



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Harvey Potts, [harvey@dogsforbetterlives.org](mailto:harvey@dogsforbetterlives.org), (541) 826-9220

## **Dogs for Better Lives Receives International Paper Foundation Grant, Supporting Puppy Raiser Program**

**CENTRAL POINT, OR** – Dogs for Better Lives (DBL) has been awarded a \$2,100 grant from International Paper’s Hillsboro (OR) Preprint facility and the International Paper Foundation. Funds will support purchasing supplies and materials for DBL’s growing [Puppy Raiser program](#).

Given the ongoing pandemic, an in-person check presentation was not possible, and the International Paper Foundation and DBL made a virtual presentation (with photos) work.

[Photo (L-R): Brandon (International Paper - Hillsboro), shipping lead and his dog Rhea. Harvey Potts, (VP of Development), Meagan Steahly (VP of Finance), Kayla Galvan (Apprentice Trainer) and shelter dog Libby, Jon Richards (HR Director), Trish Welch (VP of Operations), and Bryan Williams (CEO)]

“It is always a great pleasure to support an organization that our employees are so passionate about,” said Kristen Dang (Community Engagement Lead, IP Hillsboro). “We are proud to support Dogs for Better Lives as they strive to make a difference for those impacted by disability in Oregon and the surrounding areas.”

With more than 25 puppy raisers throughout the country, and seven of those across western Oregon, the demand for more volunteer raisers rises as DBL’s breeding program continues to grow and expand. Just this week, DBL is in process of transporting two puppies to Massachusetts, to be placed with the organization’s first raisers in the New England region.

At 8-weeks old the puppies are paired with volunteer raisers, and placed in private homes for the next 12-months. During this period, raisers attend basic obedience classes with their puppies. They also go on public outings to expose the puppies to a multitude of different environments. After the year of raising and training, the puppies are ready to return to Dogs for Better Lives to begin their professional training and next step towards becoming an Assistance Dog. Currently, DBL trains Assistance Dogs in three programs; [Hearing](#), [Autism](#), and [Facility](#).

“We’re so appreciative of International Paper Foundation’s support of our growing Puppy Raiser program,” stated Vice President of Operations, Trish Welch. “Despite numerous challenges throughout the pandemic, the breeding and puppy raiser programs have thrived. This is truly a testament to staff, volunteers, and numerous partners we work with in Oregon and across the country.”

Currently, volunteer breeder caretakers and puppy raisers are needed in Oregon, Washington, California, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. To learn more about Dogs for Better Lives, puppy raiser program, and other ways to get involved, visit <https://dogsforbetterlives.org/get-involved/>

The International Paper Foundation is one of the ways International Paper strives to reach its vision to be among the most successful, sustainable and responsible companies in the world. Started in 1952, the foundation annually provides millions in grants to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations to address critical needs in the communities where its employees live and work. Funding priority is given to programs related to its signature causes: education, hunger, health & wellness, disaster relief, and initiatives that improve the planet. For more information, visit [ipgiving.com](http://ipgiving.com).



*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.*

10175 Wheeler Road, Central Point, Oregon 97502 ◆ (541) 826-9220 ◆ [www.dogsforbetterlives.org](http://www.dogsforbetterlives.org)