

2023 Impact Report

Service Delivery in 2023:

75 justice-impacted people served across 6 cohorts

19 at-risk dogs rescued and adopted into forever homes

82% graduation rate

19 records expunged

Overall, our participants achieve long-term success:

72% employment rate

10% one-year recidivism rate



Willie (above, with Charlie) graduated from the Prison Reentry Program. His motivation for joining the program was to return to the community and to be able to interact with the dogs, as he loves animals. He shared that the New Leash program was completely different from anything else he had experienced on the streets or in prison. The number one thing the program taught him was patience, and he realized he loved animals even more than he thought. Willie interned at the PSPCA, continuing to work there after completing his internship as well as working at Forman Mills. Next, he aspires to start a career in security. “A year after I got out,” he said, “I realized I had changed into a different person.” He’s proud of the New Leash program and of everything he’s accomplished in his first year since release. “If it wasn’t for y’all, we wouldn’t be home.”



Celebrating 12 years of successful graduates like **Amanda** (pictured above with Rob Rosa, SVP, Programs), who recently received a record expungement

Mikale successfully completed the Young Adult Reentry/Diversion Program. He felt like being in the program helped him hold himself accountable to be better, and he knew he could count on the New Leash staff. He was inspired to “move smarter” during the program and learned from others who had achieved success after similar experiences. A visit to ACCT Philly taught him more about dogs and how to interact with them, and it showed him that despite tough situations, they were still nice dogs who could succeed at training. He was very successful in his internship at a dog grooming salon, where he experienced a positive work environment for the first time and where he was then hired. “When I got a job,” he said, “that’s when I saw that things were changing.” He now has a dog of his own and is very proud of his current job at a hospital, where he’s worked for six months and has plans for advancement.

Many of our YARD Program participants face gun possession or other gun-related charges. Our program directly engages participants around behaviors and mindsets, as well as providing tangible supports, that contribute to the gun violence epidemic in Philadelphia. **The Spring 2022 YARD cohort achieved a 90% reduction in gun-related charges as of June 2023, one year after completing the program.**

Babka (right) was found as a stray with another dog on a front porch in February 2023 and was very underweight. Thanks to the New Leash team’s excellent care, including removal of a benign tumor on her chest, she was soon thriving in the program and was a training superstar.

After graduating in May, Babka went home with her forever family. She was so well-socialized in the New Leash program that she quickly built an expansive network of friends everywhere she went—the market, parties, the drive-in, restaurants—and she is everyone’s favorite girl! She has continued her training and is currently working on some advanced skills so she can serve her community as a therapy dog.





Sunny (left, with Erica) was found as a stray, lethargic and sickly, and she suffered an upper respiratory infection while in a shelter. She completed her training during the Prison Reentry Program and was adopted by Erica Green, Principal of Russell Conwell Middle School in Philadelphia. Erica had looked forward to welcoming a rescue dog into her home for a long time and found the perfect match in Sunny. Now, she is living a full, healthy life with lots of socializing. She describes Sunny as “sweet, joyous, and observant - maybe a little nosy!” In addition to being a beloved family member, she also comes to the school several days per week, enjoys seeing the students, and lifts everyone’s mood. Erica continues to keep up with Sunny’s training and giving her a healthy diet and lots of exercise. Together, Sunny and Erica are fighting the stigma around pitbulls and educating people about the importance of rescuing dogs.

“When I first started the New Leash program, I felt I was going to go home and do the same thing I did before I got here. Now that I am getting closer to graduation, I feel I made a change to my mind set. New Leash gives you the tools you need to move on with your life and never come back to a place like this.”—Prison Reentry Program participant

Maurice (right) describes his life prior to beginning the Prison Reentry Program as “a living nightmare with poor decision-making” with multiple periods of incarceration. When he started the program in 2015, he said, “I was finally ready to change and make this thing work.” His dog, Humphrey Bogart (“Bogie”), reminded him of himself - damaged, abused, and lost, but not to the point of no return. Maurice felt a sense of pride in how well Bogie healed and learned, in addition to what he was accomplishing through the workshops. After graduation, Maurice’s internship at PSPCA was a stepping stone to success. Nine years later, Maurice is an entrepreneur and leader in his community. He started a property maintenance business, purchased a home, and is dedicated to his family. Maurice served as the guest speaker for the September 2023 Prison Reentry Program graduation, sharing his experience and wisdom with others who are creating their own fresh starts.





Thank you to our volunteers and partners

A warm and sincere thank you to our invaluable partners and dedicated volunteers. Your tireless efforts have not only given a fair chance to both animals and individuals transitioning from incarceration but have also created a compassionate and transformative environment. Through your commitment, we are fostering hope, rehabilitation, and a brighter future for both our furry friends and those seeking a fresh start.

