

Save the Date

Helping Hands: Monkey Helpers for the Disabled 3rd Annual Red Sox Event

Saturday, June 7, 2008 (game time TBD)
\$125/ticket includes pre-game event
Contact: AndreaR@monkeyhelpers.org for details or to reserve seats!

Monkey College Open House

Wednesday, April 16 6:30 PM
Please RSVP to: AndreaR@monkeyhelpers.org

Check Out Our Online Store

Visit www.monkeyhelpers.org/supportus/store to purchase Helping Hands t-shirts, hats, mugs and children's apparel through CafePress.com.

Changing Lives Everyday!

541 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02134
617-787-4419
monkey helpers for the disabled



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HELPING HANDSSM UPDATE

www.monkeyhelpers.org

Winter 2008

A Message from Megan Talbert

Dear Friends,

I'm pleased to report that a snowy winter has not slowed progress at HH in 2008! We had a banner year in 2007, when we placed 12 monkeys in 7 states. This winter we have been busy at Helping Hands - preparing new placements, training monkeys, and presenting SCIPP programs all over the country.

Our placement schedule is booked for the next several months bringing our team to California twice, Ohio and Kansas. We are thrilled to be working with our first "Semper Fi" placement as we are making final preparations to bring a monkey-helper to a young man who was injured in Iraq. The staff at Helping Hands is eager to share news of our newest pairs with friends and supporters of our program.

NBC and the Today Show put us in the national spotlight when they featured a one-year follow-up story on recipient Ned

Sullivan and his monkey, Kasey. We feel that this is one of the best pieces ever done about Helping Hands and it generated a great deal of excitement about the program from viewers around the country - including some new donors who gave gifts to support the placement program and the monkeys in training!

If you did not get a chance to see the Today Show story, please visit our web page (www.monkeyhelpers.com) where you can view the clip. We hope that you will feel the same pride we do when you see this story and are reminded of the huge impact we can make on the lives of our recipients and their families.

I want to send a heartfelt thank you to all of our supporters, including those who recently made gifts in response to our annual appeal. Our work is made possible by the generosity of others - every gift whether it is for ten dollars or ten thousand dollars makes a huge difference in

the lives of others.

In closing, I would like to recognize the Helping Hands staff for their incredible efforts. Each day, our trainers and professional support staff come to the Monkey College with positive attitudes and the desire to change lives. I feel so lucky to be surrounded by such a dedicated group of individuals and I want to thank them for their hard work.

We look forward to sharing updates and new stories with all of you in our next newsletter. Best wishes from the staff, Board of Directors and monkeys at



Megan Talbert, Chief Operating Officer and Andrea Rothfelder, Director of Development

Helping Hands is Pleased to Welcome Andrea Rothfelder as Our New Director of Development!

Andrea Rothfelder comes to Helping Hands: Monkey Helpers for the Disabled with over 10 years of experience in fundraising and non profit management, most recently serving the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America as the Executive Director for the State of Ohio. She learned of the organization three years ago through a chance encounter with Helping Hands Board Member, David O'Leary. Andrea was deeply moved by the commitment and passion of the organization for helping the disabled through the power of the human and animal bond. "I look forward to meeting and working with our donors, volunteers and staff. There is great need to continue to secure and grow the critical funding

required to make such a profound impact on our recipients, and I look forward to being a part of the team."

Sprechen sie Deutsch? Andrea was born and raised in Munich Germany and since moving to the US has lived in Ohio, South Carolina and now returns back to Boston, where she lived from 2003-2005, just long enough to see the Red Sox win the World Series and fall in love with New England!

In her free time Andrea loves to travel, visit with family and friends, volunteer, hike, go camping, try out new wines and restaurants.

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For more information contact
The Development Office
617-787-4419 x114

Mary Kay and Amy.

The Helping Hands Placement staff asked 2004 recipient Mary Kay Young of Wisconsin to share her thoughts on her life with her special monkey, Amy. We often highlight new placements in our newsletter. Now we also want to remember those recipients who have lived years with their monkeys and make this program successful everyday. We thank MK and hope that her words remind friends and supporters of Helping Hands of the heart warming stories of our wonderful monkeys and the amazing people they help.

I remember my very first glimpse of Amy, my helper Monkey, like it was only an instant ago. She was being carried into my home by Megan, her trainer. When I saw that diminutive almost human-like face peering up at me from her pet carrier I fell in love right then and there. She was the cutest, sweetest creature I had ever seen and I was elated that she was coming to live with me.

At that time I really thought I knew what I was getting into, but actually I had no idea what was coming my way. I have learned so much from her and about her in the time she has been here. Amy is incredibly perceptive in that when I reach for something she knows she needs to come and help even without my asking. If someone does a task she normally does Amy seems rather miffed, though she does show up for a treat just the same. She is intuitive in that when I'm feeling blue she grooms my scalp to soothe and comfort me. Sometimes she just holds my hand. Amy completely trusts me and is devoted solely to me.



I've learned that when dealing with Amy you have to be just as smart as she is because unlike a dog or cat, a monkey is behaviorally more sophisticated and does not have the same reaction as a cat or a dog. That's where Helping Hands comes into play to answer any questions or problems that may arise. I have learned

that patience, understanding, consistency and persistence are what Amy responds to best, with a big helping of lavishly applied praise.

It's been 3 1/2 years since Amy came and in that time we have carved out a very happy life together. Amy has become an integral part of my life. She is my confidante, my child, my playmate, my tool, my entertainer, my protector and much more. An unexpected benefit was getting stronger shoulders and better balance from her riding on my shoulders every day. So many things wrapped up into a tiny ball of energy.

I'm so grateful to Helping Hands for choosing me as a recipient and for all their ongoing support. Amy has brought a whole new perspective, vibrancy and amusement to my life. I know I don't ever want to be without her.



A Message from Ned Sullivan, author of the 2007 annual appeal:

"Kasey and I are extremely thankful for your generous donations to Helping Hands: Monkey Helpers for the Disabled. Your support and friendship have given me further courage and perseverance to keep moving forward. Hopefully, your gifts will help others benefit from the work that Helping Hands is doing for the disabled as they have benefited me."

Donors Speak: Why I Give...

"People and animals motivate my giving to Helping Hands. There is the life-affirming relationship between the recipient and their monkey. There is the confidence I feel that all monkey helpers will be treated with respect and love." – Judi Hindman

"Giving back, when one has received is extremely important and rewarding to me. I was raised in a household where my father became a paraplegic shortly before my birth. Helping Hands is the perfect vehicle for me to "Give Back". Besides giving annual donations, dealing with Helping Hands can be "fun" too. I have an on going bet with a New York family member on the Philadelphia (I grew up in Philly) Eagles/Giants football games. Giants win, Helping Hands wins; Eagles win our local homeless shelter wins. Nobody loses and additional happiness is created. Maybe bets on the Yankees/Red Sox baseball games are in the future?" - George T. Campbell, PhD.

"Helping Hands takes a direct and innovative approach to helping those who need it most. When you see the impact on the lives of the beneficiaries, it provides an immediate gratification that is unparalleled by other causes. And it doesn't hurt that the monkeys are so cute." – Lisa and Kem Tekinay

Staff Spotlight: Alison Payne, Director of Training

After spending a childhood dreaming about working with primates and an education gaining the knowledge to make these dreams a reality, I came to Helping Hands in 2000 with a deep respect for monkeys and an idea of how emotionally and intellectually complex they are. I never could have known then, however, just how significant the Helping Hands monkeys would become in my life. The love that I have for them, and that they give to me in return, far surpasses even the wildest dreams of my childhood. I truly cherish the fact that I get to experience this love and help these monkeys to move on and share their special companionship with someone who truly needs it.

Training our monkey helpers is an exciting process. Each



"student" arrives at the Training Center with his or her own special capabilities and unique personality. The trainers work very closely with each individual monkey to find the keys to teach and motivate him/her. Does one particular monkey need the trainer to help move and position his hands with him in the correct task behavior, or does he do better simply watching the trainer perform the behavior several times and then imitating? Does another monkey look forward to enthusiastic praise and big hugs, or is a quick tickle and cuddle session her favorite reward? We strive to make lessons fun and appropriate for each monkey's learning style. Perhaps the only thing that each of our students share is a love of a peanut butter reward for a job well done!

I know I speak for all of the trainers when I say how grateful we are to have such a fulfilling job. Watching the excitement on a monkey's face as he or she learns a task which we know will make a difference in a future recipient's life is our own personal reward ~ it's even better than peanut butter!

"Life with Sadie"

New recipient Carol Abraham has written a few words about the first months with her new monkey Sadie. Carol is 47 years old and lives in southeastern Wisconsin. She has limb-girdle muscular dystrophy and uses an electric wheelchair for all mobility due to extreme muscle weakness in her arms and legs. Carol was a registered occupational therapist until she retired from her profession 6 years ago due to her disability. Now she assists her husband with his business which operates out of a home office. Carol and her husband Tim have been married for 17 years. Many thanks to Carol for this wonderful story. We look forward to sharing news of their progress in future newsletters.

It sure is amazing how in just 9 short months our lives have been changed. We now know so much more than we ever imagined about life with a monkey!

Sadie joined our family in late May 2007. Since that time we have learned a lot about monkey communication, monkey bath time has become part of our daily routine, we've discovered a new view of shopping as we look for items in terms of monkey desires and interests, learned how to monkey-proof our kitchens, mas-



tered diapering a monkey in a variety of locations, attempted to monkey-proof our home office, have completely forgotten about maintaining a "good hair" day, learned to pack a monkey diaper bag for travel needs, understand the complexity of hierarchy, discovered the wonderful affection of a monkey hug, added new terms to our daily vocabulary, discovered and enjoy the playful wrestling antics of a monkey, (hopefully) learned how to make a "perfect" batch of monkey chow, but most importantly...found the love and companionship of a new family member.

Sadie began by assisting me with some simple tasks of fetching and turning on/off light

switches. Her "success" always seems to be more likely when peanut butter is somewhere in the picture! During the day, she spends time out of the cage with me in our home office while my husband is at work...un-tethered and un-diapered. So far, that is going very well with only a few potty accidents! I must admit, she is a lovely "office assistant" when it comes to licking envelopes or coloring on a scrap piece of paper.

It has been a long process to build a trusting relationship with Sadie but it has been well worth the wait. Each day a little more progress is made. The bond has been established and Sadie has acclimated to our family quite well. In fact, she is one very spoiled little monkey girl!

This past summer Sadie loved to spend time outdoors with me and in fact was sporting a very nice summer tan! She spent a number of long weekends camping with me and my husband - which was always a treat for her, as there are many spiders and bugs to discover at every campsite. To accommodate her travel cage and various monkey supplies, we even upgraded to a larger pop-up camper with the camping luxury of air-conditioning! Sadie was always the hit of the campground...and every Ranger became her buddy.

For her first Christmas as part of our family, she had more gifts under the tree to open than any other family member. The "Barrel of Monkeys" and new toy cell phone were her favorite new toys although just the

opportunity to unwrap a variety of gifts was a thrill...even when the gifts were not hers. One of her most notorious adventures was when she escaped from her cage one afternoon after only living with us for about a month. Much to our amazement, we discovered just how much mischief our new family member could engage in during a short window of opportunity! Her freedom involved raiding the kitchen: finding the chocolate chip ice cream and after testing it she removed it from the freezer and placed it in the microwave for "safe keeping", removing every bottle of bottled water from the refrigerator and lining them up neatly next to the sink, and selecting the "perfect" Bing cherries to enjoy (leaving the over-ripe ones for us). Needless to say, upon our entry into the house we were shocked that our little friend could accomplish so much mischief in such a short period of time. Now, before we even think about leaving the house...the lock on her cage is checked and re-checked.

Our relationship will continue to grow and Sadie will also become my little helper for a variety of tasks for many years to come. We feel so blessed to have this wonderful opportunity! It is truly amazing how a little 6 pound monkey can enhance our lives and become such a wonderful companion. Both my husband and I are grateful for the hard work and dedication which the staff of Helping Hands has provided to make this monkey placement a success.