

# PARAGON

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## SERVICE DOGS



## Paragon Press June 2025



Happy June! As summer arrives, we've been keeping busy here at Paragon. From

client travels to welcoming new pups into the program, it's been a delightful month. So, sit back and grab a cold drink while we share some exciting news!

## Client Applications Are Open!

Throughout June, we've been accepting new applications for our hearing dogs. Applications are open until July 31, 2025, and are reviewed on a rolling basis, so we encourage early submissions. If you or someone you know is interested in applying, check out the eligibility criteria below.

[Click Here to Apply](#)

[Click Here for Eligibility Criteria](#)



## Astro's Journey Across the Pond

Some of our favorite updates from clients are the adventures they have together as a team. It is magical to watch our pups open opportunities and become part of a team ready to take on the world. One amazing and well-traveled pair is Harvey and Astro!

Born and raised in the UK, Harvey has been part of the Deaf community for much of his life. As his hearing began to decline due to aging, he and his wife decided to seek out a hearing dog to support Harvey's independence and safety. Paragon matched Astro, a calm and adventurous dog perfect for all of Harvey's adventures such as career fairs and many travels.



After Harvey and Astro became a beautiful team, they began exploring the world together! Paragon staff were excited to hear that Astro and Harvey were traveling across the pond to the UK to visit family. An international flight is a serious test of a dog's training and their connection with their handler! During the nine-hour flight, Astro was an exceptional service dog, impressing the flight crew and other passengers. He remained calm and rarely moved, surprising some passengers who didn't realize there was a dog on the plane. The crew even said a warm "Goodbye, Astro" when they arrived at their destination.





Once in the UK, their adventures began with a lovely stroll by the canal, introducing Astro to his brand-new environment. Surrounded by compliments on his behavior, Astro continued to alert Harvey to important sounds, enabling his independence everywhere they traveled. They explored phone booths and even rode the classic double-decker bus.

Back in the U.S., Harvey shared, “Astro was absolutely amazing and worked hard to be a good service dog in a completely new environment with lots of stimulation and distractions.”

Way to go, Harvey and Astro, on this amazing adventure — and thank you for taking us along by sharing all the wonderful sights!





## Volunteer Spotlight: Lori

Part of the foundation of our program is our amazing puppy sitters, weekend companions, and onsite volunteers. With each volunteer role being truly essential to our success, we want to celebrate a volunteer who manages to do it all and always steps in wherever she's needed. Thank you, Lori, for your incredible work!



Lori came to our program with priceless experience. While teaching 6th–12th grade Spanish for 19 years, she began raising puppies for Guide Dogs for the Blind. Over eight years, she tirelessly helped raise six dogs, an endeavor that requires resolve, dedication, and many sleepless nights. When Lori applied to be a puppy sitter, Paragon staff were thrilled to welcome such an experienced and skilled volunteer aboard but didn't yet know what a vital role she would play. Trainers were immediately impressed by her dog-handling abilities and her deep understanding of teaching and behavior. When she expressed interest in becoming a weekend companion, we were beyond excited. With her skill set and expertise, we knew any pup placed with her would be set up for success.



"Our faith story at Christian Living Communities is one of grateful beginnings and an unwavering commitment to care that is both Christ-like and of the highest quality. It is a story of devoted staff, committed volunteers, and visionary leaders, each of whom have played an important role in keeping Christian love, respect and compassion at the center of daily life."

Dr. Dale  
Executive Director of Christian Services

Now, she spends her weekends with our 15-month-old Lab, Pruitt, introducing him to new sights, sounds, and smells while teaching him essential house manners in preparation for graduation. During advanced training, we've seen him mature beautifully becoming calmer and more confident thanks to Lori's skill and her strong partnership with our Paragon trainers.

In addition to puppy sitting, Lori goes above and beyond by coming in on Wednesday mornings to walk and enrich our pups' lives during the day. This important role provides well-deserved breaks for our dogs during advanced training and offers vital opportunities for them to work with a variety of people. Her impact is easily apparent as we watch our dogs light up when she enters the kennel room with their tails wagging furiously.



When asked about her volunteer experience at Paragon, Lori shared, "I LOVE

volunteering with Paragon... not just being around all the pups (that's a given), but it's the people of the organization that make the difference.”

Lori, thank you for not only volunteering in one role, but for recognizing what's needed and stepping up to help in every way you can. Paragon couldn't succeed without you, and you've made a monumental impact on every dog whose life you've touched. THANK YOU!

## Welcome Finch!



We are excited to welcome another new addition to Paragon Service Dogs, our wonderful little Finch! This three-pound Havanese puppy is full of energy and has a people-oriented personality.

When we first welcomed him, we were amazed by his enthusiasm. This little furball was bouncing with joy the entire time!



After we sent him up to his inmate handler, Nick, we're happy to report he's doing wonderfully. Trainers describe him as a stuffed animal come to life, showing no fear around the larger dogs. We're so excited to see how this little pup grows!

## Dog Diaries: Echo



Echo here! Things at Paragon have been busy since I arrived. It's been a full house with lots of dogs in advanced training.

This past week, I went on an outing to Scheels. There were lots of people and dogs everywhere. It was great practice!

I've been staying cool these past few weeks by lounging by the big water bowls while playing with all the other dogs. Inside, I've been working on my cues and have started learning my sound alerts – like the timer.

I hope you're staying cool too!

— Echo



# Thanks for Reading!

Thanks for celebrating all of June's adventures with us! It's always a joy to highlight amazing teams like Harvey and Astro and to recognize the important role and impact our volunteers like Lori have.

We're looking forward to some exciting stories in July, so stay tuned!

With gratitude,  
The Paragon Team 🐾❤️



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