



**Home of the
Assistance Dog Institute**
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QUEST

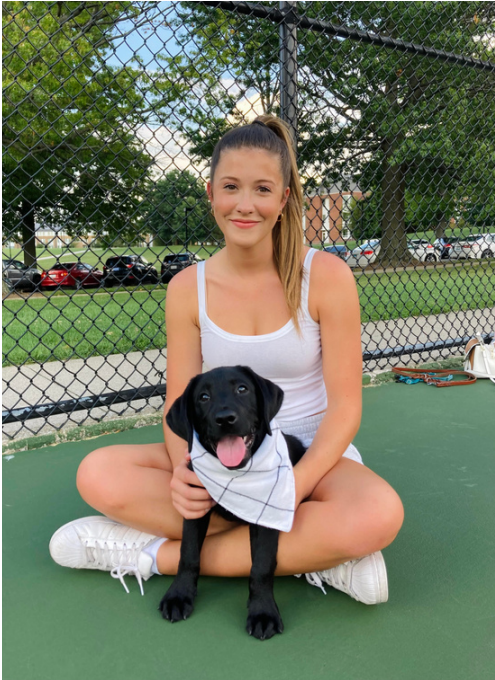
THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF BERGIN COLLEGE OF CANINE STUDIES

STUDENT SUCCESS

While pairing clients with their assistance dogs makes our hearts sing, it brings us much joy to see our students succeed after their time with us here at Bergin College of Canine Studies. We work diligently to equip our students with the tools they need to soar in the service dog industry - when that pays off, we can't help but celebrate!

The more students that we successfully graduate means that more qualified and educated service dog trainers are out in the world, ready to impact the lives of dogs and their human partners for the better.

Avary Marin began working at *Good Dog! Service Canines* shortly after she graduated from our 2022 Summer Seminar. She has been an Apprentice Service Dog Trainer at *Good Dog!* for the last year and is thoroughly enjoying it! When asked what skills from her time with us help her in her current career, she enthusiastically exclaimed “Pretty much everything! The hands-on experience working with a mock client, as well as the personality scoring of dogs and clients and how that can affect placement, has been particularly helpful for my position now.”



It’s gratifying to hear that we set Avary up for success; we’re happy that *Good Dog!* continues to cultivate her learning and support her endeavors. “The team is very supportive... educational and productive, but also fun and interesting,” she elaborates. Seeing our students grow, from start to finish, in our program is a beautiful thing to witness.

We continue to cheer them on as they blossom on their professional career path. Avary encourages our current students to “Enjoy every minute you are there! It can be challenging at times because you are learning so much, but I wouldn't trade my Bergin experiences for the world. I really progressed as a trainer in so many ways during my time there so have fun and soak up as much information as possible!”



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Bachelor of Science graduate, **Kevin Li**, completed his degree in Cynology (canine studies) in 2017. Since then, he has remained in Sonoma County to establish Kanine Freedom, his own dog training business. One of the most rewarding aspects of his work is “Watching the client really be open to learning and seeing the progress they have with their dog after putting in the work. Seeing how happy the client is after (completion of their training sessions) is always one of the biggest highlights,” Kevin shared.



His time at Bergin College of Canine Studies equipped him with the ability to educate and teach people the basics of rewarding dogs. “Being able to practice what I learned from DHV (Dogs Helping Veterans class) and Client Training helped me learn how to work with clients easier and understand how they cope,” he explained.

Upon speaking with Kevin, it is clear that he finds his education from us to be valuable. It’s wonderful to hear him speak with passion about the work he does. The biggest piece of advice that Kevin has for our current Bergin students is to “Always be open minded.” He urges students to continue to foster their curiosity about dogs long after they graduate and cultivate a community of people to talk to within the dog world so that they never feel alone.

He continues, “Keep educating yourself and make sure to give yourself some time off to avoid burnout.” While he is passionate about his career, he has learned from experience that going full-speed ahead, 24/7, simply isn’t sustainable.



Avary and Kevin are just two examples of the countless Bergin graduates that continue to succeed in the canine industry. Whether working directly with service dogs-in-training or educating the public on how to train their family dog(s), our graduates continue to advance the human-canine partnership long after their time with us.

For more information on enrolling in our Associate of Science degree in Assistance Dog Education, Bachelor of Science degree in Cynology, Master of Science degree in Human-Canine Life Sciences, or our Summer Seminar certificate program, please email admissions@berginu.edu or give us a call at (707) 545-3647.

OUR “D” DOGS



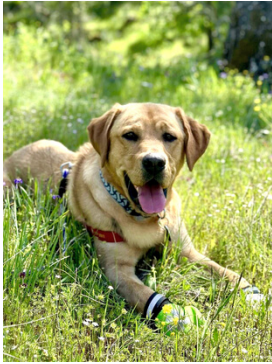
Dennis



Donald



Doris



Douglas



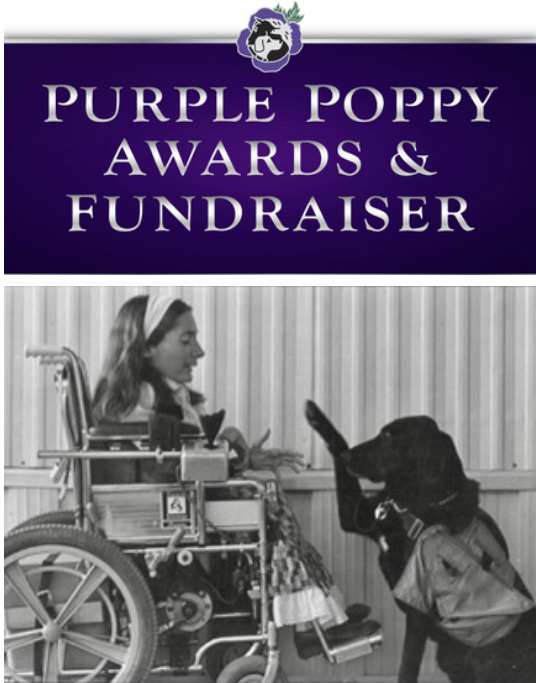
Dudley

We are seeking facility/therapy dog placement applicants! We had a litter of 5 “all named with initial letter D” dogs born during the pandemic, thus they missed out on early pup petting and enrichment experiences. They’ve been in training for 2 1/2 years. In the home and at work, they are wonderfully loving, well-behaved, and skilled in therapeutic tasks and commands.

In public, they occasionally view other dogs and some people as play objects or threats. To clarify, facility/therapy dogs don’t have public access rights, but strong handling on walks or hikes may be required. Thus, they don’t qualify for service dog partnerships.

If any working professional in the mental health and/or educational field is interested in a facility/therapy dog, please give us a call at (707) 545-3647 for more information. These are wonderful dogs and we are eager to see them placed in working roles!

BONNIE RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD



Our president and founder, Dr. Bonita M. Bergin, will be receiving a highly-acclaimed award! Bonnie will be honored at the first annual Purple Poppy Awards and Fundraiser put on by the National Service Animals Memorial (NSAM). NSAM is a federally-funded 501(c)(3) nonprofit public benefit organization that has received Congressional Authorization to build a memorial in Washington D.C. that commemorates the contributions of service animals and the pioneers that led the way. The National Service Animals Memorial has set out to create “A beautiful and moving national memorial in the nation’s capital to educate, inspire, and honor the work, contributions, and sacrifices of service animals and their handlers throughout U.S. history, and to celebrate the human-animal bond.” She will be recognized at NSAM’s inaugural Purple Poppy Awards and Fundraiser on September 28, 2023 in San Rafael, California.

IN QUEST OF: OVERCOMING COVID

A mere two weeks before the release of the new COVID Booster, and after three plus years of very carefully avoiding COVID, my husband Jim and I came down with it.

The good news is, from being vaccinated and boosted several times, it was mild. The bad news is, we let our guard down in the midst of multiple news reports that this new variant was spreading like wildfire.

Sept 2nd and 4th - Family events surrounded by relatives we hadn’t seen in the last three years. Lots of hugging.

Sept 6 - We had what seemed like a mild case of the flu, tested negative for COVID.

Sept 8 - Just to double check - tested again: POSITIVE for COVID.

Terms I’ve heard being used for this new COVID variant is “rampant” or “on a rampage.” I believe it!

For 3+ years Jim and I never stopped masking indoors. However, this Labor Day weekend, at those two outdoor crowded social gatherings, we tossed aside our masks and reveled in hugging family members we hadn’t seen in years. Days of isolation followed. Thankfully our mild cases allowed for the company and caretaking of 3 dogs and 5 horses.

With the holidays almost upon us — lesson learned. Thus when our COVID isolation finally ends, it’ll be back to masking and elbow bumping with family and friends. Keep safe!

Sonoma

OUR JAIL PROGRAM IS BACK

After a four year hiatus, we have restarted our eight year-long partnership with the Sonoma County Sheriff’s Office. In this program, Bergin College of Canine Studies students head to the Sonoma County Main Adult Detention Facility (MADF) each week to teach and provide incarcerated persons with hands-on dog training experience. The Sonoma County Sheriff Office’s focus in restarting this canine intervention therapy is to help their incarcerated persons grow and succeed in a healthy, constructive manner. It’s been beautiful to witness the growth in the incarcerated individuals’ outlooks throughout the years. These people that are cast as “the bad guys” really open up to our loving, four-legged counterparts; dogs don’t cast judgement nor do they discriminate. A human is a human and, as long as the dog is treated well, they will love them just the same. Lt. Liana Whisler of the SoCo Sheriff’s Office exclaims, “We are grateful to have this community partnership with such an amazing organization and look forward to the benefits of healing and hope it will provide our incarcerated population!”

INTRODUCING OUR 2023 SUMMER SEMINAR GRADUATES!



Left to Right: Karla Garcia, April Dessenberger, Sharon Hopfer, Duke Monk, Nova Chrisman, Tracy Nickols, Katie Schmidt, Tim Saucedo

This Bustling Campus

RESCUE DOG UPDATE

Every single puppy whelped from the rescue mothers we received from various shelters across the North Bay Area have been adopted! As you will remember from our last *Quest* issue, we had a total of 17 rescue puppies on our campus earlier this year. We couldn't be more excited to announce that all 17 dogs, including the three mothers, are currently in safe, loving homes. Thank you to everyone that helped us spread the word about the adoptable



companions. Thank you to our staff members, Devan and Jen, in tandem with our Bachelor students of Spring 2023, for ensuring that these shelter dogs were equipped to transition into forever homes. Cheers to a very successful Shelter Dog Program! This program makes its appearance every other year so keep your eye out in the 2024-2025 school year for another chance to support this wonderful initiative.

BERGIN CATS!

Yes, you read that correctly - we now have three handsome orange tabby cats on campus! Lightning McQueen and Tow Mater are litter mates and Mango is a staff member's personal pet. Lightning McQueen and Tow Mater are three months old and live in a multi-level kitty hotel, equipped with fun toys and comfy beds, in our puppy room. They get so many loving visitors and are providing our youngest service dogs-in-training with valuable enrichment 24/7.



Lightning McQueen



Tow Mater



Mango

If you look closely at Lightning McQueen, you will see that he is polydactyl! Little man's "mittens" don't hinder him whatsoever, nor do the extra digits on his front two paws hurt.

Mango is four months old and was adopted from a local animal shelter; he was rescued from a euthanasia shelter in central California. While he goes home with his mom each night, he spends his "work" days in our administration building providing our administrators with cuddles and laughter.



The tale as old as time, that dogs and cats are great enemies, is being rewritten daily here on our campus. Having these three boys on campus exposes our service dogs-in-training to the scents, sounds, and sight of cats. The more our dogs are around cats, getting desensitized to them, the better chance they have at remaining calm upon seeing them off-campus and out in the world.

THE NEW KIDS IN TOWN

Our ever-evolving campus has grown by three additional staff members this year. Crystal Hotz is our wonderful Administrative Assistant extraordinaire. Their favorite part about working here is the wonderful team they get to work with - being able to work alongside dogs is a huge plus for them. Fun fact: They helped whelp a litter of 11 at the young age of 13! Courtney Vargas is our Administrative Data Entry Support specialist and Denise Getz' (Chief Operating Officer) right-hand person. She loves how nice our team is and seeing all the awesome dogs on campus. Fun fact: She has her own craft business, specializing in handmade goods! Nicole Roberts is our Associate Dog Program Manager; she helps Bonnie with a variety of tasks including teaching, programming, and administrative tasks. Fun fact: She has so much fun hula hoop dancing that she forgets that it's a full-body workout! These three have been fantastic additions to our team and we are happy to have them!

Some fun facts about the rest of our team:

Beatriz Padilla, our Lead Puppy Kennel Technician, ensures the puppy room is maintained and running properly. Fun fact: She adopted Fiona from our shelter program last year. Becca Richardson, our diligent Chief Academic Officer, handles compliance, student services, and manages our faculty. Fun fact: She adores spending time with her family. Bonnie Bergin, our devoted President/Founder, oversees each aspect of this brainchild of hers, Bergin College. Fun fact: Her favorite song is "Desperado" by The Eagles. Casey Koslosky, our organized National Client Manager, walks clients through the process from start to finish. Fun fact: She has worked at the White House in Washington, D.C. Connie Van Guilder, our Director of Admission Services, communicates with and enrolls all of our fantastic students. Fun fact: She has been in higher education for 25 years. Denise Getz, our Chief Operating Officer, ensures we stay in compliance with all regulations, reports, and audits. Fun fact: She loves Korean music. Eric Jensen, our hardworking Facilities Manager is devoted to keeping our campus in the very best shape. Fun fact: His first grandchild came into the world this year. Jen Longman, our Puppy Breeding & Enrichment Manager is a knowledgeable RVT and manages the puppy room. Fun fact: She loves concerts and attends 20+ a year. Salianna Goss, our Dog & Puppy Education Assistant Manager, teaches and directs our foster and puppy parent programs. Fun fact: She absolutely loves to read. Shelby Snead, our Development Associate, handles public relations, fundraising, marketing, and volunteer endeavors. Fun fact: Her bachelors degree is in dance. Sherri Rieck, our Campus Operations Manager, specializes in technology, transcripts, and database maintenance. Fun fact: Her favorite band is The Grateful Dead.

ALL HANDS ON DECK

Our dedicated, loving, staff members and kennel technicians whelped three litters on campus this summer! Two Golden Retriever litters: Mama Nestle had eleven healthy pups on June 7th and Mama Meg had seven healthy pups on August 31st. Our third Mama, Hazel, is a German Shepherd rescue that we took in with open arms from the Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County. We helped her deliver a healthy litter of five on September 5th. All three litters, including their mothers, are happy, healthy, and very loved!

Bequest Appreciation

We express our deepest appreciation for those that leave us in their will. It warms our heart to know that the community feels strongly about our mission and wants to support us in advancing the human-canine connection. Our supporters’ contributions have made a lasting impact on our organization and have allowed us to place numerous assistance dogs with those in need. Our most sincere gratitude goes out to you, as we send many tail-wags.

If you would like to leave Bergin College of Canine Studies in your trust, consider leaving a legacy with a charitable bequest today! Thank you for choosing to fuel our program and expand our reach.

Bachelor Students & AWU Offer Free Dog Training



Our Bachelor of Science students teamed up with *Animal Welfare United* to offer free dog training classes to the public! Across six different parks in Rohnert Park, CA, these accessible offerings provide valuable skills for both our students and community members alike. Classes run until October 25th. For more information, go to www.animalwelfareunited.com.



Bosco

Interested in a Facility Dog?

Email ServiceDogRequest@BerginU.edu, download the Facility Dog Application on our website (www.BerginU.edu), or give us a call today at (707)545-3647!

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