

*Moving
forward
during
COVID-19*

CANINE WELFARE
TRAINING TECHNICIAN
KATE DOUGHERTY.



Guide Dogs
for the Blind



Guide Dogs for the Blind

A NON-PROFIT, CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION

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On occasion, GDB will share donor information with like-minded non-profit organizations to better fulfill our mission. If you do not want your information shared, please email us at donations@guidedogs.com.

GREETINGS FROM THE CEO

Greetings,

I hope you and your loved ones are staying healthy and safe. During these uncertain times due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) is continuing to do what we do best: care for our dogs and puppies, and assist our clients across the U.S. and Canada. While we've had to adjust how we provide critical services, with the incredible support of our GDB community, we are moving forward.

I'm very proud of our amazing staff who are continuing to provide support services to our more than 2,100 guide dog teams and 2,000 puppy raisers via video chat, email, and phone, in addition to supporting our many foster volunteers, breeder custodians, and campus volunteers. As the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, we are continuing to reassess the ways we engage our broader GDB community of puppy raisers, donors, volunteers, and clients.

One thing we know for certain: our guide dogs do so much more than help our clients get from point A to point B. Maia Scott, who is featured in this newsletter, credits her guide dog *Gleam* for providing her with much needed companionship and emotional comfort in these challenging times.



**CHRISTINE
BENNINGER
AND THEIA**

The GDB community has been tested through hardships and natural disasters before, and through every situation, we have emerged stronger than ever. With your continued encouragement and support, we will do so again. For the latest updates and ways you can help, please stay connected with us through social media and our website, [guidedogs.com](https://www.guidedogs.com). Thank you for all that you do for GDB—today and every day.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine", written over a light blue circular background.

Christine Benninger
President and CEO



***“Gleam,
Forward!”***

Moving Forward During the COVID-19 Pandemic with GDB Alumna Maia Scott

Like the rest of us, Maia Scott has spent several weeks sheltering in place during the coronavirus outbreak. *Gleam*, her Golden Retriever guide dog, has been her source of emotional comfort.

“I tend to worry. *Gleam* provides routine to my day and reminds me to be in the moment. She makes me feel vital again,” says Maia.

Gleam is Maia’s fourth guide dog. Maia describes the two-week training program as emotional, vibrant, and transformative. “*Gleam* is such a fiercely loyal dog and throws her heart into all that she does for her person. I was worried that she was so bonded to her trainer that she couldn’t be there for me, so I kept my emotional distance.” Maia credits her instructor, Cathie Laber, for helping her stay positive and trust the partnership that was developing.

BONDING THROUGH DANCE

Knowing she needed to let go of her apprehension, Maia took *Gleam* to her dorm room and put on Matisyahu's song *Live like a Warrior*. Maia began to dance, letting her body and expectations flow free. When she worked her way to the ground, *Gleam* plowed into her headfirst and did a somersault into her lap. *Gleam* continued, wagging, and prancing.

"We danced together with *Gleam* offering downward dog play bows and prancing circles, and I improvised with inspiration from her authentic movements," recalls Maia. Afterwards, *Gleam* lay against Maia with her paw atop her foot. "Dancing freely with her broke down that last barrier between us. In that dance, *Gleam* finally got to see all of me, unabashed silliness, joy, and creative spontaneity, not just the overly amped up, do-right person I'd been on the other end of the harness."

EDUCATOR, HUMANITARIAN, AND AUTHOR

A self-described lifelong learner, Maia is an accomplished theatre, art, and dance instructor, massage therapist, labyrinth meditation facilitator, and writer. She recently completed *Finger Walks*, a guidebook in print and Braille along with 16 tactile, high-contrast finger labyrinths, published by the American Printing House for the Blind.

"That's my biggest cause for a happy dance right now," says Maia, who wrote the book after realizing there is nominal material about labyrinths accessible to the blind community. "I always tell people that while my sight may be impaired, my vision is clear," explains Maia, who has focused much of her adult life using her disability to help others with differences realize their abilities.

Maia was recently honored in an exhibit called *Changemakers: Bay Area Disability Pride* at the San Francisco Public Library. The exhibit featured 50 portraits of local people with disabilities accompanied by audio and Braille descriptions. Maia was recognized for being "an extraordinary woman of compassion who has made it her life work to ensure all people are treated with dignity."

STAYING STRONG

Maia says she's extremely grateful for GDB's training program and ongoing support services. "GDB's training is very person-centered and sets clients

"Maia and Gleam are perfect for each other. They share the same spirit, and she loves all the fun and silly quirks that Gleam has. Seeing the two of them together, watching the bond they have—that's what puppy raising is all about."

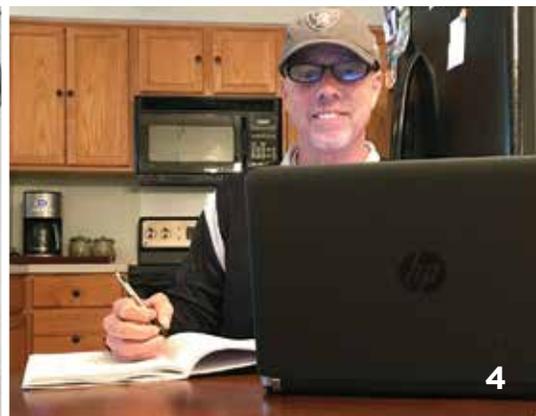
—Anna Wilke,
Gleam's puppy raiser

up for success so that we can go home safely and confidently." That confidence has helped her find a silver lining during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Every time I pick up the harness handle with *Gleam* at my side and utter '*Gleam*, forward,' I'm appropriating the guide dog handler's command as a mantra for me and a prayer that we will all navigate our way through this troubling time. May we all *Gleam Forward!*"

Finding our new normal with COVID-19

GDB wants to thank our community for pitching in and allowing us to continue our life-changing mission during these uncertain times. When we asked for your help, you rose to the challenge. As our organization adjusted to how we work, the strength of our staff and volunteers continued to shine, proving that even when we're apart, teamwork and our furry friends are key to our success!





PICTURED—OPPOSITE PAGE

1—Admissions Manager Ryan Garrett. 2—Foster Care Volunteers Bill Princen and Sharon Labs. 3—Canine Welfare Neonatal Tech Michelle Rada. 4—Field Service Manager Bill Archie. 5—A puppy club Zoom meeting. 6—Volunteer Denise Duncan.

PICTURED—THIS PAGE

7—Supervisory Certified Vet Tech Kelsey Nightingale. 8—Guide Dog Mobility Instructor Adam Gilbert. 9—Dogs in our California campus kennel practicing how to shelter in place. 10—Vet Tech Kristina Kolenko and Veterinarian Kristen Haviland. 11—CCP Operations Specialist Michelle McNew. 12—Guide Dog Mobility Instructor Jane Allman. 13—Field Service Manager Will Henry. 14—Canine Welfare Training Technician Bobby Cortez.

ABOUT GDB

 Did You Know?



All of our services are provided free of charge, including personalized training and extensive post-graduation support, plus financial assistance for veterinary care if needed.

GDB is 100% privately funded.

We receive no government support. The majority of our funding comes from individuals like you.

GDB is the largest guide dog school in North America and the second largest in the world, with more than 15,000 guide dog partnerships created since our founding in 1942.

On average, clients receive four guide dogs from GDB. Clients range in age from 12 to 80+.

Each year, approximately 300 guide dog teams graduate from our program. Thanks to caring people like you, more than 2,100 people and their guide dogs throughout the U.S. and Canada are harnessing the power of partnership.



ROBERT HAMPSON AND SPOKANE



MOVING FORWARD DURING COVID-19

GDB has provided critical support services to our clients throughout the pandemic while ensuring the safety of our staff, volunteers, puppies and dogs. This has meant lots of video chats and moving 150 adult dogs off our campuses to nurturing home environments until the shelter-in-place mandates are lifted and staff can return to campus. These necessary adjustments have resulted in increased costs related to:

- **Veterinary care** for dogs and puppies off campus
- **Providing dog food** for program dogs whose caregivers and clients are experiencing financial hardship
- **Enrichment supplies** and exercise pens for puppies in training across 10 states
- **Zoom video** service for staff and puppy raiser meetings and client consultations

When our training operations fully resume, we expect higher demand for in-home client training as some clients may not be able to travel to our campuses. GDB is committed to meeting our clients' needs even if it means incurring higher travel costs. Why? Because we believe that every eligible person who is blind or visually impaired should have the opportunity to partner with a highly trained guide dog to provide them with enhanced independence, confidence, mobility, companionship, and greater inclusion.

HELP CREATE POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS!

Make a donation by August 15, 2020 to help ensure that more guide dog teams like Maia and *Gleam* receive the training and support they need to be successful. **Your donation will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$50,000!** Please use the attached envelope to mail your donation today, or donate online at [guidedogs.com/newsgift](https://www.guidedogs.com/newsgift).

DONATE TODAY YOUR GIFT WILL BE MATCHED!

- ▶ **\$50** provides a leash and grooming supplies
- ▶ **\$100** provides transportation for one puppy to either our CA or OR campus for guide dog training
- ▶ **\$250** assists with veterinary care for off-campus adult dogs

- ▶ **\$500** provides initial vaccines and veterinary care for five puppies
- ▶ **\$1,000** provides field support services from our call center to 10 clients throughout the U.S. and Canada

PUPARAZZI!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our annual online Puparazzi photo contest. Winners were determined by the number of votes that the photos received, and each vote cost \$1. Because of your generosity we raised nearly \$39,000! All of the money raised will go toward our life-changing programs. These are the winning photos in each of the five categories.



NEW INSTRUCTOR

Congratulations to our newest Guide Dog Mobility Instructor: Shelby Gernhart. She recently completed her GDB instructor apprenticeship, which required a combination of hands-on experience, as well as a comprehensive course of academic study.

“Being a part of the moment when clients meet their new guide for the first time is magical,” she said.

Congratulations Shelby on your accomplishment. To read her complete bio, please visit guidedogs.com/blog.



OVERALL WINNER/GDB WORKING GUIDE DOG CATEGORY (ABOVE): MARSHA BUKALA WITH JEWEL; ALICIA EIDSON WITH JEROME; JOANNE SEAGLE WITH NAN.



CATEGORY WINNERS, FROM ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT—PET POOCH: PENNY; GDB BREEDER: ALFRED; CAREER CHANGE DOG: JAMBO. AT LEFT—GDB GUIDE DOG PUPPY IN TRAINING: PICARD.

SAVE THE DATE

- **CAPS & TAILS:** November 7, 2020 in downtown Portland
- **HOLIDAY LUNCHEON:** December 4, 2020 in San Francisco
- **CANINE HEROES GALA:** April 10, 2021 in San Francisco

For more information or to register, please visit
guidedogs.com/events.



Designate GDB as your charity of choice at Amazon Smile to have a portion of your purchases support our mission. To enroll, go to smile.amazon.com.

THANK YOU TO OUR NEW & CONTINUED SUPPORTERS January 1-March 31, 2020

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"I give to Guide Dogs for the Blind because they provide independence, friendship, and lifelong veterinary care. The dogs are amazing and life changing."

—Yvonne Gee,
donor since 2014

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January 1-March 31, 2020

Recognizing the vision of those who have included GDB in their estate plans.

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Barbara and William Collins
Annie Martin
Linda and Rick Pyeritz
Alicia and Jose Rodriguez
Sharon Ruiz and Richard Bueno
Joanne and Glenn Shojinaga
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You can support GDB's mission and enjoy enhanced charitable giving incentives. Find out more about The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

- The adjusted gross income (AGI) limitation (60%) for gifts of cash is eliminated for those who itemize.
- Above-the-line charitable deduction of up to \$300.00 is available for all standard and itemized deduction donors.
- Suspension of required minimum distributions (RMD's) from qualified retirement plans, including IRAs, for 2020.

For more information, return the coupon below or call 415.492.4190.



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- I want to learn how the CARES ACT can provide tax benefits for me and help support GDB.

Please indicate your preference on receiving the information:

- Mail Email Phone call

Name: _____

Address: _____

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- GDB is in my estate plan. I accept the invitation to be recognized as a member of the Legacy Society.

Return to:

Joan Scott, Planned Giving

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