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**ORGANIZATION**

CAN DO CANINES

**POSITION**

Executive Director

**BRIEF**

Ballinger Leafblad is pleased to conduct the search for Executive Director at Can Do Canines in New Hope, Minnesota.



## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Can Do Canines is internationally recognized as a leader in the assistance dog industry and is the largest provider of assistance dogs in Minnesota, with over 700 placed service dogs to-date.

Since 1989, Can Do Canines has provided assistance dogs to people with disabilities, free of charge. The fully trained dogs are provided to clients with mobility challenges, hearing loss or deafness, seizure disorders, diabetes complicated by hypoglycemia unawareness or children with autism.

A defining characteristic of Can Do Canines is its commitment to find new ways for assistance dogs to help individuals with disabilities. Can Do Canines pioneered the training of assistance dogs to detect low glucose levels for people with Type I diabetes and Can Do Canines was one of the first organizations in the country to train a Seizure Assist Dog.

The organization acts in the collective best interest of its five pillars: Dogs, the Can Do Canines Team, Donors, Clients and Volunteers.

Located in a suburb of Minneapolis just 15 minutes from downtown, a committed staff and board of directors are proud of the organization's past and excited for the future.

**35**

Dedicated  
FTEs on Staff

**900+**

Active  
Volunteers



**2019**

**AT A GLANCE**

**\$2.8m**

Annual Budget

## HISTORY

The organization was founded in 1987 by current executive director, Alan M. Peters. On August 25, 1989, the Companion Dog Connection, Inc., doing business as the Hearing Dog Program of Minnesota certified their very first assistance dog, little Annie, who became the first Hearing Assist Dog placed by the new organization.

Three years later the organization's good work began to be recognized in the community. Although only a total of 22 teams graduated by the end of 1992, the organization still received both the Nonprofit Mission Award for Innovation from the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits and the Distinguished Service Award from the State Council on Disability.

In 1995, the organization certified the first Mobility Assist Dog, and changed its name to Hearing and Service Dogs of Minnesota. In 2000, the organization merged with the Master Eye Foundation, Inc. of Minneapolis, the first and oldest guide dog training organization in the country.

The organization continued to accelerate through the first six years of the new century as dog placements expanded beyond Minnesota to neighboring states and the first Diabetes Assist and Seizure Assist dogs graduated. By the end of 2006, 200 teams had graduated.



The organization has come a long way from originally operating in a spare bedroom in the home of the founder to now owning a four-acre campus with a 20,000 square-foot facility capable of housing up to 50 dogs in training. More than 700 certified assistance dogs have been provided to clients to-date, all free of charge.

## FUNDING AND ACCREDITATION

Can Do Canines is a registered 501(c)3 in the state of Minnesota and receives no federal or state funding, relying primarily on individual contributions to provide specially trained assistance dogs to people with disabilities, free of charge. Can Do Canines makes every effort to ensure contributions are used in the most impactful way possible.

In 2007, Can Do Canines became an accredited member of Assistance Dogs International, a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to improve the areas of training, placement and utilization of assistance dogs. ADI has a comprehensive accreditation system and members, such as Can Do Canines, are regularly assessed to ensure they meet the high standards expected of assistance dog programs.

The organization also carries a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, received a Platinum Seal from Guide Star USA, and a coveted Meets Standards certification from The Charities Review Council.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

The team at Can Do Canines describes the culture as one of passion, compassion and a commitment to the animals and the humans they serve. There is a shared focus on the mission and a deep appreciation for the donors and volunteers who make their work possible. Team members enjoy trust with colleagues and feel free to share ideas. They also feel a sense of pride in being able to bring their authentic and true selves to work.

## VALUES

Client Commitment  
Teamwork  
Integrity  
Respect for People  
Respect for Animals

## VISION

We envision a future in which every person who needs and wants an assistance dog can have one.

## MISSION

Can Do Canines is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with disabilities by creating mutually beneficial partnerships with specially trained dogs.

## VALUES

These are stated organizational values which staff, clients, volunteers and donors consistently say are strongly upheld.

**Client Commitment**– Can Do Canines has a passion for developing long-term relationships that make a positive difference in clients' lives. It provides high-quality training and services. All training opportunities are considered that would benefit the graduate and client teams.

**Teamwork**– Can Do Canines works together to meet the needs of its clients through a joint effort comprised of staff, volunteers, and community supporters. By training dogs and clients to work together as teams to help forge bonds and skills that cannot be matched.

**Integrity**– Can Do Canines upholds the highest standards of integrity in all its actions. Everyone is personally accountable for their conduct, decisions and delivering on their commitments. Open, honest, two-way communication is valued and rewarded. All are prudent and fiscally responsible in the management of all resources.

**Respect for People**– Can Do Canines treats everyone with dignity, care and respect. Differences in employees, volunteers, clients and the community are valued. We develop our employees and provide a rewarding environment.

**Respect for Animals**– Can Do Canines believes dogs can be good citizens and helpful partners to people with disabilities when properly trained. Dogs must not be sacrificed to benefit people.

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

### ASSISTANCE DOG PROGRAMS

Can Do Canines brings greater freedom, independence and peace of mind to an individual's life by creating a mutually beneficial partnership with a specially trained dog matched to their personal assistance needs. Can Do Canines assistance dogs are defined by the type of assistance work they perform for their handler. Can Do Canines trains in five areas:

#### Hearing

Hearing Assist Dogs alert a person who is deaf or hard of hearing to sounds by making physical contact with them and leading them to the source of the sound.

#### Mobility

Mobility Assist Dogs work with people who have mobility challenges and other needs. They pick up, fetch and carry objects, pull wheelchairs, open and close doors, drawers, refrigerators, etc. retrieve a phone and help pay at tall counters.



## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, cont.

### Diabetes

Diabetes Assist Dogs help people with Type I diabetes. The dogs are trained to detect low blood sugar levels by sensing a change in their partner's breath odor. The dog alerts their partner by making physical contact such as pawing at them, licking their face, or nudging a hand. The canine partner can retrieve juice or a glucose tab, get an emergency phone or get help from another person in the house.

### Autism

Autism Assist Dogs are assistance dogs with full public access rights. They are trained to keep children with autism safe in public settings and help them experience the world more fully by offering comfort and assurance. When in public, children are tethered to their dog for safety. An adult is in control of the dog in public. If the child bolts away suddenly, the dog will stop and hold position, keeping the child secure and close by until an adult intervenes. These special dogs also serve as a social bridge between the child and the public.

### Seizure

Seizure Assist Dogs are trained to help people during and after a seizure. The dog responds to a person having a seizure by staying with them and licking their hands or face, retrieving an emergency phone, and alerting other family members. The dog can also wear a backpack with pockets to carry medicine and medical alert information in case the person is unable to communicate.



## PRISON PROGRAM

Can Do Canines operates puppy raising and training programs in seven local prisons. Two carefully-selected inmates are assigned to each dog. Inmates raise the dog, teach obedience, and even teach assistance dog skills, such as pulling open a door or turning on a light switch. At any given time, Can Do Canines can have up to 90 dogs placed in the prison program.

This unique program and partnership has proven to be beneficial for all involved. The dogs are well-cared for and receive around-the-clock attention and training. The inmates learn new skills and develop traits such as confidence, dedication, and patience. Prison officials say that the prisons have become a more warm-hearted place and report fewer incidents of violence. And at the end of it all, a client with a disability receives a specially-trained dog to help them achieve greater freedom, independence and peace of mind.

## DOGS IN TRAINING

Puppies begin their journey in a couple of ways. Litters born through Can Do Canine's breeding program are whelped in a volunteer's home. When they reach five weeks of age, mom and puppies travel to one of two weaning prisons. The prisons complete the weaning process.

When the puppies reach ten weeks of age, they come to the New Hope, Minnesota facility and are picked up by volunteers who will be their Puppy Raiser or Great Start Home. Dogs that are donated by a breeder or rescued from a local animal shelter begin their journey with Can Do Canines in a volunteer home. The puppy is evaluated to make sure they have the right temperament for assistance dog work. They then move on to a volunteer puppy raiser or one of the prison programs.

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, cont'd.

### Puppy Raising

Puppy Raisers are the heart and soul of Can Do Canines. They take in a puppy, teach the puppy good house manners, basic obedience, and early assistance dog skills while exposing the puppy to as many social situations as possible. Puppy Raisers attend a minimum of one training meeting each month and provide a home, food, basic veterinary care and lots of love!



### Final Training and Client Placement

When the puppies reach about 18 months of age, they return to the Can Do Canines facility for final training. The puppies are assessed by Can Do Canines trainers to find out what they're best at (smelling low blood sugar, alerting to sounds) and then, based on that assessment, they are assigned which type of disability assistance dog they will be. Then, those skills are further refined; dogs also gain additional skills based on the client's need.

When the dog is deemed ready, he or she is partnered with a client and the two begin to train together to ensure they are a good match. If they are, everyone celebrates with a graduation ceremony.

*To-date, over 700 amazingly skilled dogs have been placed, each of them making a life-changing impact with clients, families and the community.*



### SHELTER DOG PROGRAM

Can Do Canines first assistance dogs were adopted from the Minneapolis Animal Shelter.

As Can Do Canines has grown and now trains dogs for five types of disabilities, it still makes every effort to adopt and train dogs from animal shelters when possible. The facility was specially designed to include "Second-Chance Kennels," where shelter dogs can be evaluated, medically treated if necessary, and eventually trained to be assistance dogs.

### CAREER CHANGE DOGS

Throughout the training process, if the dog does not seem like he or she would be a good fit for the program, the dog is "career-changed." Can Do Canines dogs never fail! They just move on to other areas of expertise such as being a good pet or as a therapy dog. A career-change may happen for a variety of reasons, such as health and temperament.

### VOLUNTEERS

The work of Can Do Canines is made possible through the efforts of over 900 passionate volunteers who move the mission forward. Their contributions, ranging from mowing the grass, to raising puppies, to serving as a board member, all add to the success of the organization.

## POSITION PROFILE

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Can Do Canines has a rich history and an exciting future. The organization is searching for a new Executive Director to take a long-term view and lead the organization in continuing its work of providing assistance dogs to people with disabilities. This position is open due to the retirement of Founder and Executive Director, Alan M. Peters.

The Executive Director will be responsible for strategic development and programmatic leadership, fundraising, donor relations, financial oversight and overall management of this complex multi-program organization. This leader will be responsible for maintaining operational excellence in services, building and maintaining relationships with state and national nonprofit, business and community leaders and partner organizations, along with other assistance dog organizations around the world.

Can Do Canines is seeking an inclusive, collaborative and enthusiastic leader, with a background in nonprofit or community leadership and a passion for the mission of Can Do Canines and the individuals served. The Executive Director will lead Can Do Canines in executing its strategic plan and will oversee the implementation of annual operating objectives. The Executive Director will provide visionary leadership to staff and volunteers, and be a positive representative to donors. The leader will also oversee the continued emphasis on growth, quality, expansion and innovation.

#### *Essential Responsibilities*

##### Strategy & Board

- Work with the board of directors to create, execute and measure progress on strategic plans
- Oversee future growth initiatives and expansion of the organization
- Maintain positive, open, collegial relations with board members

##### Staff & Volunteer Leadership

- Provide leadership to a committed group of staff and volunteers with a positive, collaborative style
- Exhibit excellent staff management skills focused on teamwork, growth and development
- Oversee the organization with the highest level of ethics and integrity

##### Fundraising, Donor Relations and Communications

- Provide leadership and direction for successful fundraising efforts; build and maintain meaningful donor relationships
- Represent and act as ambassador for the organization
- Be active in the community and in national groups related to the mission of Can Do Canines

##### Financial and Operational Management

- Direct the achievement of operational results; ensure high quality program delivery
- Lead the planning efforts for new programs and initiatives
- Oversee an efficient budgeting and financial reporting process

## POSITION PROFILE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### *Management Responsibilities*

The Executive Director reports to the Can Do Canines fifteen-member board of directors which is made up of a variety of business and community leaders. The Executive Director oversees a committed staff of full-time, part-time and volunteers. Roles reporting directly to the Executive Director are Director of Development, Director of Operations, Director of Training and Marketing & Communications Manager. A total of 31 dedicated full-time and 12 part-time staff work at Can Do Canines, supported by 900-1100 outstanding volunteers each year.

### *Qualifications*

The fully qualified candidate will possess significant related leadership experience with a nonprofit service organization of similar size and complexity, although comparable leadership experience in other sectors will be considered.

- Significant experience in a senior level strategic leadership role and related academic/continuous education is required.
- Strong connections and relationship building skills across private, public and corporate sectors.
- Passion and experience in resource development including having met and exceeded fundraising or advancement goals.
- Proven track record of revenue growth.
- Experience leading the operations of a complex, multi-programmatic organization.
- Background working with and building productive relationships with donors.
- Experience leading a large contingent of volunteers.
- Experience working productively with a highly engaged board of directors.

### *Leadership Characteristics*

- Passion for Can Do Canines' mission and values.
- Ability to lead change while understanding the impact of change on people and systems.
- An inspiring, visionary leadership style; cultivates trust by leading with authenticity and integrity.
- A style of building and maintaining high performing teams.
- Creative, innovative problem solving style.
- Committed to supporting a culture of staff growth and development.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to foster a positive, collaborative work environment; empower others; and share authority.



### *Compensation and Benefits*

The target base compensation range is \$125,000-\$150,000 and includes participation in the organization's benefits plan and relocation assistance, if appropriate.

## THE TWIN CITIES, THE BOLD NORTH, THE LAND OF 10,000 LAKES

### MEET MINNEAPOLIS & ST. PAUL

When the Twin Cities hosted the Super Bowl in 2018, it cast an international light on what the organizing committee dubbed “The Bold North.” It also gave the world an up-close and personal view of what those of us who live here already knew. Minnesota Nice is for real.

The Twin Cities of Saint Paul and Minneapolis are a unique blend of small town and major cosmopolitan hub. Both urban cores boast a thriving business, arts and civic atmosphere. Saint Paul, part of Ramsey County, is the state capitol, and is home to state government; the city has a more historical vibe. Minneapolis is part of Hennepin County, named for Father Louis Hennepin, an early explorer of the interior of North America. Hennepin County is the state's most populous and consists of 45 cities and boundless opportunities.

900+

Lakes in the Twin  
Cities metro area.

300

Parks and miles of  
biking.

60+

Museums in the  
metro area.

Outside of the central downtowns, however, both cities have many distinct neighborhoods, and residents identify more with their individual communities than with the larger city as a whole. Housing in our friendly neighborhoods is varied and offers something for all.

The area lives up to its Bold North tagline in every way. Residents enjoy four very distinct seasons, none of which will let you down. According to WalletHub, Minneapolis ranks 12th in America for cities with the most green space. Both cities share a common root of being river towns, and the great outdoors is a major attraction for residents and visitors alike. In addition to the mighty Mississippi River, there are more than 900 lakes in the metro area and surrounding suburbs, upwards of 300 parks, and miles of biking and walking trails. Nearly every weekend in the summer there are several outdoor events for participants and spectators—triathlons, biking races, running races, boat races, water skiing competitions, cultural celebrations, golf tournaments, and more.



**ENTERTAINMENT** In the *Land of 10,000 Lakes* and with the nation's #1 park system, there is always fun to be had in the region. The summer highlight for many Minnesotans is the Minnesota State Fair. One of the largest of its kind in the country, ours is a world-class showcase of Minnesota's best in agriculture, industry, arts and entertainment. Held on a 320-acre parcel located between Saint Paul and Minneapolis, it is a self-supported organization and has been held on the Minnesota State Fairgrounds every year since 1885.

As summer turns to fall, the region puts on a breathtaking autumn show that draws visitors from miles around. And the active lifestyle of Minnesotans doesn't go dormant during the winter either. Being hardy in every way, we take advantage of the miles of cross-country skiing trails, downhill ski areas, ice skating, snowmobiling, sledding, and ice fishing.

In recent years Minneapolis and St. Paul have become two of the most diverse cities in America. Almost six percent of the population identifies as LGBTQ, with many Twin Cities' organizations in arts, politics, culture, advocacy and religious sectors serving the community.

Minnesota's Somali community is one of the largest in the United States. Saint Paul is the heart of Minnesota's Hmong community as well, and is home to the largest urban concentration of Hmong residents in the country. The West Broadway neighborhood in Minneapolis and the Rondo neighborhood in Saint Paul are home to African American businesses, arts and cultural institutions and restaurants.

It is by design that we've embraced such ethnic uniqueness. Our multi-cultural communities present us with a strong and diverse workforce with an added bonus of getting to know the world, and different cultures on a more intimate scale right here at home.

One of the best places to get a taste of our many blended cultures is on Lake Street in Minneapolis - Midtown Global Market is a welcoming indoor market and meeting place featuring an abundance of ethnic dishes, gifts and groceries, from Mexican and Middle Eastern to Vietnamese, Indian, Swedish and Italian.

Many Hmong and Vietnamese restaurants and shops are located in the Frogtown neighborhood as well, on and around University and Lexington Avenues. Hmongtown Marketplace on Como Avenue and Hmong Village on



Johnson Parkway on Saint Paul's East Side feature a wide variety of traditional foods, clothing, fabrics and crafts, as well as farmers markets.

**ARTS & CULTURE** There are countless arts and culture offerings in the Twin Cities. The Grammy Award-winning Minnesota Orchestra has a reputation as one of the top orchestras in the world. The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra is also regarded as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world.

Since the early 1960s, the Guthrie Theater has staged outstanding shows from the classical to modern. Popular national shows and performers also tour through the Twin Cities year-round at stages in both Minneapolis and Saint Paul, and at the University of Minnesota.

If you are a theater-goer in the Twin Cities, you'll never have a dull moment. According to the Western States Arts Federation, Minneapolis ranks as the fifth-most "creatively vital" city in the country, right after D.C., LA, NYC and Boston. The Penumbra Theatre in Saint Paul is the country's oldest African American theater.

We boast more than 40 venues with a variety that even the most seasoned thespian would notice.

There are the magnificent musicals that play on the State, Orpheum, and Pantages stages and lots of local talent making a statement on stages such as the Southern Theater, New Century, and Illusion. Hamilton, Les Miserables and West Side Story are a few examples of productions that have played here. Theater is also a large component of life in Saint Paul. The gorgeous 1000-seat Fitzgerald Theatre acts as Minnesota Public Radio's largest broadcast studio. Staged productions commission authors, artists and radio hosts to create programming for the public radio community. The Fitzgerald Theater is Saint Paul's oldest theater and celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2010.

The Ordway Center for the Performing Arts has been recognized as one of America's leading not-for-profit performing arts centers, and is home to a wide variety of performances throughout the year providing the finest in musical theater, music, dance, and vocal artists in its Music Theater and Concert Hall. In addition, each year the Ordway presents its Flint Hills Family Festival, serving more than 50,000 children and adults through its Ordway Education programs. Dance companies such as James Sewell Ballet, Minnesota Dance Theatre, Ragamala, Zenon Dance Company and TU Dance perform at an array of venues including the renovated Cowles Center.

For the museum-goer, there are more than 60 museums in the metro area. The Science Museum of Minnesota and the Minnesota Children's Museum are interactive learning facilities and fun experiences for the entire family. The Minnesota African American Heritage Museum and Gallery and the Minnesota History Center are museums for all ages with permanent and changing exhibits, lectures and events.

The Minneapolis Institute of Arts has a collection of more than 100,000 pieces. The Walker Art Center has been called "possibly the best contemporary art museum in the U.S." by Newsweek, and has over 11,000 pieces. The University of Minnesota's Weisman Art Museum is also a contemporary art destination. The Somali Museum of Minnesota on East Lake Street features hundreds of traditional Somali artworks and artifacts as well as educational programs.

**FOR SPORTS FANS** For those who prefer activity of the spectator variety, the Twin Cities is home to the Minnesota Twins, Minnesota Vikings, Minnesota Wild and the Minnesota Timberwolves. We are also the home of the four-time WNBA Champion Minnesota Lynx and the Minnesota United soccer team. We host in some of the best sporting facilities in the county, including Target Field, home of the Minnesota Twins, and US Bank Stadium, a brand new, enclosed stadium where the Minnesota Vikings host their NFL games. Additionally, the stadium hosts early season college baseball games of the University of Minnesota Golden Gophers.



Popular music abounds, from the Grammy-winning Sounds of Blackness to Atmosphere. Outdoor concerts and festivals such as the Basilica Block Party and Rock the Garden are a common and popular activity. After all, artists from Bob Dylan to Prince have called the Twin Cities home.

**FOR FOODIES** The Twin Cities area offers award-winning restaurants (several chefs have been regional James Beard Award winners). In addition to the popular Mall of America, there are plenty of unique shopping districts in both cities and in the suburbs. Beyond sports, the great outdoors, entertainment, and culture, perhaps the biggest attraction for the Twin Cities is the lifestyle.

Forbes hailed Saint Paul and Minneapolis as one of the nation's healthiest metros and USA Today named Saint Paul as North America's "Most Romantic City." Minneapolis/Saint Paul is also proud to have a world-class international airport. In fact, the Airports Council International named MSP the 2017 Best Airport in North America in its size category, with more than 25 million passengers a year.

Networking groups in technology, manufacturing, healthcare and education support their professions. Active Chambers of Commerce further business interests and First Fridays Twin Cities celebrates African American excellence.

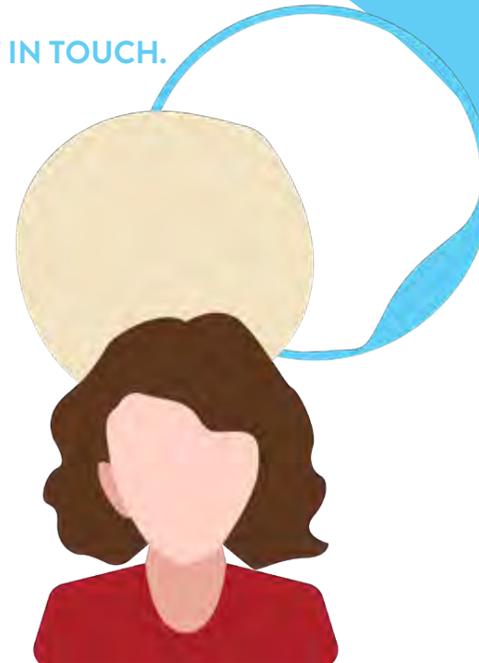
The Twin Cities is a vibrant, richly diverse Midwestern community where Minnesota Nice is alive and well. We are the perfect blend of small town/big city and our residents pride themselves on their warm and welcoming ways. There is a reason Business Insider ranked Minneapolis/Saint Paul number nine on its Top 50 Places to Live in America. We really are all that and more!



WE INVITE YOU TO GET IN TOUCH.



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**CIVIC SEARCH. REIMAGINED.**

