



# 2020 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT





**FREEDOM  
SERVICE DOGS  
OF AMERICA**



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT & CEO

As you read through our 2020 Annual Impact Report, you'll find that the heart of this report—and the heart of all our work at Freedom Service Dogs—lies in the profound impact we and our community of supporters are privileged to make on the lives of the people we serve.

We are especially proud of the impact we made during a year in which many curveballs were thrown at us by the pandemic, starting in March with a full shutdown of our facility for seven weeks. The closure resulted in the need to find foster homes for 23 adult dogs overnight, in addition to the 61 puppies already with puppy raisers (which, thanks to our amazing volunteers, we did!). That was just the start of the challenges we faced, and overcame, last year, as we doubled down to find creative solutions in every corner of our organization that allowed us to continue our vital work. Among our most notable 2020 accomplishments, we:

- ★ Graduated 24 new client-dog teams despite the pandemic, a 26% increase over 2019.
- ★ Completed the first full year of our purpose-bred puppy program. In 2020, we welcomed 39 puppies born at FSD into our training program—nearly double the number we had projected. With these pups and another 60 FSD-born puppies expected this year, we are poised to start reaping the benefits of carefully managing the genetics, temperament, health care, and early training and socialization of our service dog candidates—all with the goal of graduating more successful service dogs in a timelier manner for the 90-plus clients on our waiting list.
- ★ Achieved an initial 40% placement rate for puppies in our training program, a dramatic increase over the 9% placement rate we saw with shelter and rescue dogs, and a confirmation that we will be able to serve significantly more clients with our current model.



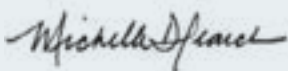
- ★ Remodeled our space to include specially designed whelping and neonatal kennels, and reorganized our team to create Puppy Development and Reproduction and Genetics departments to manage the breeding program and nurture our pups from inception to birth and beyond.
- ★ Developed hybrid teaching models that combine socially distant learning in small, in-person groups with virtual learning so we could continue to conduct client placement classes, volunteer puppy raiser trainings, and follow-up training and support for our 195 active clients.
- ★ Devised new ways to raise money, including the hugely successful “Fill Our Bowls” online campaign, when it became apparent that three of our four annual fundraising events had to be canceled.

All these achievements have one common goal: to provide more custom-trained service dogs and lifetime support, at no cost, to our clients who have disabilities so they can live fuller, more fulfilling lives. Our success in achieving that goal was validated by a survey of 2019 FSD graduates who have had their service dogs for one full year. It showed that 83% of respondents experienced an increase in their overall quality of life, including social, physical, and emotional functioning.

That’s what we mean by impact. As you read the stories of some of our 2020 graduates in this report, remember that their newfound independence, their increased happiness, and their greater hope for a better life is representative of hundreds of teams that have graduated from FSD since 1987.

2020 was an unexpectedly difficult year, but it was also a year filled with progress and promise. A year in which it was clear that our mission resonates with our generous community of supporters, in good times and trying times alike. Thank you for sticking with us and making your own impact on this organization and the deserving clients who are counting on us. We do all that we do for them...but we couldn’t do any of it without you.

With deepest gratitude,



**Michelle Search**  
FSD Board Chair



**Michele Ostrander**  
FSD President & CEO



**Board Chair Michelle Search**  
with Zena and Stella



**President & CEO Michele**  
Ostrander with Toodles

# 2020 IMPACT



**12**  
veterans

**5** people with  
physical  
disabilities



**24**

CLIENT-DOG TEAMS  
graduated from  
FSD



**4** children and  
young adults  
with autism



**3** therapists or  
social workers

a **26% INCREASE** over 2019



Amount FSD clients pay for a custom-trained service dog: **\$0**

Cost to custom train one service dog: **\$30,000 to \$50,000**



**2020 GRADS CAME FROM**



**ACTIVE WORKING TEAMS**

**received lifetime support services**



**8 LITTERS**  
**OF PUPPIES**  
**born at FSD...**



**adding**

**39 NEW**  
**SERVICE DOG**  
**RECRUITS**

**to our program**





**93 VOLUNTEER PUPPY RAISERS**

helped

**109 PUPS**

reach their full potential



**TRILLIONS OF TAIL WAGS!**



# YOUR SUPPORT CHANGES LIVES

Since our founding in 1987, FSD has graduated more than 500 client-dog teams, and we currently provide lifetime support to 195 active clients—all completely free of charge.

Our clients include brave veterans who return from serving their country with PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and damaged or missing limbs; women and men who find their mobility limited and their ability to care for themselves compromised by a spinal cord injury, a stroke, or a disease such as muscular dystrophy or multiple sclerosis; and children and young adults who find it hard to fit in, make friends, and participate in everyday activities due to autism or another neurocognitive disorder.

These 2020 graduates are just some of our clients who are experiencing greater independence, happiness, and hope, thanks to the custom-trained service dogs made possible by your kind support.



## ALEX & DAKOTA

**ALEX:** Graduate student, husband, father, and U.S. Marine Corps veteran with PTSD

**DAKOTA:** Creates space around Alex in public, interrupts nightmares, retrieves medication

*"I applied for a service dog because I've been having a lot of difficulties with medication management and PTSD, and also to help me better manage self-isolation and just be more active with my family. Dakota can identify early signs of why and when I need my medication and go get it for me. She's energetic and makes me more energetic. She basically never lets me out of her sight and has already helped me out on several occasions."*





## ETHAN & PIKA

**ETHAN:** 9-year-old Minecraft video game enthusiast and graduate of FSD's Disco's Dogs program for children and young adults with autism or other neurocognitive disabilities

**PIKA:** Helps calm and soothe Ethan with weighted pressure, redirects his focus

*"One of my favorite parts about this service dog is that she helps me calm down and she's my friend. She comforts me and makes me laugh, and I love her so much." - Ethan*

*"I think Pika will change our lives because I've already started to see small pieces of change. Pika is so loving and sweet, and when she helps Ethan get out of the downward spirals, it really allows him to redirect his focus onto her instead of what's upsetting him. I cannot say thank you enough." - Bryce, Ethan's dad*

**K:** Segway-riding outdoor adventure lover with multiple sclerosis

**PATRIOT:** Retrieves forearm crutches, pushes handicap buttons, increases K's confidence and independence so she can continue her active lifestyle

*"I'm so glad that my friends pushed me to apply for a service dog, because it has changed my life in a very positive way. I didn't realize when I was out in public how many times I felt insecure. Having Patriot with me feels so different and so much better. I can rely on him and know that I don't have to find a person to help me, and that's huge. He's a great companion, and he's quickly become my best friend."*



## K & PATRIOT



# LIFETIME SUPPORT: AN ONGOING IMPACT

At Freedom Service Dogs, we don't simply match clients with service dogs and cross them off our waiting list. We provide lifetime support for all of our active working teams, which in 2020 amounted to 195 teams.

Our lifetime support program is designed to ensure that our clients and their service dogs continue to function together smoothly, while also continuing to meet Assistance Dogs International (ADI) standards. Among our lifetime support services are refresher training for specific tasks, supplemental training for dogs due to a change in the client's physical or mental functioning, and behavioral management for dogs that exhibit noise sensitivity on July Fourth or become fearful of certain areas while on walks, for example.

FSD also provides successor dogs when a client's service dog retires, typically after seven to 10 years, so that our clients can continue to enjoy the many benefits of a service dog. All of our lifetime support services are provided to our active teams at no charge.

During the 2020 pandemic, we:

- ★ Provided successor dogs to three FSD clients whose service dogs retired.
- ★ Gave one-on-one training support—either in person or via Zoom calls—to 26 active teams.
- ★ Created an educational program for clients to help them with the process of retiring their service dog and obtaining a successor dog.
- ★ Developed nutrition and fitness guidelines to help prevent weight gain among service dogs that were getting outdoors less often due to the quarantine.





## TYSON & FERGUS

**TYSON:** FSD successor client and veteran of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Army who returned home from seven tours in Iraq and Afghanistan with PTSD. In 2015, Tyson graduated from FSD with Argon (at right in photo). When Argon retired after six years due to health issues, Tyson was matched with successor dog Fergus (at left in photo), and they graduated in 2020.

**FERGUS:** Provides balance support, awakens Tyson from nightmares and flashbacks, retrieves dropped items, reduces anxiety in crowded places

*“When I first got Argon, he made me get outside more and kind of fit back into society a little bit easier. I think Fergus will make it more possible to manage my life and be more personal to people, to think about the positive stuff in life instead of about the negative stuff. Argon and Fergus are like my constant shadow of two dogs. You made my life worth living.”*

**LORI:** Four-time FSD successor client who uses a wheelchair after having four strokes triggered by a gene mutation. Lori graduated with her first service dog, Pioneer, as part of FSD’s first graduating class in 1993. Since then, Lori has graduated with three successor dogs, including her most recent partner, London, in 2019. In 2020, Lori received lifetime support in the form of one-on-one training sessions to help London re-bond with her and get back into full working mode after Lori was hospitalized for a lengthy period.

**LONDON:** Opens and closes doors, retrieves items, removes laundry from dryer, turns lights on/off

*“I’ve learned over the years that independence gives you not only quality of life, but a wonderful life. If I have to rely on others, I feel guilty that I’ve created a burden. However, with my service dogs, I enjoy extracurricular activities and have paid back the donation of my service dogs by doing pet therapy in nursing homes. For me, serving others is quality of life, and I couldn’t do that independently without Freedom Service Dogs and the four pups they blessed me with.”*



## LORI & LONDON



# VOLUNTEERS MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE



2020 Volunteer of the Year Alex Holcomb  
with tiny service dog candidate

In 2020, our volunteer program looked substantially different, as COVID-19 safety protocols prevented volunteers from being onsite for most of the year. Nevertheless, many of our dedicated volunteers found ways to continue serving FSD by sewing masks, transporting puppies, making donor thank-you calls, and taking on much-needed new roles as puppy raisers, weekend fosters, nursery assistants, kennel assistants, and committee volunteers. As our facility reopens, we will once again happily welcome the many volunteers who help clean our kennels, provide puppy enrichment, and perform other essential work.

Our greatest volunteer need continues to be recruiting and training puppy raisers, as we anticipate bringing 120 new puppies into our program in 2021. Each of these tiny service dog candidates will spend 10 to 12 critical months of their development offsite in the home of a specially trained puppy raiser, who will help the pup maintain basic obedience training, learn house manners, and become more socialized through encounters with new people, places, and experiences. Our puppy raisers play a vital role in ensuring that our pups are as prepared as possible to return to FSD for advanced training and placement with a client in need.



**In 2020, 93 volunteer puppy raisers helped 109 pups learn, grow, and reach their full potential. We are incredibly grateful for their assistance and for all of the volunteers who make our life-changing work possible.**





## Volunteer Puppy Raiser Anna Maddocks with Benz

*"Puppy raising made 2020 worth living! I moved to Denver in February 2020, not knowing anybody and not able to work, and then the pandemic hit. I was so fortunate to become a volunteer for this wonderful organization by taking home Benz, a 5-month-old yellow Lab. Being able to focus on Benz and her training and exposure gave me new meaning and purpose, getting me out safely in the scary COVID-19 world. The community of puppy raisers is so supportive and like-minded, wanting the best for these dogs and the people they will go on to serve. I was able to meet people, be a part of something bigger, give back, and feel purpose again, as well as having a new best friend and sidekick in Benz. I cannot thank FSD enough for what being a puppy raiser has meant to me."*

## Volunteer Puppy Raisers Lauren and Ryan McClain with Beamer

*"We are so honored to be part of the puppy raising program at FSD. Seeing these dogs go on to change the lives of their partners is the reason we signed up for this unique opportunity. In a world full of uncertainty, being able to focus on training a puppy with positive reinforcement, walks, and play every day is a wonderful distraction for us. In addition to the joy (and love) we get from working with our puppy, we also get to be part of a great community of other raisers, which is invaluable."*



FSD needs volunteer puppy raisers who live in Colorado! As a volunteer puppy raiser, you will receive specialized training, ongoing support, and supplies for your puppy. If you live outside Colorado, contact us to learn how you can support this rapidly expanding program.

For more information, visit [freedomsvicedogs.org/volunteer](https://freedomsvicedogs.org/volunteer) or contact Volunteer & Community Outreach Coordinator Hannah Perruccio at 303-922-6231 x201 or [hperruccio@freedomsvicedogs.org](mailto:hperruccio@freedomsvicedogs.org).



# THANK YOU

## FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN 2020!

In 2018, an exceptionally generous gift of \$1,381,961 from The Clarence R. Millwee Trust allowed FSD to establish our first endowment. As of Dec. 31, 2020, the endowment had grown to \$2,106,410, thanks in large part to the generosity of our supporters. To learn how you can contribute to the endowment and help sustain our life-changing work for years to come, contact Director of Philanthropy Karen Aalund at 303-922-6231 x218 or [kaalund@freedom servicedogs.org](mailto:kaalund@freedom servicedogs.org).

### \$500,000+

Ronin Factory

### \$250,000-\$499,999

The Estate of Gary Hornbrook  
Uniformed Services University  
of the Health Sciences

### \$100,000-\$249,999

Anonymous  
Dr. Marty Pets  
Quick-Tag  
The Salah Foundation

### \$50,000-\$99,999

The Anschutz Foundation  
Arthur L. & Elaine V. Johnson  
Foundation  
Eric + Jessie Decker Foundation  
The Gary and Leslie Howard  
Family Foundation  
The Harold Lee Charitable Foundation  
May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust  
NAPE Charities Fund  
Patterson Foundation

### \$25,000-\$49,999

AnnieMac Home Mortgage  
Anonymous  
Clarence R. Millwee Irrevocable Trust  
Community Health Charities  
The Estate of De Anne Marie Hull  
Eugene C. and Florence Armstrong  
Family Foundation Inc.  
The Marilyn Lichtman Foundation  
The McCune Family Foundation  
James McElhinney  
Joan Ouder Kirk  
Roxann Menning Revocable Trust  
Sierra Nevada Corporation  
The Theo Raven Trust

### \$10,000-\$24,999

Albertsons-Safeway Foundation  
Anonymous  
Ed and Bette Arnold  
Baird  
The Barnwood Foundation  
Bochnowski Family Foundation  
Dotty Bracken  
Cars Helping Charities  
Core Laboratories

Des Plaines Valley Memorial  
Post 6863

The Dixie Foundation Inc.  
EC Data Systems

Philip L. Edwards and Catherine  
Dews-Edwards

EOG Resources Inc.

The Estate of Howard F. Prass  
The Estate of Therese Howard  
Syril Frank

Margot and Dick Hampleman

Jerry and Janice Hanson

Ken W. Davis Foundation

Gabriel Koroluk and Amy Zupon

Liberty Oilfield Services

Richard and Pat List

Lockheed Martin Corporation

Manitou Fund

Michael J. and Patricia Levitt Family  
Charitable Foundation

Nestlé Purina PetCare Company

Patricia Crown Family

PDC Energy

Piccinelli Family Fund

A. Ralph and Mary Reed

Reliance Energy Inc.

Joel A. Schleicher

Kathleen Schlenker

Sturgeon Electric



Bruce and Patricia Thoms  
Frank and Jeanne Trainer  
Keith and Margaux Trammell  
UpWest Foundation  
Wag N' Wash  
Gary and Diann Warren  
The William H. Donner  
Foundation  
Chapman Young

## \$5,000-\$9,999

Anonymous  
The Autrey Foundation  
The Bates Foundation and Trust  
BetsWest Foundation  
BOK Financial  
Bright Funds Foundation  
Michele and Laurence Chang  
Clarence J. Venne Foundation  
Commonwealth Charitable Fund  
Cowboy Moving & Storage  
CustomInk  
The D. Lane & Anwyl Bates  
Foundation  
Dave and Cheryl Duffield  
Foundation  
David and Jennifer Kahn  
Family Foundation  
Sally Davis  
Jeffrey A. Dean and Heidi Hopper  
Denver Broncos Charities  
Donald and Elida Derebey  
Dogwalkers  
Reece and Christine Duca  
E\*Trade Financial  
Employees of UnitedHealth Group  
Employees of UnitedHealthcare  
Ernest George Mueller and  
Frances Joy Mueller Foundation  
The Estate of Catherine M. Lutz  
The Estate of Glenn F. Leiter  
The Estate of Sherry P. Chapman  
The Estate of Vicki Heisler  
Dean and Margo Fiala  
Frank S. and Joanne M. Nicoll  
Foundation  
FranServe  
David and Luann Furman

The Geaton & JoAnn DeCesaris  
Family Foundation  
The Gerald Schlosser Family Trust  
Phyllis Gibula  
Stephanie Gonzalez  
Grand Chapter of Colorado Order  
of the Eastern Star  
Great Western Petroleum  
Hamlin Family Fund  
Mary K. Henson  
Matt and Stacey Hicks  
Edward and Barbara Holtvluwer  
Eleanor M. Irvin  
Joe and Van Mabee Foundation  
The Jon and Carol Hughes Family  
Foundation  
Joshua and Hannah Keister  
Chris Law  
Lynch Creek Farm  
Jared and Melissa Mabey  
Mantz Foundation Inc.  
MFA Oil  
The Monteil Family Fund  
National Christian Foundation  
The Nature Conservancy  
New Roots Solutions LLC  
Peter Paul Luce Foundation  
Republic Services Energy  
Kelly Richards  
Sheila E. Roberts  
Rock Harbor Foundation  
Rocky Mountain Alliance  
Children's Foundation  
Judy Sansone  
Gabrielle Scott  
Emma Smith  
Smith S.H.A.R.E. Foundation  
Patricia Spayne  
Gary and Teresa Stewart  
Brian and Amy Sward  
Virginia W. Hill Foundation  
Wickham Charitable Fund  
Darryl and Maritza Wong  
WPX Energy Inc.  
Christopher Zacher

# FACES OF FREEDOM: MIDLAND

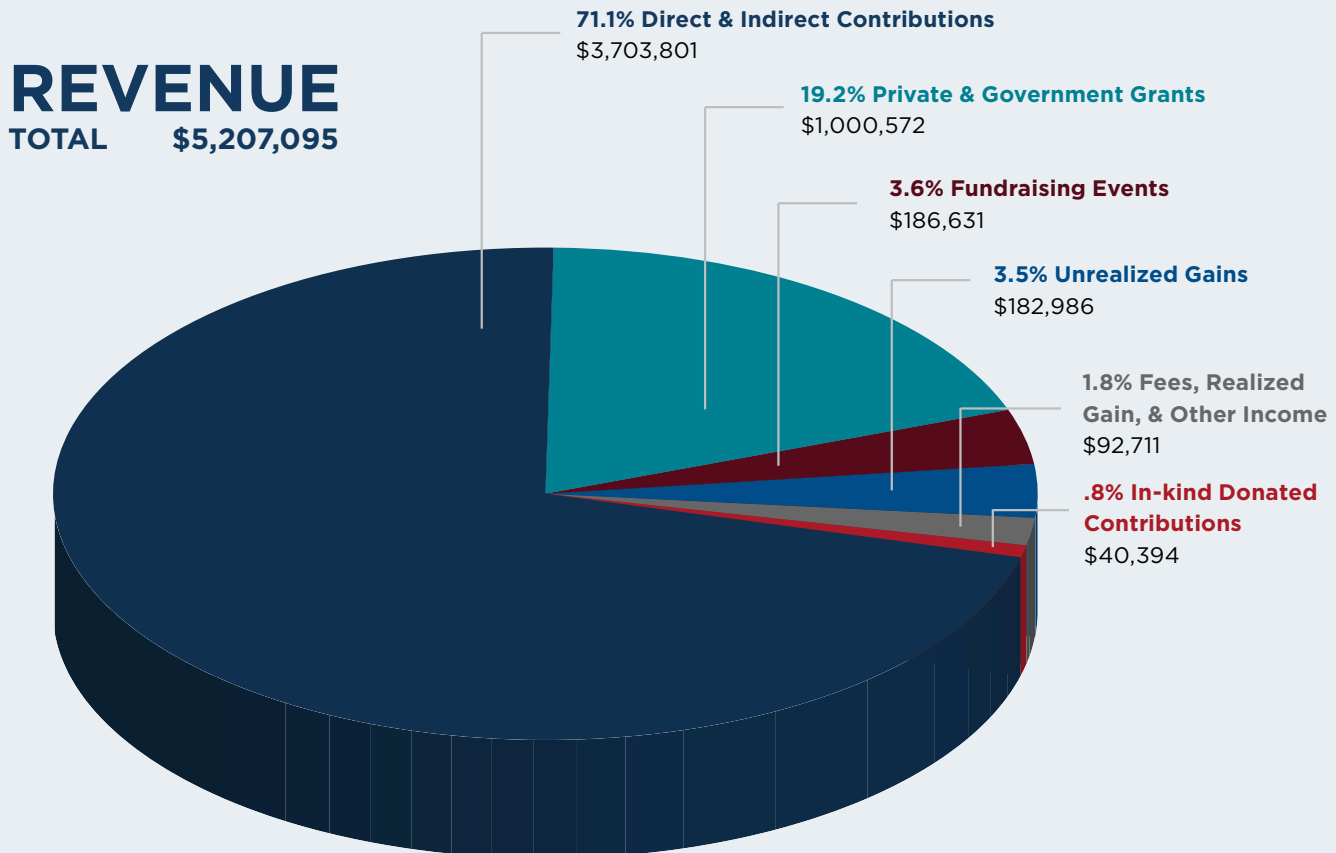
In 2020, FSD's major fundraising events were canceled due to the pandemic, with the exception of Faces of Freedom: Midland. Our fifth annual Faces of Freedom: Midland Sporting Clays Tournament, co-presented by Core Lab and EOG Resources, took place on Sept. 18, 2020, and raised \$168,000—an impressive sum, considering that the event was held using social distancing protocols to help ensure the health and safety of 240 participants and 50 volunteers.

In 2013, Core Lab created the Faces of Freedom fundraiser to benefit Freedom Service Dogs' Operation Freedom program for veterans. Since then, Faces of Freedom events in Midland and Denver have grossed over \$2 million for FSD. Many thanks to our generous sponsors for their continued support!



# 2020 FINANCIALS

We are committed to being responsible stewards of our financial assets. Relying on the generosity of our community of supporters from all over the country to fuel our mission, we are proud that \$.80 of every dollar goes to providing care and training for our service dogs and education and support for our clients, and \$.20 of every dollar goes to fundraising and administrative expenses.



## STEPHEN & BRAXTON

**STEPHEN:** Computer-programming student and drone pilot with lower-limb paralysis

**BRAXTON:** Picks up crutches, opens doors, pushes handicap buttons

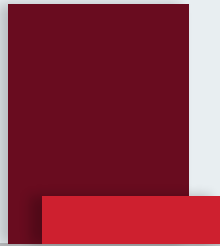
*"A couple of years after my injury, I was finding myself just kind of stuck at home. Having a service dog allows me to get out and do things with friends and other people. I am blown away by how much effort has gone into training these dogs. It's quite humbling, and I feel quite privileged to have a Freedom Service Dog."*





**\$.80 OF EVERY DOLLAR**

provides service dog care and training, and client education and support.



**\$.20 OF EVERY DOLLAR**

goes toward fundraising and administrative expenses.

## EXPENSES

TOTAL \$4,166,593

### 80% Program Expenses

\$3,344,409

#### Dog Training, Dog Care, & Client Services

\$2,466,491

#### Public Education & Other

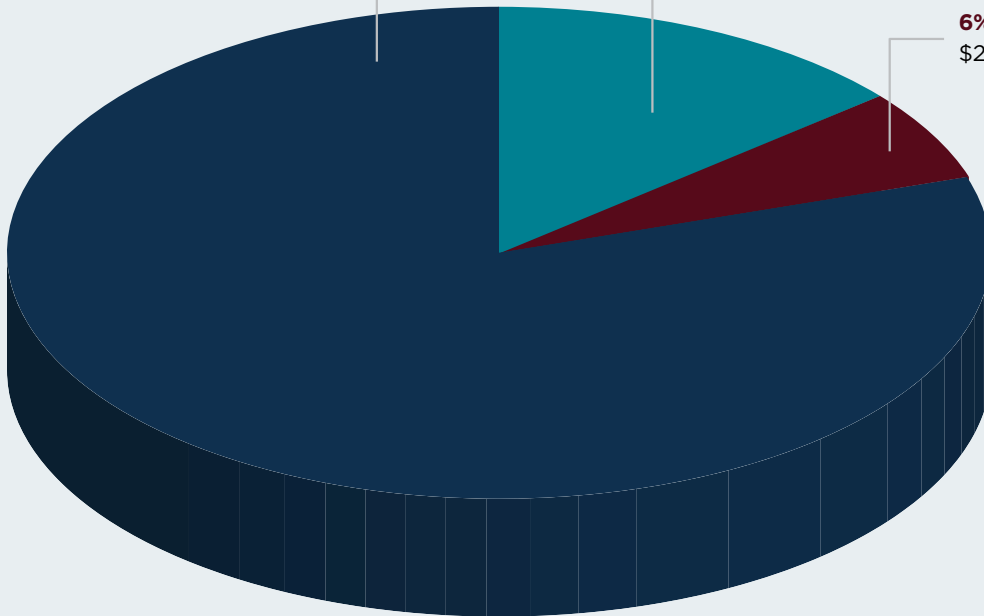
\$877,918

### 14% Fundraising Expenses

\$566,874

### 6% Administrative Expenses

\$255,310



**TOTAL ASSETS**  
**\$13,682,766**

**TOTAL LIABILITIES**  
**\$607,686**

### NET ASSETS

#### Without Donor Restrictions

Undesignated \$2,419,877

Investment in Property/Equipment \$6,325,781

#### Board Designated

Operating Reserve \$2,190,000

Endowment \$2,036,410

#### With Donor Restrictions

**\$103,012**

**TOTAL NET ASSETS**

**\$13,075,080**





# DALE & QUEST

**DALE:** Motorcycle rider, pilot, and U.S. Army veteran with PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and physical limitations sustained during a paratrooping accident

**QUEST:** Retrieves items, creates space in crowds, assists with mobility

*“I think veterans in particular know what the word hopelessness means. For me and a lot of other veterans, it’s hard for us to reach out. It’s hard for us to not pull up our own bootstraps and keep going. We were told that when you run into a wall, you either break through, climb over it, or check around the corner and see if there is a door. Quest is a door for me. When I was lying in the hospital without any expectation of survival, I wondered, ‘Should I give up?’ Because it was so hard, and it hurt so much. I thought about my family and the service dog I didn’t even know. It was the hope of having a service dog that carried me through a really rough time.”*

# WAYS TO GIVE

Want to leave your “paw print” on the life-changing work of Freedom Service Dogs? Here are just a few of the many ways you can make an impact.



### INCLUDE FSD IN YOUR WILL

Consider leaving a specific dollar amount or percentage of your estate to FSD in your will or trust. It is easy and can be done in a few short sentences.



### GIVE APPRECIATED STOCK

Consider an outright gift of stocks or securities to FSD. It is 100% free of capital gains tax and eligible for income tax deduction.



### MAKE AN IRA ROLLOVER GIFT/QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTION (QCD)

Consider making capital gains and income tax-free gifts from your IRA each year. If you are 70½, you can transfer up to \$100,000 annually to FSD, saving you (and your heirs) future tax liability on your IRA. Also, consider gifting your 2021 IRA required minimum distribution to FSD, capital gains and income tax-free.



### NAME FSD AS A BENEFICIARY ON LIFE INSURANCE

Consider naming FSD as the primary or secondary beneficiary of all or a portion of your life insurance policy. It is as easy as writing Freedom Service Dogs, Inc. on your beneficiary designation form.



### CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

Consider making a gift of cash, stock, or other assets to FSD, and in return, you will receive a fixed amount of income each year for the rest of your life.

*This information is not intended as legal advice and may not reflect current law. Please consult with your advisor.*



## QUESTIONS?

Contact Director of Philanthropy  
Karen Aalund at 303-922-6231 x218  
or [kaalund@freedom servicedogs.org](mailto:kaalund@freedom servicedogs.org).





# ABOUT FSD

Freedom Service Dogs of America (FSD) is a Denver-based nonprofit organization that unleashes the potential of dogs by transforming them into custom-trained, life-changing assistance dogs for people in need. Clients include veterans and active-duty military, children and teens, and other adults. Their disabilities include autism, traumatic brain injury, cerebral palsy, spinal cord injuries, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Since being founded in 1987, Freedom Service Dogs has paired more than 500 client-dog teams at no cost to the client.

For more information, visit [freedom servicedogs.org](http://freedom servicedogs.org).



**Assistance Dogs**  
INTERNATIONAL

ACCREDITED MEMBER



## 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*Jefferson Wells*

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Blake Finley  
*Addison & Maxwell  
Real Estate Brokerage*

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*Morgan Stanley Wealth Management*

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Karen Aalund

#### Director of Communications

Erin Conley

#### Director of Dog Operations

Laura Edwards

#### Director of Finance and Administration

Laura Rogers

#### Director of Client Services

Amanda Vallo

**Thanks to Amanda Engel, the talented photographer whose work is featured in this report.**

## 2021 EVENTS

**MAY 6**  
Diamonds in the Ruff:  
Mission Pawsible

**JUNE 25**  
Faces of Freedom:  
Denver

**SEPTEMBER 12**  
Doggie Plunge

**SEPTEMBER 17**  
Faces of Freedom:  
Midland



