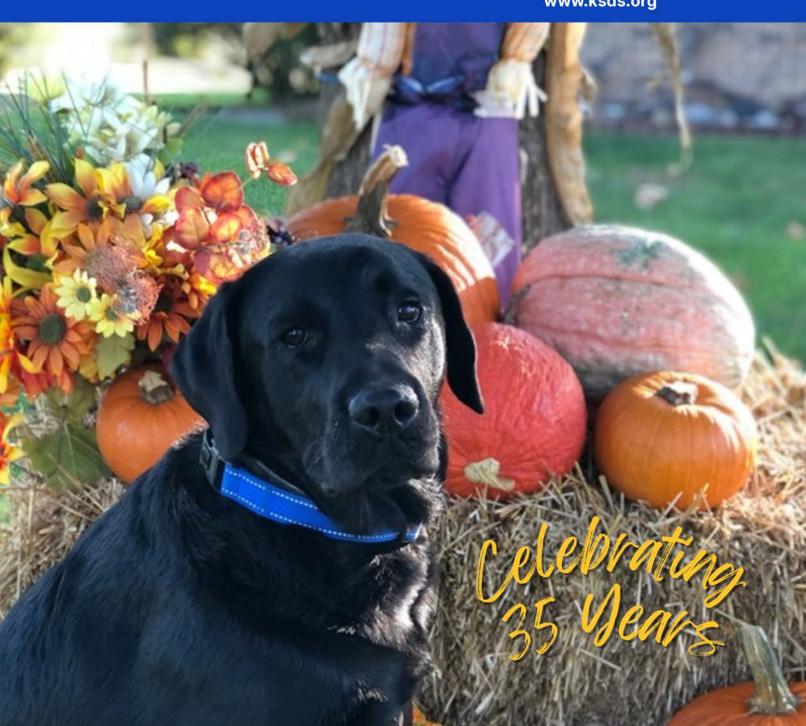
## The PATHWAY

A publication of KSDS Assistance Dogs, Inc.

### **GUIDE DOGS SERVICE DOGS FACILITY DOGS**



www.ksds.org





### Don't miss these upcoming events!

- **35th Anniversary Celebration** August 22nd 5-7:30 pm
- Kansas State Fair September 5-14th
- Husker Harvest September 9-11th
- Fall Graduation October 11th at 11:00 am

Are you interested in transforming



**SCAN TO DONATE** 





### LIFE Center Blends Generations—and Brings Smiles with Buster

At the heart of the Logan Intergenerational Family Education (LIFE) Center, generations connect in meaningful, daily ways. This pioneering facility combines a community-centered care, a 36-bed "small house" style nursing home, a Pre-K through 4th grade elementary school, a day care center, and a variety of shared amenities—all under one roof.

The LIFE Center is more than just a place to live or learn—it's a place to belong. Children and senior residents share music, meals, and play, forming natural bonds that boost joy, reduce loneliness, and foster empathy. One four-legged newcomer is especially good at bringing people together: Buster, a black Labrador and newly minted facility dog. He recently joined the team with Logan Manor administrator Teresa McComb, who says his calming presence has been transformative.

Buster not only accompanies residents to medical appointments, offering comfort and familiarity, but he's also a daily favorite among both young students and elders. One resident living with dementia, who struggles with most names, greets Buster with a smile and his name each morning —a small moment with a big impact. Children love to snuggle him on the floor, and Buster takes it all in stride, patiently bridging generational gaps with wagging-tail warmth.

The LIFE Center's innovative model is gaining attention nationwide for its deeply human approach to elder and youth care. With support from staff like Teresa and the daily magic of Buster, it's clear that connection, care, and community are thriving at Logan.



Biking Across Kansas riders toured our facility during their overnight stop in Washington—learning about KSDS and our mission while enjoying local hospitality on their journey across the state.





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September 5 - 14th
Come see us at our booth!

**Madelyn Kipp** Mordecai - Service



Jason Force Lazarus - Guide



Meschell Nash
Quince - Service



**AJ Vitosh** Kelce - Service



Jason Neubauer TJ - Service



Lindsey Butterfield Konza - Facility



Teresa McComb

Buster- Facility



Deborah Cochran Merlin - Guide

For more information about our graduates and puppy raisers, scan QR Code



# KSDS ASSISTANCE DOGS, INC. CELEBRATES 35 YEARS OF CHANGING LIVES



### From 4-H Roots to National Impact

This year, KSDS Assistance Dogs, Inc is proud to celebrate 35 years of empowering independence and tranforming lives through the incredible bond between people and dogs. What began in 1990 as a small group of 4-H Dog Project puppy raisers and their families has grown into a nationwide mission.

"Indigo has allowed me to live my life as though there are no limits." -Bob Lucas, KSDS Graduate

Thanks to the unwavering dedication of volunteers, donors, trainers, and staff, **KSDS** has placed **659 guide, service, and facility dog teams** across **37 states**, with **puppy raisers in 23 states** helping raise the next generation of canine partners.

### A Mission Rooted in Family

KSDS began as Kansas Specialty Dog Services with a clear, heartfelt mission: to promote the independence and inclusion of people with disabilities. The organization was founded by four Kansas families deeply involved in 4-H who had firsthand experience raising puppies for another assistance dog organization. Recognizing a critical need for placements closer to home in the Midwest, they took the leap and formed a local organization to serve their community and beyond.



"The accolades for what people have given for this organization brings tears to my eyes."
-Glenda Keller, Board Member Since 1990 and former CEO (pictured center with puppy)





Over three and a half decades, KSDS has consistently expanded its capabilites and reach:

With essential support from the Kansas Department of Rehabilitation Services and generous donors, KSDS was established in 1990. It was the first organization in the United States to raise and train guide, service, and facility dogs at the same location, showcasing its innovative spirit and dedication to the cause.



HUSKER September 9 - 11th
HARVEST Come see us
DAYS. at our booth

- 1991-1994: First Canine Housing Unit and puppy wing built
- 1996: Topeka Correctional Facility training launched
- 1997: KSDS Training Center constructed with private donations
- 2001: Name changed to KSDS, Inc. to reflect national reach
- 2003: Became an Accredited Member of Assistance Dogs Int. (ADI)
- 2004-2015: Construction of accessible housing and renovations
- 2015: Renamed KSDS Assistance Dogs, Inc.
- **2021:** Selected to International Breeding Cooperative

"If it's meant to be, it will happen."

-Lila Keesecker, Founding Family and Board Member (ret. 2019)

### **Built on Community**

From day one, KSDS has thrived because of the selfless dedication of generous and committed people who believe in its mission:

 Libby Eaton, a schoolteacher who embodies commitment, raised an incredible 12 puppies. She beautifully states,



"The wonderful thing about KSDS is the people - we just had such wonderful friends."

• Carla and Derry McGuire, part of the "Triple I Puppy Raisers" continue their deep involvement by traveling to cook for KSDS's Grad Retreat every year. For them, "KSDS means family."

Now, with 659 teams placed across the U.S., KSDS continues to prove that the heart of one person - and the spirit of one puppy - can profoundly change countless lives.



**Derry and Carla McGuire** 

For more history of KSDS Assistance Dogs, scan below:





**Libby Eaton and Gina German** 

### Staff Spotlight: Debbie Tegethoff

Debbie, our **Lead Guide Dog Trainer**, has been a cornerstone of KSDS since 1999. She finds immense joy in the inspiring stories from graduates and the remarkable transformation she's witnessed through the Topeka Correctional Facility program.

"It's a blessing for the people who receive the dogs, but also a blessing for us - to be part of their journey."

Her dream for the next 35 years? More graduates, continued growth, and even deeper community involvement, spreading the power of assistance dogs far and wide.



Debbie Tegethoff doing puppy health checks.

### **How You Can Help**

Looking ahead, our vision is clear: to place even more graduates each year, extending the gift of independence to everyone who needs it. To achieve this ambitious goal, we need your support:

- More puppy raisers: The foundation of our future teams.
- Continued financial support: Every donation directly fuels our mission
- Community involvement Join us for puppy play time and become part of the KSDS family!
- "The bond between humans and dogs at KSDS is more than puppy love it's life-changing, enduring, and filled with purpose."

**Thank you** to every volunteer, donor, staff member, graduate, and supporter who has helped us reach this incredible milestone. We can't wait to share the next chapter of empowering independence with you.





### Join the Celebration: August 22nd!

Celebrate 35 years of remarkable achievements and unwavering dedication!

- 35th Anniversary Hamburger Meal
- KSDS Campus, Washington, KS
- 5:00-7:30 PM
- Meal sponsored by United Bank and Trust of Washington and Linn





# Raffle prizes donated by: Bradford Built/ Territory Brewing Bruna Implement Zabokrtsky Hardware

### Bring your family for an evening of fun and learning:

- Bounce house
- Face painting
- Educational demos showcasing the incredible skills of our dogs
- Tours of our facility to see where the magic happens





A Time to Refresh, Reconnect, and Refocus. KSDS was proud to welcome 10 dedicated graduate teams back to campus for Grad Retreat 2025, held July 14–16. This annual event offers a unique opportunity for graduates to reconnect with staff and each other while engaging in hands-on training reviews and one-on-one support.



Throughout the retreat, our staff worked closely with each team to ensure they were continuing to work at peak performance. Whether it was reinforcing commands, addressing new mobility or lifestyle needs, or simply fine-tuning teamwork, the retreat provided valuable time for reflection and growth.

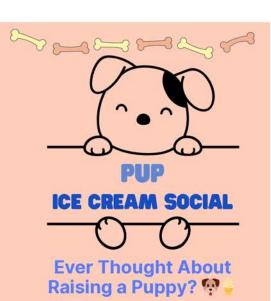




Continued support for our graduates is a vital part of the KSDS mission. From the day they graduate to every year that follows, our team is committed to offering guidance and training for the life of the partnership.

We are so grateful to the graduates who made the trip and continue to inspire us with their dedication and love for their canine partners.





Join us right after graduation on October 11, 2025 at 1:00 PM for a fun, informal information session about becoming a KSDS puppy raiser! Enjoy some ice cream, meet other raisers, and get your questions answered. No pressure — just puppies, people, and plenty of tail wags!









Left: Puppy Raiser, Ally Hazy, a K-State vet student is raising Gordo. His name is sponsored by The Lawrence Noon Lions Club.

### **Introducing the Wood Litter!**

KSDS is excited to welcome a new litter of black Labrador puppies born December 26, 2024, to Glaze and O'Vinny (from BUCS – Bergin University of Canine Studies).

This group was named through our NameGame fundraiser on Facebook, with the winning theme: types of wood!

### **Meet the Mighty Avengers Litter!**

KSDS Assistance Dogs is thrilled to announce the arrival of the Avengers Litter! Born to Morgan and Brinks on February 18, 2025, these six golden retriever pups are already on their way to becoming heroes in harness. This mighty group was named by popular vote through our NameGame on Facebook—a fun way for supporters to get involved and help raise money for KSDS.



From the left: Audrey Pool with Thor, Eileen Mason with Agatha, Brian Hesse and Steve Harlan with Mystique, Lisa Hamilton with Ms. Marvel, Madison Haynes and Emily D'Amore (not pictured) with Gamora, Carla McGuire with Loki, and Momma Morgan



Meet Daisy and Minnie, two of our adorable pups from the Disney litter! These playful sisters are full of personality and making great strides in their training. Minnie's name was generously donated by Bryan and Karen Collins — thank you for your support! Daisy is being raised by Shane and Sheila Johnson and Minnie is with Renee Schowengerdt.



From the left: Bob and Sandy Bartkoski with Ash (who is currently being raised by Nancy Scott), Gina German with Elm, Angie Toews with Cedar, Marty Mashak with Birch and Steve Heaton with Teak.

### Thank you for helping change lives one dog at a time!

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At KSDS Assistance Dogs, Inc., every item on our wishlist supports the training, care, and success of our incredible dogs. From toys that enrich learning to cleaning supplies that keep our campus safe and healthy, your in-kind donations make a direct impact.

We invite you to browse our Amazon Wishlist and consider contributing an item. No donation is too small—every gift helps change lives, one paw at a time.

Scan the QR code below to view our full wishlist:











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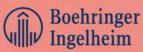












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