



## Planning for the Future – Our 2014-2018 Strategic Plan

2014 marked the first year of Helping Hands' latest five-year Strategic Plan that was co-authored by our staff and Board of Directors in 2013. There are many new challenges to take the place of the old ones. The need to create a new, larger home for The Monkey College, with room for retired monkeys as well as those in training will be a key focus over the next five years. Additionally, retaining our current staff and expanding our training program are needs that must be addressed in order to maintain the steady development of helper monkeys.

Furthermore, we must build connections to new volunteer leaders who will work with the Executive Staff to continue to carry out our mission in the years to come. And all of this cannot happen without the support of our donors who will help us to fund our annual operating needs while increasing our reserve funds to ensure that we can care for the monkeys regardless of any unexpected influences on yearly fundraising efforts.

The staff and Board of Directors used the following six objectives as we created our individual goals and timeline that will govern our path from 2014-2018:

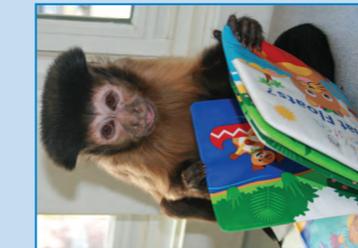
- I. To increase and sustain the rate of successful placements with qualified candidates.
- II. To ensure that Helping Hands monkeys have an excellent quality of life throughout their lifetimes.
- III. To optimize the opportunities for and effectiveness of the Helping Hands training program.
- IV. To recruit, retain, and fully utilize the talents of a strong, sufficient and committed group of volunteer and professional staff leaders.
- V. To move towards an appropriate, long-term facility that is sized and configured to meet the needs of all aspects of Helping Hands' mission and program.
- VI. To continue to strengthen Helping Hands' long-term financial sustainability by developing a robust, broader base of philanthropic support.

We look forward to sharing Strategic Planning Updates with our donors and friends in the years to come! Thank you for your critical support of our mission.



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### Meet a Monkey: Blake



Blake is a very recognizable monkey at The Monkey College – this photo of her in the bath is an iconic image at Helping Hands. She loves to take baths and play with her trainer as she is being dried off. Blake's favorite task is flipping pages in a book or magazine. On a sunny day, you might find her in



the playroom with her trainer and a warm fuzzy blanket, soaking up some rays or flirting with her reflection in a mirror. She thrives on lots of attention and quality time with her trainer, which will make her an excellent companion and service monkey. To meet Blake's "classmates", visit our website, [www.monkeyhelpers.org](http://www.monkeyhelpers.org)

*Creating priceless partnerships.*

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**HELPING HANDS**  
MONKEY HELPERS

## From our Leadership

Dear Friends,

Only a fortunate few organizations have the opportunity to recognize 35 years of achievement—a full generation's worth of effort, dedication, barriers overcome and accomplishments. From its roots back in 1979 as a postgraduate doctoral dissertation, Helping Hands: Monkey Helpers has grown to the national non-profit organization it is today. A 35th anniversary is an appropriate time to look back and reflect on the extraordinary people whose inspiration and resolute commitment have enabled so much success. Progressing past the hopes and uncertainty of the early days, today we have the assurance that Helping Hands' mission—the training and placement of capuchin monkeys to be in-home assistants and companions to people with severe mobility limitations—is of irreplaceable value to those we help.



In reflection, we recognize some of the most significant things we have learned during our first 35 years. Early on we realized that capuchin monkeys would be able to do simple tasks that are helpful, and would mutually benefit from a strong bonded and caring relationship with people. We have affirmed that it is possible to do our work free of charge to the human recipients, funded by charitable donations from philanthropic individuals, foundations and corporations. We have built an institution that is organizationally and financially strong enough to take lifetime responsibility for the monkeys. And, as affirmed by the testimonials of our many, many recipients, we know that the partnerships we create make a life-preserving difference.

We gathered together this October to celebrate these achievements and look towards the future at The Monkey Helpers' Annual Food Festivale. This evening raised almost \$100,000 towards our programs and introduced many new friends to our organization. We would like to thank our top sponsors, Foundation Robmar, Joan K Sexton Foundation, The Hampton Foundation, Howland Capital, and Partners+simons for helping us to create such a magnificent evening. Special thanks to our event chair, Lisa Flores, and the Columbus Hospitality Group.

During the past 35 years Helping Hands: Monkey Helpers has provided a resourceful, caring, effective and exciting alternative for people living with severe mobility limitations. With the help of our supporters—financially, volunteering, and ambassadorial—we know that the next 35 years will see successes we can only dream about today.

Warmest regards,

*Susan Keyes*  
Susan Keyes  
Chair, Board of Directors

*Megan Talbert*  
Megan Talbert  
Executive Director

## Tails of Success: Celebrating 10 Years – Mary Kay and Amy

My name is Mary Kay. Amy and I live in a small town in the northern United States. A car accident 28 years ago caused me to become handicapped. I heard about Helping Hands while watching a CBS news report. I thought it quite comical that I could get a monkey to help me out, but I really didn't give it any serious thought at that time because I believed it was too far-fetched of a notion – not something that could happen in my mundane life. So I immediately put the thought aside.

A few weeks after I saw the news segment I was doing a computer search on hand splints and up popped the Helping Hands website. I laughed to myself and went on with my search. Several weeks later I was researching something else and AGAIN the Helping Hands website came up. That's when I knew I needed to look into this monkey idea. After reading all about how a service monkey could help

someone like ME I started taking a closer look at my life and how a little helper could benefit me in my daily activities. I decided to apply and that is when Amy came into my life.

Amy adds a new dimension to my lifestyle in that she gives me a reason to be. As much as I depend on her she depends on me as well. I make all the decisions for her well-being and if I didn't do a good job it would show in her health and her disposition towards me. I am Amy's caretaker, her protector and savior when something scary is near and I relish this role.

Having a service monkey makes my life a bit easier by all the tasks she does so willingly and without hesitation. Anybody who has had to have someone help them with menial tasks knows that people get very exasperated at constantly performing these chores repeatedly. But a monkey LOVES to do them and a

*"A monkey does not care how many times she has to pick up a pencil... in fact, the more, the better!"*

monkey does not care how many times she has to pick up a pencil in the span of one minute. In fact, the more the better in Amy's case! Our favorite things to do are to be outside while Amy practices the fine art of entomophagy (insect eating). We also love to hang out in our greenhouse basking in the warmth of the sun planting, reading or listening to music.

Our relationship over the last 10 years has just become very normal. I can't say when it changed from sheer awe to her just being one of the family although I will say that there are times during every day that I look at Amy and still can't believe I have her. I think about the people that made the decision to gift me with this AMAZING friend and realize all over how lucky I am.

If someone were contemplating applying for a service monkey I would say if you are an animal lover, if you are alone for a portion of the day, if you have a need for more independence in your routine, if you are a patient person then you should make room in your life for a



monkey helper.

I send my deep and heart-felt appreciation to all who support Helping Hands. Without your generous

donations, philanthropic nature, and undying love of Helping Hands the world would not have this unique organization.

Your support helps build a partnership, bringing a well-trained monkey into a home. A helper monkey can do so many things for their recipient such as open doors, drawers, containers, refrigerators, and much

more - all of those obstacles that are major roadblocks for people living with disabilities that no one else gives a second thought about. A gift of a donation becomes a gift of freedom for a recipient. I cherish Amy with all my heart, and I thank you for the past 10 years. We look forward to the next 10 together.

**Facts:**  
Helping Hands provides free active placement support for the lifetime of each placement. That includes skills reinforcement for a monkey and recipient, 24-hour veterinary advice, and emergency care.

## SAVE THE DATE FOR 2015: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

### Scenes from The 2014 Monkey Helpers' Annual Food Festivale



Robert Stern, MaryAnne McCauley, and Jane Yusen



View of the festivities

Jessica Raider, recipient of the Charles Evans Trainer of the Year Award

