

Therapy Dog Program Provides Joy and Comfort

For people who have pets, they know how good it is to have a furry and friendly companion by their side. Dogs, known as “man’s best friend,” can also be anyone’s go-to for cheer. They also provide therapeutic benefits to individuals such as lowering blood pressure, diminishes physical pain, lowers anxiety and encourages communication, along with lifting one’s spirit.

Due to these benefits, our Therapy Dog Program was implemented to bring some extra joy to the individuals we serve. Established last year, the program was started by a small group of administrative staff to continuously bring new and creative programming to individuals with developmental disabilities we serve and to tenants who live in our People Inc. Senior Living apartments. Through a short period of time, the program has grown in popularity.

People Inc. Associate Vice President Lori Brodsky, who oversees our agency’s business office functions, manages our Therapy Dog Program. It’s a volunteer role that she loves.

“The program brings so much joy to my work,” Lori shared. “The outcomes for the individuals we serve are amazing. It goes beyond just a friendly pet visit – there are therapeutic benefits, moods are uplifted and there is so much engagement.”

As a member of the Association of Professional Dog Trainers, Lori has the pleasure of attending dog therapy visits and seeing first-hand the results that are achieved, as well as working with the owners of the certified dogs. “To see such a beautiful reaction from the individuals with developmental disabilities and our seniors that we serve brings tears to my eyes; it has been a very rewarding experience for all of us,” said Lori.



Lori Brodsky, People Inc. associate vice president, manages our Therapy Dog Program. Visiting with therapy dog Tessie, she shares that it’s a volunteer role that she loves.



Participants from the People Inc. Lancaster Day Habilitation enjoyed their visit with Deuce!

The therapy dogs have had a tremendous impact on our individuals with developmental disabilities who have physical and medical challenges.

Certified Therapy Dog Deuce recently visited program participants of our Lancaster Day Habilitation. Participants were overjoyed with Deuce’s visit. “Our program participants said they liked Deuce, wanted him to sit on their lap and gave him hugs,” said Amanda Sypniewski, senior day supervisor, People Inc. Lancaster Day Habilitation. “They smiled often, pet and reached towards Deuce. Individuals who are non-verbal smiled and laughed as they spent time with Deuce.”

Participants from our various day programs are also getting in on the fun! Our Niagara County Community College Young Adult Life Transitions and Arts Experience programs have teamed up to make bandanas for therapy dogs that are part of our program.

Your dog can have an impact, too, by joining the People Inc. Therapy Dog Program. To learn more, contact Lori Brodsky at lbrodsky@people-inc.org or by calling 716.817.7421.