



Why is This Poodle Getting a Massage?

LEARN ABOUT OUR UPGRADED CANINE
ENRICHMENT PROGRAM ON PAGE 9!



2023

Annual Impact Report



Looking Back

with CEO Michele Suchovsky

Ellen Dykstra Photography

This has been an incredible year for the PAWS Family. We built bridges with other Assistance Dog organizations through Assistance Dogs International, dreamed up exciting innovations that will make PAWS even better in the years to come, and welcomed 198 new bouncing bundles of Foster Puppy joy into the world! PAWS Dogs bring people together from all walks of life, forging important ties that last a lifetime and beyond.

Last February, I was particularly proud of the community we've built together. When we learned of the tragedy at Michigan State University, we were able to respond immediately. The ongoing dedication of the PAWS Family meant that there was no question that we could or would find a way to help. Instead, we were able to focus on finding the best way for PAWS Dogs to support the MSU community in their time of need, which you can read about on page 3.

One of my favorite things about PAWS are the ways we've found to support large groups and

individual people. Though PAWS Client Barb's story on page 7 definitely illustrates that the individual scale is still a big deal!

Speaking of big deals, the newest member of my family will tell you that she is, in fact, the biggest of big deals. HADDIE is my Breeding Mama Dog who likes to run fast, go everywhere I go, and will help continue our proud tradition of Papillon PAWS Dogs. I can't wait to help her welcome her first litter in the future!

PAWS Dogs bring people together. I am proud of what we've created together, and the big and small ways we change the world every single day.

Sincerely,

Michele Suchovsky
CEO

This year I turned in my fourth foster puppy, KILO. The heavy heart I felt that day was overshadowed by my excitement for not just KILO's next adventure, but also for the future of the PAWS's mission.

Before heading off to our Prison Partners Program, KILO's journey took him through PAW's new Canine Enrichment Program, aptly nicknamed "Puppy Summer Camp". I hope you enjoy reading more about how PAWS put their innovation and continuous improvement mindset into practice to support the well-being of our dogs-in-training on page 9.

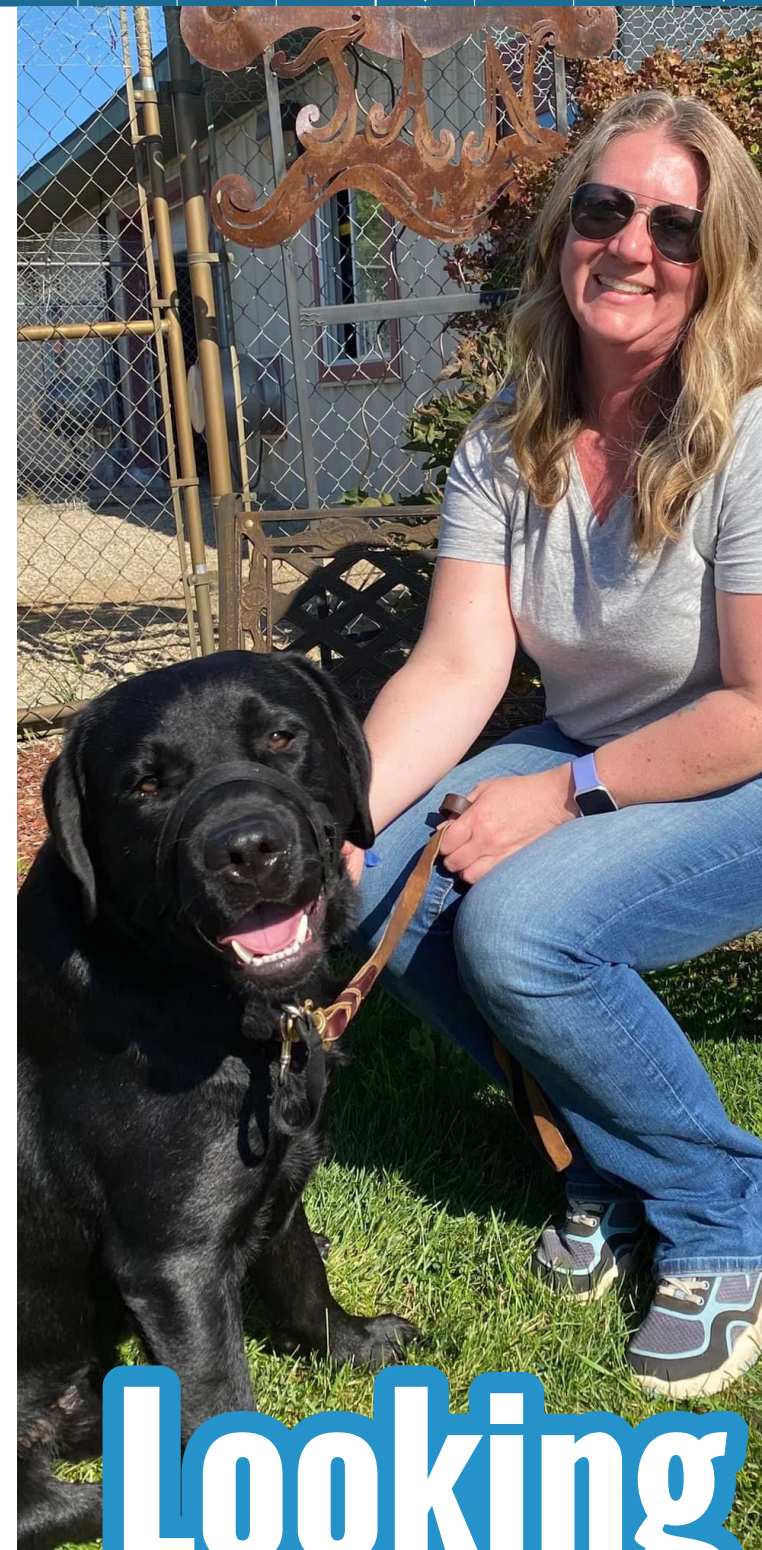
I recently had the opportunity to review some of the results of the Client Survey that PAWS conducted. While I expected there would be meaningful impact, I was blown away to see that our clients overwhelmingly reported positive changes to their lives that they attributed to their partnership with their PAWS assistance dog. I encourage you to see more on this impact on page 5.

As we look ahead, there is excitement around the growth of PAWS. We are focusing on a goal to increase the number of people for which we can enhance their independence and quality of life with a PAWS custom-trained assistance dog. Our annual application period is open now and the need for our dogs will be evident in the over 400 applications we are expecting. We are grateful for the commitments of our donors, volunteers, and staff who will continue to make our mission to serve these prospective clients possible.

As a long-serving part of the PAWS family and caring member of our community, I appreciate your support in helping to build a future for PAWS that continues to grow our mission.

Gratefully,

Sara Osterman
New Board Chair



Looking Ahead

with Board Chair Sara Osterman

Building Community



The PAWS Family has deep ties to MSU. Many of our Clients, volunteers, and staff are proud Spartan alums, and PAWS works closely with the MSU Vet Department on complicated cases.

On February 13, 2023, three people were killed and five others injured in a mass shooting on the Michigan State University campus in Lansing, Michigan.

As word of the incident spread so did the outpouring of love and concern, accompanied by a deep desire to help. With backing of the CEO, Michele Suchovsky, Canine Enrichment Coordinator and recent MSU grad Carrie Payson reached out to a Dean with whom she still had a connection. "Obviously you're trying to be very careful with this email because they're devastated. We sent it and just 20 minutes later they wrote back: 'Yes! When can we arrange a phone call?'"

One week after the shooting, on the day the campus reopened, 17 PAWS Dogs, 21 PAWS Staff, and 9 PAWS vans traveled to MSU. In the lounges of the three largest residential colleges on campus, PAWS set up cushioned floor tiles, pillows, and vases of flowers to give students a calm and serene place to cuddle with PAWS Dogs.

Over the course of the day, hundreds of students flooded through each lounge. They came from

home, classes, and vigils. Some wanted to talk about their day, and how wonderfully their professors and the administration were handling their return. But most just wanted to focus on the dogs.

"We were with the STEM students," says one staff member. "They were fascinated by the PAWS Breeding program, and the way PAWS has largely bred elbow dysplasia out of our dogs. We also joked that two of our PAWS Ambassador Dogs, WINDSOR and CHEWY, are dating, and they wanted to know everything about their romance. Mostly, they just needed some time to be young college students."

"We only have eyes for CHEWY," wrote the Dean of Lyman Briggs College later. "Yesterday hundreds of students enjoyed puppy love in the Holmes Hall West Lounge. We had compassionate and friendly dog handlers from PAWS, and a delightful range of dogs throughout the event. We are really thankful."

PAWS could never have done this without you. Your generosity kept the lines of communication humming, put gas in our tanks for the drive to Lansing, and made sure students and dogs were comfortable through a long day. Thank you for helping PAWS ensure that we can respond when our community needs us most.

Certification Celebration



Vanessa & MITTEN



Patricia & JUDGE



Joseph & LOUIE



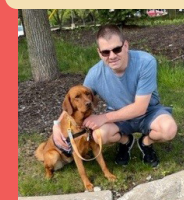
Tammy & BESO



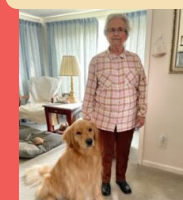
Eileen & COCOA



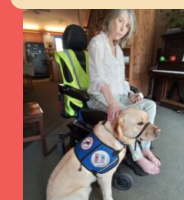
Stephanie & JARVIS



Bryan & MOSA



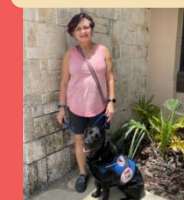
Susan & SAILOR



Lisa & WOODRUFF



Sandra & LOUIS



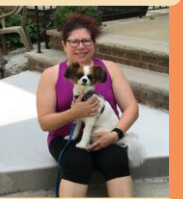
Patricia & OAKLEY

One of the big milestones in any Team's journey is getting their official certification. Each Team works together with their local Field Rep for months, practicing their skills and becoming a perfect working pair. Once they achieve their official Team certification, the whole PAWS Family celebrates! You can follow our monthly Certification Celebrations over on the official PAWS blog at www.pawswithacause.org/blog.

When long-time PAWS Client Alan came to pick up his newest PAWS Dog, TUESDAY, he gave every member of the PAWS staff a handwritten card and a puzzle piece. Alan wanted to express his appreciation for the PAWS Family and the way Clients, volunteers, supporters, and staff all come together to ensure that the people PAWS serves enjoy lives of dignity, companionship, and confidence.



Brielle & PRANCER

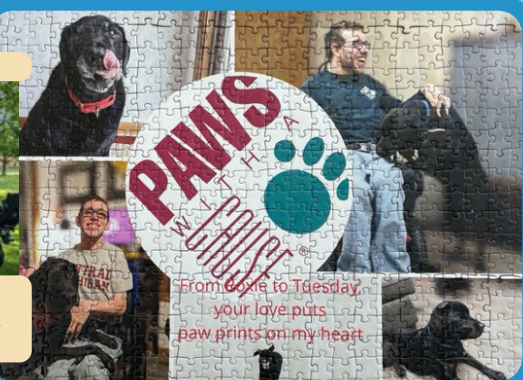


Jennifer & PEANUT

"You are but one piece of a larger puzzle," wrote Alan, "where no one piece is more important than any other. Success requires everyone giving their very best, without you, the picture is incomplete."



Alan & TUESDAY



You Built This!

Confidence. Safety. Independence. Some people might take these for granted. However, many PAWS Clients don't... until they receive their PAWS Dog. We've known for a long time that PAWS Dogs impact lives, but now we know just how much!

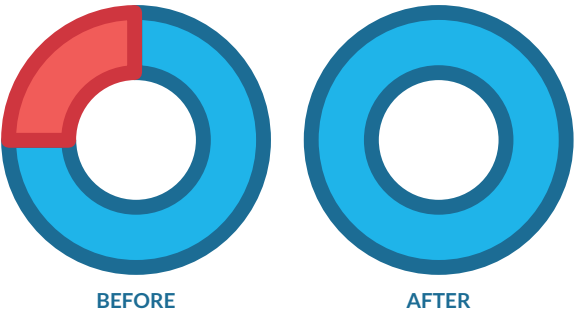
Last summer, a partner organization gave PAWS the money to carry out our very first formal, scientific Client survey. Designed with statisticians from Grand Valley State University, we gathered hard data from as many Clients as possible to measure exactly how having a PAWS Dog in their life impacted them.



Problem Solving Skills

Before getting their PAWS Dog, 24% of Clients reported they were "Dissatisfied" or "Very Dissatisfied" with their problem solving skills. With their PAWS Dog, 100% of Clients report being "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied". Figuring out how to work as a Team translates into so many other areas of life!

● DISSATISFIED OR VERY DISSATISFIED ● SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED



The results absolutely blew us away, and we are so excited to share a few highlights that you helped make happen.

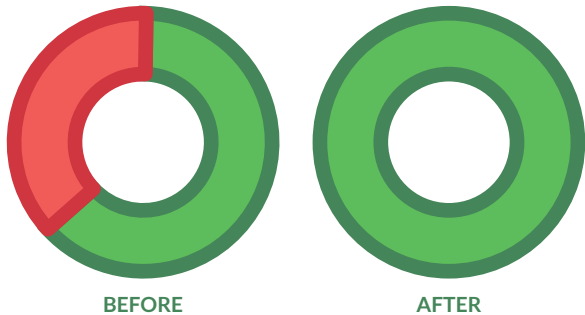
Thank you to the Clients who shared their time and stories, and to every member of the PAWS Family who took PAWS from training one dog for one friend to thousands of changed lives spanning four decades.



Feeling Safe at Home and in My Community

When we asked if Clients felt safe in their home and community, 63% of them said that before they got their PAWS Dog, they were dissatisfied to some degree with their feelings of safety. With their PAWS Dog, they said they feel "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied."

● DISSATISFIED OR VERY DISSATISFIED ● SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED



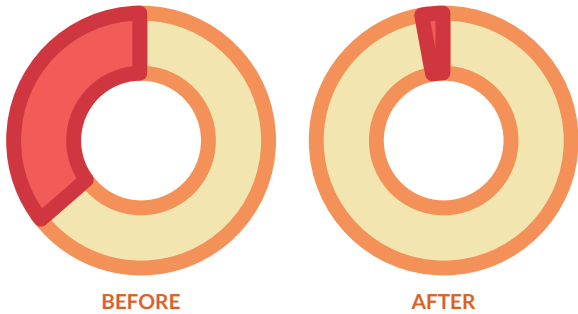
"As a disabled young woman, I never wanted to or thought I'd be able to live by myself. My service dog has given me not only physical independence but the feeling of companionship and safety to be able to thrive on my own. I am so grateful for him every single day. He is my family and my best friend."

"Instead of hiding my disability from the world, my dog helps me with the world seeing my cute dog! I'm no longer afraid to share why I have my PAWS Dog. She saves me while having a seizure. It's great to be able to share that and not hide and worry about that. I live alone so I can live and sleep comfortably knowing my dog will take care of me and make sure I can get help if need be. She knows how to call 911, get my recovery meds and bring the phone to me - all of these can save my Life. Just being in my life she also greatly reduces my stress and calms me down every single day....which means less seizures as well."

Interpersonal Skills

Clients often tell stories about how their PAWS Dog makes them feel more seen and respected as they move through the world. When asked how they felt about their interpersonal skills, ability to cope with difficult situations, and manage positive relationships their satisfaction rose 66% after teaming up with their PAWS Dog!

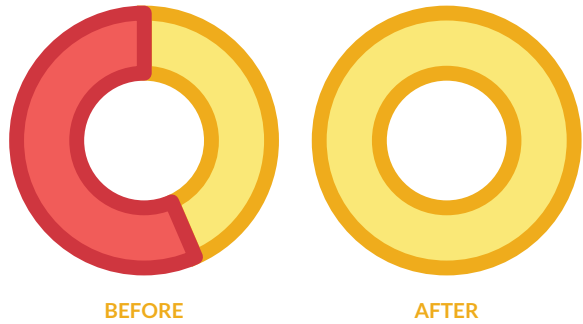
● DISSATISFIED OR VERY DISSATISFIED ● SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED



Satisfaction with Mental Health

Clients reported that their PAWS Dog increased their satisfaction with stress/anxiety coping skills from 47% to 100%. In other words? PAWS Dogs are not only great helping with physical tasks, but also for our Clients' mental health!

● DISSATISFIED OR VERY DISSATISFIED ● SATISFIED OR VERY SATISFIED



"Before I received my PAWS Dog, I was quite the recluse. I've lived in my apartment complex for almost 20 years and have never taken advantage of that lovely park that lies between the four buildings where I live. Now that I have my amazing PAWS service dog, I'm able to enjoy it. I've met so many wonderful dog parents that look out for us and each other; we're a community within a community that sticks together! I've met so many people who I've only seen in passing and it feels really good to be social again."

COBY, the Hero

By Barb,
a PAWS Client

In May of last year, PAWS gave me a lovely hearing aid named COBY. We learned each other's patterns and work well together for the most part. The one thing my PAWS Field Representative and I haven't been able to do is get COBY to "Touch" while walking.



If COBY wants my attention, he simply sits down. The first couple of times, it really got my attention—it nearly planted me on my backside! It's effective, but unexpected.



The first time he prevented me from stepping out in front of a biker I couldn't hear coming. The second was a collision with another person. The next, a shopping cart.



and saw a speeding fire engine turn right where I was about to step! Lights flashed, traffic halted, horns were blaring, and everyone was focused on me.



Two separate vehicles stopped and people ran toward me screaming, "That dog just saved your life!" "He loves you a lot!" "Whoever trained him did a fantastic job!"



Last October, I was out walking and arrived at a busy intersection. COBY sat and waited while I hit the walk button and surveyed traffic. When the walk signal blinked on, I looked around several times and we both moved forward.



Just as I went to enter the street, COBY spun me around, walking backwards and almost pulling me to the ground. I admit, I was starting to become angry when I looked up –



After we caught our breath, COBY and I went to a burger joint, where he got a hamburger patty as a special reward. He thought he was in pure heaven!

As I look back over my time with COBY, it's not the trivial stuff like the doorbell, telephone, or kitchen buzzer where I use his skills. Most of the time, I'm on top of that stuff.

It's the public things that are very high profile where I find myself forever wondering why anyone would question the need for an Assistance Dog. He has given me back to the community, and I interact more than I have in years. My fear of being in public has dropped to zero, and my circle has grown exponentially!

Building Puppy Summer Camp

It takes almost two years for a PAWS Facility Dog to go from a newborn puppy to helping people in places like hospitals and schools where folks are having a tough time and need a friendly, fuzzy face. But what happens during that time?

Starting this year, PAWS added puppy summer camp to the process. PAWS has a great care program for the PAWS Dogs in our kennels, but we wanted to take it to the next level. PAWS recruited dozens of volunteers to grow and expand the program, to make our dogs' lives even better, and set them up for even greater success in their careers.

This initiative is run by Canine Enrichment Coordinator, Carrie Payson. "I have 20 to 25 volunteers here right now," she laughs, "but eventually we could take 100 to 125 more. Our goal is to create opportunities for dogs to have greater exposure to sunlight, fresh air, space, and activities to engage their minds."

The Canine Enrichment area is always hopping. On a typical day you'll see a volunteer working one-on-one with a dog in one play yard, while another will be leading a group on a scent-based enrichment activity in another. In a different yard, a volunteer will be acting as recess monitor or "Pack Manager", helping a pack of adolescent dogs learn to play together safely. Inside, volunteers are giving dogs massages, helping build confidence through agility training, and rolling huge carts of water and food bowls in and out of the canine kitchen.

Volunteer Niki loves it so much she comes in at least three days a week and is a go-to resource for all things feeding, massage, and polite puppy

manners. Niki is blind, and she and PAWS worked together to create a system so that she could feed dogs in their kennels quickly and easily.

"My phone can read things, but if the dogs are barking, I can't hear it. So, we have beads on pipe cleaners: a big bead means one cup of food, a half bead for half a cup. They also have different textures, including one for canned food. It works out great!"



"We wanted volunteering to be available to everybody," says Carrie. "These dogs are going to be working in really diverse environments and they need to know how to be around lots of different people."

If you would like to join PAWS' Canine Enrichment volunteer team, visit the PAWS website at pawswithacause.org/campus-volunteering/.

2023 Financial Statement

REVENUES	2022	2023
Contributions	\$ 1,852,008.00	1,944,924.00
Capital Campaign Contributions	2,435,021.00	3,849,622.00
Events	82,327.00	83,965.00
Direct Placements/Partnerships	141,358.00	296,105.00
Donor Restricted Funds		
General Contributions	4,510,714.00	6,174,616.00
Local United Way Designations	575,695.00	356,272.00
Federal/State Combined Campaigns	53,383.00	46,132.00
Workplace Campaigns	629,078.00	402,404.00
Planned Giving	1,380,533.00	1,157,019.00
Foundation Grants	516,533.00	559,627.00
In-Kind Contributions	68,356.00	190,848.00
Investment/Gain/(Loss) Sale of Stocks	(656,682.00)	467,796.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	72,221.00	71,178.00
Endowment Revenue	16,150.00	236,050.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	(568,311.00)	775,024.00
TOTAL REVENUE	6,536,903.00	9,259,538.00

EXPENSES	2022	2023
Program Expenses	\$ 3,426,078.00	3,426,329.00
Education & Advocacy	11,107.00	
Administration Costs	291,291.00	327,841.00
Fundraising Costs	947,135.00	693,631.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	4,675,611.00	4,447,801.00

CHANGE IN FUND BALANCE \$ 4,811,737.00

ENDING NET ASSETS \$ 13,324,720.00

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

2023 Community Impact

28 Facility Dogs placed directly through PAWS

75 PAWS Dogs in other working placements

37 Newly Certified Teams

36 Newly Placed Teams

198 Puppies Born into the PAWS Family

90 Breeding Host Volunteer Homes

5057 On-Campus Volunteer Service Hours

89 Re-Certified Teams

21 New Mama & Papa Dogs

187 Active Foster Puppy Raiser Volunteer Homes

339 Teams in the Field

[Addressee]
[Organization Name]
[Address Block]
[City], [State] [Zip]

Paws With A Cause
4646 Division
Wayland, MI 49348
pawswithacause.org



Look Inside...
To See What We Built Together In 2023!