



# PAWS-abilities

Governor's Scholars Program, Murray State University 2017

Taylor Davis, Madelyn Day, Kendall DuLaney, Jordanne Howard, Cierra Monroe, Jordan Tapp

## Our Goal

PAWS-abilities is our non-profit business idea. Our goal for PAWS-abilities is to provide a safe environment for local stray dogs and rehabilitate them to become service or therapy dogs in the future. The trainers will be local inmates who have passed a strict screening process to ensure the safety of all who are involved. The inmates will be supervised by licensed, professional dog trainers who specialize in service and therapy training. We plan to partner with several local organizations, businesses, and veterinarians to place the service dogs with their new families and to promote the health of the dogs at little expense to our business. Lastly, we will seek partnerships in local hospitals and nursing homes that may have the need for therapy dogs. Service and therapy dogs alike are now needed for a growing number of reasons and for a wide array of individuals. There is also a large number of stray dogs in Kentucky specifically. To many, they are seen as nuisances; however, we would give them a meaning and a purpose by transforming them from the frowned-upon local strays to the highly-respected service dogs.

## Beneficiaries

Our target audience includes any person, diagnosed with a mental or physical disability, in need of a service dog to improve his or her daily lifestyle. According to the University of Arizona, "0.9% of persons with disabilities are partnered with service dogs. In 1990, Congress found that 43 million Americans were diagnosed with some sort of disability, while only 387,000 service dogs were actually partnered with a recipient." With today's society, that 43 million disabled person population is only growing, so the need for service dogs is growing as well. Our goal is to limit the large gap between people who need service dogs and people who already have them. Our secondary audience includes the rest of America's population willing to donate toward our mission. This audience will have the unique opportunity to sponsor a potential service dog and to provide for someone in need.



"When Their Sad Ads Stopped Working, One Animal Shelter Tried A New Idea That Saved A Lot Of Dogs." *Wimp.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 July 2017.  
Moss, Laura.



"Fulton jail inmates train, bond with shelter dogs during eight-week program." *Creative Loafing Atlanta*. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 July 2017.



"Prisoners save shelter dogs from death row." *MNN - Mother Nature Network*. Mother Nature Network, 05 June 2017. Web. 07 July 2017.



Rubenstein, Marissa. "7 Incredible and Unlikely Ways Service Dogs Save Humans Everyday." *BarkPost*. N.p., 29 Apr. 2015. Web. 07 July 2017.

## Resources

### Personnel:

- A veterinarian to make sure the dog is healthy enough to be trained.
- A dog trainer to teach inmates how to train a dog properly.
- An inmate to train the actual dogs.
- A dog to train into a service dog.
- A recipient who will use the service dog.
- A sponsorship to fund the process.

### Training Basics:

- Training facility
- Food
- Treats
- Crates
- Toys

## Current Programs

On average, there are 47,596 dogs abandoned in animal shelters every year, and 102,363 stray dogs are captured by authorities every year. Of these dogs, approximately 5,142 were euthanized. That averages out to be one dog every two hours. Right now, there are some organizations that are attempting to accomplish the same goal. However, they are taking a different approach than the PAWS-abilities program would. Organizations such as Service Dogs Incorporated, Freedom Service Dogs, and Four Paws have programs available to rescue and rehabilitate stray dogs. As members of the PAWS-abilities program, the dogs would be rescued, rehabilitated, and placed with an appreciative family immediately from their homeless lifestyle.

## Risks

As we mentioned before, we want to not only restore purpose to dogs' lives, but also the lives of prisoners. By requiring each inmate to go through a screening process, we can determine which ones are stable enough to train an animal, and also examine their previous crimes. This way the training is considered a community service project, inmates can get their sentences reduced, and we can benefit more than one life at a time. Critics of this idea would argue that not all dogs are meant to be service dogs. To prevent any issues, the dog candidates would also go through a screening process. Typically, service dogs must be reliable, safe, and friendly companions; by screening the dogs before they face human interaction, we can eliminate unnecessary problems.

## Marketing

Did you know that approximately 3.3 million dogs enter animal shelters every year? With your help, we can reduce this number. PAWS-abilities, a non-profit organization that is geared toward rescuing stray dogs, would not only change our lives, but the ones of dogs around us too! With proper training and the right amount of love, every dog has the potential for something great. So join us in restoring a dog's purpose, and contact PAWS-abilities today!



## Sources

"First Stray Dog to Become Assistance Dog for Disabled Person." *More Humanity Towards Animals*. Four Paws, n.d. Web. 07 July 2017, "Pet Statistics." *ASPCA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 July 2017, "Service Dog Training FAQ: Owner Training, Cost, Basics." *Psychiatric Service Dog Partners*. Psychiatric Service Dog Partners, n.d. Web. 30 June 2017, "12 Alarming Facts About Pet Homelessness." *One Green Planet*. N.p., n.d. Web. 07 July 2017.