



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **DBL's First Young Professionals Board Launches in Washington's Puget Sound, Securing First Three Members**

**CENTRAL POINT, OR** – Two years in the making, Dogs for Better Lives' (DBL) [Young Professionals Board \(YPB\) – Puget Sound](#) launched earlier this month, securing its first three members. Helping to kick off DBL's new fiscal year starting in July, Corey Wise (chairman), Meghan Heims (vice chairman), and Claire Dickinson (treasurer) have all recently accepted officer positions within YPB – Puget Sound.

"Despite DBL experiencing unprecedented times, we're still seeing a lot of buzz and interest in our Young Professionals Board in Washington State," stated CEO Bryan Williams. "We're excited to see Corey, Meghan, and Claire join the YPB and know with their enthusiasm, passion for the mission, and diverse professional skillsets, they will help to elevate DBL's exposure in the region to the next level."

As DBL continues to grow and embark on its journey to better the lives of those with disabilities, pairing them with an Assistance Dog, they aim to cultivate the next generation of leaders in the Greater Puget Sound region to become involved in carrying out DBL's mission and vision.

"In following our strategic plan in further establishing our regional and national reach, the Young Professionals Board (Puget Sound) will play a critical role in assisting DBL with its community outreach and engagement, further extending our reach into the Pacific Northwest, stated Board Chairman, David Hollingsworth. "I'm looking forward to watching Corey, Meghan, and Claire's progress on their initiatives moving forward."

The DBL Young Professionals Board (YPB) is comprised of like-minded individuals in their 20s, 30s, and 40s that have a passion for dogs and giving back to people with disabilities in their communities. Members will be responsible for marketing the mission of DBL, participating in outreach events, as well as planning and fundraising through a variety of initiatives.

With the support and guidance of the regional Young Professionals Board in Washington's Puget Sound, DBL will host a yet-to-be-determined signature event, engaging donors, clients, and community partners. Eventually, we will have Young Professionals Boards across the country, working to support each of our planned satellite offices. Currently we have satellite offices in Puget Sound (WA) and Central California, with plans next for Southern California (2021).

Please see below for backgrounds on Corey Wise, Meghan Heims, and Claire Dickinson.

### **Corey Wise**

Corey is the founder and CEO of StruggleBear LLC, a company that inspires people to own their struggle not only through humor and relatability but through cultivating a community that is bonded by vulnerability and courage. Prior to StruggleBear, Corey pursued a passion and attended Central Washington University in 2003 to pursue his BA in Flight Technology to become a commercial airline pilot.

In 2008 he joined the US Air Force as a Special Warfare Unit as a Pararescue (PJ) Specialist, where he rescued and medically treated downed and injured military personnel all over the world. Corey not only followed the PJ motto of “These Things We Do, That Others May Live” during his service with the Air Force, but this motto has served as a lifelong source of inspiration for Corey and drives his efforts to help others to this day. His tenure with the Air Force was unexpectedly cut short by a traumatic leg injury during training, resulting in 8 screws being surgically implanted in his leg and a medical discharge.

After the Air Force, Corey’s passion for challenge landed him at the University of Washington to study Business and Marketing. From there he soon found a career in digital marketing, project management, and entrepreneurship, which has provided him with the skills he has applied to StruggleBear.

Corey has lived all over the Pacific Northwest, notably with a year in Squamish, BC where he spent the days outdoors rock climbing. He now lives in Seattle, WA, and can be found cycling around Lake Washington spreading his message of positivity, climbing, and mountaineering the surrounding mountains, as well as working with his Dogs for Better Lives’ future assistance black labrador, named “Gunther”.

Staying true to the PJ motto, community service has always been a central theme to Corey’s mindset. Even as a youngster, Corey showed leadership qualities as he coached and refereed youth hockey, while later in life serving with various food banks and organizations, as well as assisting in the management of a YMCA community youth garden.

The opportunity to be part of Dogs for Better Lives will allow Corey to fulfill his mission to give back to the community, helping both people and dogs to have better, more fulfilling lives. Corey joined the Dogs for Better Lives Young Professional Board in the spring of 2020.

### **Meghan Heims**

Meghan Heims is a marketing and advertising executive in Washington’s Puget Sound area, focusing on brand strategy and platform development to create memorable, engaging, and ultimately long-lasting brands. With a background in apparel design and fine art, she cultivates with an eye for creativity and taste. She hopes to utilize these skills and passions to create an everlasting brand with the young professionals board that will stand strong through the many goals that Dogs for Better Lives will tackle and can easily be adapted to suite all YPB branches across the country.

She was born and raised in Newport Oregon, A coastal fishing community and one of the many ports where her father runs his boat. The oldest of 4 daughters, she learned the importance of leadership and teamwork early on. Raised by parents that instilled the importance of hard work, perseverance and problem solving, but also the necessity for compassion and helping others. With this knowledge she has volunteered since a young age, eventually following in her mother’s footsteps and becoming a board member of the Newport Fishermen’s Wives, an organization that raises money for fishing families in need and creates awareness of the importance of the fishing community in their region and beyond.

As a volunteer for NFW she helped organize and execute many large and successful fundraising events. She hopes to offer her expertise on creating these events as a member of the YPB of Puget Sound and raise the ever-important funds that Dogs for Better Lives uses to do its important work.

An adventurous woman, Meghan has traveled all over the United States and Abroad, for work and play. She loves to go surf fishing and beach combing with her husband Jayson (an Army combat veteran and recipient of the Purple Heart and her personal hero), stepdaughter Alyssa (11) and their great dane Muddy Waters.

Meghan hopes to bring a collaborative, focused, co-leadership to the Young Professionals Board of Puget Sound. Utilizing the many unique aspects of her beautiful region to promote, fundraise and create general awareness of the amazing work that Dogs for Better Lives does. She is humbled by the appointment to co-chair and looks forward to working with all of the officers and eventually other YPB boards to fulfill the Dogs for Better Lives mission.

### **Claire Dickinson**

Claire Dickinson serves as the Operations Director for a large Periodontal Specialty in the Pacific Northwest, Puget Sound Periodontics. Claire's love of dentistry as well as business had led her to this position whereas she leads the day to day operations in effort to serve patients and referring offices in the best way possible. In addition to working in various positions in dentistry for the last 23 years, Claire holds a bachelor's degree in Business Management and is close to finishing her master's in Organizational Management and Leadership.

Claire currently lives half time Colorado with her husband, two sons, and two dogs, and half time in Seattle. She loves Crossfit, and coaches part time while in Colorado. Aside from Crossfit, Claire also is an avid cyclist. Her love of cycling started due to her wanting to share experiences with her son, who is an aspiring Tour de France participant. Both her and her son, have participated in many races throughout the Colorado Rockies and in Denver.

Volunteering allows Claire the opportunity to give back while satisfying her need to help others. She has volunteered many times with her son's PTA/PTSO organizations, in Crossfit, Dental Teams International, and local events that serve the community. She believes that volunteering and giving back is a huge contribution to the betterment of society. The reason she chose to volunteer for Dogs for Better Lives is because she loves dogs and has experienced firsthand how they can reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and ease loneliness. Bringing dogs together with Autistic individuals is an amazing opportunity and one that she is excited about being a part of.

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To learn more about the Young Professionals Board – Puget Sound, and/or to submit your application for consideration to the YPB, please visit... <https://dogsforbetterlives.org/young-professionals-board/>.



*Dogs for Better Lives is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization focusing on the training and placing of Hearing Assistance Dogs, Program Assistance Dogs, and Autism Assistance Dogs. Accredited by [Assistance Dogs International \(ADI\)](#) and recognized by [Charity Navigator](#) as a 4-star nonprofit, Dogs for the Deaf has been rescuing dogs, bettering lives, and providing assistance dogs since 1977.*

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