

ASSISTANCE DOG INSTITUTE

PRESS RELEASE

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Sierra School Has New Students—Puppies!

A litter of seven golden retriever puppies was born at the Assistance Dog Institute on January 23. On January 31 they will have their first day of school with students from Sierra School in Rohnert Park! Teen trainers will be matched with the pups and shown how to educate them to be future service dogs. Early puppy training, sessions last only a few minutes at first to begin socialization and learn simple commands. The dogs will eventually learn a total of 90 commands and be placed with someone with a disability at about age two.

This unique “High Schooled Assistance Dog Program” is taught by Rick Yount to kids with special learning needs. Working with a puppy has been proven to motivate kids to show up for school, engages them in a volunteer effort for the community, and has had remarkable success with turning their lives around. Parents and teachers of kids in existing “HS-A” programs are thrilled with the changes they see in these teens. Their self-esteem soars as they are shown a way to be successful in doing something to help others. In addition, working with the pups fosters communication, caring, and compassion.

For more information about the program, contact Rick Yount at the Assistance Dog Institute at 707/545-DOGS.