

Contact:

Jeanine Konopelski, Canine Companions, 707-577-1759, jkonopelski@cci.org

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It All Starts With a Puppy...and You

Actor Scott Foley asks for volunteers to help change lives one puppy at a time

SANTA ROSA, CA – Actor Scott Foley, star of ABC’s hit drama series *Scandal*, has a new best friend named Esther. Esther is an adorable Canine Companions for Independence puppy being raised to be an assistance dog to help a person with a disability. Scott wants to tell you how great it is to be a volunteer puppy raiser for Canine Companions.

While Esther can only use her wagging tail and cute wrinkles to talk about becoming a Canine Companions puppy raiser, Scott has her covered. In addition to lending his voice to Canine Companions’ new puppy raising public service announcement (PSA), Scott Foley has chosen to become a celebrity ambassador for Canine Companions.

“It’s such an amazing non-profit and I’m happy to help increase awareness of Canine Companions,” Foley tells CBS News in a recent interview. His ambassadorship will help raise awareness for Canine Companions, including its puppy raising program.

Foley explains in the new PSA that Canine Companions is looking for dedicated volunteers who are willing to turn a fuzzy fur ball into a well-socialized and obedient Canine Companions dog ready for professional training.

“Volunteer puppy raisers are the heart and soul of Canine Companions for Independence’s mission,” says CEO Paul Mundell. “We couldn’t offer life-changing assistance dogs to people with disabilities entirely free of charge without the dedication of each volunteer puppy raiser.”

Loving volunteer puppy raisers care for a Canine Companions puppy for 14-18 months, exposing the puppy to real-life scenarios and attending fun training classes. Each pup is returned to Canine Companions for professional training where they learn 40 commands to enhance independence such as opening doors, retrieving dropped items or alerting a handler who is deaf or hard of hearing to sounds in their environment.

Watch Esther and hear her best buddy Scott Foley now, and learn more about how you can change the life of a person with a disability one puppy at a time by becoming a volunteer puppy raiser at cci.org/puppyraiser.

For over 40 years, [Canine Companions for Independence](http://www.cci.org) has been enhancing the lives of people with disabilities by training and placing nearly 5,000 assistance dogs with program graduates, including 136 dogs with wounded military veterans and more than 1,200 dogs with children, entirely free of charge.

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About Canine Companions for Independence

Canine Companions for Independence provides highly-trained assistance dogs to children and adults with disabilities. Established in 1975, Canine Companions has six regional training centers across the country. Canine Companions is recognized worldwide for the excellence of its dogs, and the quality and longevity of the matches it makes between dogs and people. For more information, visit www.cci.org or call 1-800-572-BARK.