There were many questions during the webinar related to the definition of success that was used during the data phase of the project and moving forward. Please know that we appreciate and honor all that puppy raising volunteers do. The time and commitment they give are incalculable. Defining success strictly as a dog becoming a breeder or guide is necessary for this project; using this definition of success assists us in celebrating the areas in which we are all succeeding and recognizing areas in which we all can improve. A raiser doing their best, raising a well-behaved dog and the dog becoming eligible for recall is incredibly important and should be celebrated. Ultimately, our mission is to create as many working teams as possible and having dogs added to our breeding colony is an integral part of that; this is why success is defined as becoming a guide or a breeder. This does not lessen, though, our recognition of and gratitude for all that puppy raisers do to make that possible.

Q: What does the $11,000 for a puppy’s first 16 months include?
A: It includes the care of the puppies on campus before leaving for raisers, and the expenses for puppies once they are in puppy raiser homes, including the vet care GDB pays for, an average of staff expenses, etc. It does not include expenses paid by the volunteer raiser.

Q: What is the number of applicants for a guide dog per year?
A: We receive approx. 1,000 inquiries each year and that results in about 600-700 applications.

Q: When a puppy is transferred and then graduates, who gets "credit" for the success. The initiating raiser (club) or the completing raiser (club)?
A: For this project everyone involved in raising the puppy received "credit" for the success.

Q: Is there a difference in success between puppies that are transferred? Co-Raised?
A: There was no correlation whatsoever for transferred dogs. We also ran for co-raising homes (more than one home per puppy) and that also had no correlation for success.

Q: Does our success rate correlate with other guide dog schools?
A: That's hard to say because different schools calculate their success in different ways. For example, some schools place career change dogs in other types of service then count them as "success" for their school.

Q: Is there any puppy success correlation based on proximity to GDB campus and all its resources?
A: We do not have any data information about that.

Q: Is there any puppy success correlation based on puppy club size?
A: We have the data to be able to look at that, but we have not completed that correlation analysis yet.

Q: Does the success rate you speak about include those dogs CC'd for medical reasons?
A: For this project we removed data on dogs released for a medical reason.

Q: For the children statistic does this include raisers who are in that age range or just having other children in the house?
A: The household was looked at as a whole not based on which family members were raising.

Q: Did the age of the puppy raiser have an effect on success rates?
A: No - we did look at this and there was no strong correlation (positive or negative).
Q: Is there correlation between experience of the raisers and success. Do first time raisers have less success than more experienced ones.
A: Not in our first take of the data, no. But we feel we need to explore this more and we will.

Q: Is there any data that shows the success rates of puppies living in homes with other dogs (pets) versus living by themselves or with other GDB puppies in training?
A: We looked at that data; having a pet or not did not correlate to success; in other words, it did not affect success.

Q: Any statistics on CC's who go to community placement graduation rates with partner service orgs?
A: We do have statistics about this overall, but for this study we wanted to focus on success for GDB.

Q: Do you take in to consideration the type of breeds raised and success rates - Lab vs golden vs crosses?
A: We do look at success rate by breed but for this presentation we were trying to keep things as simple as possible.

Q: Is there a difference of success rate for gender (of dog)?
A: Inherently no. However, there is an artificial elevation of success for females due to the fact that we pull more females for the breeding colony each year than males and being a breeder counts towards success.

Q: How many total CFR’s do we have now?
A: There are 11 CFRs, one open CFR position (Utah) and 2 Canine Resources Managers (Pat Cook & Lynna Feng).

Q: Are CFR’s ever "graded” to see how they are doing in evals with PR’s?
A: CFR data is constantly being analyzed and used for feedback.

Q: Is there a group also looking at how breeding can increase puppy success?
A: Yes - we are always looking at this.

Q: Has analysis been or planned on being done on the impact on where clubs meet, the number of meetings, and the ratio of leaders to puppies?
A: Right now we are working on a deeper analysis of the club specific data to address those and more questions.

Q: Will there be more structure for leaders to follow in monthly meetings? More hands on time to teach raisers and have interaction?
A: Yes absolutely; that is part of our plan for updating club structure.

Q: What is on-boarding?
A: The process of bringing new puppy raisers on board prior to receiving their first puppy.

Q: When you look at club success will this be over time ... one year we may have a 70% success, this year ... not so much with some really challenging puppies?
A: Absolutely - there are also some clubs who tend to take more challenging transfer puppies and some that take Goldens or other breeds that may be less successful; so yes, this is a continuum not just a snapshot.

Q: Are you currently requiring puppy exchanges in raisers homes? And if so how often per year?
A: Yes, puppy exchanges (or trades) are required. Any changes to this policy (which can be viewed in the Club Structure section of the Puppy Raising Volunteer Policies & Procedures Manual) will be reviewed by the Club Structure group in conjunction with the upcoming Club Structure survey.

Q: Any data on if the Pick of the Litter movie increased raiser applications?
A: It absolutely gave us many interested people; but we aren't sure how many actual raisers it may have yielded. We have high hopes for the new television series we are filming and its effect on recruitment.
Q: How will you decide which clubs to test the new structure with?
A: We will begin with a pilot of best practices with clubs we have identified as being less successful in various CFR territories. Starting in this way will give us information about how these best practices can support all clubs in the future.

Q: Who will be conveying where each club is on the success vs unsuccessful rate?
A: Clubs will receive this information from their CFR on an individual basis.

Q: Will we get to only see our clubs success rates? Or will we be able to see other clubs, territories etc?
A: See question above; each club will be given information only on their own success rate but we will be including information about puppy clubs overall; i.e. averages, etc. for comparison.

Q: Has GDB considered an online forum for raisers to ask questions and experienced successful raisers can point us to videos and text for tips? Would be great for giving/receiving feedback. And more expedient than waiting for a puppy meeting?
A: This is great idea! We have plans to develop a more robust online community and we have chosen the tool for this; GDB will be recruiting a staff person to focus on this project. Stay tuned!

Q: Does this information regarding raisers skills take into account that raisers skills evolve over time?
A: Our intention is to find ways to help support and develop raisers who are less successful regardless of their tenure.

Q: Have you done an analysis on age of leaders and age of raisers?
A: We have not; this is due to the fact that there are many gaps in the demographic information we have about our puppy raising volunteers.

Q: Any plans on implementing more training meetings a month vs just one a month?
A: That is also part of the upcoming survey and further club structure - our plan overall is to bring more consistency.

Q: Will a similar evaluation process be completed for the period from recall to final outcome?
A: Other departments at GDB are very interested in the process we are using to evaluate our program and we anticipate that others will assess their programs in a similar way.

Q. Have the numbers of raisers dropped? I keep seeing that there are lots of puppies needing homes?
A: We are actively exploring this question; it does appear that we have a lower number of puppy raisers at this time than we have had in previous years.

Q. Is there any screening process to access a puppy’s temperament before going to a raisers home?
A: There is another small study we were working on for this; we are awaiting outcomes.

Q: Will there be more formalized leader training in the future?
A: Yes! Evaluating the training for our puppy raising leaders is an important part of the overall project.

Q: Do you have a timeline for implementing the changes? How long is the estimate for testing the club structure until it’s implemented everywhere?
A: Some changes have already begun; others will take more time to implement and evaluate. This is a long-range project (3-5 years).

Q: What percentage of raisers ARE repeat raisers?
A: An average of 70% for many years ongoing.

Q: Please identify roles at GDB of Emily Brown, Sarah Blevins and Jenna Bullis?
A. Emily Brown is the Puppy Raising Manager. Sarah Blevins is the Operations Manager of Puppy Raising. Jenna Bullis is the Director of Breeding and Canine Development.
Q: What is being done to fix the links on the puppy raisers' manual page?
A: We have completely updated the PR Manual; please go to www.guidedogs.com/prmanual to get new links. You will need to reset your bookmarks. Be sure to check out the new Puppy Raising Roadmap!