CALIFORNIA EVENT
On Saturday, May 19th over 150 guests joined us at the Real D Studios in Beverly Hills for a family friendly, fun evening of wine, chocolate, soda, and ice cream tastings. It was so wonderful to welcome old and new friends and to spend time with recipients, and donors on the West Coast!

There was something for everyone, from age 12 to 100...gourmet cheese toasts, unique flavored sodas, wine from around the world, chocolates, and humorously flavored ice cream. Liz Lavender’s Honey. Cheers of delight emanated from the “snow game” where children (and adults!) could purchase chances to win fabulous prizes.

Our silent auction was a display of wine baskets, movie baskets, unique opportunities like a movie premiere and after party tickets, defensive driving classes, autographed merchandise, orchids, sweet goodies, and much more. The bidding was heated for a walk on role for the TV show CBB.

We screened our film “And then a Monkey” which shares the stories of six recipients, how they came to find us and in turn, their monkey helper, as well as the story of our program. Real D Studios has done a wonderful job telling our stories on film, and there were many people reaching for tissues throughout the audience.

By the end of the night, everyone was full, happy, and had made some new friends. Best of all, we raised over $15,000 for our Training and Placement Program!

Thank you to everyone who attended, donated, gave an auction item, and volunteered their time; in particular, John Kelly Chocolate, Galco’s Soda Pop, and Camille Ice Cream. A special and heartfelt thank you to our three event chairs Susan Ciccone, Cynthia Chvatal, and Linda Dean, pictured on the right with Corrine. They created and organized the entire event, and without their tireless dedication, creativity, and fun spirit, this evening would not have been possible.

We are proud to announce our new Youth Education Program entitled: “Living Permanently Enabled.” This fun and lively 30-45 minute presentation includes more information about disability awareness, traumatic injury prevention, and the concept of becoming permanently enabled in one’s own life.

Helping Hands Staff give an overview of our service animals concept of becoming permanently enabled in one’s own life. Through interactive activities, film clips, photos, and questions, our staff delivers a dynamic program promoting a message of resilience and awareness in an age appropriate manner.

Currently we can only do presentations in the local area. If you are interested in hosting or sponsoring a Helping Hands Youth Education Program for your classroom or organization, please email Erica Noyes at erican@monkeyhelpers.org or call (617) 787-4419 ext. 105.

To learn more and connect with us, visit: www.monkeyhelpers.org

STAFF
Megan Talbert, Executive Director
Andrea Rothfelder, Director of Development and Communication
Jennifer Dowdy, Staff Spotlight
Alison Payne, Director of Training
Stefania Schoen, Placement Trainer
Trillium Studios, Film Clip Producer

This new, monthly series of short films has been created to share the training building blocks, Monkey College fun facts, and real stories about the incredible impact our monkey helpers make. Our hope is that you will enjoy this special look “behind the scenes” and that you experience the impact your donation, support, and volunteer efforts make in all areas of our program. Episodes are debuted through our website. Sign up for the monthly e-Newsletter and be among the first to see each premiere.

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YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAM
Since 1998, Helping Hands has endeavored to educate school aged children through our Spinal Cord Injury Prevention Program (SCIPP). SCIPP has been presented to thousands of school children and young adults every year, informing and educating them about safety and the prevention of injuries during daily recreational activities. In 2012, we began the process of updating and restructuring this program.

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Dear Friends,

With your help, the last twelve months have been a breathtaking time for telling Helping Hands’ story across the country—through film, online newsletter, our 4,000 Facebook friends, and countless towns. The instant feedback we have received from new and long standing supporters has been inspiring.

If you haven’t had the chance to spend time with George, Judy, and Sophie by watching ‘Jady and Sophie’s Story’ (Invite your co-workers to our website to do so. Our filmmaker Cary and Sam Wiensky, once again, managed to give us a remarkable inside view into our mission and the power of our monkey helpers.

We are constantly reminded that one of the key differences between Helping Hands and other service animal organizations is that the animals are actually being of service. The partnership between our recipients and their monkeys, along with the love and laughter that emanates from that special relationship, can only be seen within the walls of our home environments. Therefore, we continue to strive to find ways to share this most intimate and powerful bond with all those who care very much for those who have been, and continue to be, touched by our mission.

You share our belief in our mission, and through these new ways, we give you an even deeper understanding of everything that goes into making such placements possible. Moreover, our hope is to reach even more potential recipients, to educate those in need, and to help to highlight the benefits to the people living with a physical disability.

THANK YOU for continuing to spread the word about Helping Hands. Every online newsletter that is forwarded, every Facebook share, and every re-‘tweet’ brings us closer to our supporters and opens new doors for us around the globe. Most importantly, sharing Helping Hands’ story allows us to expand our mission services and help more people seeking the independence and companionship our special monkeys provide.

Warm regards,
Megan Talbert
Executive Director

MEET A MONKEY: Mandy

Mandy is a funny little monkey who recently moved into the Monkey College from her foster home to continue her training. Her hilarious antics keep our staff and volunteers entertained on a daily basis. We have several large yoga balls in the playroom at Helping Hands. Mandy finds it to be a fun way to combine her yoga and balance training. She also enjoys the support of her foster family, and following the instructions and advice of the Helping Hands training staff are all important keys to success.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Natalie Shelton

The series of events that led me to working as a trainer were serendipitous. After graduating from Wheaton College with a degree in psychology in 2000, I landed a part time position working with tamarind monkeys at Harvard University. While working as a lab assistant, I was introduced to a trainer from Helping Hands. I was intrigued by the work she did, and inquired about volunteer opportunities. After volunteering for a year and a half, I was lucky enough to get a training position in June of 2004. Who knew that brewing coffee would lead to this?

The monkeys’ intelligence and funny antics never fail to put a smile on my face. I think I’m able to work so closely with the monkeys because I’m one of the recipients of the service animal organizations is where the animals are actually being of service. The partnership between our recipients and their monkeys, along with the love and laughter that emanates from that special relationship, can only be seen within the walls of their home environments. Therefore, we continue to strive to find ways to share this most intimate and powerful bond with all those who care very much for those who have been, and continue to be, touched by our mission.

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