

WHO WE ARE: Mobility Service Dogs West Coast Project's (MSD-WCP) mission is to raise dogs for the mobility-disabled community to improve their quality of life through functional independence, giving them confidence and a voice in the community at large.
MOBILITYDOG.ORG



WHAT WE DO: MSD-WCP's vision is for the mobility-impaired community to live full, vibrant lives and achieve functional independence with the assistance of a canine companion. To achieve this outcome, MSD-WCP raises service dogs and offers educational programming for the mobility impaired, schools, the general public, and businesses.

Mobility service dogs are not just furry friends; they are the keystones to functional independence for the mobility disabled community. MSD-WCP values independence, reliability, bond-based puppy rearing, demonstrating empathy, and connecting humans to canines. MSD-WCP raises, trains, and matches standard poodles with mobility-impaired individuals. MSD-WCP's poodles are donated from breeders who prioritize the health and wellbeing of their litters, temperament, working ability, and longevity of their dogs. Poodles are our chosen breed because of their intelligence, strength, and the fact that they are hypoallergenic so they do not negatively impact others.

In addition to training Mobility Service Dogs, MSD-WCP provides training, education, and support to mobility-impaired individuals to assist them in navigating and overcoming the many obstacles that they encounter on a daily basis. MSD-WCP promotes lifestyle changes for the disabled handlers with healthy food, yoga, and modalities to create stronger, healthier humans. MSD-WCP also plays a key role in the community by educating people and businesses to understand the role of a Service Dog. MSD-WCP seeks to create a user-friendly pathway for mobility-impaired individuals by providing them and their communities with new and trusted tools to enable active participation in the world at large.

In the interest of making the disabled population's interface with the community smooth and hassle-free, we offer Education and Outreach Programming in the greater community to educate businesses, schools, and individuals on just what a service dog is and does for its handler, as well as how to interact with Handlers and their Service Dogs in public and private spaces. MSD-WCP's current activities and programming include: Puppy Raising & Service Dog Training Program; Mobility Service Dog Placement Program; Education and Outreach Program for Mobility Impaired Individuals and Community at Large: Service Dog Handler, Community Events, Business, Schools, etc.; and Advocacy. MSD-WCP is affiliated with and partners with trainers, breeders, other service dog organizations and service industry leaders to assess the SDiT performance, with a goal of becoming a leader in the mobility service dog world. MSD-WCP adheres to industry standards and evaluates all canines according to service dog industry guidelines to ensure the best quality of life for the canines.

OUR STORY: Janie Heinrich founded MSD-WCP in 2018. After several failed attempts to secure a mobility service dog when it came time to retire her working dog, Janie began hearing the stories of others who struggled with mobility and struggled to secure a dog. Janie knew what she had to do: start her an organization to train Mobility Service Dogs and support the Mobility Disabled Community, making their worlds user-friendly and FUNCTIONALLY independent. Janie's vision is to raise dogs for aging populations and others in need. Janie knows what she's talking about: she has trained three Mobility Service Dogs with a Service Dog Trainer and is successfully cheering on all of our Service Dogs in Training (SDiT) and Service Dogs (SD) as well as their handlers.

In the spring of 2010, a crate fell on Janie, changing her life forever. Suffering severe trauma to the nerves at the base of her spinal cord, left hip bursa, and left rotator cuff in 2010, Janie was told by her medical teams that she would use a wheelchair the rest of her life. This was not an acceptable solution for Janie. She refused to believe her life was destined to be bound to a chair. With the help of Occupational Therapy, Janie learned how to walk with arm crutches and with the aid of her Mobility Assistance Service Dog, Phoebe. Fast forward to 2017: due to Phoebe's age, it was time to retire her and for Janie to look for a new Mobility Assistance Service Dog. In trying to find a new service dog for herself, Janie learned that just two other mobility organizations, combined, receive an average of 220 applications a month. About 82% of those who apply are eligible, but only 5% receive a Mobility Service Dog.

WHO WE HELP: MSD-WCP effectively serves all people through education, advocacy, and raising mobility service dogs. Focusing on assisting individuals with mobility disabilities, MSD-WCP does not discriminate based upon background, race, ethnicity, gender or any other factor. MSD-WCP reviews all applications equally and supplies dogs based upon availability and need. MSD-WCP supports dog users, including those suffering from mobility issues like spinal cord injuries and POTS; Invisible Disabilities like Fibromyalgia, Multiple Sclerosis, and Parkinson's; and Physical Disabilities like Bone and Skeletal disorders. Through education and outreach programming, MSD-WCP reaches out to the general public, people of all backgrounds with no discrimination to ethnicity, race, gender, or age. Our puppy raisers are diverse in age, ethnicity, and background and have a common goal of raising the strongest, most intelligent, prepared canines for the mobility disabled community. Our puppy raisers are located in the western states, but the opportunity is available to all people nationwide.

NEED STATEMENT: In recent years, the numbers of people using service dogs and the number of services that dogs provide has rapidly expanded. The likelihood of coming in contact with a working service dog is growing, yet the general public has little appreciation of these wonderful animals, their jobs, or how to interact with the people who are partnering with such canines. The demands for more dogs trained to help people with mobility disabilities continues to grow, with organizations receiving far more applications than service dogs available to match. Mobility Service Dogs West Coast Project steps up to the task of education, assisting, and empowering FUNctional independence.

Mobility service dogs can be taught to do a multitude of tasks including catch and break the falling handler, counterbalance for walking (balance/walking harness), retrieve dropped items such as keys, retrieve a phone or any item needed to make life easier, help with transitioning from sitting to standing and from bed to wheelchair, etc., carry items in a specialty harness backpack, open doors in the home and in public, press buttons for elevators and doors, grocery shop (off shelves or fruit stand into bag, etc.), pull the door open and remove clothes from the dryer, support for standing to floor and floor to standing, to name a few. Based on recent surveys, ONLY 19% of the general public understands the tasks that a service dog performs, and an overwhelming number believe that service dogs are just pets that an owner wants to take with them everywhere.

OUR CHALLENGE: It is estimated that nationwide more than 70% of individuals who need a service dog cannot afford one. The journey from puppy to Mobility Service Dog in Training (SDiT) to Mobility Service Dog (SD) is an investment of approximately \$22,500 and can take up to two years, depending on the dog. Puppies are with their raisers for 6-9 months before they are matched with their disabled handler. MSD-WCP provides all the food, veterinarian visits, tools, equipment, and training while the puppies are with their raisers. Once the dog is transitioned to its handler, MSD-WCP provides 50% of all the handler's service dog training and follow up training for the Service Dog Team. We find that by investing the handlers become involved at a more intimate level. We cannot do this important work alone! We rely heavily on individual donations, corporate sponsorships, and partnerships, and as we grow, we will reach out to foundations for support. Because we are a fully volunteer organization, 100% of donations go directly towards puppy raising, training, and placing a mobility-assistant service dog with a mobility-impaired individual. These donations make a huge difference in the lives of our dogs and humans and make our work possible.

OUR DOGS, THE HEARTBEAT OF MSD-WCP: Since January 2018, MSD-WCP has placed 12 Service Dogs. These canine/human teams are thriving, growing, and learning daily as they navigate medical appointments, daily life, and the world at large. **Beckett** was the first SD placed by MSD-WCP in January of 2018 to assist our founder with counterbalance, bracing and soft retrieval work. **Sir Baldwin's** puppy raising and training took him from Arizona to Washington and back to San Diego to meet his forever handler who is wheelchair-bound. **Arthur** was raised by a team in Arizona and placed in California where he assists his handler with balance and bracing work. SD **Lynx** is with a family assisting the grandmother and child in balance work to keep them active and functionally independent. SD **Frankie** has learned medical alert and is growing into his Balance, Catch, and brace work. SD **Bombay** has allowed his handler to continue working and being independent! **Hampton** is in allowing handler to live all of life again working on balance work and medical alert. **Edison** is working hard mastering basics and is in the middle of his Medical Alert Training Online. Edison is alerting his handler 80% of the time and will soon be ready to start doing counterbalance work. SD **Tango** is preparing for balance, bracing, and medical alert work for his handler. **Carmine** is working successfully with her SD Handler on PTSD alert and Balance work. Ollie, was placed in March 2018 and is working on balance work, medical alert, and bracing. **Gifford**, being trained to work with a young girl wheelchair bond with spinal bifida. Letters of gratitude for our work as we raise awareness and educate. 6 new puppies ready to begin their training!

MOBILITY SERVICE DOGS-WEST COAST PROJECT TESTIMONIALS

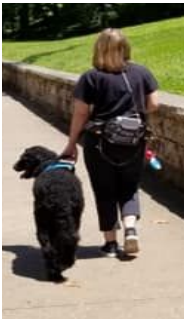


"Tango is almost 10 months old now, and I have had him for 3 months. He came to me from the Mobility Service Dogs West Coast Project. I started out as a puppy raiser with basic skills and knowledge of having dogs. MSD-WCP has provided me with all the support and tools to raise Tango. I have my own disabilities of degenerative spine disease and multiple sclerosis. When I received Tango, I was only a few months out of major spine surgeries and healing. I went from wheelchair to walker then a cane, and now I have Tango as a service dog. Tango started



responding to me quickly, and, for such a young age pup, I was surprised. Tango is sensitive to my balance and walks on the side where I feel "off". He responds to my MS flares and literally gets me up and takes me to the kitchen when I need to eat after medicine. If my body temp is hot, he takes off my socks. He gets me out and about, and, if I ever feel anxious, he leans into me to comfort me. Tango likes to help whenever he can and tries to carry things for me. He has helped build back my muscle strength just by playing with me. We are still growing and learning together. Many thanks to the team of MSD-WCP for the support and guidance in raising a service dog."

Darlene Melvin, May 15, 2019



"For the past few years, I have been limited by my mobility, and unable to live a full and functional life. Although Hampton and I have only been together for a few short weeks, he has already learned to notify me when something is not "right" with my body. We are learning to walk together as one unit, which not only amazes me but gives me such hope and a newfound determination. I look forward to continuing our training and the many adventures I know we will have! To be able to leave my home without the worry of falling is a gift that I can't thank MSD-WCP enough for! I feel so fortunate and so very blessed!"

Danielle Huskey, age 50, Chronic Illnesses. May 15, 2019



"Phoebe has become an extension of me, making it possible to be functionally independent. She assisted me in carrying everything, even while I was in my wheelchair. She balanced me, carried my purse, and created a gentle fall when I began walking with arm-crutches. As my body changed, creating new difficulties and new challenges, Phoebe evolved with me; because we were a Mobility Team, I could continue moving forward with aplomb. Phoebe is retiring at age 11, and Beckett is training up to be my next Mobility Service Dog. He is bigger and will allow me to continue my big, beautiful life with his harness and brilliance. I would be stuck in a wheelchair for life without my Phoebe and Beckett. I am deeply grateful for their energy and love, allowing me to continue vibrant living. They make everything possible, giving me options while extending my day in my wheelchair or walking with supportive tools."

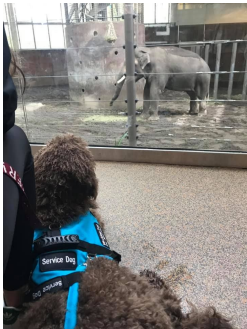
Janie Heinrich, 61, Spinal Cord Injury, February 2019



“Mobility Service Dog-West Coast Project came into my life during a very hard time. My first service dog unexpectedly retired, and I was a new mom. I found them by chance when they were building up their name, and I am forever grateful for that chance. The founders worked hard with me personally to help me figure out exactly what I need. I opted to train alongside my dog from the start to help build a bond and have done so with their encouragement and guidance! I trained my first service dog from puppyhood and found it an extremely rewarding process that resulted in an unbreakable bond. No matter the size of the bump in the road we encounter, they have trainers on standby for advice and support, and the board is constantly keeping in touch so never once have I felt like I am doing this on my own. It’s truly been a community experience, even amongst the other teams through their organization. Frankie, my mobility Service Dog in training, is my pride and joy. He has brought to me more independence than I have ever experienced, not only through the tasks he has been trained

to do, but also in bringing me confidence, knowing that he can aid me if I suddenly am in need of assistance while out in public. Nobody believes that he is still in training with how incredible his behavior and demeanor is, and that’s not something I could have done on my own! I am not sure if I will ever find a way to thank them for all the love and support I’ve received from this amazing organization. Not only am I left with an amazing assistance animal, but I also now have lifelong, family-like support!”

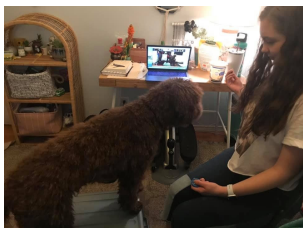
Jae Hemingway, 26, Spinal Cord Injury, March 2019



“Edison may not be ready to physically support our daughter yet, but the emotional support he provides is priceless. This fall, my daughter’s Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia symptoms have become more severe, causing a lot of anxiety for all of us, but in the midst of all of it, this brilliant puppy provided by Mobility Service Dogs West Coast Project is giving her more than we ever imagined. We knew that one day he would be able to support her on her dizzy days and help her to walk, but we didn’t realize how much joy he would bring on the way there. Edison provides unending entertainment mixed with a lot of hope. Edison is all puppy when his vest is off, stealing things he shouldn’t, teasing our other dogs, and getting into all kinds of misadventures. When his vest is on though, he is a steadfast and calm companion. He navigates challenging situations with ease, strolling down hospital hallways and sitting through meetings. We knew training him would be a lot of work, but it’s also a lot of fun. He excels at training, and my daughter can train him from her bed if she can’t get out of it, giving her purpose on

days she feels useless. He gives her a new outlet of opportunity to spread awareness of her illness. He also makes something invisible to many, visible, which gives us a better sense of safety for her. He brings a smile to everyone’s face when they see him, which makes my daughter very happy. Of course, he is also a silly puppy. Recently, she said he makes her laugh to the point of tears every day. Edison may not be ready to give our daughter independence yet, but he has given us all a lot of light, laughter, and hope. We are forever grateful to Mobility Service Dogs - West Coast Project.”

Heather Hellman, mother, and co-raiser of SDiT Team & Edison, November 27, 2018

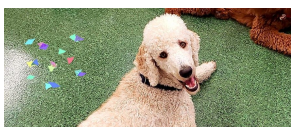


“Last night Edison was off vest at youth group, getting some love from friends when Tabitha got up and started walking toward another room. He barked once, she kept going, he barked again, she kept going, so he got up and went after her. She ignored him, stayed standing and passed out. He has not been trained to bark at her, and we have only been able to do minimal scent training for medical alert because she has been constantly symptomatic recently, but he did it and everyone in the room knew that’s what he was trying to do. Once we knew she was ok, she got a collective -“Edison told you so”- from the group, and he got a big celebration. He is

brilliant!”

Heather Hellman, mother of SDiT Team Tabitha & Edison, May 14, 2019

“I was blessed in meeting Janie Heinrich about a year ago on what became a rescue mission of poodles. I had gone to California to pick up a poodle who was being released from the breeder’s care and was to bring some “puppies” back to



Washington State and to their puppy handlers. As it turns out, the puppies were actually full grown dogs and were definitely feral. Our group ended up taking all the dogs we could from the situation and Janie (MSD-WCP) helped in placing the adults (two of which I have). This organization is incredible: knowledgeable and caring. I have since had an opportunity to foster one of their dogs, preparing him for his final human in need. Problems that I thought insurmountable at my end were handled quickly and thoroughly with positive results at the organization's end and Baldwin was placed with a young man who had been paralyzed from the waist down and is now in a wheelchair. I truly can't give enough praise to MSD-WCP and the work they do to improve mobility in people's lives. I am thankful to be part of this team."

Deborah Stevens, Volunteer with Mobility Service Dogs West Coast Project, 10/2018



"My name is Anna and I am a service dog trainer. I had the pleasure of training and preparing Baldwin to be a service dog for Alex, a recent paraplegic. We are currently working on Baldwin's transition to Alex and his new life. Baldwin is an amazing retrieval expert. He is currently helping Alex pick up things that fall, since Alex doesn't have use of his legs. Because of Baldwin, Alex has his independence. Alex has told me that he now has a reason to wake up in the morning and someone to keep him company. He now has independence. Our journey will continue, so Alex and Baldwin stay strong together. The job I do makes me feel good, knowing that I can help someone gain independence by training a dog to do tasks a human needs."

Anna Gilnets, SD Trainer for MSD-WCP, May 2019.

"I met Arthur on a warm December night, when his local trainer brought him over. Like an Angel with wings, descending the heavens in a Jan Van Eyck masterpiece, Arthur entered my life, my soul, my entire reason for being. His big, beautiful, brown eyes looked into my sad eyes and knew immediately what he had to do: become my shadow, even when the sun is not shining. There was no grace period. No checking each other out. It was instantaneous, as was the joy he brought to me and all that surrounds me. I've raised so many dogs, I can't count them all. I was four or five when I got my first puppy, a Collie: of course it was the 1950s. Never have I ever met a K9 like Arthur. The bond that formed between us, is almost frightening. On first encounter, people could not believe we had been together a matter of days, nor could I. He goes everywhere with me. Ubers, cabs, buses, he's cool with everything, and pandemonium where ever we go. He loves people of all ages, especially children. Did I teach him this? No. I haven't taught him a thing, except maybe his name. This is how he showed up that warm December evening six months ago. He has never left my side, back, front, or my heart. Undoubtedly, he is my forever friend. He is a life-changer and has made all the difference in my life and the lives of everyone he meets. What would I have done without Arthur?"

His beloved friend, caretaker, soulmate, Elliot Lincis, SD Handler of the Elliot & Arthur SD Team, April 2019

