4 Paws for Ability

Annual Report
2017

Taking the ‘dis’ out of disability.
104 service dog placements
350 puppies born at 4 Paws
4000+ hours volunteered onsite
1150+ service dogs placed since 1998
8 different types of service dogs placed
1 service dog placed in Puerto Rico
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Welcome to the 4 Paws for Ability 2017 Annual Report.

As I reflect on everything that happened over this past year, there is much to celebrate and share with you. Our staff and volunteer base grew considerably. We hired more trainers and socializers to meet the growing need for service dogs. We have more volunteers than ever, which was always one of our visions in order to keep the costs associated with service dog placement at a reasonable level. We invested in new technology to help us be more efficient. We were fiscally responsible with the money our donors entrusted to us with an overhead rate of 9%; we are proud that 91 cents of every dollar went to our mission and to the care, housing, and training of service dogs to help children and veterans with disabilities.

4 Paws was also honored to spend time with a talented crew from Netflix who came to film for a few weeks at our facility and at one of our client’s homes. 4 Paws will be featured in Episode 1 of “Dogs,” a Netflix original documentary series, which launches in November 2018. We hope you will watch this episode to get a glimpse of the work we do every day. We welcome visitors too so please reach out and come see our work firsthand.

It takes a village to raise, train, and place a service dog, and we thank everyone who worked at 4 Paws, volunteered in any capacity, donated, or put their trust in us to provide them with a service dog for making 4 Paws for Ability the agency it is today! Thank you for being on this journey with us and helping make dreams come true for our children and our veterans with disabilities.
Mission

The 4 Paws for Ability, Inc. mission is to:

• Enrich the lives of children with disabilities by the training and placement of quality, task trained service dogs to provide increased independence for the children and assistance to their families
• Enrich the lives of veterans from recent conflicts whom have lost the use of their limbs or their hearing while in active combat
• Educate the public to accept the use of service dogs in public places

Vision

The 4 Paws vision is to:

• Have a large corps of volunteers to assist in all areas of the day-to-day operations of the agency as well as serving on committees to assist in specialized areas of need, such as marketing and fundraising.
• Have a sufficient number of employees to manage a growing organization though it is 4 Paws desire to have volunteers meeting most of the agency's needs, to keep the costs associated with service dog placement at a reasonable level.
• Be financially independent with funds available to those clients who need assistance with the fundraising process.
• Be the preferred provider of service dogs for children at the national level.

Advantages

4 Paws unique competitive advantages:

1. **Challenges are welcomed.** 4 Paws is willing to reach out and tackle the more difficult placements.
2. **Enviable success rate.** We have a 98% success rate in placements: we have a 90% success rate with the first dog placed in the home and an overall success rate of 98%.
3. **Flexible training.** Training that can provide unique and highly customized kinds of placements.
4. **Global.** Global outreach rather than primarily regional.
5. **Open to more individuals.** 4 Paws has no minimum age requirement and does not discriminate based on severity of disability within the programs it provides.
6. **Pet Friendly.** 4 Paws does not require that recipients give up their pets to receive a service dog as many agencies do.
Bryson Branam’s service dog, Curtiss, joined his family in May of 2017. This gentle dog has not only been a constant source of comfort and joy to his companion with severe autism, he has saved his life on more than one occasion. Bryson’s mom, Amy, remembers the first time this life-saving dog came to everyone’s rescue. On a hot summer day while his family was working in the yard, Bryson slipped away. Terrified, his parents did not know where to begin searching and thoughts were already flashing to nearby bodies of water, a common draw and danger for children who elope. Dad, Patrick, quickly attached the leash to Curtiss and commanded, ‘Curtiss, go find your boy.’ “Curtiss knew exactly where to go. His nose went to the ground. He made one short sweep back and forth to figure out which way his boy went and followed the strongest scent. Straight to the passenger side car door,” according to Amy. Bryson was already flushed with the heat. Children with autism can experience temperature differently and Bryson would not have thought to get out of the car on his own. Thanks to Curtiss, their son was found in time to save his life.

Curtiss endlessly enhances Bryson’s life. “Bryson and Curtiss are never separated. They go to school together, hang out together, play together, snuggle, and sleep together,” according to Amy. “They are a wonderful team, and we have seen a dramatic change in Bryson's behavior and his level of independence. His meltdowns, which can take the form of head banging or running into walls, have dramatically decreased.” When they do happen, Curtiss is trained in behavior disruption and is able to either “lap” (put his head in Bryson’s lap) or nuzzle Bryson to divert his attention and help Bryson return to a steady state. Amy also credits Curtiss’s influence with a marked improvement in Bryson’s verbal skills. After being silent for much of his life, Bryson is routinely using one and two-word sentences and sometimes three word utterances that make his needs known. “Every word is a celebration,” according to Amy.

The Branams face hurdles every day, but partnered with Curtiss, they look toward Bryson’s future with steady confidence. They feel that there is a new sense of peace in their lives, and they are grateful every day for the beautiful dog that guards and loves their sweet son.
Being at 4 Paws for two weeks was...

...a life changing event. In the many months leading up to our class, we had often heard and read about so-called "4 Paws Magic". After personally experiencing it, we now fully understand and believe that "4 Paws Magic" is real. We are forever thankful for our newest family member, Dynamo. We love 4 Paws!

-Chad Cameron
Anastyn & Dynamo

Our lives are already different because...

...I can finally be at peace since my daughter has a new friend that takes great care of her.

-Louise Ortiz
Izabel & Beetee

We haven’t been home long, but I already know...

...Madge has changed our lives and family dynamic in a positive way. Ruthie's confidence has improved greatly.

-Rebecca Cantral Boyle
Ruthie & Madge
Mitch & Hero, Veterans Assistance Service Dog

Hero, a German Retriever, was matched with Mitchell Williams, a USAF Veteran, in October 2017. Hero is a diabetic alert service dog and has been instrumental in alerting his owner to drops in his blood glucose level. “His range of alerting is usually between 70-180. (A normal blood glucose range is between 70-99 milligrams per decalitre.) When he alerts he first will give me that eye-to-eye look. Then, almost immediately, he will place his paw on my lap, and if my blood glucose is suddenly very low he will lick vigorously at my left ear. He always gives a bark to get my attention, or anyone’s attention that is close by. He was very well trained by the staff at 4 Paws for Ability on alerting,” Mitch explained. Hero has given peace of mind to Mitch’s wife Mary Jane who, in the past, worried about him every time she left for work as a non-medical home health assistant for Diversified Healthcare in Fairhope, Alabama.

Mitch and Hero hadn’t been partners for long, before Hero alerted to a major problem. Mitch credits Hero with saving his life that day. After an afternoon at a ball park, Mitch began slurring his words and was unable to stand up. He also began hallucinating. Remarkably, his blood glucose readings on both hands tested normal according to his wife, however, Hero began alerting energetically causing Mary Jane to summon the EMTs. On their recommendation, Mitch was taken to Thomas Hospital and was found to be having severe seizures, rather than the stroke that was Mary Jane’s fear. Mitch credits Hero for being definitive about the emergency situation and feels that their close bond was the reason he could detect a new crisis situation for his human partner.

Alabama-born, fifty-five year-old Mitch, was a Master Plumber and Gas Fitter who qualified as Journeyman Plumber for the military. He served in the United States Air Force from 1986-1987. Unfortunately, Mitch experienced an adverse reaction to immunizations he received, resulting in damage to his pancreas, leading to his future Type I Diabetes diagnosis. He ultimately had to stop working because of the severity of his disease.

Mitch’s mother, Katy Mitchell Williams, started him on the search for a diabetic service dog. He found out about 4 Paws after an internet search for “Diabetic Alert Dog.” He felt that his life changed forever when he got information and was ultimately accepted into the program.

According to Mitch, a brand new, rewarding and confident future opened up ahead of him after being matched with Hero. “Hero and I have bonded so well that in addition to knowing when my blood glucose is out of whack, he even knows when I need to take a nap. The bond between Hero and me is stronger than I could ever have imagined. I could never have asked for a better service dog.”
We are settling in with our service dog, and already...

...Jest and I are doing great and working together as a team. He has given me a larger sense of independence than I could have ever imagined. We go out and work together in public everyday so we keep his skills sharp and I am beyond thankful for everyone involved in teaming jest and I together.

-Daniel Dumas & Jest

Our lives are already different because...

...Cruz is now able to go to doctor and dental visits without major meltdowns! He has his best friend by his side at all times!

-EllaMae Richmond
Cruz & Spirit

I wanted to thank...

...the crew that was involved with Hero's journey - Medtronic has had their sensors on backorder, so my pump isn't working as designed. HERO really has stepped his game up, again thank you all to the moon and back.

-Mitchell Williams & Hero
Train and place quality, task-trained service dogs

2017 Placements

104 Dogs Placed in 2017

- Autism Assistance Dog
- FASD Assistance Dog
- Hearing Assistance Dog
- Mobility Assistance Dog
- Multipurpose Assistance Dog
- Multipurpose Assistance Dog with Seizure Assistance
- Seizure Assistance Dog
- Veteran's Service Dog
In 2017, 4 Paws’ continued its pursuit of purpose breeding service dogs with good temperament, sound body, conformation to breed standards, and with the best possible traits and disposition for public access work. 4 Paws continually works to better the processes involved and made strides in selecting future breeders from third and fourth generation 4 Paws bred moms as well as acquiring well suited males and females for the program from reputable breeders across the globe.

Golden Labs remain the core of the 4 Paws program and a successful breed, mixing the outgoing and caring qualities of the Labrador and Golden Retrievers. In 2017, 4 Paws has worked to increase the presence of Newfoundland mixes as part of the service dog program to gain both the size of the Newfoundland, as well as their loyal and devoted temperament. Golden and Labrador Retrievers and Papillons, remain steady, important components of the program and slight growth was experienced in the Goldendoodle/Poodle breed. Papillons remain the only small breed in the program, excelling at a variety of scent work when small breeds are needed for a placement.

In 2017, 4 Paws bred 1 litter of German Retrievers, 9 Goldendoodles, 2 Poodles, 19 Golden Labs, 2 Golden Retrievers, 1 Labradors, and 7 litters of Papillons. This resulted in the birth of 350 purpose bred potential service dogs.
In many ways Sawyer Shapiro is a typical active seven-year-old boy. According to his mom, Alexis, “Sawyer loves watching movies and shows on his iPad or TV. He also loves dinosaurs, robots, going to the beach, seeing live shows, taking vacations, hanging out in bed, ice skating with his grandpa, sleeping at his grandparents, bounce houses, and anything related to outer space,” she said. Sawyer, however, has Dravet Syndrome, a life-threatening form of epilepsy. He had his first seizure at the age of six months. Along with frequent seizures, Sawyer has a number of additional conditions: Autism, language difficulties, sensory needs, motor and balance impairments.

Until the Shapiros met Cherry, a 4 Paws for Ability service dog, Sawyer was restricted in many ways. “Having Cherry has made things so much easier because I can have him hold the special handle on her vest and then we can walk together safely and with confidence. Sawyer loves to walk with his girl. We never used to be able to do this safely! It has made our lives so much easier!” Alexis enthused. Since Cherry is a gorgeous and friendly dog, it gives Sawyer a cool factor too. Other kids admire her, and it gives them something to focus on besides his limitations. In addition to her seizure assistance work, Cherry assists Sawyer with sensory seeking needs and behavior disruption. Alexis reflects that one of Sawyer’s favorite things is deep pressure from Cherry, and Cherry takes it up on herself to nuzzle and bump Sawyer when he needs distraction from something that is impacting him.

The Shapiros initially heard about 4 Paws for Ability through good friends who also had children with Dravet Syndrome. They got to know their dogs and “were truly blown away by how wonderful they were,” Alexis explained. Cherry joined their family in June of 2017. The Shapiros consider Cherry an asset to the whole family, and she has enhanced Sawyer’s life in a multiple of ways. They explain, “She has given him a true friend, a guardian, a playmate who won’t judge him, a living weighted blanket, a seizure monitor, an anxiety soother, a much cooler way to walk safely, and have more independence. We don’t worry as much when he is sleeping or playing in his room as long as Cherry is there. We’ve noticed how much more confidence Sawyer has.” When asked how he feels about his loyal canine companion, Sawyer says that he loves to cuddle her and that “Cherry makes me feel happy!” That brings joy and peace to the entire family.
We are settling in with our service dog, and already...

...our life has changed. Ramsey is alerting, Mom is getting more sleep, and Leah is more confident and independent with Ramsey by her side.

-Jenka Conrad
Leah & Ramsey

We just got home and already we were able to...

...settle in as a family of 6 (4 humans, 2 canine)!
Joe loves sleeping with Mulder and plays ball with him (which Mulder is ALWAYS ready for).
It's exciting to see their bond develop a little more every day!

-Stephanie Welter
Joe & Mulder

Since coming home...

...I'm amazed how Titan has bonded with Frank. I was skeptical at first how this would happen since Frank's autism prevents him from getting close to anybody. But Titan knows Frank is his boy and he is always concerned about his well being. I am amazed how they are becoming a team walking together every day. I am so encouraged by the short time Titan has been part of his life and am excited to see what the future holds for both of them! We are truly grateful to everybody who contributed their time and efforts into helping these SDs grow into such amazing friends and companions.

-Beth Montanaro
Frank & Titan
The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday takes up the case of a girl, her service dog and a school that barred the dog from its premises. Ehlena Fry was born with cerebral palsy, a condition that significantly limited her motor skills but not her cognitive ability. So when she was 5, her pediatrician recommended that her parents get a service dog to help her become more independent. Family and friends threw fundraisers to scrape together the $13,000 needed for the right dog, and in 2009, Ehlena and her parents went to Ohio to train for two weeks with their new goldendoodle, a cuddly, big white pup named Wonder.

The Frys had talked to Ehlena’s school about the dog, but when Ehlena brought Wonder to class with her, she was told the service dog was not allowed.

Courtesy ACLU School officials have refused to talk about the case, but their legal position is that under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the district was already paying for an aide to help Ehlena physically in school and that the dog was unnecessary. Ehlena’s parents replied that the dog was not part of their daughter’s education plan. He was intended to help her perform more functions by herself, to make her grow stronger and more independent.

Having a service dog for Ehlena, they maintain, is akin to having a service dog for a blind student instead of requiring the student to navigate the school by holding on to the arm of a teacher. Wonder was trained to hit handicap buttons for her, to open and close doors, to pick up items she dropped, and perhaps most importantly, to stabilize her so that she could make transfers from a chair to a walker, or from a walker to a toilet seat. “One of our whole goals in getting Wonder for her was that eventually, the more she was able to use Wonder and navigate her environment, that she would need the aide less and less,” says Ehlena’s mother, Stacy Fry.

Early in the dispute, after mediation, the school agreed to a 30-day trial with Wonder, but Stacy Fry says the dog was not permitted to sit with Ehlena in class or to go with her to the lunchroom. Fry says the 30-day trial, in fact, was marked by one hostile act after another. “There was so much animosity,” she says.

She says that Ehlena and Wonder were even required to demonstrate a toilet transfer with adults from the school watching, an experience that Stacy Fry says was devastating and traumatic for her daughter. After the 30-day trial, the school returned to its no-dog policy. Although Wonder is a hypoallergenic breed, the school said among other things that two children and one teacher were allergic to dogs, and that one child had a dog phobia because he had previously been attacked by a dog.

So the Frys home-schooled Ehlena and then transferred her to another school district where Wonder was welcomed with open arms. He went to class with Ehlena and to lunch. He was in the staff section of the yearbook. He had his own ID card. He was in the class picture. And, says Ehlena’s mother, the relationship between dog and kid was integrated into the school seamlessly. “It was amazing, and they were so accepting,” Fry observes. “It was such a teaching tool, for the other kids.”

The Frys sued the old school district under the Americans with Disabilities Act and other federal laws. They sought unspecified money damages for the emotional distress they say their daughter suffered before transferring to the new school district. Ehlena’s mother says the suit is not about money, but is meant to forge a path for other children with service animals “so that they don’t have to have what happened to my daughter happen to their child.”

“That is success for us,” Stacy Fry says. Represented by the ACLU, the Frys want the Supreme Court to declare that, when disabled children are prevented from having qualified service animals at school, they and their parents can go directly to federal court.

But the school district, backed by the National School Boards Association, argues that to allow such suits could cost school districts millions of dollars. They note that 6 million disabled children are covered by the law that guarantees individualized special education for disabled children, and that that law requires parents to exhaust administrative appeals before going to court to challenge an education plan.

So far, the Frys have lost in the lower courts, as have parents like them in most parts of the country. But now their case is before the Supreme Court. Ehlena will be there, with Wonder. The goldendoodle, after seven years of hard mobility work, has retired to a pet’s life. Ehlena, now 12, is in middle school. “He helped her bridge that gap,” Ehlena’s mother observes. “Working with him helped her to learn how to not need him as much.”

In February 2017, the Supreme Court ruled 8-0 in favor of Ehlena and Wonder.
4 Paws for Ability Service Dogs
Placements by State

*Data through 31 December 2017

Australia – 4
Canada – 19
Japan – 1
New Zealand – 7
Switzerland – 1
Germany – 1
Mexico – 1
Puerto Rico – 1

Upcoming Placements (2018-2019)

- Autism Assistance Dog: 34%
- Diabetic Alert Dog: 5%
- Fasd Assistance Dog: 16%
- Mobility Assistance Dog: 16%
- Multipurpose Assistance Dog: 1%
- Multipurpose Assistance Dog with Seizure Assistance: 1%
- Seizure Assistance Dog: 5%
- Veteran’s Service Dog: 1%
A large corps of volunteers...

More than 175 pups in traditional puppy raiser homes at any given time.

Traditional homes like seasoned veterans, the Organiscaks pictured with Admire, and brand new helpers like Jan Ferris, pictured with Elite and the Wilson Family, pictured with Terra, ensure good socialization and foundational obedience for the pups in their care!

More than 4,000 hours volunteered onsite!

Onsite volunteers Karen and Barbara with puppy raiser Sherry help 4 Paws so much they have begun to look like the decor!

The Graber kiddos were so excited to complete their orientation and get back for puppy play time!

239 volunteers giving puppy baths, puppy play time, walking dogs and more!

Top Onsite Volunteer Hours

John Geise
Barbara Kimmel
Karen Gebhard
Matt Lammi
Donna Mattingly
Patricia Clute
Teresa Jones
Darlene Andes
Graber Family
Doug Roby & Ethan Rambeck (Grandfather and grandson)
...assisting in all areas of operations.

190 puppies raised through the 4 Paws University program at 19 different colleges and universities.

Teams like this one from Wright State watched their puppy, Apex, graduate as a service dog this year and this one from Ohio State saw their hard result in a promotion! Seven, a golden lab, was promoted to service dog mom!

More than 135 breeder moms and dads in loving guardian homes.

This year the Oesterlin and Wesley families both welcomed newly selected service dog moms into their home!

Even more popular are volunteers who don’t fit just one category. Volunteers who invest time onsite, in their homes, at events, all helping to make the magic happen at 4 Paws. Desi and her mom are both puppy raisers and guardian home to Winkies, and Desi wouldn’t have it any other way!

More than 150,000 hours volunteered through 4 Paws Mission Pawsible prison training program.
2017 Revenue

- Contributions and Gifts: 56.8%
- Program Service Fees: 39.8%
- Sales and Fees: 3.0%
- Other Income: 0.4%

2017 Expenses

- Administrative: 3%
- Program: 91%
- Fundraising: 6%
4 PAWS FOR ABILITY, INC.

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>December 31,</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2017</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
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<td>Inventory</td>
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<td>Other current assets</td>
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<td>Land, building and equipment, net</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td>$6,827,548</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities and Net Assets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
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<td>Mortgage payable, current portion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total current liabilities</strong></td>
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<td>Mortgage payable, net of current portion</td>
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<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Net Assets</strong></td>
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<td>Unrestricted</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total net assets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities and net assets</strong></td>
<td>$6,827,548</td>
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4 PAWS FOR ABILITY, INC.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017 (WITH COMPARATIVE TOTALS FOR 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unrestricted</th>
<th>Temporarily Restricted</th>
<th>Total 2017</th>
<th>Total 2016</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Revenue:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program service fees</td>
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<td>$1,903,030</td>
<td>$2,570,386</td>
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<td>Donations</td>
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<td>1,197,064</td>
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<td>Sales and fees</td>
<td>141,626</td>
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<td>141,626</td>
<td>138,058</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
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<td>20,877</td>
<td>16,251</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total revenue</strong></td>
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<td>4,782,698</td>
<td>3,921,759</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses:</td>
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<td>Dog care</td>
<td>2,122,770</td>
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<td>1,813,383</td>
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<td>Dog training</td>
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<td>Administrative</td>
<td>290,284</td>
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<td>263,393</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising and program development</td>
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<td>156,813</td>
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<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>194,101</td>
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<td>194,101</td>
<td>188,056</td>
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<td><strong>Total expenses</strong></td>
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<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>995,154</td>
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<td>995,154</td>
<td>621,713</td>
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<td>Net assets, beginning of year</td>
<td>$3,500,111</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,500,111</td>
<td>2,878,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets, end of year</td>
<td>$4,495,265</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>$4,495,265</td>
<td>$3,500,111</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4 Paws for Ability is not only an organization that trains and places quality, tasked trained service dogs but a strong, caring community of people dedicated to enhancing the lives of all the families that we touch. From the children and veterans with life challenging disabilities, to the staff, volunteers and surrounding communities, we are all impacted for the better when we connect with the spirit of the work being done at 4 Paws for Ability.

We thank you for being part of this community. Your support in helping us with each placement of task trained service dogs is the foundation of what we do. We could not do this without your giving hearts.

In January 2017 we celebrated our one year anniversary in our newly renovated training center. Each step in our growth is moving us closer to our goal of placing more service dogs with families in need and closing the gap of time between application and placement. In 2017 we finished the year by placing 104 service dogs, and there were 24-28 months between financing and placement. My family knows firsthand how life changing a placement can be. Making that a reality in less time with the same best in class quality has to be our focus. One less sleepless night, one less exhausting trip to the market, one less missed social encounter for our children and veterans is what we strive for. Peace of mind for the entire family one placement at a time.

In 2017 we grew our staff, invested in improved technology, and developed more precise reporting. This has allowed us to be more accurate, efficient, and cost effective. These upgrades are driving enhanced data retention, analysis, and reporting for our breeding and training programs...all designed to increase our ability to positively impact the disability community.

My family and I are blessed to be part of such an amazing community. We thank you for your generous investment of time, heart, and financial support.

Kind regards,

Amy Wilcox
Board of Trustees Chair
Key Staff

Karen Shirk
Executive Director & Founder

Jeremy Dulebohn
Training Director

Jennifer Lutes
Associate Director

Kelly Camm
Development Director

Jessa Kenworthy
Head Trainer

Peg Walsh Bernert
4 Paws Alaska Head Trainer

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DVM

Ruth Keller
DVM

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Genetics and Socialization Director

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As of December 31, 2017