Together, we are changing lives.

2020 was a year of extraordinary difficulty for many. Lives were lost, businesses went under, people had to establish what we are calling a ‘new normal.’ Like most non-profits, we were hit by the pandemic in ways we could not have predicted.

Yet, with new leadership and a new outlook on our mission, we had a successful year. Take a look at our numbers to see how we rose above the road blocks and continued changing lives in 2020...one dog at a time.
Executive Letter

While 2020 was not the year any of us expected, I am happy to say that Little Angels was able to rally together and still have a productive twelve months. It certainly didn’t come without its hardships, but in a year where many found themselves out of jobs or with foreclosed businesses, LASD was able to find growth and success. 2020 was not the most ideal year to jump into the role of Executive Director, however with expert guidance from our Board of Directors, as well as solid roots laid down by our founder Katie, we were able to make the transition as a company with relative ease. I am beyond excited to settle into this role, and thrilled to start putting my visions to work. There will always be struggles to fight through, but working as a cohesive unit, myself, Katie, and our board of directors will continue to see this company grow and watch our mission spread across the country.

While our mission and objectives stayed the same, our operations had to change and adapt. We had to completely change things that were muscle memory for us; and I think that is where our staff excelled. With so much uncertainty swirling around, they jumped into the saddle and made all the changes necessary to ensure we continued to operate. Change is never easy, but the silver lining for us was the ability to reevaluate every facet of our operations and determine where there was a more simplistic and efficient way to run.

Looking back now, it seems using tools like video calling would have been an obvious benefit to a working environment, but as we have seen this past year, sometimes the most necessary changes need an extreme catalyst to spark the engine. As we hopefully work out of social distancing and hands-free lessons, we are excited to bring back some of our original operations, while also still employing some of our new found strategies. Having become experts in video calling, we have realized that as our Little Angels family continues to grow farther across the globe, there are still ways for us to stay closer than ever.

As we celebrate what could have been a tragic year for Little Angels, we would be remiss if we didn’t acknowledge every single person that made this year possible. To each of our fosters across the country, THANK YOU! You alone saved Little Angels by taking our dogs in during emergency situations - often without preparation. Be it shut downs from COVID, wildfires threatening a ranch, or any other number of issues, our fosters have always been there to save the day. We would not be who we are without you. A huge thank you as well to each of our prison programs, who somehow managed to keep operating through a pandemic. These facilities offered a safe refuge for our dogs, and ensured they were still getting the attention they needed. We are forever indebted to each of our inmate trainers, and all of the staff helping them to be successful. Finally, to every single sponsor and donor, be it large, small, corporate, or private - you are each helping us to change lives...one dog at a time. Little Angels would cease to exist without your support and for that, we are grateful.

In a year that saw pain, illness, and struggles, Little Angels found strength, good fortune, determination, and a renewed sense of family. Forging through the past year only proves what we already knew. Our family is the best of the best, and we only plan to become better. 2021 should expect to see lots of puppy paws, plenty of smiles, excited recipients, and continued growth from this amazing company.

In what will only be remembered as a year for the ages, thank you to all that helped Little Angels pull through it. While I am ecstatic to have taken on the leadership of this company, nothing has really changed. It has, and always will be, our amazing staff, volunteers, and of course, puppies, leading the way.

Cheers to an even better 2021.

Josh Drew
Executive Director, LASD
HOW WE WORK

Your support for Little Angels Service Dogs (LASD), helps us achieve victories that save lives, one dog at a time. This is how we do it.

Puppy Whelping & Development

Our breeding dogs live with staff or breeding fosters that care for them until it is time to whelp. Litters are whelped at our Breeding and Puppy Development Center in NH or in the homes of fosters. Development training starts within days of birth.

Prison OR Foster Program for Socialization

Between 8-12 weeks our puppies will continue their training in either our prison program, where they are taught basic commands, and some advanced tasks while changing the lives of their inmate trainers, or they may also enter loving foster homes to focus on socialization in public, basic commands and good manners.

Trainers Implement Advanced Tasks

At one year, the puppies return to our ranches to get reacquainted with the trainers and begin their advanced task training. Here they will work toward the ultimate goal of graduating and placement with their “fur-ever” human.

Matched & Placed, Handler Training

Dogs typically finish their training between 18-24 months of age. Once matched, they go through two weeks of Handler Training with their recipient and our trainers. During this time, the bond between the dog and recipient is established as the two begin their lives as a working team.

WHO WE ARE

We are a 501c3 non-profit, Assistance Dogs International accredited, service dog organization. We work to prepare and place fully trained service dogs in homes with disabled children and adults. As an ADI accredited organization, our training practices are held to the highest standards in the industry. It is with this dedication to our recipients that we are able to change lives...one dog at a time. We couldn’t do it without our team of over 150 staff and volunteers, our donors, and our community.
We have successfully placed over 100 service dogs with their disabled recipients since our founding in 2006. Even during the pandemic we were able to safely place 11 dogs with their forever humans.

We place Civilian/Veteran Psychiatric Dogs, Seizure Alert and Response Dogs, Autism Dogs, Mobility Dogs, Hearing Dogs, and Diabetic Alert Dogs. We offer a lifetime of support for our recipient-dog teams, continuing to check in on them, and supporting them as they navigate life together.

Let’s hear what some of them have to say:
My LASD experience has been wonderful. But especially supportive I would say. The hardest thing that I had to deal with was the wait. I just kept thinking “I’m not going to get the dog.” But it is so worth the wait. She is amazing. The whole team here has just been super supportive.

Church Music Director and recipient of an LASD Service Dog, with her new companion, Darbi.

When I first found out about the program, I was so excited to have found a program that could help me. [Missy] is my best friend. She is my anchor. She helps me go out in public more. She really just brightens my day. They [the LASD trainers] are always there to help.

Student and recipient of an LASD Service Dog, with her new companion, Missy.
WAYS TO Give

AMAZON SMILE
If you frequently purchase from Amazon Prime, consider using Amazon Smile. This Amazon feature allows you to choose a charity to receive a portion of the proceeds from your purchase. We also have an Amazon wishlist with many items that we need in order to keep our ranches running smoothly, and our dogs happy.

PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING
This fundraising method is utilized mostly by our recipients. We use the platform, Just Giving, to help create a seamless flow of donations from the recipient’s network, and the recipient’s network’s network. See the graph to the left to understand. Darlene, our Fundraising Coordinator, also gives a statement as to why we love peer-to-peer fundraising.

SEASONAL OR ANNUAL GIFT
If you have the means, donating based around a holiday works as well. We usually receive donations around Christmas and New Year’s, as well as during our Giving Tuesday campaign in the Fall. Throughout the year you can keep an eye out for giveaways, fundraisers, or other events we may host in order to encourage donations and spread awareness of our mission.

Why we love PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING

Having our new crowdfunding site through JustGiving has been a game changer for our recipients. This platform allows our recipients to each set up an individual page and have peace of mind knowing the site is secure and all donations are coming directly to Little Angels Service Dogs. Our recipients have been doing an amazing job utilizing this opportunity to raise funds for Little Angels. We are so grateful for all of their hard work and their commitment to our mission!

Darlene Drew
Director of Recipient Relations

TOTAL
$412,000
Raised this year.
After our dogs are whelped and go through their initial puppy development training, they go to one of our prison programs, or they go home with a foster.

*Pictured above* are a few of our inmate volunteers at Bolduc Correctional Facility in Maine with our May the 4th litter; Leia, Boba, Chewie, Rey, and Obi.

*Pictured to the right* is an image submitted by one of our fosters. She takes our dogs with her to the daycare facility she runs in New Hampshire. There, our dogs get an incredible amount of socialization with kids, and learn a lot about impulse control.

Josh contacted the Maine Department of Corrections Commissioner, Randall Liberty, to see if there would be any interest in introducing a prisoner service-dog training program in our facilities. Commissioner Liberty immediately put Josh in contact with the Director of Bolduc Correctional Facility, Russell Worcester. Being a former police K-9 handler himself, Director Worcester immediately jumped on board with the idea, and assigned me to oversee the program. We are 2 months into our second group of Little Angels puppies. The impact this program has had on our facility is truly amazing for both prisoners and staff alike. For the prisoners, it has given them purpose, a sense of direction, experience working as a team, and mostly, a sense of accomplishment.

One prisoner in particular has served 36 years and was recently transferred from the state’s only Maximum security prison to BCF. Having known this prisoner for the first 21 years of my employment, I can honestly never remember hearing him speak a word to a staff member, never smiling, and never participating in anything like a dog-training program. Since getting one of the dog trainer positions, he’s found something to love, something that loves him back, a rewarding purpose, and now stops by my office frequently, carrying on lengthy conversations. He smiles, tells jokes, and more importantly, has a sense of normalcy in his life which is incredibly important after so many years incarcerated and about to enter into society as a free man. He once told me early on how when he gets released, he wants to buy a Semi truck and drive around the country by himself. He’s since changed plans and wants to buy a Semi and a dog and drive around the country together.
AT A GLANCE

2020

71 dogs

IN TRAINING THROUGH ANY OF OUR PROGRAMS IN 2020

11 graduates

THREE DOGS

GRADUATED AS IN-HOME UTILITY DOGS.
2 dogs placed after being rescued.

30,000+ hours logged by our volunteers and fosters.

63% children vs. 37% adults in 2020.

41 adoptions of released service dogs.

19 puppies litters born to LASD breeder dogs.

3 active prison programs housing our service dogs in training.

35 dogs training in prison through our inmate-dog training program.

Working teams in each area of disability since 2006:
- 52 Psychiatric
- 36 Seizure
- 32 Mobility
- 14 Autism
- 1 Medical Alert

35% of released service dogs of breeding fosters.

35 prison programs housing our service dogs in training.

In Maine:
1 active program

In California:
2 active programs

In 2020:
35 active dogs
Where HAVE WE BEEN????

Placement Locations Since 2006:
- The United Kingdom
- California
- Texas
- Oregon
- Michigan
- North Carolina
- Nevada
- Washington
- Indiana
- Utah
- Massachusetts
- Maine
- New Hampshire
- & More!
OUR FINANCIALS by the Numbers

2020 Income

- Total: $1,621,474.05
  - Contributions: $1,410,728.55 (87%)
  - Grants: $100,745.50 (6%)
  - PPP Loan: $110,000 (7%)

2020 Expenses

- Total: $1,061,642.41
  - Payroll: $610,597.12 (58%)
  - Admin: $210,350.21 (20%)
  - Programs, Development, Fundraising: $240,695.08 (22%)

Of Program Services:

- Training/Kennel Supplies: $125,304.62 (52%)
- Vet Costs: $72,000 (30%)
- Foster, Breeding, Training Costs: $43,390.46 (18%)
2020 will certainly be a year the world always remembers. Just like many other non-profits, our organization felt the magnitude of the COVID-19 pandemic in the first quarter, threatening to break us down. At the first sign of trouble, our board pulled together for a game-plan. Health and safety were imperative, and economics an unknown – but failure was never an option for Little Angels.

This is a phrase I’ve held near and dear to my heart from the organization’s inception back in 2006. It started off with just a few puppies and a small training room in my garage. I remember meeting with volunteer puppy raisers at local parks and seeing the commitment of a growing team who shared in my dream. As with anything worth the time, it was a lot of work . . . but the only path was forward.

Through the years we’ve made life-saving discoveries in how dogs alert to seizures - and we greatly impacted the ability for children and adults to receive dogs to assist with a variety of disabilities that many other organizations still can’t facilitate. Our dogs have literally and figuratively opened doors for those who can’t. In the last 15 years, Little Angels has provided more opportunities for our communities than many organizations can manage in a lifetime. How does this happen? It comes back to my favorite phrase, “Failure is never an option.” I’m so proud of our team of volunteers, trainers, and administrators! Together, we’ve soared out of this pandemic with unimaginable success.

In this perilous climate, businesses were forced to make drastic changes for survival. Not only did Little Angels survive - we thrived! I’m humbled by the generosity and undying devotion of this team - because something so grand could never be attained by a select few; there is an entire community supporting our unified goal! Our staff refused to quit. Even with the hurdles, eleven new service dogs are assisting their recipients, and close to a dozen are at the starting gate; ready to go out. Our incredible inmate trainers and fosters adjusted seamlessly to virtual lessons, providing training and loving homes for our dogs. And when I needed to step back a few feet to homeschool my children, our Board Treasurer, Stephanie, moved her entire family to our California ranch to oversee daily procedures, and Josh took over as the Executive Director for the entire organization. He’s been in training to take this position for three years, and has done a stellar job of not only meeting our goals, but improving on them.

As with anyone who is touched by this organization, my heart will always be fully invested. I remain the Board President and Director of Training for both ranches. After all, who could walk away from something so beautiful? I’ve been so blessed by the Little Angels Family - a community of people who met as strangers, but came together to truly change the lives of others through the incredible dogs who give so freely of their hearts and talents. Together, we are changing lives . . . one dog at a time.

Katie Gonzalez
Chairman of the Board
Founder
RECOGNIZING THE PEOPLE AT THE OTHER END OF THE LEASH

We want to take the time to recognize our staff members at both our New Hampshire and San Diego Ranches as well as those doing amazing work for us remotely.

Pictured left, from left to right, top to bottom: Trinity (Kennel Maintenance), Jen (Training Manager, Kennel Manager), Stephanie (Board Treasurer), Julia (Training Instructor), Sam (Training Instructor), Dominique (Training Instructor), Not Pictured: Ryan (Kennel Maintenance).

Pictured above, from left to right, top to bottom: Savanna (Strategic Marketing Manager), Scott (Maintenance), Darlene (Director of Recipient Relations, Fundraising Coordinator, Director of Human Resources), Kyler (Maintenance Manager), Josh (Executive Director), Ryan (Admin), Sherlee (Training Instructor), Kat (Training Instructor), Spencer (Operations Manager, Training Manager).

Not pictured (Remote Workers): Katie (Founder, Director of Training), Mary (Grants Manager), Melody (Fundraising Manager), Dana (Breeding Program Manager), Alaina (Recipient Support Liaison), Aime (Applications Manager), Julia (Applications Assistant), and Gwen (Trainer).

A huge thank you to our staff for keeping this company moving forward, we couldn’t do it without you!
FROM plans to progress

THANKS TO

The Marilyn Lichtman Foundation

Puppy Breeding & Development Center

We want to give a HUGE shoutout to The Marilyn Lichtman Foundation for helping to fund the building of our new Puppy Breeding & Development Center in New Hampshire, they awarded us with $60,000. They, along with L.A. Drew, Coleman Concrete, Veno Electric, Belletete’s, Hancock Lumber, Fallen Drywall, Firm Foundations, and Bullet Construction, were able to make it possible for us to safely whelp and train up to three litters of puppies at one time.

“The Marilyn Lichtman Foundation is proud to walk alongside Little Angels Service Dogs. Our Founder, Marilyn Lichtman, was a strong believer in the therapeutic use of animals. To that end, she had five dogs with her at her passing; providing treasured comfort and companionship. Supporting nonprofits is what we do. Seeing our grants funds change lives, is our greatest reward.”

Thank you for helping our plans turn to progress.
Our affiliates, sponsors, donors, and volunteers mean the WORLD to us. We want to give a huge shoutout to Grandma Lucy’s. Grandma Lucy’s is a family-owned all natural freeze dried dog food and treat company. Their facilities are located in California, so our San Diego Ranch will frequently be working with them.

They are generously providing us with enough dog food for every dog we have in training, for an entire year. This will help us save money, but also the quality of their food will make our pups the healthiest they can be!

Even after that amazing donation, they will also be sponsoring our most recent litter of puppies. They have decided to name them after The Office characters, we couldn’t be more excited!

For more than 20 years, we have been fortunate enough to give back to different pet related organizations, but I was inspired to shift our focus to service dogs. Our middle son, Hunter, has Autism. About a year ago, a boy at his school came in with his service dog. Watching the new found freedoms this boy was given due to his service dog’s special skills, I knew that we wanted to help. We are so grateful to Little Angels for all they do to help people like Hunter lead more independent and safe lives.

Breann Shook
Co-Founder & Owner
Grandma Lucy’s
We invite you to interact with us on social media. There you will learn more about our company, what we are doing, and how you can support us further.

Our Instagram and Facebook are full of images capturing our training process, our staff, and honoring those who help us and our pups on their journeys to becoming Little Angels Service Dogs.

Our YouTube will take you along as we interview recipients, take our dogs on public outings, and eventually specifics on how we train our dogs. We hope to see you and connect as you learn about how we change lives...one dog at a time.

Our New Hampshire Ranch:

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