

\$10,000 SDWR Autism Service Dog Grant Awarded to 7-Year-Old Boy in Largo, FL

Christian, a 7-year old boy living in Largo, Florida, has received a very generous \$10,000 Grant towards his very own Autism Service Dog from SDWR

LARGO, FLORIDA, USA, April 30, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Christian, a 7-year old boy living in Largo, Florida, has received a very generous \$10,000 Grant towards his very own [Autism Service Dog](#) from Service Dogs by [SDWR](#), to assist him and help better communicate his needs. SDWR, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization located in Virginia, is one of the nation's largest [service dog](#) 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 Christian - Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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.

Christian was diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum at a moderate level when he was three years old. Christian's autism symptoms present themselves in many different ways. He has a speech and communication delay. He is seven years old, but still doesn't speak in complete sentences. He is very hyperactive and has sensory challenges. He has a hard time with loud noises and can be distracted by any audible noise in a room. Christian also has behavioral challenges as well and regulating his emotions is very difficult for him. He can be weepy, angry, anxious, and even aggressive. Christian has a very hard time sleeping through the night and needs constant pressure to stay asleep. Otherwise, he has night terrors, can't sleep, and occasionally sleep walks. Christian's family is hopeful that a service dog will act as a guardian for him and help keep him safe.

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



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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 children and 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 provides high quality Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, and hypoallergenic breeds (exclusively for those with verifiable allergies, additional pledge will apply) that are suitable for service work. SDWR has developed a partnership with their breeders coupled with unsurpassed training, allowing them to offer their clients another tool to better manage their life of dealing with a spectrum disorder.

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 SDWR 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 apply for an SDWR Autism Service dog visit <https://www.sdwr.org/service-dogs/autism/>.

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

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