
PRESS RELEASE

National Service Dogs Accredited by Imagine Canada's Standards Program

For immediate release

The staff and Board of Directors at National Service Dogs are very pleased to announce that we have achieved a great landmark in our organization's history and future with our recent accreditation by Imagine Canada's Standards Program.

Imagine Canada, the umbrella for Canadian charities and non-profits, launched the Standards Program in May of 2012. Accreditation is awarded to charities that can demonstrate excellence in five key areas: board governance; financial accountability and transparency; fundraising; staff management and volunteer involvement.

National Service Dogs is one of only 82 Canadian charities out of 80,000 to receive distinction as an accredited organization through the Standards Program. "This is a great achievement for National Service Dogs," said Executive Director Danielle Forbes. "The accreditation process is meticulous and incorporates every aspect of our operations; it has been a part of our strategic plan since the Program's launch in 2012."

A paramount goal of the Standards Program is to increase an organization's transparency and capacity, and to strengthen public confidence in individual charities and the nonprofit sector as a whole. "Individuals, families and communities work incredibly hard to raise money for our organization. As a charity, we have a responsibility to every one of our donors to be transparent and honest," says Forbes. "Donors are investing in a cause they believe in. Their trust and belief in that cause cannot be presumed upon; it must be earned. That is why the Standards Program is so important to us."

National Service Dogs (NSD) is an innovator and international pioneer in the field of Service Dog training and placement. Founded in 1996, NSD was the first organization in the world to establish a Service Dog program to meet the unique needs of children with autism. In 2011 NSD developed a Service Dog program for veterans and individuals living with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This year NSD launched the first program of its kind in Ontario, Canine Assisted Intervention, which matches Assistance Dogs with health professionals for the treatment of mental illness, trauma, abuse and physical injuries in adults and children.

Service Dogs are valued at \$30,000 through their working life but are provided to clients at no cost to themselves. NSD receives no government funding and relies entirely on support from corporate sponsors, community members, service clubs and annual fundraising events. "National Service Dogs has always been a great organization to invest in and grow with," noted Forbes. "Our accreditation through Imagine Canada reinforces that fact and increases our ability to meet the needs of Canadians from coast to coast." To learn more about National Service Dogs' award winning programs visit www.nsd.on.ca