

*The following story was submitted by a team volunteer. To submit stories about your team, send text and p*



It was a good summer for Idaho Rush player Jack Gambassi. Jack is a member of the U13 Swoosh team and has been playing for Idaho Rush since he began playing the game at the recreation level.

When he's not making a contribution on the pitch Jack devotes a good deal of his time to volunteering for charity. In the past July he travelled with his church youth group from St. Michael's Cathedral in Boise to Calgary, Canada with an open mind and was ready to accept whatever assignment he was given. He expected soup kitchen, painting, or other traditional type of volunteer service. It was much to his amazement and delight when he was asked to serve as a coach at a soccer camp for underprivileged kids in the city.

Jack was responsible for exposing a group of 5- to 7-year-old kids to the game. Many of the kids had never played soccer before. While his primary job was to lead the kids in fun he claims he managed to teach a few core skills (not head down). Jack enjoys having fun with kids and there couldn't have been a better match than this assignment.

While the soccer camp was a big thrill, the highlight of his year came in the spring. Jack is a volunteer puppy raiser for [Companions for Independence](#). Canine Companions places service dogs across the U.S., free of charge, for people with physical disabilities.

From January 2010 through May of 2011 Jack had responsibility to raise a puppy with the hope that it would

for a person with a disability. After Jack's sixteen months of puppy raising followed by a year of professional puppy, Wave, graduated as a service dog. Wave is a special kind of service dog called a "hearing dog". As Wave was assigned to a person with a hearing disability, who in her words "was dependent and now is independent Wave and to Jack".

Canine Companions for Independence has a special tradition where the puppy raiser gets to present "their" receiving it. In April 2012 Jack travelled to Santa Rosa, Calif., where he "handed over the leash" as part of a graduation ceremony.

*Idaho Rush*