



## *Carrie Pirritt and Maddie*



With two small children desperate for a dog and fond childhood memories of my own golden retriever, I was certain a puppy would be the perfect family addition. I never planned on having a dog that could do pet therapy. In fact, I don't think I even knew what it was, but there was always something special about Maddie. She was so calm,

even as a puppy, and had a profound intuition about people. With such a kind and loving nature about her, I realized we should share her gift and looked into opportunities to volunteer together. Maddie was about 6 years old when we found Denver Pet Partners and I knew that it was a perfect fit for us. She passed the evaluation on the first try and I even remember the evaluator saying she had never seen a dog scoot backwards to make sure everyone had a chance to pet her.



We began volunteering at a retirement home and I quickly realized that Maddie was a natural with older folks. She would approach each resident gently and place her head in their lap. They would share stories about dogs they had growing up and



how special each one was. Even the grumpiest residents would leave with a smile on their face and thank us for coming. One of the greatest moments we had was when we were visiting a woman in memory care while her husband was there. She began telling us about her favorite dog which led to a bunch of stories. Her husband hugged me on the way out and said he had not seen his wife so happy in such a long time. Since then, we have continued to visit senior centers and retirement homes and enjoy bringing joy and precious memories back to the residents.

Maddie doesn't just walk up to the residents, but also the people that work there, because she believes everyone can benefit from some dog love!



One of Maddie's favorite volunteer situations is visiting the de-stressing events at the universities during finals week where the students bombard her with love and pets, which she adores every minute of. They welcome the distraction and always talk about how much they miss their dogs at home.

Maddie and I love being part of Denver Pet Partner and all of the opportunities they provide. When I break out the purple vest, Maddie gets so excited and can't

*DPP Team of the Month (February 2020)*

wait to get to work. I hope to continue to bring all of her love to as many people as we can!

