

## The Leader Dog Difference

Leader Dogs for the Blind is innovative, inclusive and dedicated to providing high-quality services to its clients in a respectful and empowering environment.

Clients who are turned down elsewhere come to Leader Dog for personalized training. Unlike many programs, Leader Dog has no upper age limit and accommodates clients with multiple disabilities or health challenges.

Because of the importance that Leader Dog programs hold in clients' lives, we maintain an unparalleled level of quality. All O&M specialists are certified in their field and instructor-to-client ratios are low to ensure personalized attention and safety. Training methods for dogs meet or exceed International Guide Dog Federation standards and are achieved using positive reinforcement and operant conditioning training principles.



## Support a Lifetime of Independence

The generosity of supporters makes it possible for Leader Dog to empower its clients to change their lives.

### Volunteer Opportunities

**Puppy Raiser:** Puppies are placed in host homes for a year until they are old enough for formal guide dog training. Puppy raisers teach basic obedience, house manners and socialize the dog in the community.

**Breeding Stock Host:** Leader Dog's sophisticated breeding program relies on volunteers to house dogs on a continual basis. Families that host female breeding stock also care for their puppies during whelping and the first six weeks of life.

**On-Campus Volunteer:** Volunteers work in every department on Leader Dog's campus caring for dogs, answering phones, assisting clients and more.

### Giving Opportunities

Leader Dog is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that relies entirely on donations from individuals, foundations, corporations and service groups such as Lions Clubs in order to provide all programs free to clients.

There are many options available to make a financial gift including recurring gifts, memorial donations and planned giving.

To donate, please visit [leaderdog.org](http://leaderdog.org).



**Leader Dogs for the Blind** empowers people who are blind, visually impaired or Deaf-Blind with skills for a lifetime of independent travel, opening doors that may seem to have closed with the loss of sight.

Thanks to the generosity of dedicated supporters, all programs are provided free to clients, including meals and housing during training, travel and equipment costs.

Leader Dog programs are crafted to address individual situations and adapt to our clients' changing needs at any point in their lives. From youth camp to O&M cane training through guide dog training and GPS technology integration, Leader Dog's programs give clients the confidence and skills they need to live independent lives.

*A "Best In America" Charity  
by the  
Independent Charities of America*

*The mission of Leader Dogs for the Blind is to empower people who are blind or visually impaired with lifelong skills for independent travel through quality Leader Dogs, highly effective client instruction and innovative services.*

### Member

International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF)  
Assistance Dogs International (ADI)  
Council of US Dog Guide Schools (CUSDGS)  
American Foundation for the Blind (AFB)  
VisionServe Alliance  
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER)

For more information or to apply for a free Leader Dog training program, go to [leaderdog.org](http://leaderdog.org) or call 888/777.5332.

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## Empowerment for a lifetime of independent travel



## Guide Dog Training

Since 1939, Leader Dog has operated one of the world's most respected and innovative guide dog programs. The free, 26-day residential training program welcomes clients who are legally blind, at least 16 years old, have good orientation and mobility skills and are able to care for their dog.

Training is personalized for each client. Thanks to sophisticated breeding, puppy raising and dog training programs, Leader Dog is able to match clients with a dog that best fits their lifestyle, travel pace, physical size, stamina and other considerations. Clients have the opportunity to train with their guide dog in a wide variety of situations to fit their current and future needs, including urban, suburban and rural locations; college campuses; busy stores and malls and other environments.



### Deaf-Blind

In 1991, Leader Dog became the first organization to provide guide dogs specifically for clients who are both deaf and blind. These dogs are assessed for maturity and receive special training focused on partner awareness and traffic/street crossing.

Instruction for clients who are both deaf and blind is provided via American Sign Language, either tactile or visual, based on a client's range of vision.

*It's more crucial than ever for me to have a Leader Dog because I now have hearing loss and my dog helps if I don't hear an approaching car. Traffic concerns are huge for me because I need to be able to get to work so I can put food on the table for my wife and daughter. —William Herzler*

## Accelerated O&M Training

The first seven-day residential orientation and mobility (O&M) program empowers people by providing the skills needed to travel safely using a white cane in a much shorter timeframe than traditional O&M programs. O&M training is the first step toward becoming an independent traveler.

*Being able to orient myself will give me much more confidence traveling at night. When you have night blindness, you become like Cinderella and run home when it gets dark outside. —Marisa Postlewaite*

Training focuses on cane skills and maintaining orientation while traveling, and it is provided on a 1:1 client-to-instructor ratio and is personalized for each client's individual needs and capabilities.

The training is provided free of charge to anybody who is legally blind and at least 16 years of age, regardless of whether or not they plan to eventually train with a guide dog.



## GPS Technology

Clients receive and are instructed in the use of a free GPS device that provides location, direction, street name, nearby points of interest and other information.



This technology empowers clients to identify their current location and plan their own travel, rather than relying on others to fill this need.

GPS technology allows people to travel further and explore new destinations.

*For me and my family it's important that I'm safe. Being less dependent on asking strangers for directions at night for directions is to my advantage. —Dr. Ruth Queen Smith*

## Summer Experience Camp

A unique summer camp for boys and girls ages 16 and 17 that combines summer fun with an introduction to guide dogs and the opportunity to spend time with peers who are facing similar challenges.

Campers kayak, rock wall climb and tandem bike; receive a free GPS device with instruction and spend time with dogs and Leader Dog instructors to learn more about living and working with a guide dog.

*It's such a positive environment. By the middle of the week everybody is working together, trying to help each other. —Brandon Werner*



[leaderdog.org](http://leaderdog.org)