

**BUILD-A-BEAR® KICKS OFF 2018 PARTNERSHIP WITH CANINE COMPANIONS FOR INDEPENDENCE® & FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TO PROVIDE SERVICE DOGS TO KIDS IN NEED**

*Interactive retailer will donate \$1 for every Promise Pets™ furry friend made in stores today through August 8, 2018*

ST. LOUIS (June 28, 2018) – Building on an initial \$300,000 donation late last year to [Canine Companions for Independence](#) in honor of the retailer’s 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday in 2017, [Build-A-Bear®](#) today announced a fundraising campaign to help provide even more Canine Companions® service dogs to children with disabilities. For every [Promise Pets™](#) furry friend made in U.S. Build-A-Bear Workshop® stores or at [buildabear.com](#) June 28 through August 8, Build-A-Bear will donate \$1 (up to \$50,000) to Canine Companions to provide assistance dogs to kids as they graduate the organization’s professional training program.

“At Build-A-Bear Workshop, we believe that having a furry friend by your side—whether it’s a teddy bear, a pet, or an assistance dog—can bring comfort and provide support in times of need,” said Emily Fuhrman, manager of foundations and giving, Build-A-Bear Workshop. “Over the last two decades, we have supported many organizations that promote healthy relationships between pets and their human best friends, including a one-time gift to Canine Companions in honor of our 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday last year, which is helping to provide assistance dogs for 30 children with disabilities. We are honored to continue our partnership with Canine Companions and invite the public to participate in a nationwide campaign to help more children in need.”

Canine Companions assistance dogs are trained by the nonprofit organization to serve as the “ears, hands and legs” of their human partners, with the ability to understand 40 commands and perform tasks such as turning on lights, opening doors and pulling their partner in a wheelchair. The dogs also provide social support as their partners learn to interact with them and utilize all of their capabilities. The assistance dog training program culminates in a graduation ceremony that is held for the dogs and their puppy raisers, and celebrated with the dogs’ soon-to-be human partners.

“Canine Companions assistance dogs help kids with disabilities have more independence to do the things that all children love to do,” said Jeanine Konopelski, director of marketing at Canine Companions. “Our assistance dogs can pick up dropped toys, help during medical therapies, assist with daily chores and build confidence. Build-A-Bear and the Promise Pets campaign are helping to provide children with independence and a four-legged best friend. Our partnership is changing lives for children with disabilities, and we are grateful to Build-A-Bear for their continued, generous support.”

Since 1997, Build-A-Bear has donated more than \$8 million in support of pets and animals, focusing on the relationship between children, families and pets. Through both the one-time gift to Canine Companions in 2017 and the 2018 fundraising campaign, Build-A-Bear and Build-A-Bear Foundation™ are helping to provide assistance dogs for 35 children with disabilities in the U.S.

Build-A-Bear is also expanding the fundraising campaign to the U.K. in support of [Guide Dogs](#), a nonprofit organization that aims to empower people who are blind and partially sighted to enjoy the same freedom of movement as others by offering guide dogs and other mobility services. For every

Promise Pets furry friend made in U.K. Build-A-Bear Workshop stores and at [buildabear.co.uk](http://buildabear.co.uk), Build-A-Bear will donate £1 to Guide Dogs (up to £10,000).

For more information about Build-A-Bear Foundation and the company's charitable giving efforts, visit [buildabear.com/giving](http://buildabear.com/giving).

#### **About Build-A-Bear®**

Build-A-Bear® is a global brand kids love and parents trust that seeks to add a little more heart to life. Build-A-Bear Workshop has over 400 stores worldwide where guests can create customizable furry friends, including corporately-managed stores in the United States, Canada, China, Denmark, Ireland, Puerto Rico, and the United Kingdom, and franchise stores in Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Mexico and the Middle East. [Buildabear.com](http://Buildabear.com) is the online destination for unique furry-friend gifts, featuring The-Bear-Builder™, a shopping configurator that helps create customized gift options. In 2018, Build-A-Bear was named to the FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For® list for the 10<sup>th</sup> year in a row. Build-A-Bear Workshop, Inc. (NYSE:BBW) posted a total revenue of \$357.9 million in fiscal 2017.

#### **About Build-A-Bear Foundation™**

Build-A-Bear® believes in the power of hugs and the simple comfort of having a furry friend by your side. The mission of Build-A-Bear Foundation™ is to add a little more heart to life by sharing hugs and making days a little bit brighter for those in need. Since 1997, Build-A-Bear has donated nearly \$50 million to a variety of organizations and in a number of ways, including through Foundation grants. Build-A-Bear Foundation supports nonprofit organizations and registered charities that are doing good work in the communities where our Guests and associates live, work and play. For more information, visit [buildabear.com/giving](http://buildabear.com/giving).

#### **About Canine Companions for Independence**

Canine Companions for Independence provides highly-trained assistance dogs to children, veterans and adults with disabilities. Established in 1975, Canine Companions has six training centers across the country in Northern CA, Southern CA, NY, OH, FL and TX. Canine Companions is recognized worldwide for the excellence of its dogs, and the quality and longevity of the matches it makes between dogs and people. Since its inception, Canine Companions has placed more than 5,800 assistance dogs with people with disabilities. Give Independence—and Give a Dog a Job®. Visit [cci.org](http://cci.org)

###

#### **Media Contact:**

Maria Lemakis

Build-A-Bear Workshop

(314) 423-8000, ext. 5367

[MariaL@buildabear.com](mailto:MariaL@buildabear.com)