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## **Susquehanna Service Dogs receives \$20,000 grant from Purina to create new assistance dog training center**

*Donation through Purina Trust Fund will expedite process of training assistance dogs and matching them with individuals in need*

ST. LOUIS, February 1, 2022 – Susquehanna Service Dogs (SSD) today received a \$20,000 donation from Nestlé Purina PetCare Company to help develop a new training center near the company's manufacturing facility in neighboring Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.

The new training center will allow SSD to fortify operations and increase the likelihood of more successful assistance dogs, ultimately resulting in the ability to accommodate more people waiting to be matched with an assistance dog in a shorter time. Purina's donation will be used for state-of-the-art training equipment and technology to monitor the health and well-being of the dogs in training, as well as their social interaction. The 13,000-square-foot training center will open in the spring of 2022.

"In all of our communities, Purina is proud to support programs and organizations that share our belief that pets and people are better together," said Angela Broadrick, Purina factory manager in Mechanicsburg. "Susquehanna Service Dogs has made a big impact in our region for a long time and we look forward to seeing how the new training center will enhance their efforts to provide suitable assistance dogs for those in need."

SSD is a program of Keystone Human Services (KHS). Founded in 1972, KHS works to end institutionalization and supports people with disabilities to live, work, and go to school in the community. SSD has placed over 350 assistance dogs, giving children and adults their independence and confidence back for over 27 years. SSD breeds, raises, trains, and places assistance dogs and hearing dogs, as well as facility dogs, to assist children and adults with disability in communities throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.

"It takes a community to raise, train, and place assistance dogs, and we're pleased to partner with Purina to equip the new training center," said Charles J. Hooker, President and CEO of Keystone Human Services. "Ultimately, we're working together to change lives and create more inclusive communities."

SSD's expertly trained dogs support people with mobility challenges, children and adults with autism, veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury, non-military related PTSD, other psychiatric needs, hearing impairments, and seizure response. SSD also places facility dogs for schools (New York, Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C.), courthouses (treatment and veteran court, family court, and child protection), hospitals (Children's Hospital of

Philadelphia), nursing homes, and criminal justice systems. SSD follows each partnership between the person and dog for the life of the dog, providing support to keep each partnership successful, and conducting annual re-testing.

This donation is being granted through the Nestlé Purina Trust Fund, established by Purina founder William H. Danforth to provide critical support to important community causes. The company is investing more than \$1 million in its communities this year through several capital and capacity-building grants to support local non-profit organizations. Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than \$150 million towards organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive.

To learn more about causes Purina supports, visit [www.purina.com/about-purina/supporting-communities](http://www.purina.com/about-purina/supporting-communities).

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