Welcome back to Part Four of our five-part series, *Focus on the Phases*! Come along with us as we continue to explore the various stages of the guide dog training process. Each week, we'll give you some insight into the specific skills and milestones that guide dogs in training go through when they are on campus.

If you missed them, you can read Focus on the Phases: Guide Dog Training Part One, Part Two, and Part Three.

In Phase 6 of guide dog training, the dogs continue navigating increasingly complex areas and environments. Training routes focus on advanced city routes such as the light rail, heavy pedestrian areas, revolving doors, and safely walking on train platforms. Throughout these advanced phases, new skills are introduced in combination with maintaining previously learned skills. The training teams will return to familiar environments frequently to maintain the dog's confidence and accuracy, while intermittently adding new things.

By the time they enter Phase 7, guide dogs in training have now experienced guide work in many types of travel environments so that they are well prepared for the future. The instructor will work with them to fine-tune specific skills in this last phase before final testing. An option that the instructor may utilize for quality control and assessment in this phase is to do a walk with the dog while wearing a sleep shade while another instructor follows as a spotter for safety and to provide feedback.

Come back next week to read about the final phases of guide dog training!