



Home of the  
**Assistance Dog Institute**  
10201 Old Redwood Hwy  
Penngrove, CA 94951  
707-545-DOGS (3647)  
www.BerginU.edu

Q1 2021

# QUEST

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF BERGIN UNIVERSITY OF CANINE STUDIES

## IN QUEST OF:



Want to Donate?  
Scan here!

### INSIDE:

- KERRY AND ABDUL SENSORY GARDEN CONTINUES TO GROW
- SUMMER SEMINAR
- ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

## Excitement about the Kerry and Abdul Sensory Garden Continues to Grow

A local landscaper has offered her services to design the site. I met and walked the property with her recently and was even more thrilled about the plan after listening to her vision and creativity.

The goal: a place providing the types of experiences that might otherwise cause an unexposed pup to question the safety of the environment.

Ideas just kept flowing:

- Smells, the pup's primary sense, will stimulate their interest in this dynamic environment. Plants with tantalizing odors, unique animal furs, brushed horse hair and different breeds of dogs' hair, even motor oil, placed in safe containers to be enjoyed (not feared) over and over.
- Sights, like statues of differing shapes of animals, people, some with robotic movement, and other unusual things that move like mylar balloons and flags waving in the breeze.
- Sounds like gentle wind chimes, horses whinnying, wind blowing, music and some sounds that in a less inviting environment might be frightening like the occasional chain saw.
- Differing objects to touch: trees, bushes, rocks, wading ponds, flowing streams or even a water fall. Surfaces to walk on, over and under, some that even move beneath their paws - to increase balance.
- And even things that a flick of the pup's tongue introduces a new or interesting flavor: spices, garden herbs, and other unique and worldly tastes.
- A playground for puppies with safe swings, slides, tunnels, a merry-go-round, and climbing apparatuses to build balance and self-confidence.

- Twisting, turning walkways, with grates and other challenging obstacles, maybe even a miniature train ride, through a wonderland of enjoyably stimulating experiences, even the calming effect of a mindful labyrinth.
- The ultimate place and space designed to help our young and older pups learn to trust and be comfortable confronting the world as full-fledged service dogs partnering with individuals with disabilities, expanding life's possibilities for both.
- An environment that reduces the need for a pup to be released from the training program because he or she reacted to a situation that, had they been exposed to it when young, they would have been completely comfortable with it.

This is our tribute to and vision for the "Kerry and Abdul Sensory Garden" - an environment that will increase the number of successful service dogs, bringing love, partnership and mobility to those seeking independence from their disability.



Photo of Kerry & Abdul

# BERGIN UNIVERSITY *of* CANINE STUDIES 2021 Summer Seminar

6/7/2021 - 7/24/2021



## **SERVICE DOG TRAINING SEMINAR – 297.5 clock hours**

The Service Dog Training Seminar is designed to introduce and educate students to the theories and applied practices involved in the selection, training, matching, placement and follow-up of service dogs with clients with mobility and psychological limitations. Employing the most up-to-date research-based methodologies, the seminar:

- Provides training for employees of existing programs providing knowledge to help them upgrade their methods;
- Helps existing assistance dog programs add a service dog training component to their current repertoire of assistance offerings;
- Prepare graduates for entry-level employment with client-oriented service dog programs;
- Is beneficial for those interested in starting one's own non-profit service dog business.

The seven-week Seminar begins with students participating in the two-week BASICS and the ABC'S of the SMARTEST DOG TRAINING model program used in the placement of service dogs with clients. This is followed by three weeks of applied service dog command training combined with a series of lectures covering topics ranging from canine health care to an understanding of disabilities, and the application of various service dog roles.

The last two weeks requires the students (under the watchful eye of their instructor) to teach an actual service dog class, giving the lectures, running the training practices, doing demos, and conducting fieldtrips. On the last day a graduation ceremony is held for the clients who have received a dog (and the students receiving a certificate). The students conduct each part of the pre-designed ceremony concluding an educational and applied immersion into most aspects of service dog program operations.



Questions? Email us at [Admissions@BerginU.edu](mailto:Admissions@BerginU.edu)



## **PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

- To introduce and involve students in theory and applied methods involved in the training of service dogs;
- To educate students in the procedures involved in the placement of service dogs with individuals with mobility and psychological limitations; and
- To provide students with an overview of employment-related opportunities in the service dog field, including: entry-level canine care and training positions; client placement specialists; fundraisers; and canine therapeutic intervention handlers.

## **PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Students completing the course will be able to demonstrate:

- Skills related to the training of service dogs commands;
- Procedures related to the placement and follow-up of service dogs with individuals with mobility and psychological limitations;
- Knowledge of canine health and wellness care, other service dog roles, new perspectives in dogs' cognition, pup raising practices, overview of service dogs from start to finish.
- Knowledge of employment opportunities related to service dog training and placement.



# ALUMNI *spotlight*

-NOELLE WEBB-



element of understanding, and the foundation upon which all else rests, is that of communication. The culminating final paper, the Capstone, allowed me to synthesize the knowledge and my interests into a functional project to help people bridge the language/communication gap with their dogs.

Bergin University is the world's only fully-accredited institution of its kind, and as such, my education from Bergin U. adds credibility to my chosen path as a human-canine interaction advocate. With an innate entrepreneurial and creative spirit, I formed The Blue Paw Project, a business devoted to understanding dogs and educating people. Through my Bergin experience, I became aware that canine body language education of both children and adults is necessary to strengthen the human-canine bond. Benefitting society with new applications of that bond became MY mission: To Speak Dog.

While at Bergin I discovered that there was a lack of comprehensive canine body language books designed for children who are most at risk for dog bites. This realization sparked *Speak Doggie, Speak!* a canine body language tale with the primary goal to educate children and their parents on canine signaling. As a follow-up, a second book "Bark, Whine, Growl," a children's guide to dog sounds, is another step forward in the human-canine connection. A third children's book, related to positive reinforcement training, the philosophy of Bergin University, is in progress.

(Continued on following page)



A corporate layoff, the deaths of my two dear dogs, and the startling revelation that my father had been a P.O.W. during the Korean War—seemingly unrelated events, but those events brought me to Bergin University. Those moments jolted me to pursue a deeper understanding of the human-canine bond. Years of volunteering experience in local dog shelters led me to Paws for Purple Hearts and then ultimately to Bergin University. Simultaneously, I was offered guardianship of a released service dog. That sealed the deal—I was called; I knew it and I also had a great feeling of responsibility to use my knowledge to change and improve the world of human-canine partnerships—that's the Bergin vision.

I chose Bergin to open my mind and opportunities for my future and I can attest that both goals have been achieved. The professors were like the bumpers on a bowling lane. A strange analogy, but they kept me on track, as the lane bumpers do, with the latest scientific canine research and guided me to books and information that I would not have encountered on my own. Each class in the Master's Degree program offered enough structure to stay on task, while providing the freedom to pursue what spoke to me individually. The small classes became my extended community and offered the opportunity to interact with both the teachers and students.

Calling on my undergraduate degree in foreign languages, I was drawn to the world of Canine Body Language. That interest combined with other Bergin courses led me to the realization that understanding our canine companions is not an elective, it is a responsibility, and that the time is now to make long-lasting and long overdue reparations with our canine companions. As I see it, the most basic

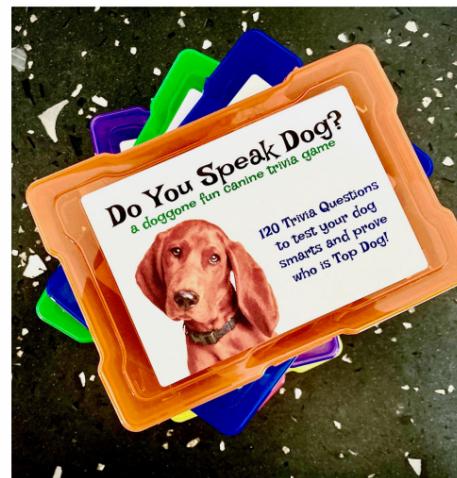
In addition to children's books, my Bergin education has afforded me the knowledge and confidence to create *Do You Speak Dog?* a doggone fun trivia game for adults. Rooted in current canine research, the primary objective of the game is the education of the adult audience on a broad range of topics from canine body language to dogs and the law. Educational yes, but fun too! I've had the pleasure of watching my creation come to life and it's quite a hoot, or should I say a "woof!"

With my Bergin U. Master's Degree in hand, books and games will be the springboard to an even more exciting project-replicating the Dementia Dog Project based in Scotland. In partnership with currently existing service dog training programs, inmates will serve as dementia dog trainers to boost training capacity to provide dementia assistance dogs. A lofty calling, but one that wouldn't have been possible without the encouragement and educational knowledge gained at Bergin U.



## Bark, Whine, Growl

A children's guide to dog sounds



## Ways to donate:

- Scan the QR code on the front page of this newsletter
- Use the envelope included in this newsletter
- Click the "donate" button in the link in our Instagram bio
- Click the "donate" button on our website at [www.BerginU.edu](http://www.BerginU.edu)

Follow us!

 [www.Instagram.com/BerginUniversity](https://www.instagram.com/BerginUniversity)

 [www.Facebook.com/BerginU](https://www.facebook.com/BerginU)



**Home of the  
Assistance Dog Institute**  
10201 Old Redwood Hwy  
Penngrove, CA 94951  
707-545-DOGS (3647)  
[www.BerginU.edu](http://www.BerginU.edu)

**Staff (alphabetically):**  
Bonita M. Bergin, EdD -- President/CEO  
Devan Amundson -- Dog Kennel Manager  
Carol Bracco -- Receptionist  
Emma Coenen -- Inmate & Development Program Manager  
Mandy Drexhage -- Bookkeeper  
Denise Gregersen -- Registrar/Chief Operating Officer  
Rachel Hanson -- Staff Accountant  
Eric Jensen -- Facilities Manager  
Shinya Kawasaki -- Breeding and Early Puppyhood Education Manager  
Jennifer Longman -- Vet Care Assistant  
Rebecca Richardson -- Chief Academic Officer  
Sherri Rieck -- Campus Operations Manager  
Molly Rodgers -- Student Services Administrative Assistant  
Connie Van Guilder -- Director of Admission Services

**Faculty:** Listed on our website, address above

**Board of Trustees:**  
Dave Phillips -- Chair  
Mark Quattrocchi -- Secretary/Treasurer  
Bonita Bergin -- Member/President  
Ricky Dukes -- Member  
Roy Hurd -- Member  
Rob Rutherford -- Member  
Clem Carinalli -- Member

Newsletter Editor -- Emma Coenen  
Photo Credits -- Sherri Rieck

