>	<b>209,169.00</b>	<b>533,026.00</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>3,956,434.00</b>	<b>5,959,244.00</b>

EXPENSES	2020	2021
Program Expenses	\$ 3,518,835.00	3,477,267.00
Education & Advocacy	86,502.00	52,170.00
Administration Costs	302,561.00	282,397.00
Fundraising Costs	448,401.00	620,387.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>4,356,299.00</b>	<b>4,432,221.00</b>

**CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE**      **\$ 2,100,760.00**

**ENDING NET ASSETS**      **\$ 6,651,691.00**

If you would like to learn more about PAWS' annual finances, please visit [www.pawswithacause.org/financials](http://www.pawswithacause.org/financials) or call 616-877-7297 to request our detailed financial statement, 990 form, or audited financial statement.



# meet our **CLIENTS**

Certified between July and October 2021

**Cathy & YOYO**



**Lee & NIRA**



**Lesha & BRONTE**



**Patty Joe & PROMISE**



**Sandra & DALI**



**Anitia & CADENCE**



**Anna & GILMORE**



**Brody & OMBRE**



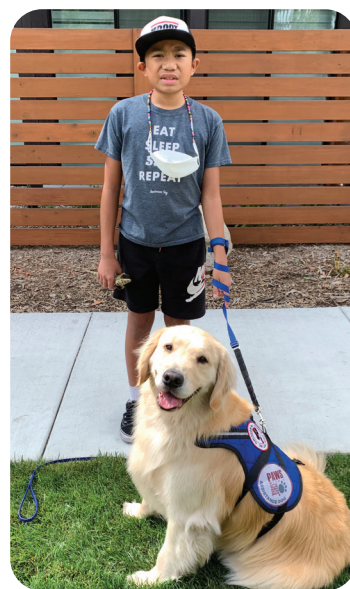
**Franklin & THORLEY**



**Toni Ann & KRATER**





**Katelyn & HARBOUGH****Le Le & BENNY****Liina & NISHA****Logan & HAMLIN****Michael & KAZ****Mike & COWBOY**

"It is amazing to me that one year has passed since COWBOY arrived! We bonded quickly and we have learned a lot together. He has become my shadow. When I am out with COWBOY, I enjoy interacting with others, especially kids, about what he does for me. I needed to be 'trained' because a lot has changed in my life, and PAWS has changed, since I had my first assistance dog 35 years ago. The older I get the more I need help from COWBOY. He can do so much more than what TAFFY needed to do for me all those years ago."

**- Mike & COWBOY**

**Christine & OXLEY****David & SUGAR****Linda & TROOPER****Shea & TIMBER**





**Paws With A Cause**

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# YEAR IN REVIEW

## 2021 COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS



105

VOLUNTEER BREEDING  
HOST HOMES



161

PUPPIES BORN INTO  
THE PAWS FAMILY

252



VOLUNTEER FOSTER  
PUPPY RAISER HOMES

415

CLIENT/DOG TEAMS  
IN THE FIELD

53

NEWLY CERTIFIED  
TEAMS

75

GRADUATES FROM  
PURPOSFUL PLACEMENTS\*



78

RE-CERTIFIED TEAMS

6

FACILITY DOGS  
PLACED BY PAWS



\*PAWS dogs placed  
by partners in other  
working careers.