



# SUMMIT ASSISTANCE D❤GS

## 2018 Annual Report

### Envisioning our future training campus

**“To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream. Not only plan, but also believe.” ~ Anatole France**

2018 was a year of both contemplation and action at Summit Assistance Dogs. We were busy as ever training future assistance dogs, while also moving forward with plans to build our training campus on Whidbey Island. When we see the difference *just one Summit dog* makes in a person’s life, we want to do everything we can to create more life-changing partnerships, and a campus will enable us to change the lives of many more people.

The journey to become a highly skilled mobility assistance dog takes two full years and requires the dedicated help of many donors, volunteers and professional trainers along the way. A campus will provide a sense of permanency for our clients, volunteers and staff, and will leverage many efficiencies to “unleash” our full potential and that of every person and dog we serve.



FULL CAMPUS PLAN

Several leadership donors have stepped forward to fund the early stages of our Unleashing Potential capital campaign. With this generous support, in 2018 we developed architectural renderings of the fully accessible campus and prepared the site for future development. We also worked with an architect to draft the building plans for the first and most critical building, our Canine Condo. At the end of 2018, we had raised \$1.5 million in pledges and gifts towards our phase 1 building goal of \$2.5 million.

When we meet our phase 1 fundraising goal, ideally in 2019, construction of the Canine Condo will begin. When completed, we will see an immediate increase in the number of dogs we can bring into our training program, while also benefiting from the sense of permanency this loving and warm environment will provide for our puppies in training, our volunteers and our staff. We will then move to phases 2 and 3 to raise another \$2.5 million to complete the campus with a state-of-the-art training and administrative center and client lodge featuring equipment necessary for stays.

The dream is becoming more real with each day, and 2019 will bring many opportunities for more people to help us build Summit’s forever home. Follow our campaign progress online at [summitdogs.org](http://summitdogs.org). Thank you to all who help us create life-changing partnerships between people and dogs.



CANINE CONDO



BUILDING SITE, DEC. 2018



Many new puppies, lots of hope  
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# SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

*Creating life-changing partnerships between people and dogs.*

## Message from the Founder/Executive Director

The journey to become a service dog is a long and eventful one! We love celebrating the many firsts with our supporters - the first steps, first "sit", first retrieve and, ultimately, the first meeting between a graduating dog and their new partner. Over the course of each pup's journey, there are also many less celebrated, but equally important, aspects of raising and training a future mobility assistance dog. Our days also include doing lots of laundry, cleaning bowls, grooming, developing training curriculum, leading instructional classes, transporting dogs to veterinary appointments, and so much more.

It takes both a truly special dog and the dedication of many donors, volunteers, and professional staff to create priceless partnerships between an assistance dog and their partner. We strive for only the best - the



"Olympians" of the canine world - and that journey involves so much support and love along the way. Is it worth it? In the words of our clients, absolutely. These magic partnerships have been described as "a bridge off a deserted island" and "a gift that is always by my side" and "truly life-changing."

At any given time, we have more than 30 dogs in training: young puppies just learning to navigate the world with the help of our volunteer puppy raisers, adolescent dogs learning new skills and creating strong bonds in our prison program partnership, and dogs in advanced training with our professional trainers who are refining their skillset to respond to more than 60 cues and truly enjoy working alongside their human partner.

We have a very promising line up of dogs in intermediate and advanced training, and I'm excited about the lives they will change in 2019. Your support along the way is instrumental to our success. We strive for only the best for our dogs and our clients and, together, we can create more magical partnerships that will transform lives forever. Thank you!

*Sue Meinzinger*





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## New puppies, new hope in 2019

We were excited to welcome the first litter Summit has hosted for the Assistance Dogs International Breeding Cooperative (ABC). Eleven puppies, known to us as the J Litter, were born to Labrador Retrievers Stitches and Theo November 29. While this was our first ABC hosted litter, we had seven puppies, the I Litter, born in October 2018 to our breeding dog Bella and Virgil, a stud dog from Southeastern Guide Dogs. We also have brought many other puppies into our program through the cooperative.

The cooperative was started by Marina and Bob Phillips who worked for Guide Dogs for the Blind for many years. It was modeled on a sheep-breeding cooperative in New Zealand, where ranchers shared breeding stock

and within a few years had vastly improved the quality and quantity of all members' wool production. Within the cooperative, service dog programs across the US and Canada are working together to breed and share the highest quality dogs possible so more life-changing partnerships can be created by all.

The breeding cooperative was formed with initial donations of dogs from some of the larger programs around the country. Co-op members host breeding dogs and when a litter is born, the hosting organization receives a percentage of the puppies but also distributes a percentage out to other member programs. We will be keeping six J Litter puppies and sending five to cooperative member organizations.

"Membership in the breeding cooperative assures Summit access to a much wider gene pool and proven service dog lineage than we could ever have otherwise, especially as a small program. We can also tap the collective expertise of the members, who share information willingly," said Sue Meinzing, Summit's Founder and Executive Director.

The success of our breeding program has proven itself so far for Summit. Six of the seven I Litter pups were still in the program at the end of the year with high hopes for others.

"Great service dogs are like Olympians," Sue said. "They are the cream of the crop of the puppies who start into the program, and we're pleased that we have so many looking very promising right now."



# SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

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BRIANNA & MABEL

## 2017 graduate dogs have grown in roles with partners

Mabel, 2017 graduate dog with Brianna Vail, and Scout, 2017 graduate with Kori Gibson, joined their partners on new adventures during the past year.

Brianna is now a graduate student pursuing a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Mental Health Counseling – Deaf at Western Oregon University in Monmouth. The Woodinville, WA, resident finished her undergrad degree at the University of Washington/Bothell shortly after being paired with Mabel. After graduation, she volunteered for a week at Seattle Children's Stanley Stamm Summer Camp and then set off to Oregon for a whole new life living on her own for the first time.

"People comment on how much more confident I am since getting Mabel," Brianna said. "I got her at a perfect time when I was getting ready to be out on my own." Brianna had waited almost five years for Mabel.

Scout has become a star at Home Depot in Covington, WA, where he goes to work with Kori. Scout's celebrity is due to his exposure there and his many other public events. He's a superstar at community fairs where he and Kori represent Home Depot. Kori says he's unflappable. At one event, he met Spiderman, two Disney princesses, a Prince Charming and Grumpy the Turtle.

"This was a real African Tortoise," Kori said. "Scout kept play bowing trying to get the tortoise to play, and Spiderman got a complete face wash from Scout. He's so good with children too."

He's a great traveler too, taking it all in stride on a flight to Phoenix with Kori. "He is one great dog on the airplane. Too bad I don't fly as well as he does!" She says this happy-go-lucky boy also likes to stop and smell the flowers wherever they go. "People ask how old he is because he's so mellow. They assume he's an older dog, but he's just three."

## Lifetime support for graduates

When a new life-changing partnership is created, we don't just shake the client's hand, pet the dog and send them merrily on their way, watching them fade into the sunset. We are partners with our clients for the working life of their dogs and sometimes even into the dog's retirement.

"Summit staff are always just a phone call away," said 2017 graduate Kori Gibson. Soon after graduation, they visited her to help her deal with a couple of training issues and a skin issue that made Scout itch and lose some of his hair.

Whether it's skin issues or fine-tuning skill sets, particularly in the first few months together for the graduate pairs, Summit staff are there for them. It's all part of our lifetime support. At a minimum, all graduates are met with annually for Public

Access Tests to make sure things are going well and that the pair can represent Summit well in the community.

"Connecting regularly with clients helps us head off and prevent problems and helps our clients maintain strong ties with our staff," said Melissa Mitchell, trainer/client support coordinator.



KORI & SCOUT



# SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

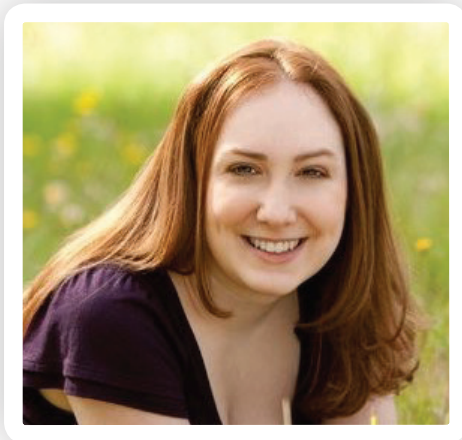
*Creating life-changing partnerships between people and dogs.*

## Growing number of successor-dog applicants adds to waiting list

About one-third of the applicants on Summit's waiting list are prior graduates whose dogs have died or retired. While the wait time to receive a service dog can be longer than hoped for, the good news is, we have a lot of puppies in the pipeline. That means that more than ever we need new

puppy raisers. Please consider opening your home and heart to a puppy in training. Your commitment would be about one year (see life cycle graphic on back page), and the rewards will be countless. Visit [summitdogs.org/volunteer](http://summitdogs.org/volunteer) to learn more and apply for this great work.

## Condition has interrupted Sarah Cowan's education, but young applicant presses on



SARAH COWAN

A rare condition called Chiari malformation has interrupted 25-year-old Sarah Cowan's college career a couple of times, but she's still intent on completing a degree in advertising and PR while also working part-time as a video editor.

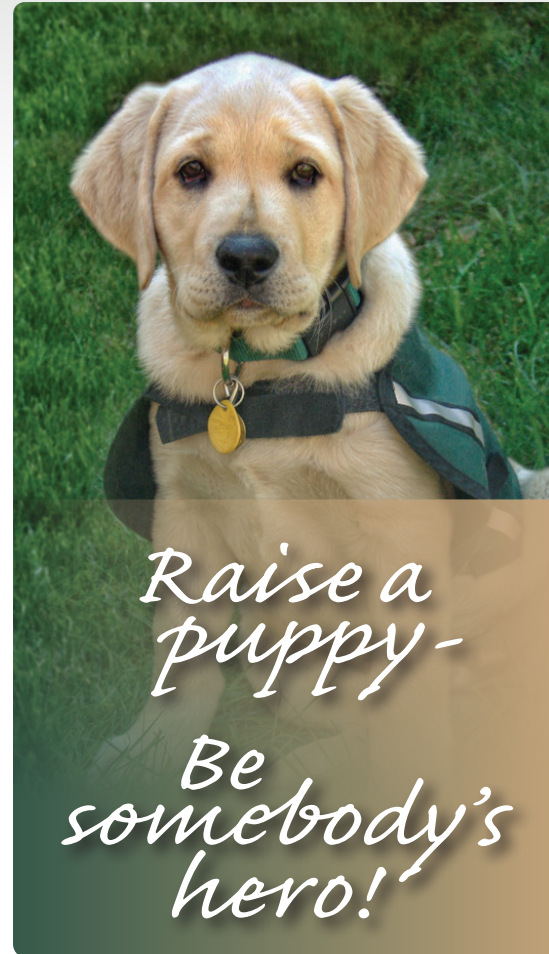
Sarah's condition was first diagnosed when she was four years old, although it's more commonly diagnosed when people are in their twenties.

"One day, I was just unable to walk," she said. "Luckily I regained that ability with surgeries that involved an implant that lifted the cerebellum, and multiple shunts."

The condition is caused by the cerebellum sitting too low on the spinal cord, which causes cysts and neurological issues. The cysts are called Syringomyelia. Her condition is rare enough that one of her doctors wrote a study about her for a medical journal.

Her condition remained steady during her elementary and high school years. After she graduated from high school in Olympia, she moved to California to study film. Once in college, things took a turn, and she had to drop out and move back home so she could concentrate on physical therapy and learning how to manage daily living.

"I had to train myself to get dressed and do all those things we need to do every day to get by," Sarah said.



Then she tried attending Western Washington University in Bellingham to earn a business degree, but when her condition took a serious turn for the worse, she had to move back home again.

"I had taken a break from college, and when I went back, I couldn't move my right hand." She still has balance issues and currently has no sensation in her arms and hands, so she uses a track mouse to do her video editing work.

Sarah applied to Summit about two years ago after researching where to find a service dog. Now she's hopeful she will soon have a four-legged partner to help with daily tasks and be her faithful companion.

# SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

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## Numo floats through training with her puppy raiser

Life on a floating home is something many of us would enjoy, and that's just the life Numo is living. Her volunteer puppy raiser Geoff Gamsby lives on a floating home on Lake Union, so that's where Numo is happily ensconced for her training.

Numo is Geoff's first Summit puppy, but she's his 10th altogether. Geoff has raised service and guide dogs for about 15 years for other organizations but decided to switch to Summit after learning about our positive-reinforcement training methods.

"I really like that Summit rewards for the right behaviors but doesn't reprimand for incorrect ones," he said. "Summit shows appreciation for the dogs and goes above and beyond in supporting puppy raisers. That's important, because it's a lot of work raising and training a dog, keeping a job, going to classes and all the other things we need to juggle. It's been a fantastic adventure so far."

He says Numo, a yellow lab, is doing really well at a year and a half.



"She's showing some great potential," he said. "She's gone to several NuMotion events, and she does great every time."

Numo is named for NuMotion, a company that provides mobility solutions, wheelchair, and mobility equipment. NuMotion has provided a corporate sponsorship for Summit and named Numo. They share Summit's mission of supporting

people's independence, so it was a natural fit for them to become a Summit donor. Numo is happy to attend NuMotion events and show off her skills.

Geoff grew up in Michigan but moved out here about 12 years ago. He's an architect who is currently working as a professional captain for a Lake Union charter company. He's also enthusiastic about finding additional ways to support Summit and is interested in pursuing 3D videos through a company he knows, in ways that might support Summit's work.

## 2018 Foster Homes

Alex Stone  
Andrea Crispin  
Asif & Adila Esbhani  
Anastasia Rotkina  
Brandon Dombrowsky  
Brenda Crispin  
Cheng Shih  
Deborah Darsie  
Debbie Donahoe

Diana Smith  
Donna Sellers  
Donna Shuman  
Donna Vaquer  
Edward Dardis  
Erin Shiflett  
Geoff Gamsby  
Indira Dhingra  
Jane Dielman  
Jessemine Fung  
Jessica Johnson  
Jody Fox

Joy and Dave Thompson  
Justin Tolmer  
Kathleen Cole  
Katie Wadsley  
Keri Bambach  
Kristen Ramsey  
Kristen Rieb  
Linda Chapman  
Lori Sprague  
Lynne Proctor  
Michelle & Audrey Peiker

Mikayla Rolfs  
Michael Powers  
Mona Zimmerman  
Najla Hafez  
Jim and Nancy Sleeth  
Nancy Nielsen  
Nina Kral  
Pam & Justin Wendlandt  
Penny Potter  
Rachel Silver  
Rick Anderson

Sadruta Chandrashekar  
Sally & Michael Hughes  
Sarika Sharma  
Sarah Roberts  
Scottie Kuper  
Shawn Crincoli  
Shivani Caplan  
Todd Bohle  
Tracy Harachi  
Warryn & Matt Hill

# SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

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## 2018 Accomplishments

- Provided training and support for 40 dogs and their volunteer puppy raisers through weekly classes led by Summit trainers at four locations and via one-on-one consultation.
- Continued our training partnership with the Monroe Correctional Complex where 27 inmates provided intermediate-level training and care for 14 young dogs, with bi-weekly instruction from Summit trainers.
- Conducted advanced level training for nine dogs, with 24-hour care and training provided by our staff trainers in their own homes.
- Welcomed 11 new Labrador puppies dubbed the “J Litter” and provided around-the-clock care and love during their critical first eight weeks.
- Provided ongoing support to 33 current clients and their service dogs, meeting with each to assess skills and provide further instruction and guidance as needed.
- Provided 12 educational presentations for various community groups.
- Developed construction renderings, leveled the building site and built a road to our future fully accessible training campus on Whidbey Island.

## 2018 Financial Results

(FY 1/1/18 – 12/31/18)

### INCOME

Corporate Donations & Grants	186,000
Employee Giving Campaigns	128,000
Event Income	280,000
Foundation Grants	3,500
Individual Donors	130,000
Investment Income	29,000
Miscellaneous	1,500
Organization Donations	12,000
Program service revenue	13,000

**TOTAL INCOME \$783,000**

### EXPENSE

Communication	5,000
Events	66,000
Insurance	4,000
Miscellaneous	22,000
Occupancy	12,000
Printing & Postage	23,000
Professional Services	82,000
Salaries	336,000
Supplies	42,000
Travel	20,000

**TOTAL EXPENSES \$612,000**

**NOTE:** This represents preliminary financial data that excludes depreciation expense and is subject to further audit adjustments.

## Board of Directors

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Oak Harbor, WA

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Bellevue, WA

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Seattle, WA

**Kevin Corcoran**  
Bellevue, WA

**Andrea Crispin**  
Seabeck, WA

**Tracy Doering**  
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**Matthew Hobbs**  
Bellevue, WA

**Michael Hughes**  
Mill Creek, WA

**Ray Vermillion**  
Anacortes, WA

## Staff

**Sue Meinzinger**  
Founder/  
Executive Director

**Mark Bunje**  
Facilities  
Project Manager

**Rita Cooper**  
Office Manager/  
Dog Adoption  
Coordinator

**Brenda Crispin**  
Foster Home  
Coordinator

**Lisa Freshour**  
Trainer/Prison  
Program Director

**Lynne Jordan**  
Director of  
Philanthropy

**Lindy Langum**  
Trainer

**Teresa McCoy**  
Client Services Manager

**Melissa Mitchell**  
Trainer/Client Support

**Alex Stone**  
Philanthropic  
Giving Officer

## Contact Information

PHONE: (360) 293-5609

WEB: [www.summitdogs.org](http://www.summitdogs.org)

E-MAIL: [Info@summitdogs.org](mailto:Info@summitdogs.org)

MAIL:

P.O. Box 699

Anacortes, WA 98221

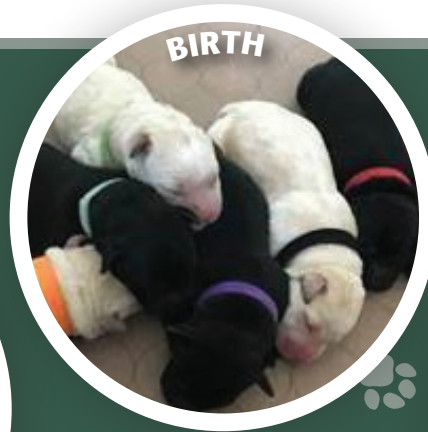


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## The Life Cycle of a Service Dog

