

I. GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

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Date 9/14/26

Contact Information

Organization Name: Canine Partners for Life
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Phone: 610-869-4902
Website: <https://www.k94life.org>
Year Incorporated: 1989
FEIN: 23-2580658

ED/CEO Name: Kathleen Leary
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Board Chair Name: Kate Schroeder
Board Chair Approval (check here): ☒
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Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

☐	Arts, Culture, Heritage	☐	Education, Library	☐	Environment, Animals
☐	Health	☒	Human Services	☐	Social Justice, Civic Engagement
☐	Religion	☐	If other, please describe:		

Mission: The mission of Canine Partners for Life is to increase the independence and quality of life of individuals with physical, developmental, and cognitive disabilities or who are in other situations of need. We achieve this mission through the training and provision of service and companion dogs.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Canine Partners for Life's (CPL) services are primarily focused within a 250-mile radius of the CPL campus in Cochranville, PA, though services are provided nationwide.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served. (Include Chester County # &/or % served.) We serve children and adults who have mobility impairments and medical conditions such as seizure disorders, Diabetes, or cardiac issues, or who are in other situations of need. CPL provides ongoing support and training to more than 130 active teams, with 10-15 new teams placed each year. Currently, **12 active service and companion teams reside in Chester County.**

Annual Budget \$ 1,704,377.00 _____ 13 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
82 % of budget for program expenses 9 # of Board Volunteers
10 % of budget for administrative expenses 550 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
8 % of budget for fundraising expenses 10,000 # of Volunteer Hours

100% = total

Top 3-5 funding sources:

Individual Donors
The Scaife Family Foundation
The Independence Foundation
West Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
The Allerton Foundation

This grant proposal is for: ☒ Direct Service Programs & General Operating &/or ☐ Capacity Building

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

☐	Contingency Planning	☐	Partnerships, Collaborations	☐	Merger, Closure
☐	Mission, Vision, Strategy	☐	Board Engagement & Leadership	☐	Marketing, Communication
☐	Resource Development	☐	Operations	☐	Technology
☐	If other, please describe:				

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$ _Any amount is appreciated

Proposal Summary: *(a few sentences, please)* Since 1989, Canine Partners for Life (CPL) has been partnering service and companion dogs with people who have various physical, cognitive, and developmental disabilities, or who are in other situations of need, to provide them the opportunity to live a more independent life. CPL is committed to forming successful, lasting partnerships that grow and change throughout the challenges that come with living with a disability. The programs that ensure this mission is achieved, like the CPL Breeding Program, the Community and Prison Puppy Raising Programs, Advanced Dog Training Program, Team Training, and Graduate Support Program, are critical to the overall success of these partnerships. General operating support will ensure that these programs continue to develop and succeed, ultimately increasing the independence of individuals with disabilities.

1. Nonprofit's overall aims

Canine Partners for Life is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to increasing the independence and quality of life of children and adults with physical, cognitive, and developmental disabilities, and in other situations of need. We accomplish this through the provision of skilled service and companion dogs. Since 1989, we have placed over 850 service and companion dogs across the United States, with individuals with a wide range of conditions such as stroke, cerebral palsy, dysautonomia, Parkinson's Disease, ALS, seizure disorders, diabetes, autism, and Down's Syndrome.

CPL places three types of service dogs – mobility support, wheelchair assistance, and medical alert dogs. We place two types of companion dogs - home companions and facility companions. Home companions are placed with individuals with disabilities who would benefit from the support of a well-trained dog within the home but do not require assistance in public. Facility companion dogs are placed in medical facilities, courthouses, or nursing homes, and typically work with individuals who have medical conditions or are victims of abuse or trauma. All of these dogs play a vital role in the lives of their partners by providing unconditional love and support. Each year, CPL places approximately 15 to 20 service and companion dogs, trains 50-70 dogs, and supports over 130 active teams.

Key Initiatives: Our core programs, maintained by our general operating budget, are the Breeding and Whelping Program, Community and Prison Puppy Raising Programs, Advanced Training Program, Team Training, and Graduate Support Program. These programs are designed to create, prepare, and sustain healthy dogs and high-quality canine partnerships.

Each CPL dog goes through a two to two-and-a-half-year, comprehensive, and customized training program to meet the specific needs of its human partner. CPL breeds puppies, works with local rescues and professional breeders, and participates in the Assistance Dogs International (ADI) breeding program. Puppies spend their first eight weeks at CPL or a partner prison before moving to a community volunteer home for socialization and basic obedience. At 6 months of age, the puppies are partnered with inmates at one of the 6 prisons that are a part of the life-changing Prison Puppy Raising Program. As the puppies are provided with the training and structure that they require, the inmates are given the opportunity to give back to the community, learn new skills, and experience the puppies' unconditional love.

At approximately 14 months of age, the dogs return to CPL to begin their advanced training. Trainers meet with each client and customize the skills of the dogs to meet their future partner's needs. Once a match is identified, clients are invited to campus to complete Team Training. Team Training is a two-week period that includes skills development, lectures, community access trips, and teaching the client how to work with, care for, and grow their bond with their canine partner. All of the new teams are celebrated at an annual graduation ceremony. After graduation, we provide lifetime support to our teams to ensure the well-being of the partnership, with teams recertifying every 1-2 years.

Key achievements and Distinctiveness: As one of the first service dog organizations in the world to be accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI), CPL is a highly respected leader in the assistance dog industry and stands out among other organizations for its innovation. For example, in 2006, CPL placed the first cardiac alert dog in the world. CPL is one of the few service dog providers to place full-service dogs with children as young as 12 years old, one of the first service dog organizations to establish a Prison Puppy Raising Program and remains one of the only service dog organizations that builds balance and support harnesses in-house. For several years, CPL has earned GuideStar's Platinum Seal of Transparency and Charity Navigator's 4-star ratings demonstrating strong financial health and transparency. This is the highest possible rating and represents CPL's adherence to sector best practices and execution of the mission in a financially efficient way.

2. Funding request

What specific needs & issues are being addressed, via what programs and services?

Individuals with disabilities often face obstacles to independence, safety, and activities of daily life. Service and companion dogs remove these barriers. Medical alert dogs prevent what could become catastrophic events by informing their human partner of sudden changes in blood pressure, blood sugar, seizures, or cardiac episodes; mobility support dogs reduce falls and injuries by providing balance and support and performing

retrievals. Companion dogs provide support within the home, reduce anxiety, and increase opportunities for socialization. All of our dogs empower their partners to feel more confident and capable in managing their environment.

Why is it important to fund this now?

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), 28% of adults in the United States have a disability. Childhood disability continues to increase, with the prevalence of developmental disabilities in children ages 3–17 increasing from 7.4% to 8.56% from 2019-2021. The CDC also reports that the average American with a disability spends approximately \$11,637 a year on healthcare, while non-disabled individuals spent about \$6,700. Adults with disabilities are more likely to have 10+ doctor visits (38% vs. 6%) and hospital admissions (19.4% vs. 4.7%) in a year. This increased practical and financial burden of living with a disability directly affects quality of life.

As more individuals recognize the life-changing impact of service dogs, the demand continues to grow. Wait times across the industry have reached an average of three to five years. Furthermore, the cost of obtaining a highly trained service dog is prohibitive for many. CPL proudly places service dogs free of charge, asking only that clients make a meaningful donation if they are able. As we expand our programs to meet this need, additional funding is essential to sustain the full continuum of services needed to create and maintain these life-changing partnerships.

How will results & impact be demonstrated?

Our goals this year are as follows:

1. To place at least 15 service and companion dogs in life-changing partnerships
2. To increase community awareness of our companion and facility dog programs, as evidenced by a 100% increase to our companion and facility dog applicant list
3. To develop an implementation plan to re-open our waitlist to ensure prospective clients have a clear pathway to request placement and that our organization is prepared to manage new applications effectively

Within the past year, we have begun to employ more rigorous data collection methods. Our program's effectiveness is determined by a variety of outcomes, some of which are the number of dogs that graduate each year, the longevity of partnerships (8-10 years), and the number of puppies that enter training each year (20-30). We are beginning to also track the percentage of dogs that move into advanced training and the percentage of clients who return for a successor dog, as well as the success of specific programs, such as the in-house breeding program and Prison Puppy Raising Program.

We continue to value the powerful stories our clients share of how their dogs have changed their lives. We will evaluate our program outcomes through caregiver and client feedback at the beginning of their partnership and 6-month intervals thereafter. We will solicit feedback regarding emotional regulation, daily routines, independence, communication, social interaction, sleep, and family quality of life. We will continue to collect client stories, as we believe these provide valuable insight into our home companion partnerships. We will identify common themes among outcomes in order to understand where clients are experiencing the greatest benefits, and adjust our program accordingly.

Service and companion dogs make it possible for our clients to live the lives they thought they would never be able to because of their disabilities. Mary, matched with Aldan in 2023, has recently reclaimed a major part of her life. She shared, "[Aldan] has given me so much courage that I completed all of my continuing education credits to reactivate my license, and my private practice is open for business. I never thought I would work any job again, much less restart my private practice, but here we are."

Another client who recently gained a new level of independence is Jack, who was partnered with Dassi in 2025. Jack lives with an intractable seizure disorder, meaning his seizures cannot be controlled with medication. He experiences seizures about once a week and often fell and injured himself, even suffering a fractured back. After exhausting every available epilepsy medication without success, Jack's family began the

search for a service dog. Every day, Jack and Dassi, walk a mile to school together. Jack's family now has far greater peace of mind. "We feel better about him walking to school alone, showering, or simply being by himself. We used to worry constantly that he would fall. He still might, but it happens far less often because Dassi alerts us when he's vulnerable."

These stories are just two examples of the life-changing impact of a service or companion dog. Every successful partnership restores confidence, increases independence, and provides hope for a more fulfilling future. A gift will make independence possible for another team. Thank you for your consideration.