

\$7,500 SDWR Autism Service Dog Grant Awarded to Young Brothers in Chambersburg, PA

Caleb, a 5-year old boy in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and his 9-year-old brother Benjamin have received a \$7,500 Grant towards an SDWR Autism Service Dog.

CHAMBERSBURG, PA, UNITED STATES, April 15, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Caleb, a 5-year old boy in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and his 9-year-old brother Benjamin have received a very generous \$7,500 Grant towards their very own <u>Autism Service Dog</u> from Service Dogs by Warren Retrievers, or "<u>SDWR</u>," to assist them and help better communicate his needs. SDWR, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located in Virginia, is one of the nation's largest <u>service dog</u> providers with over 600 service dogs placed. SDWR is now serving over 1,000 families through its programs. SDWR breeds, trains, and places service dogs to adults and children with invisible disabilities such as Diabetes, Seizure Disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or in the case of Caleb and Benjamin - Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Service Dogs by Warren Retrievers, or "SDWR," is known for its customized training methods that aid those with invisible disabilities. In recognition of April being Autism Awareness Month, SDWR sponsored a Grant Program for Autism Service Dogs. The grant program is for individuals in North America diagnosed as being on the Autism spectrum, to include Aspergers. SDWR accepted applications throughout the month of March and a great deal of their decision making process in determining who received an Autism Grant relied heavily on the essay portion of the application.

Benjamin has Autism, ADHD, ODD and sensory issues. He is a bright child and does excel academically. He has problems with executive function skills and emotional regulation. Caleb has Autism, ADHD and sensory issues. He has trouble with emotional regulation and can get upset very easily and loves to be cuddled to calm down. Caleb and Benjamin's Autism affects their social relationships with their parents, his brother and his peers. Both brothers are typically unable to read social cues which can lead to frustration and anger. Loud sounds can bother them at times, but they often wear headphones in order to block some of the sound. Caleb and Benjamin's family is hopeful that a service dog will act as a guardian for them both and help keep them safe and comfort them.

SDWR has awarded several grant opportunities to help families with loved ones on the Autistic Spectrum alleviate funding efforts for their very own Autism Service Dog. SDWR has awarded four \$7,500 grants, two \$10,000 grants, two \$12,500 grants, as well as awarding two lucky families a full \$25,000 Autism Service Dog Grant. For existing clients, the SDWR grant covers up to \$10,000 towards an outstanding pledge or the remaining balances, whichever is less. The selection process is based on ability to care for the service dog after placement, ability to follow SDWR's training program, the information on the application, and participation in allowing SDWR to publish benchmark moments about the service dog and handler.

SDWR has developed a unique program for training dogs to support individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. Not only can service dogs provide an overall calming effect for the child on the autism spectrum, but there are a number of tasks the dogs can be taught too. These tasks include finding the child if lost, serving as stationary ballast in the case of elopement, and

providing redirection from repetitive or self-injurious behaviors among other tasks. When paired with a service dog, children on the autism spectrum often have improved sleep patterns, increased social interaction, and a better ability to express themselves.

SDWR delivers some of the highest-quality and personable service dogs to families who are affected by an invisible illness. Unlike most other service dog organizations, SDWR's trainers travel to the client's home over a period of 12-18 months for continued personalized training. This is because they firmly believe that the families should receive as much training and education as their service dogs do.

Service Dogs by Warren Retrievers is a non-profit organization based in Virginia, and relies on donations to help the organization in its mission, "Until there's a cure ... there's a dog."

To learn more about the types of service dogs SDWR offers for those living with invisible disabilities, visit https://www.sdwr.org/service-dogs/.

To make a donation, be a sponsor of a future grant, or learn more about SDWR, please visit the website, <u>www.sdwr.org</u>.

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