

New Multiyear Grant to Benefit Guide Dogs

The grant will help Morris Animal Foundation research health issues that lead many guide dogs into early retirement.

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The Laura J. Niles Foundation, an organization that makes grants to charities that help humans and animals, has pledged a \$150,000 multiyear matching grant to Morris Animal Foundation (MAF) to help improve the health of working guide dogs. Health problems often lead many guide and service dogs into early retirement.

“Our foundation is excited about their partnership with MAF because we hope that the two organizations, working together, will be able to address a serious problem in guide dogs and service dogs,” said Leland Selby, a spokesman for the Laura J. Niles Foundation. “It’s very disappointing if a dog has to retire at an early age. If we can find a cause and explore ways to eliminate it, it is a win-win for both the human and the animal.”

James Kutsch, Ph.D., MAF trustee and president and chief executive officer of The Seeing Eye Inc., knows first hand the benefits of such research. “I know personally that any research to solve issues that lead to early retirement of a dog guide will be both highly beneficial for the dog and greatly appreciated by the blind dog user,” he said. “My last Seeing Eye dog had to retire four years early because of a heart condition.”

Morris Animal Foundation, established in 1948, has funded almost 1,400 animal health studies with funds totaling more than \$51 million.