



Service Dogs Alabama  
Executive Director: Frances McGowin  
8365 Mobile Highway  
Hope Hull, AL 36043

334-676-3733

[fmcgowin@servicedogsalabama.org](mailto:fmcgowin@servicedogsalabama.org)

[www.servicedogsalabama.org](http://www.servicedogsalabama.org)

---

## PINE LEVEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RECEIVES FACILITY INTERVENTION DOG

HOPE HULL, AL (5/10/2021) – Service Dogs Alabama

The first weekend in May was an exciting time for Service Dogs Alabama (SDA) and Pine Level Elementary School in Deatsville. Gunner, Pine Level Elementary School's Facility Intervention Dog, completed training and has transitioned to begin assisting students and staff. Gunner has been skillfully trained to serve multiple people with intervention tasks that break cycles of disruptive or self-defeating behavior while creating meaningful and positive impacts.

**Wendy Ellender, Counselor** at Pine Level Elementary, is Gunner's handler. **Mrs. Ellender and Mrs. Harry, Pine Level's Principal** are very excited to witness the impact Gunner will have on the students at Pine Level.

SDA is a committed, long-term partner for recipients of Facility Intervention Dogs. After the transfer of a facility dog, once a month for the first six months, then once every three months for the remainder of the first year, and annually after that, the SDA transition team will check-in for support, questions, and suggestions with each recipient. All dogs placed by our program stay in our system for monitoring for the working life of the dog and receive the required annual re-certification and training for three years. Facility Intervention Dog teams are evaluated and provided updated training for those three years to ensure that their Facility Dog continues to meet their unique needs.

Service Dogs Alabama is the oldest and largest non-profit organization in Alabama and has placed over 75 dogs with qualified individuals/facilities throughout the State of Alabama. Serving both veterans and children with disabilities, providing medical and psychological assistance dogs to children, adults, and veterans with disabilities, as well as Facility Intervention Dogs for schools and courtrooms. SDA has developed a 43-acre state-of-the-art training complex in Hope Hull, AL (Guice Slawson Training Complex); built an additional office and kennel facility in North Alabama; created a prison-based dog training initiative, as well as implemented unparalleled School Dog and Courtroom Dog programs.

Pine Level Elementary School's Facility Intervention Dog, Gunner, was sponsored with help from the following: Autauga County Community Foundation, Central Alabama Community Foundation, Junior League of Montgomery, and Alabama Department of Ed.

To learn more about Service Dogs Alabama or to support our mission, please visit [www.ServiceDogsAlabama.org](http://www.ServiceDogsAlabama.org).

For additional information, please contact Richard Rice at 334-676-3733 or [richard@servicedogsalabama.org](mailto:richard@servicedogsalabama.org).