

# Welcome!

Thank you for joining us today.

The webinar “Seeing Eye Dog and Therapy Animal Services” will begin momentarily.

Please note: This webinar is being recorded and the materials, including a transcript, will be placed on the National Disability Institute Assistive Technology Loan Program site, along with our other [AT Spotlight Webinars](#).

# Captioning

- Real-time captioning is provided during this webinar.
- The captions can be found by clicking on the “cc” button in your Zoom controls at the bottom of the screen.

# Submitting Questions or Technical Difficulties

For Q&A: Please use the Q&A box to post any questions you have during the webinar to Laurie Schaller.

If you are listening by phone and not logged in to the webinar, you may also ask questions by emailing [HPrice@NDI-INC.org](mailto:HPrice@NDI-INC.org).



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Building a Better Financial Future

# Seeing Eye Dog and Therapy Animal Services

hosted by National Disability Institute's  
Assistive Technology Loan Program

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# National Disability Institute (NDI)

We envision a society in which people with disabilities have the same opportunities to achieve financial stability and independence as people without disabilities.

Our mission is to collaborate and innovate to build a better financial future for people with disabilities and their families.

# NDI's Assistive Technology (AT) Loan Program

Our services include outreach and promotional webinars, financial education and guidance on spending plan development, referrals to financial counseling or programs that can help people get assistive technology.

NDI received grant funding through the U.S. Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration.

The contents of this orientation were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, the content does not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

# Orientation Welcome

Today we welcome Don McGowan and Nancy George-Michalson about their services, volunteer and training opportunities.

[This recording along with our Assistive Technology spotlight webinars are recorded and posted to our site for future viewing.](#)

# Don McGowan





# The Seeing Eye

- Has been providing independence and dignity since 1929 to people who are blind and visually impaired.
- The Seeing Eye is the premier guide dog school in the United States with over 18,000 matches in its 94 year history.

The Seeing Eye  
1 Seeing Eye Way  
PO Box 375  
Morristown, NJ 07963  
973-539-4425  
[www.SeeingEye.org](http://www.SeeingEye.org)

# The Seeing Eye's Mission and Vision

The Seeing Eye is a philanthropic organization whose **mission** is to enhance the independence, dignity, and self-confidence of people who are blind through the use of specially trained Seeing Eye dogs.

- It breeds and raises puppies to become Seeing Eye dogs
- It trains Seeing Eye dogs to guide people who are blind and keep them safe.
- It instructs blind people in the proper use, handling, and care of the dogs.
- It conducts and supports research on canine health and development.

The Seeing Eye's **vision** is to be recognized for sustained excellence and continuous improvement as the best guide school to attend and to support, as a donor, volunteer, puppy raiser, or employee.

# Breeding Seeing Eye Dogs

- The Seeing Eye works primarily with three breeds of dogs, Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, and German Shepherds. We often cross-breed Labs and Goldens to get the benefits of both breeds.
- We use these dogs because they are friendly, strong, energetic, and good with people. Their most important quality is that they like to please. They like being trained to do certain things, and they like to be praised when they do them.
- We breed our own dogs so we know their lineage and the health and success of their parents and grandparents.
- We choose our dogs to breed carefully and with compassion. Females have just one or two litters, and are then are retired from breeding.
- We exchange dogs with other guide dog schools and trusted breeders so as to keep the gene pool fresh.

# Raising Seeing Eye Puppies

- Seeing Eye puppies spend time in their first eight weeks in our “puppy playroom”, where they are exposed to the sights and sounds of the world. Volunteers work with them to keep them busy and observe their behavior.
- Each puppy then goes to live with a family for 14-15 months. Puppy raisers give the puppies love and care and attention while they are growing up. They train them to be good dogs in the house, not on the furniture, not begging for food, not jumping on people, etc. The puppies are “crate trained” so they become used to having a safe place where they can go when needed.
- After 14-15 months, assuming all is well, the puppy is returned to The Seeing Eye for further training.
- If a puppy is identified as not being suitable to become a Seeing Eye dog, the puppy raising family can, if it wishes, keep the dog for its own.

# Training Seeing Eye Puppies

- Puppies return to The Seeing Eye at about 1-1/2 years of age, and are assigned to trainers to lead them through four months of intensive work.
- They learn the many things they must do to keep their future owner safe. They learn to wear a harness and learn such things as:
  - Stopping at cross streets so their person can evaluate traffic and decide when it's safe to cross
  - Avoiding obstacles and leading their person safely around them.
  - Going up and down stairs safely so their person doesn't fall or trip.
  - And much more.
- The puppies are taken to New York City and other challenging places to become accustomed to many situations, and so the trainers can observe how the puppies behave.

# Matching Seeing Eye dogs with Owners

- People who are blind or visually impaired contact The Seeing Eye to discuss whether a Seeing Eye dog is right for them. The preliminaries include information gathering and doctor and ophthalmologist certifications.
- When a person appears to be a good candidate for The Seeing Eye, a trainer visits him/her at home to learn more and to take him/her for a “Juno” walk. This helps the trainer know if a candidate will trust a dog, and his/her walking speed.
- The trainers then discuss candidates and dogs and develop lists of dogs that are best suited for each person.
- The Seeing Eye invites 24 people at a time to come to The Seeing Eye to live on-campus for 3-1/2 weeks. During this time people bond with their dogs and learn how to work with them safely.
- At the end of 3-1/2 weeks of training, new dog owners return home to begin their lives with their new Seeing Eye dog companions.

# Seeing Eye Dog Costs and Ownership

- The cost to a blind or visually impaired person to receive a Seeing Eye dog is \$150, which includes:
  - Transportation to The Seeing Eye and return home,
  - Accommodations in The Seeing Eye's dormitory wing during training.
  - Intensive training over 3-1/2 weeks with experienced trainers.
  - The opportunity to meet and learn from others who are blind and visually impaired.
  - Support for the Seeing Eye graduate and dog for as long as the dog is working.
- When a person leaves The Seeing Eye with a dog, it is his/her dog. It is no longer The Seeing Eye's dog. It belongs to its new blind owner.
- Accordingly, once they return home, people with Seeing Eye dogs are responsible for their dogs -- care and feeding, exercising, supplies, veterinary care, etc.

# The Seeing Eye

Questions???

Thank you for your time and attention. Contact The Seeing Eye at any time to learn more about any aspect of our mission and our work. The main number is 973-539-4425.

You can reach out to me directly if you wish to follow up on our discussion.

Don MacGowan

Volunteer Program Coordinator

Cell: 973-479-4020

E-mail: [DMacgowan@verizon.net](mailto:DMacgowan@verizon.net)



# WELCOME



New York  
Therapy  
Animals®

**Comfort Support Smiles**

The mission of New York Therapy Animals is to provide healing and education through the human-animal bond for people in need.

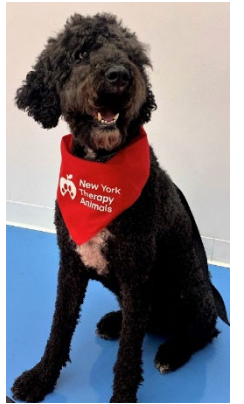
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# New York Therapy Animals

Not-for-profit New York City based charity organization (affiliate)  
Headquarters Salt Lake City, UT Domestic and International Organization

We are the official NYC Reading Education Assistance Dogs®  
(R.E.A.D. ®) children's literacy support program in schools and libraries



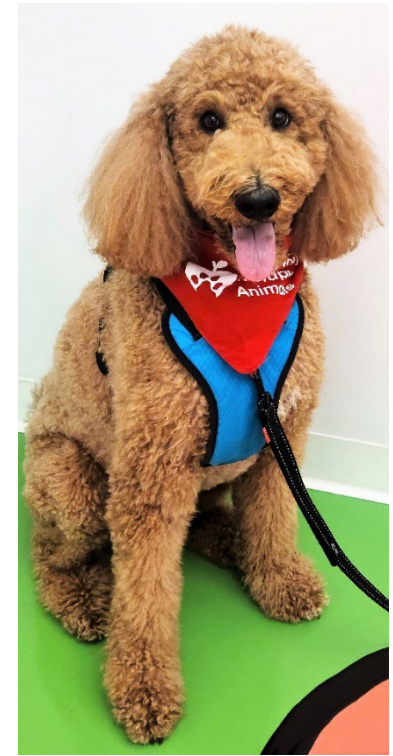




**We educate both ends of the leash in required handler workshops, therapy dog training classes and in continuing education courses. Our teaching methods promote healthy relationships through humane education and expert behavior training.**



**Our criteria for dogs are well-mannered, social, reliable, predictable and controllable and inspire confidence in their interactions with people. The dog may never have shown aggression towards people or other animals.**



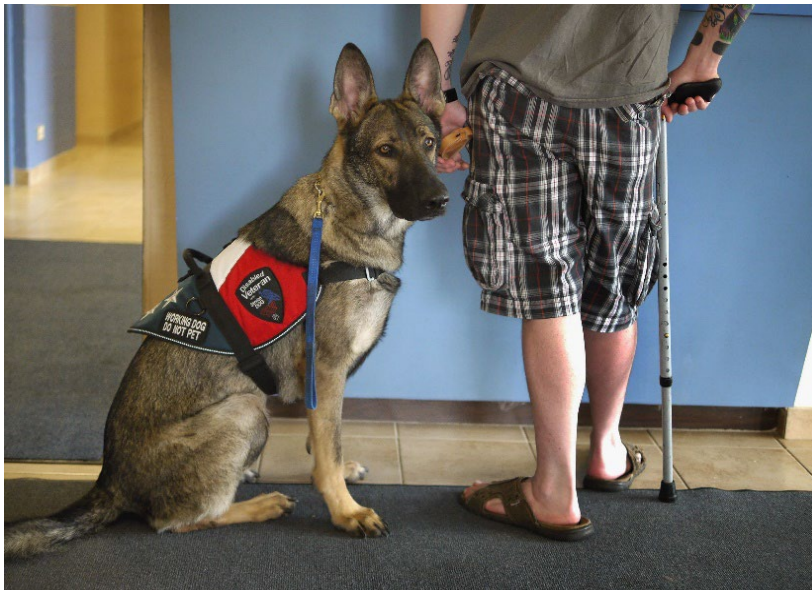




What's the difference between  
a **Service** Dog,  
an **Emotional Support** Dog,  
and a **Therapy** Dog?

**Service/Assistance Dogs**  
Have Full-Time Careers

**Any animal individually trained to assist a person with a  
disability with one or more life activities.**  
- from the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990



## Emotional Support Animal (ESA)



**Its presence assists a person with stress and anxiety.**

**No training is required.**

**Only access is with physician's prescription.**

- from the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990

- Emotional support animals (ESAs) are pets and **not** service dogs **or** therapy dogs.
- Mental health professionals prescribe emotional support animals under the law to a person with a disabling mental illness and must determine that the presence of the animal is needed for the mental health of the patient.
- Airlines are no longer required to accommodate emotional support animals.

-from the American Kennel Club 2021



# Therapy Dog

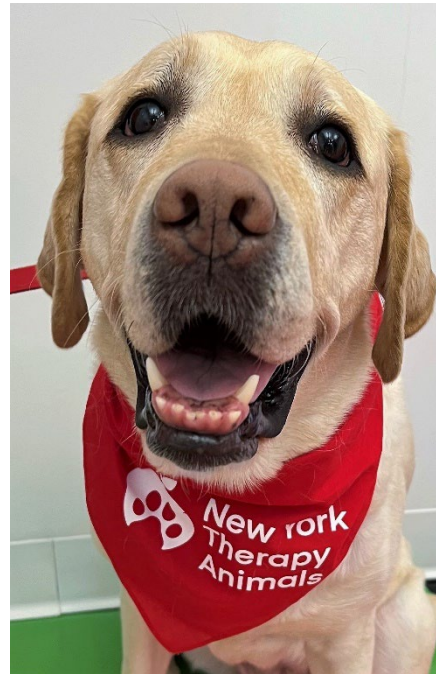
**Rare temperament, to interact with a constant stream of strangers.  
Not essential to one person's functioning, therefore no special rights of access.  
Must meet requirements.**

**Therapy Animals Volunteer Part-Time with their human partner**



## A good therapy dog is ...

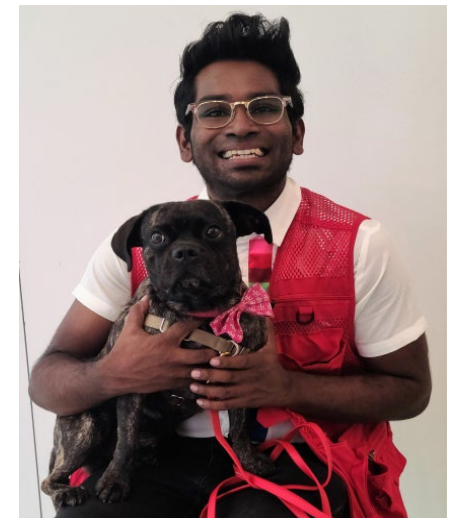
- Happy doing the work
- Predictable/ Reliable/ Controllable/ Responsive
- Adaptable, flexible in various environments
- Medically screened; healthy
- Loves people; willing to engage; sociable
- Able to cope with stress and surprises
- Not dependent on treats





## A Great Handler ... 1<sup>st</sup> priority is their dog

- Is a proactive advocate for their dog, pays attention to their behavior, body language, stress signals
- Demonstrates a solid, loving relationship with their dog
- Enjoys the company of others and facilitates a connection
- Is genuine, friendly, respectful, supportive and a GREAT listener
- Ongoing teaching skills with their teammate



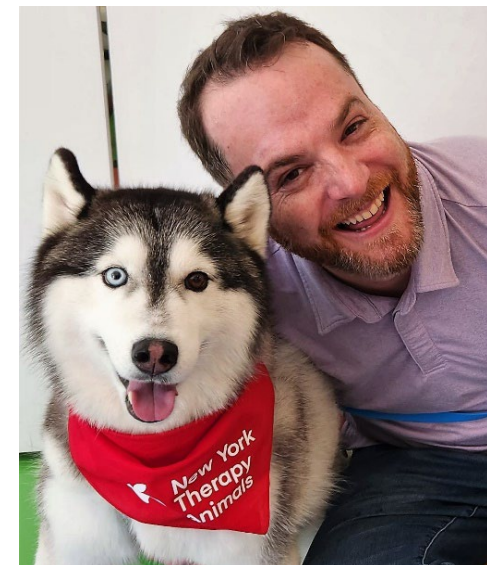
## How can therapy dogs contribute in a therapeutic setting

- **Therapy animal teams** can motivate people in occupational, physical therapy, psychotherapy
- Bridge communication gaps with healthcare providers
- Assist in crisis intervention
- Lessen loneliness, catalysts to social interaction, conversation
- Help to reduce a client's symptoms of stress, anxiety, lift spirits and trust
- Provide opportunity for touch, giving and receiving affection
- Motivate grasp, reach, movement/ Physical exercise
- Unconditional love/ Nonjudgmental
- Enhance self-confidence and self-awareness





# Therapy dogs bring comfort, support and smiles to everyone!





# Volunteer Opportunities





**NYC Criminal  
Courthouse**

*The New York  
Times*



**Alzheimer's  
Facility**

**Pathways  
Children's  
School**





# Reading Education Assistance Dogs® R.E.A.D.®





# TCS New York City Marathon Road Runners







**“People may not remember what you say, or do, but they’ll always remember how you make them feel.”- Maya Angelou**







**Thank you for joining us today!**



**Nancy and Melodie**



**New York  
Therapy  
Animals®**



**Visit us at  
[NewYorkTherapyAnimals.org](http://NewYorkTherapyAnimals.org)**

# ABLE Act

A person who has a disability since before age 26, may open an ABLE savings / investment account at any age.

New Jersey and New York offer ABLE savings accounts; other ABLE plans are available to choose from too.

- Savings up to \$100,000 does not count towards the **SSI resource limit of \$2,000**.
- Any amount of ABLE savings does not impact any type of **Medicaid** eligibility.

An ABLE account owner, friends and family, Special Needs or Pooled Trust or a 529 college savings plan may **contribute** up to \$17,000 into ABLE annually.

An ABLE account owner who works and does not have contributions deposited into a retirement account may contribute up to an additional \$13,590 from their employment **earnings** into their ABLE account. \$16,990 for residents of Alaska and \$15,630 for residents of Hawaii.

ABLE contributions can total **\$30,590 for 2023!**

[The ABLE National Resource Center Provides Free Information](#)

# NDI's AT Loan Program

- NDI partners a bank to issue and service pre-qualified Assistive Technology loans up to \$45,000 for residents of New Jersey and New York.
- NDI buys down the interest rate to 4% interest.
- NDI has deposited funds with these institutions to guarantee defaults, allowing for more favorable lending terms.

**Our services include** outreach and promotional webinars, financial education and guidance on spending plan development, referrals to financial counseling or other programs that can help people explore AT resources available in NJ and NY.

[Our site spotlights new AT equipment and products](#)

# NDI AT Resource Guides

- The NDI AT Resource Guides list grants, lending programs and other service providers who can help you select the best and most cost-effective AT to meet your needs.
- There are AT Demonstration programs listed where you can try out or borrow AT, sometimes *indefinitely*.
- There are AT assessment services that can help you evaluate AT to meet your needs, abilities and activity levels and environment.

[Assistive Technology Guide for \*\*New York\*\*](#)

[Assistive Technology Guide for \*\*New Jersey\*\*](#)



## Online Resource Center for People with Disabilities and Chronic Health Conditions

[Financial Resilience Center](#)



## Next Webinar:

Service Animals presented by Katy from Canine Companions  
Thursday, September 21, noon-1:00 p.m. ET

# Questions?

NDI AT Loan Program Contact:

**Laurie Schaller**

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Manager, Financial Empowerment

[AssistiveTechLoans.com](http://AssistiveTechLoans.com)

Phone and FAX: **(202) 449-9521**

[Webinars are recorded](#)

Community presentations available

## Post webinar survey:

- What information was most helpful?
- Do you need help finding a job?
- What type of AT would you like to know more about?
- Do you want to schedule an NDI AT Loan presentation for your agency or community organization?