



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GUIDE DOGS OF TEXAS, INC. ANNOUNCES CEO SEARCH

--CEO Sandra Merrill stepping down to focus on training, North Texas region--

SAN ANTONIO – Guide Dogs of Texas, Inc., the only internationally certified guide dog training provider physically located in the state, has begun the search for a new CEO. Current CEO Sandra Merrill announced her decision to step down from the post on Tuesday, August 24 in order to return to guide dog mobility training full time and to help expand the organization’s footprint in the North Texas region as the DFW Satellite instructor. She will remain in her current role to help facilitate the transition to a new CEO.

An internationally certified Guide Dog Mobility Instructor (GMDI), Merrill led GDTX as the CEO for seven and half years, helping to increase the nonprofit’s net assets by \$1.4 million and drive a strategic plan that saw capital improvements, the development of an endowment and creation of a planned giving program. In addition, the organization expanded its guide dog breeding program to help provide more potential guide dogs in the training pipeline.

A graduate of Reed College and Johns Hopkins, Merrill joined the GDTX team in 2000, holding various posts, including Director of Training, before being named CEO in 2014. She currently serves as the chairman of the US Council of Guide Dog Schools and is a regular presenter at national seminars and International Guide Dog Federation conferences around the world.

“Sandy has done an exceptional job leading Guide Dogs of Texas during her tenure as CEO,” said Mark Zamzow, the GDTX board chair. “Under her leadership, the organization built a strong financial foundation and expanded its capabilities in a variety of ways, enabling GDTX to help Texans with blindness gain freedom, mobility and independence. She will be missed greatly as CEO, but GDTX is extremely fortunate to have her take the helm of our DFW satellite and increase our mission focus in that area.”

“I’m honored to have served as CEO of Guide Dogs of Texas, and I’m proud of what the organization has achieved these last seven and a half years,” Merrill said. “I’m very excited to have the opportunity to further our mission through direct work with our clients and applicants in North Texas. In addition to my training work, I can help build relationships with prospective

funders to help build a model satellite for our organization that can be replicated in other cities.”

Parties interested in applying for the CEO position should visit www.guidedogsoftexas.org or email gdtxcareers@gmail.com. No phone calls, please.

About Guide Dogs of Texas

Guide Dogs of Texas is the only internationally certified nonprofit guide dog provider physically located in the state of Texas and serves people with vision loss – and their families – in a 1,400 mile radius from its San Antonio main campus. The mission of Guide Dogs of Texas is to provide freedom, mobility and independence to Texans with visual impairments through education, support, and days of guided sight provided by training with a professionally bred, raised, trained and personally matched guide dog. The organization has provided more than 240,000 days of canine-powered guided sight since 1989.

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