



# SUMMIT ASSISTANCE DOGS

*Empowering people with disabilities to greater heights*



## Summit in Sixty Seconds

February, 2016

### Randall Dutton – Applicant

Orcas Island resident, Randall Dutton, was hit with a double whammy – born deaf and diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in 1999 – but he remains upbeat and positive and is looking forward to getting a service dog from Summit. He's had several dogs over the years, mostly to help him with hearing.

When he was 12 years old and living in Denver, he wrote to the humane society and asked if he could get a hearing dog through their fairly new program. They told him they didn't usually place dogs with children, but he persisted and ended up with Angel, a dog who had been surrendered by an older woman who went into a nursing facility.

"Angel was with me from the time I was 12 all the way through grad school," Randall said. "We were inseparable. I have many touching and even funny stories about Angel. Shortly after grad school, Angel passed away. I think she wanted to see me through college before she passed on."



Following Angel, Randall has had three dogs, two of whom he named for a couple of his favorite Star Wars characters – Vader and Obi. His current dog, Bubba, was mistreated as a puppy, so Randall and his mother worked hard to help him relax and feel safe. He is now 12 years old and is "a very sweet, gentle dog."

Randall moved to Orcas Island as a freshman in high school. His mother worked all day as his interpreter and held down a night job to support them. Randall then attended The Evergreen State College, where he earned a Master's Degree in Environmental Studies. It was shortly after finishing grad school that he experienced his first MS attack.

"I was paralyzed from the chest down and spent some time in Harborview," he said. "I am fortunate that I had a very proactive doctor. I had chemo and was able to slow the progression of my MS. Since then, there have been great strides in treatment options, and I have been stable for the past several years."

Randall says that although he is stable, he has lost significant function on his right side and realizes it is time to have a trained service dog.

"Because my mom still works full time, I am alone quite a bit," he said. "I will rely heavily on my dog for companionship as well as helping me get around."

Randall enjoys gardening, walking (sometimes with his power chair), yoga and football. He also enjoys outings off-island and knows a trained service dog would increase his independence and safety when he's away from home.

### 2016 Unleash Your Love fundraising luncheon coming up!

Please join us for our annual Unleash Your Love fundraising luncheon coming up on Thursday, April 28th. We have a new location this year at the Hyatt Regency, Bellevue and we are thrilled to, once again, have Patti Payne, columnist for the Puget Sound Business Journal, emceeding the event. Invitations and more information will be sent out shortly, but we hope you'll mark your calendar now so as to not miss this inspirational event.

### Prison Program Graduations

Our prison training program at Monroe Correctional Complex has been a win-win program for Summit and the inmates since 2010. At the end of each 9 week training session a graduation ceremony is held to celebrate the inmates & dogs that completed the training during that session. Summit is allowed to have a limited number of guests attend each graduation. The programs are held each quarter within the prison with the next one scheduled for Wednesday, March 9. Please know that a background check will be processed by the prison on anyone wishing to attend and we will need to obtain certain personal information several weeks prior to the graduation date for that to be completed. If you are interested in attending this upcoming graduation, or one later in the year, please contact [info@summitdogs.org](mailto:info@summitdogs.org) for more information.

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