



2023



**ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT**



# MISSION

We transform lives by partnering people with custom-trained assistance dogs.

# VISION

We envision a world where individuals have the freedom to live their lives to the fullest with a custom-trained assistance dog by their side.

# A Message

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude for your support this last year. Undeniably, 2023 was the most impactful year in the history of Freedom Service Dogs, and we are proud of the accomplishments we reached as a community.

In 2023, we saw the results of our abundant dedication come to fruition. We are delighted to share that we placed a record-breaking number of assistance dogs with veterans, adults, children and teens, and licensed mental health professionals. Successfully placing 32 assistance dogs, two professional therapy dogs, and five skilled companion dogs, we saw a remarkable 30% increase in client-team placements from the previous year. These accomplishments speak volumes about the dedication of our staff and volunteers and generous support of our donors and partners.

With the intention of expanding our reach and deepening the impact we make in the lives of people who have served their country and communities, we introduced new programming with the addition of FSD Skilled Companion Dogs. Intelligent and friendly pups, FSD Skilled Companions are placed with veterans, first responders, active-duty military members and their families, and Gold Star families to provide comfort and loving companionship in the home. In just a few months, we placed five FSD Skilled Companions with heroes, and we eagerly anticipate placing many more assistance dogs, professional therapy dogs, and skilled companion dogs in the years ahead.

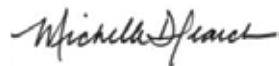
## FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT & CEO

Furthermore, we made strategic investments in our infrastructure and staff to fortify our organization's capacity for growth and efficiency. These investments have strengthened our organization, enabling us to better serve our community and continue advancing toward our shared vision.

At FSD, our efforts are rooted in the belief that small, everyday actions create profound change. In the simple joy of a wagging tail, the smiles shared with friends, and the love in a dog's eyes, we can make a big difference in people's lives. Together, we are everyday game changers, transforming lives one dog, one human, and one small act at a time.

As we look to the future, we are filled with hope and optimism knowing that we have an ever-growing community of compassionate supporters standing by us. To everyone who has supported our efforts, we extend our deepest gratitude and invite you to help us continue leaving paw prints on the hearts of hundreds. Your support and kindness makes all our actions—the big and the small—possible.

With gratitude,



Michelle Search  
FSD Board Chair



Chris Nelson  
FSD President & CEO



**BOARD CHAIR MICHELLE SEARCH WITH YAHTZEE  
AND PRESIDENT & CEO CHRIS NELSON WITH BOGGLE**

# 2023 IMPACT

# 39 DOGS

PURPOSEFULLY PLACED WHERE THEY CAN HAVE THE MOST IMPACT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES



DIANNE & FSD  
PROFESSIONAL  
THERAPY DOG  
REBEL

# 2

**FSD PROFESSIONAL  
THERAPY DOGS**  
PLACED WITH MENTAL  
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS  
AND FIRST RESPONDERS

# 32

**FSD  
SERVICE  
DOGS**  
PLACED WITH:



# 11 PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY CHALLENGES



# 13 VETERANS



# 8

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS  
WITH NEURODEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES**

# 5

**FSD SKILLED  
COMPANION  
DOGS**

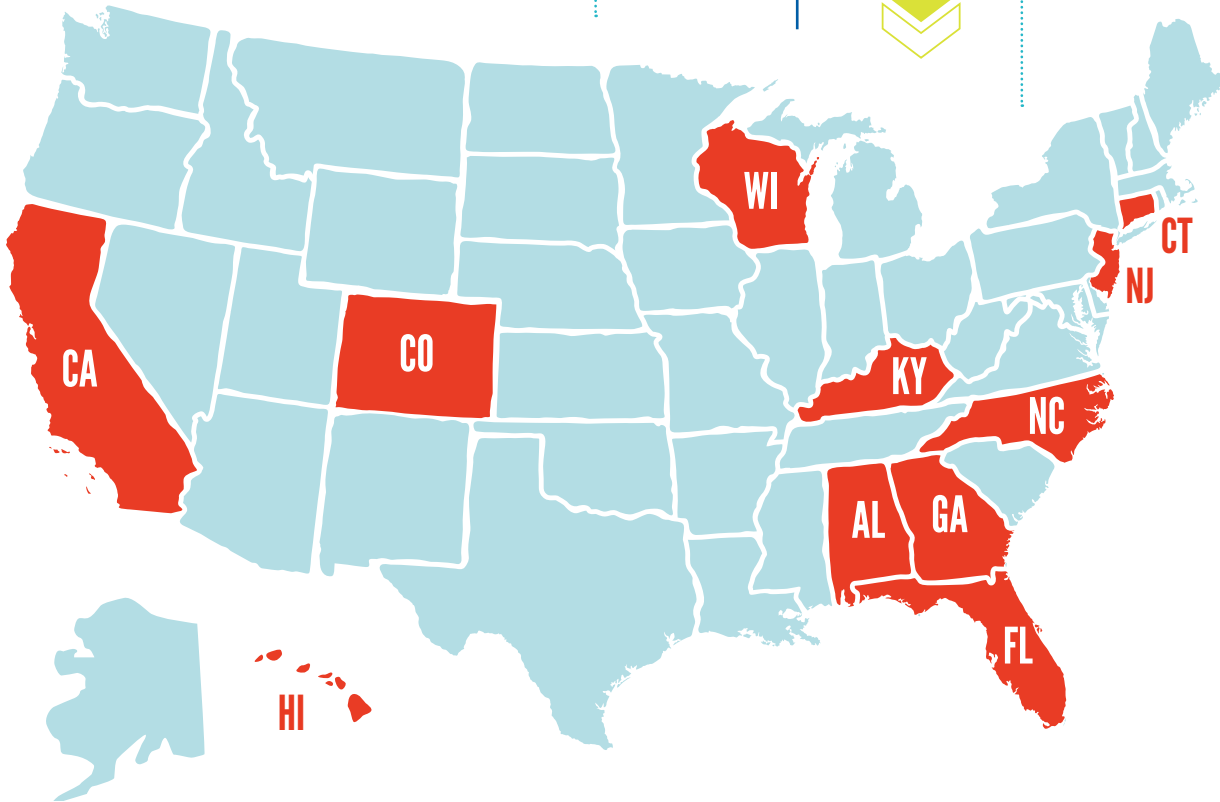
PLACED WITH  
VETERANS AND  
FIRST RESPONDERS





# 2023 Graduates

CAME FROM



COST TO CUSTOM TRAIN  
ONE SERVICE DOG:

\$30,000 to \$50,000

\$0

Amount FSD clients pay for a custom-trained service dog





**LIFETIME  
SUPPORT**



CLIENTS  
*received*  
**7**  
SUCCESSOR DOGS  
AFTER THEIR  
DOGS  
RETIRED

U.S. ARMY VETERAN  
KARI WITH FSD  
SERVICE DOGS  
ELMER & MATCHA



**134**

ACTIVE TEAMS  
WERE ELIGIBLE FOR

**LIFETIME  
Support  
SERVICES**

U.S. ARMY VETERAN  
CHARLES & FSD  
SERVICE DOG GOBI



**70** *clients*  
**RECEIVED**  
ONE-ON-ONE  
**TRAINING  
SUPPORT**

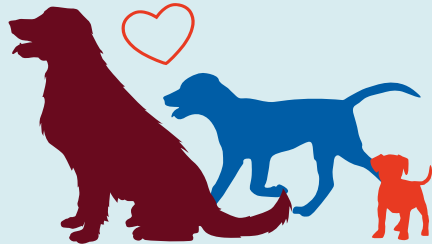
ZACH & FSD  
SERVICE DOG  
KATANA

# 365

VOLUNTEERS PROVIDED EXCEPTIONAL CARE, TRAINING, AND

*Love to*

262 PUPPIES AND DOGS



# 140

VOLUNTEER PUPPY RAISERS

*helped*

141 PUPS REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL



TRILLIONS OF

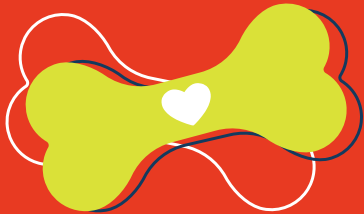
*tail wags and puppy kisses!*

# 113

NEW SERVICE DOG

*recruits*

BORN AT FSD ENTERED OUR PROGRAM



MILLIONS OF TREATS, SNUGGLES, AND WORDS OF PRAISE!



FREEDOMSERVICE DOGS.org



KRISTIN &  
FSD SERVICE  
DOG BOOGIE

# OUR DOGS MAKE A DIFFERENCE



## RAISING HOPE AND UNLEASHING INDEPENDENCE

In December 2017, Kristin suffered from multiple broken bones and a diffuse axonal brain injury after she and her beloved dog were struck by a car on a routine jog. After awakening from a two-week coma, Kristin began the long journey of rehabilitation, including re-learning how to walk. Struggling with emotional difficulties, anxiety, and short-term memory loss, she was also grappling with the loss of her beloved golden retriever, who tragically didn't survive the accident.

During her recovery, Kristin became acquainted with the hospital's therapy dogs, and experiencing firsthand the amazing power of dogs, decided to pursue an FSD Service Dog to assist her on a daily basis. While Kristin waited to be matched with her new furry companion, she and her family decided to become volunteer puppy raisers for FSD. Paired with puppy with a purpose Pele, Kristin and her husband discovered all the amazing ways service dogs can learn to assist their human partners.

In summer of 2023, Kristin was matched with Freedom Service Dog Boogie. Trained to perform a variety of tasks to assist Kristin, Boogie quickly proved that she was more than an assistance dog—she was a true friend. With Boogie by her side, Kristin discovered a renewed sense of hope and independence. She shares, "I don't know if people fully recognize how much these dogs change our lives and how we are impacted by all the people involved in training the dogs, including the puppy raisers."

Not long after taking Boogie home, Kristin received the exciting news that the first puppy she and her family raised, Pele, had been partnered with two children with neurodevelopmental disabilities. Kristin reflects, "We know that we're doing something that someone else did for me, and it's huge. Pele is going to change their lives, and we had a part in that. It makes us feel good knowing we're making a difference."

Kristin's family has since raised three FSD puppies with a purpose, all of whom are making a lasting difference. Shared Kristin,

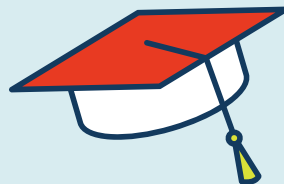
*"We're giving back to FSD, but we're also getting so much in return. We know our puppies are going to change someone's life because Boogie has changed ours. We love raising, and we don't plan on stopping."*

## THOMAS & VALOR

Thomas is a U.S. Navy veteran with a career spanning over two decades. His faithful—and aptly named—FSD Service Dog Valor is a constant source of support, aiding him with his PTSD, mobility issues, and hearing challenges. Valor is trained to retrieve items, create space in crowded environments, and nudge Thomas to bring him back to the present moment.



*“Having Valor is far beyond just having a well-trained dog. He’s a package deal. Yes, I have a service dog that is my battle buddy, but I also have someone who depends on me and vice versa. He also reminds me of where I’ve been and encourages me to help others.”*



**TO MEET ALL OF OUR 2023 GRADUATES,**  
scan this QR code or visit [freedom servicedogs.org/news](https://freedom servicedogs.org/news).

# Thank you FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN 2023!



## \$100,000+

Anonymous  
Dr. Marty Pets  
The Harold Lee Charitable Foundation  
Gilda Kaplan  
Phoebe Jacobs Estate  
Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

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

Anonymous  
Connie Ann King Trust  
The Daniel C. Ryan Trust  
The D. Lane & Anwyl Bates Foundation  
The Little Pub Companies  
Mary K. Wick Trust  
PDC Energy  
Quick-Tag  
Scaife Family Foundation  
Sturgeon Electric  
The William H. Donner Foundation

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

Abdon Guizar Memorial Charitable Fund  
AnnieMac Home Mortgage in partnership with the Panebianco Family Foundation  
Dotty Bracken  
The Dixie Foundation, Inc.  
Christine Duca  
Reece Duca  
The Estate of Carol Lee Condit  
Eugene C. and Florence Armstrong Family Foundation, Inc  
The Gary and Leslie Howard Family Foundation  
Mark Gengozian and Lori Lemmen  
IADC Denver Chapter

IE Electric  
Ken W. Davis Foundation  
Liberty Energy  
The McCune Family Foundation  
The Moreno Family Foundation  
Joan Ouderkirk  
The Solich Fund





## ANGELA & MELODY

*“Melody has become a part of me that I thought I had lost. She has physically and mentally made life achievable, positive, and enjoyable for me. FSD has given me a new lease on life. Even with my disability, Melody has made it worth getting up each morning. Melody has completely changed how I see and do my everyday life. She has made it possible for me to enjoy life as I used to. She has given me joy, peace, and lots of love and help.”*

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

- Anonymous
- Anschutz Family Foundation
- Autodesk Foundation
- Blueprint Skilled Services
- Bochnowski Family Foundation
- Daren Carr
- Community First Foundation
- Community Health Charities
- Core Laboratories
- Kristen and Rob Deevy
- Donald and Elida Derebey
- Marilynn Ducker
- EC Data Systems
- EOG Resources Inc
- The Estate of Howard F. Prass
- FESCO, Ltd.
- Dean and Margo Fiala
- Art and Gwen Flaming
- George and Sarah Buchanan Foundation
- Gray Family
- The Gwynne Romig Charitable Remainder Trust
- Matt and Stacey Hicks
- Hilltop Securities
- Joseph Jagers
- Joe and Van Mabee Foundation
- Joseph M. Smith Charitable Trust
- Barbara Kellogg
- The Lewis J. and Clelia M. Serventi Family Foundation

- Richard and Pat List
- The Marilyn Lichtman Foundation
- Mario Barbieri Charitable Foundation
- Mill River Fund
- Denise Moore
- Helen Nugent
- Devra and Michael Ochs
- Partners 1st Federal Credit Union
- Phelan Family Foundation, Inc.
- Rockwater Energy Solutions
- Schlumberger
- John Schultz
- Gabrielle Scott
- Marcia Shuwarger
- Slawson Exploration Company, Inc.
- Tappan Easton Foundation
- Karen Trott
- Viasat
- Virginia W. Hill Foundation
- Wellworx Energy Solutions
- Noel and Erika Wickwar
- Barbra Wilson
- Joe Wockner
- Diane Writer
- Christopher Zacher



# FOREVER FREEDOM LEGACY SOCIETY



The Forever Freedom Legacy Society honors our friends who have invested in the future of Freedom Service Dogs by making an estate gift to FSD.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT MAJOR GIFTS & PLANNED GIVING OFFICER SHANDA GRIEBEL AT 303-922-6231 X240 OR [SGRIEBEL@FREEDOMSERVICEDOGS.ORG](mailto:SGRIEBEL@FREEDOMSERVICEDOGS.ORG).**

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Stephen and Caressa Baker  
Roberta Barrett  
Carol Boersma  
Brenda Brock  
Jeff Brothers  
Mike & Charlene Bugh  
Colin V.G. Campbell  
Patrick J. & Harlene L. Cavanaugh  
Denise and Gary Daniell  
Christine Day  
Kristen and Rob Deevy  
Scott Erickson  
Dean and Margo Fiala  
Eva Field  
Blake Finley  
Janis Fox  
Pamela Gelband  
Paul and Deanna Geldens  
Phyllis Gibula

Eddie and Bobbin Holtvluwer  
Gene and Donna Jensen  
Gilda and Werner Kaplan  
Cathy and Don Kennedy  
Lani and Michael Kessler  
Sara King  
Lauri Knox  
Arnold and Marcia Krause  
Little Dolores Ranch  
Richard and Mae Livesey  
Deborah MacNair  
Glenna McKelvy  
Nancy Miller  
Michelle Nicholas  
Roger and Gloria Olson  
Carol Peterson  
Janice Phillips  
Margaret and Jim Piccinelli  
Michael Piccinini

Ralene Reynolds  
Donald Richard Rigling  
Pamela Rogers  
Joanne Schultz  
Gabrielle Scott  
Michelle Search  
Emma Smith  
Janet Soderstrom  
Patricia Spayne  
Mary Lynn Sprowles  
& Wayne Harbick  
Harold and Cathy Stearne  
Susan Surman  
Bruce and Patricia Thoms  
Margaret Turner  
Kathy Welsh  
Cheryl Willenborg



## NATHANIEL, MICHAELA, & PELE

Nathaniel and Michaela are siblings living with a rare genetic disorder known as CDG. Along with other neurodevelopmental disabilities, complications from this disorder also affect their mobility, vision, and speech. In addition to providing physical assistance, such as picking up dropped items and opening doors, FSD Service Dog Pele also helps Nathaniel and Michaela by building their confidence, interrupting anxious behaviors, and providing support in challenging times.

*“Pele has allowed both Nathaniel and Michaela to try new skills and gain more independence. Most of all, she is a constant companion, a true friend who loves unconditionally, and a dog who loves both her job and her kids.”*





# Community Partners: CHANGING THE GAME

BEYOND THE ICE RINK, THE COLORADO AVALANCHE AND KROENKE SPORTS CHARITIES HAVE BEEN AMAZING CHAMPIONS OF THE MISSION OF FREEDOM SERVICE DOGS. THEIR SUPPORT HAS MADE A MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE FOR FSD, EXEMPLIFYING THE PROFOUND IMPACT OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS.

## DEVON TOEWS RALLIED FOR FSD

In June, Colorado Avalanche defenseman and 2022 Stanley Cup champion, Devon Toews, selected Freedom Service Dogs as the beneficiary of a highly successful Alltroo sweepstakes activated by NHL King Clancy nominees. Rallying the enthusiastic support of nearly 800 supporters within just four weeks, Toew's initiative garnered a record-breaking amount (more than \$19,000), surpassing other NHL participants and setting a new standard for community support.



## VETERAN & FSD SERVICE DOG HONORED ON THE ICE DURING MILITARY APPRECIATION NIGHT

In December, U.S. Marine Corps veteran Yve and her FSD Service Dog Cruz were honored on the ice during the Colorado Avalanche's annual Military Appreciation Night. Confidently walking down the red carpet to center ice, the pair stole the hearts of nearly 18,000 excited hockey fans at Ball Arena in Denver. After weeks of practice, Cruz flawlessly executed the ceremonial puck drop as the crowd roared with applause. Devon Toews even signed a jersey for Yve to commemorate the special occasion.

## HOCKEY PUPS WITH A PURPOSE NAMED AFTER COLORADO AVALANCHE PLAYERS

Devon Toews was given the unique opportunity of naming an entire litter of future Freedom Service Dogs superstars! Born in October 2023 and inspired by the nicknames of his fellow teammates, Toews named his favorite puppies with a purpose: Bo (Bowen Byram), Cale (Cale Makar), Cogs (Andrew Cogliano), Landy (Gabriel Landeskog), Lehky (Artturi Lehkonen), Mikko (Mikko Rantanen), Slash (Logan O'Connor), and Tazer (Devon Toews). These hockey pups are currently living with volunteer puppy raisers who are guiding them on the path that will hopefully lead to them becoming life-changing assistance dogs.



**FOLLOW FSD ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, AND TIKTOK FOR MORE PUPDATES ON OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COLORADO AVALANCHE AND KROENKE SPORTS CHARITIES. GO AVS, GO!**





## KYLE & MERENGUE

U.S. Army veteran Kyle is a loving father, husband, and dog dad who enjoys archery and spending time with his family. His sweet and devoted FSD Service Dog Merengue helps Kyle with his symptoms of PTSD and TBI by creating space in public, retrieving items, and providing comfort in times of need.

*“Merengue has definitely impacted me for the better! I look back to where I was and wonder how I functioned without him. He is really present and helps keep me grounded and calm. He knows me and helps me when I’m struggling. He’s really changed my attitude and lookout on things, and that’s been the biggest difference. He’s amazing!”*

# WE RELY ON THE *generosity of* OUR SUPPORTERS

**AROUND THE COUNTRY TO SUSTAIN OUR MISSION AND ARE COMMITTED TO BEING RESPONSIBLE STEWARDS OF OUR FINANCIAL ASSETS.**



**\$.82**

OF EVERY DOLLAR PROVIDES SERVICE DOG CARE AND TRAINING, AND CLIENT EDUCATION AND SUPPORT



**\$.18**

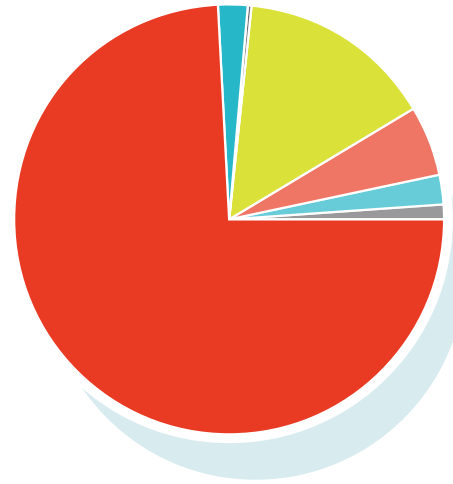
OF EVERY DOLLAR GOES TOWARD FUNDRAISING AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES



# REVENUE

74.4%	Contributions & Grants	\$4,187,993
2.2%	Government Grants	\$125,830
0.1%	In-Kind Donated Contributions	\$4,910
14.7%	Fundraising Events	\$827,187
5.3%	Investment Return	\$297,786
2.4%	Interest & Dividend Income	\$133,745
0.9%	Adoption Fees & Other Income	\$49,740

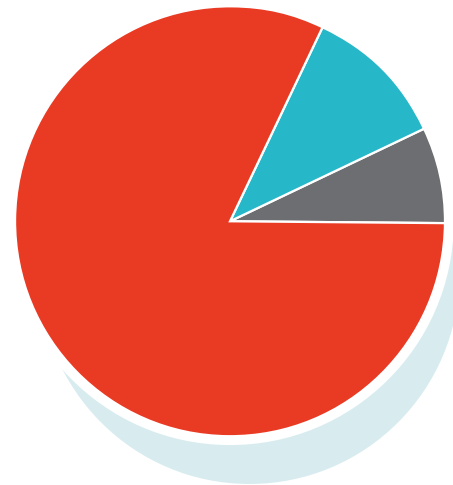
**TOTAL \$5,627,191**



# EXPENSES

82%	Program Expenses	\$5,725,799
»»	Dog Training, Dog Care, & Client Services	\$4,364,357
»»	Public Education & Other	\$1,361,442
11%	Fundraising Expenses	\$782,714
7%	Administrative Expenses	\$452,843

**TOTAL \$6,961,356**



# LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

**Total Assets**  
\$12,655,062

**Total Liabilities**  
\$436,771

**Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions** \$11,608,794

- Undesignated \$1,036,134
- Investment in Property/Equipment \$5,823,729
- Board Designated

»» Operating Reserve \$2,650,000

»» Endowment \$2,098,931

**Net Assets With Donor Restrictions** \$609,497

**TOTAL NET ASSETS:**  
**\$12,218,291**



## LEO & SPROUT

U.S. Army veteran Leo served in the Criminal Investigation Division and provided security for Vice President Dick Cheney. His journey continues with the support of his second FSD Service Dog Sprout who helps him navigate life with PTSD, as well as knee and shoulder challenges. Sprout has been trained to assist Leo by creating space in crowds, nudging him to bring him back into the present moment, and retrieving items, enabling him to lead a more independent life. After retiring from the Army, Leo continues to serve others as part of a coalition to build homes for veterans and others experiencing homelessness.



# WAYS TO GIVE

HERE ARE SOME OF THE MANY  
WAYS YOU CAN LEAVE YOUR

*"paw print"*

ON THE LIFE-ENRICHING WORK  
OF FREEDOM SERVICE DOGS:



- Include FSD in your will
- Give appreciated stock
- Make an IRA rollover gift/  
qualified charitable distribution
- Name FSD as a beneficiary  
on life insurance



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



**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ALL OUR WAYS TO GIVE,**

contact Major Gifts & Planned Giving Officer Shanda Griebel  
at 303-922-6231 x240 or [sgriebel@freedom servicedogs.org](mailto:sgriebel@freedom servicedogs.org).



# ABOUT FSD



At Freedom Service Dogs of America (FSD), we believe dogs can make a profound difference in the everyday lives of people challenged with disabilities. Daily tasks and routines that many take for granted can be challenging or complex for an individual with limited mobility, a young person with autism, or a veteran or first responder with PTSD or a traumatic brain injury. Picking up a dropped phone, moving around in a busy public space, or withstanding a stressful environment can feel overwhelming if you don't have the necessary resources to navigate the situation. At FSD, we purpose-breed and custom train dogs that empower individuals with disabilities to live lives filled with possibility.

Each of our service dogs, professional therapy dogs, and skilled companion dogs is placed with the individual or situation where they can have the greatest impact. At FSD, we understand that these puppies with a purpose are far more than highly-trained assistance dogs; for those we serve, they are everyday game changers.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board Chair

**MICHELLE SEARCH**

*Jefferson Wells*

Vice Chair

**JOHN DELLASALLE**

*Tennison Group*

Treasurer

**KEITH SMITH**

*InBank*

Board Members

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*Pensionmark Financial Group*

**WILLIAM FOY**

*Spearhead Commercial Capital*

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**LANI KESSLER**

*Kessler Personal  
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**DANIEL MAY**

*Quitman Consulting*

**PETER MEYERS**

*Black Creek Capital Markets*

**MELISSA MORROW**

*FirstBank*

**BRIAN SWARD**

*Jackson National  
Life Distributors*

**NOEL WICKWAR**

*Morgan Stanley  
Wealth Management*

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

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**CHRIS NELSON**

Director of Communications

**ERIN CONLEY**

Director of Operations

**STEPHANIE GUILD**

Interim Director of Philanthropy

**NADINE PACE**

Director of Finance and Administration

**LAURA WARNER**



SPECIAL THANKS TO  
AMANDA ENGEL PHOTOGRAPHY

# 2024 EVENTS



**APRIL 25**  
Diamonds in the Ruff

**JUNE 21**  
Faces of Freedom: Denver

**SEPTEMBER 27**  
Faces of Freedom: Midland

**NOVEMBER 8**  
Faces of Freedom: Houston

For more information, visit [FREEDOMSERVICEDOGS.ORG](https://FREEDOMSERVICEDOGS.ORG)