

Dear Prospective Volunteer:

Thank you for your interest in Chenny Troupe. I've enclosed a volunteer application form, the Certification test, a test reservation form, the Animal Certificate of Health and some general information about Chenny Troupe. I hope that this letter and accompanying information will be helpful to you as you are thinking about testing your dog. Please remember that you will be working with your dog in health care facilities with adults and children who have physical or emotional challenges.

The elements of the test are intended to present situations that you and your dog will encounter when you work in a program. You will be working in a group setting, so your dog will have to be able to stay focused on you and your client, even when there are lots of other dogs and distractions, like medical equipment or medicinal smells. Many of our clients cannot pet a dog with a flat hand, or they make loud noises or sharp movements, and again, your dog will need to stay focused. Behaviors that you may find endearing in your pet, such as jumping up to greet you, can be devastating to a person whose balance has been compromised by a brain injury or whose skin is fragile after surviving a fire. To insure an effective and positive therapeutic experience for our clients, and a satisfying volunteer experience for you, your dog must be under your verbal control, reliable and patient.

The Chenny Troupe certification process consists of two parts: a practice session to familiarize you with the test and the actual test day, which follows by a week. The next practice and test sessions are posted on the home page of our site, or you may call the office for the dates and locations. You must attend both sessions to be eligible for certification. To reserve your place, please submit the reservation form and a \$35 check (payable to Chenny Troupe) to our office. Please read the accompanying bullet points for details about our certification process.

Please tell us about you and your dog by completing the volunteer application. We need help with a variety of activities in addition to work in our programs, so be sure to let us know if you are willing to help even without your dog. A mandatory volunteer orientation will be held on a weeknight following the test.

I hope this information has been helpful to you. It is intended to help you and your dog prepare for the test, not discourage you! Please do not hesitate to call me at (773) 404.6467 if you have any questions. Best of luck to you!!

Sincerely,

Caryl Horn
Associate Director