

ISSUE 13
Life
UNLEASHED

dogsinc



Joe Bogart and
Guide Dog Pomp

HEROES

Finding Vital
Support in
Four Paws

A Story
of Survival
and Hope

How a Family
Finds Comfort
Through Loss

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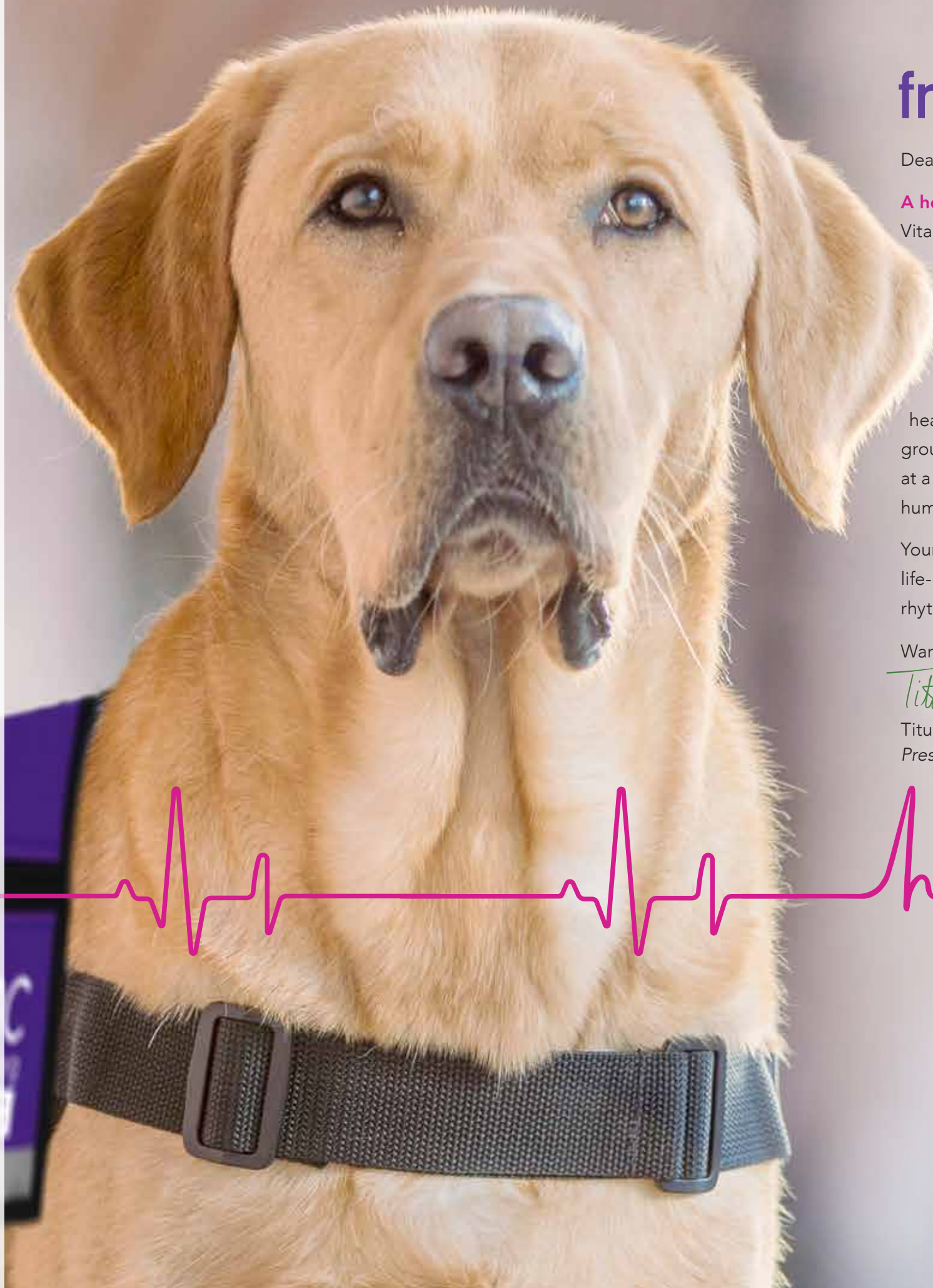
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from our CEO

Dear Friend,

A heartbeat: life's first rhythm. Vital, constant. But for many veterans and military families, that rhythm falters. Fear spikes. Pain echoes. The world feels out of sync.

Then, a dog steps in. Their heartbeat steady, their presence grounding. One beat at a time, our dogs show the way back to solid ground. And the human-canine bond creates a new pulse. Calm, strong, lasting.

Your kindness—the heartbeat of our mission—jumpstarts these life-changing bonds. Thank you for being part of this powerful rhythm of healing and hope.

Warm regards,

Titus Herman

Titus Herman
President and CEO



MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE

The Dogs Inc **Cornerstone Society** is an exceptional community of like-minded friends. Members make a profound impact on our mission through a multi-year commitment.

You're invited to join the **Cornerstone Society** today.



MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Partner | \$1,200 - \$4,999 per year

Benefactor | \$5,000 - \$9,999 per year

Visionary | \$10,000 - \$49,999 per year

Guardian | \$50,000 - \$99,999 per year

Founder | \$100,000+ per year



Enjoy exclusive events and other benefits. Join at dogsinc.org/CS or call **941.729.5665**.

Life UNLEASHED

ISSUE 13

A publication of Dogs Inc

Our extraordinary dogs transform lives throughout the country—at no cost to recipients. What makes our pups so special? Top-notch pedigrees and countless hours of training and love. Guide dogs turn darkness into light for people with vision loss. Service dogs restore freedom for veterans. Skilled companion dogs heal the broken hearts of those struggling with loss. And they never ask for anything in return. Neither do we. We offer our clients their loyal friends, expert instruction, and lifetime support free of charge—thanks to big-hearted donors and volunteers.

Alumni Support

We are the only organization in North America to provide guide and service dogs, online and in-person training, lifetime alumni support, premium dog food, and preventative veterinary care—all at no cost. And our commitment doesn't end there—we also offer financial assistance for unexpected veterinary bills.



Charity Navigator 100% Rating

We enjoy a rare 100% rating on Charity Navigator, placing us among the top one tenth of one percent of the 1.5 million charities in the U.S.



4210 77th St E. | Palmetto, FL 34221
dogsinc.org | 941.729.5665

from our board chair

Dear Supporter,

A veteran and her service dog walk side by side. To onlookers, it's just a stroll, but for them, it's a breakthrough.

One carries wounds—some visible, some not. The other offers quiet strength and steady nudges toward healing. Two souls, bound by trust, walking the road to peace.

For over ten years, I've had the privilege of witnessing countless moments like this—moments made possible by people like you. Together, we're lifting up those who've served, offering them the hope and dignity they deserve.

Thank you for being part of this mission.

Warmest regards,

Bob Meade
Board Chair, Dogs Inc



Board of Directors

Members of our prestigious board of directors are dedicated to governance, strategic planning, financial management, advocacy, and resource development. This group of leaders brings passion and commitment to the organization and plays a pivotal role in our work of providing extraordinary dogs and life-changing services to the people who need them.

Members include:

- Robert Meade** Chair, Sarasota, FL
- Carol Sanders** Vice Chair, Bradenton, FL
- Colleen Flaherty** Treasurer, Parrish, FL
- Katharine Saunders** Secretary, St. Petersburg, FL
- Drew Asher** Tampa, FL
- Ken Folkman** Tampa, FL
- Tim Griffy** Richardson, TX
- Vice Admiral Joe Maguire, USN (Ret.)** Austin, TX
- Bobby Newman** Tampa, FL
- Dr. Harris Silverman** Sarasota, FL
- John Whitcomb** Tampa, FL

Mission Advancement Council

Our dedicated Mission Advancement Council works tirelessly to create and implement our "friendraising" strategy—forming and cultivating relationships with individuals who share our values and vision to secure the long-term success of our organization.

Members include:

- Carol Sanders** Chair, Bradenton, FL
- Colleen Flaherty** Vice Chair, Parrish, FL
- Philip & Carol Beauchamp** Belleair, FL
- Susan Citron** Sarasota, FL
- Paula Cummings** St. Petersburg, FL & Sturgeon Bay, WI
- Leo & Trish Eineker** Bradenton, FL
- Dan Galnick** Lutz, FL
- George & Mary Graner** Placida, FL
- Gary & Melody Johnson** Gulfport, FL
- Jennifer Baltic Osgood** Tampa, FL
- Kathy Pou** Lakeland, FL
- Susan & John Rapp** Lakewood Ranch, FL
- John Whitcomb** Tampa, FL



GUIDED BY

RESILIENCE

A STORY OF SURVIVAL, GRIT, & THE HUMAN-CANINE BOND.

“Pomp guides me out of darkness and away from the demons of war.”



In less than 24 hours, Joe Bogart would pack up and head home after months in the desert.

He scanned the horizon, leading his team on their last route clearance. Mortars, rockets, IEDs, suicide bombers—all still out there, waiting. Just 30 minutes until his troops reached the gate.

Then, an explosion.

Shrapnel punctured the vehicle’s armor and sliced Joe’s protective eyewear, destroying his right eye and causing trauma to his other.

In a flash, his last mission in Iraq became the beginning of a dark battle—learning to live without eyesight, haunted by the trauma of war.

Courage arrived with his first guide dog, Gillian. Determined, Joe petitioned the Army to return to Iraq.

“My commander could have easily just said, ‘No, I’m not taking a blind person to Iraq,’” Joe says. “But I wanted to go. I needed to go.”

He received full clearance and became the first-ever blind soldier to deploy to ground combat. Gillian waited for him back home. When she passed away, Joe felt the deep sting of grief. Mourning her loss, he hesitated, unsure his heart was ready for another dog.

Years went by.

“I realized I had waited too long,” Joe says. “And when I got notified that Dogs Inc had a new dog for me, this old, crusty combat soldier had tears in his eyes. I was so ready.”

Now, playful Pomp—with a happy tail and energetic spirit—knows when to place a soft chin on Joe’s lap and look into his soul with those big brown eyes.

“Pomp is more than my guide,” Joe says. “He guides me out of darkness and away from the demons of war.”

Pomp adventures with Joe and his wife in their RV—sniffing the Pacific breeze, feeling sand beneath his paws, and watching seals and seabirds. He brings peace and calm.

With Pomp by his side, Joe finds that resilience is about more than surviving—it’s about finding peace. ●



Because of you, our dogs bring light in the darkness.

A DAD'S LOVE A DOG'S COMFORT

A SPECIAL COMPANION
JOINS THE FAMILY.



He was the kind of dad who listened. The kind of dad never too tired to throw the ball in the backyard, coach his son's little league team, or pick up his best bud from school and lend an ear on the drive home.

Derik was the kind of dad who showed up.

But beneath his daily school drop-offs and the family's laundry, U.S. Army veteran Derik fought the memories of the frontlines of Afghanistan. His wife of 10 years, Mary Margaret, knew he'd seen too much. More than one should have to bear.

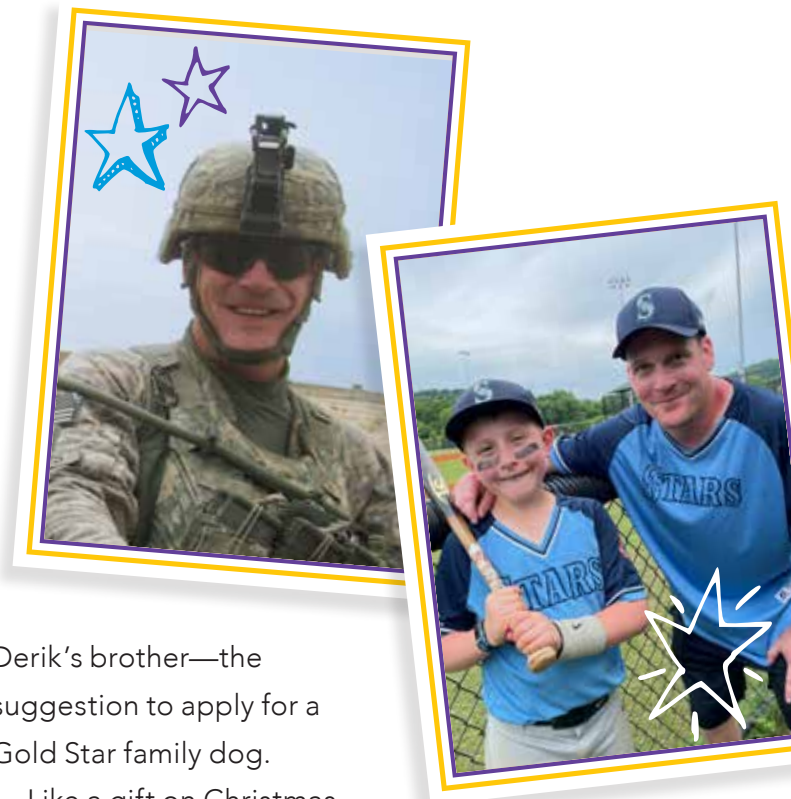
At eight, Aaron lost his dad.

Just like that, everything changed. The home for three now held two. A mother and a son grieving the loss of a dad who'd always stuck by their side.

"It turned our lives upside down," Mary Margaret says. "Aaron had this intense fear inside our home after that day."

After, Aaron avoided looking around the corners into each room. The backyard, once his safe space for practicing sports, turned into a field of unknowns.

A small piece of advice soon came from



Derik's brother—the suggestion to apply for a Gold Star family dog.

Like a gift on Christmas morning—as Aaron calls that day—Gold Star family dog Summers arrived.

Summers watches over her best friend, Aaron. She lets him rest, telling him it's safe as he turns around a corner. Always there, always looking ahead.

"The bond between the two of them is phenomenal," Mary Margaret says.

"Summers just comforts him, and that's one of the main things Aaron needed—something, or someone, to provide him safety and comfort."

Like a gift on
Christmas morning,
Gold Star family dog
Summers arrived.





The bond between the two of them is phenomenal

—Mary Margaret

She leads Aaron to the calm of bedtime, lying next to him, never too far from her person. Her purpose. And there's not a day that goes by that Aaron doesn't say, "I love you, Summers."

While Derik's love was something special only a dad can give, Summers steps in and comforts as if she knows exactly where she's needed, riding along to Aaron's school drop-offs and pick-ups, playing ball in the backyard, resting next to him during homework time, and cuddling when the nights feel long.

Settling in like a family member who's always been there, Summers' love finds a place where Derik's family needs it most.

Because he was the kind of dad who'd want his son to smile again, to love again, to find comfort in a companion who snuggles and calms his fears.

He was just that kind of dad. ●

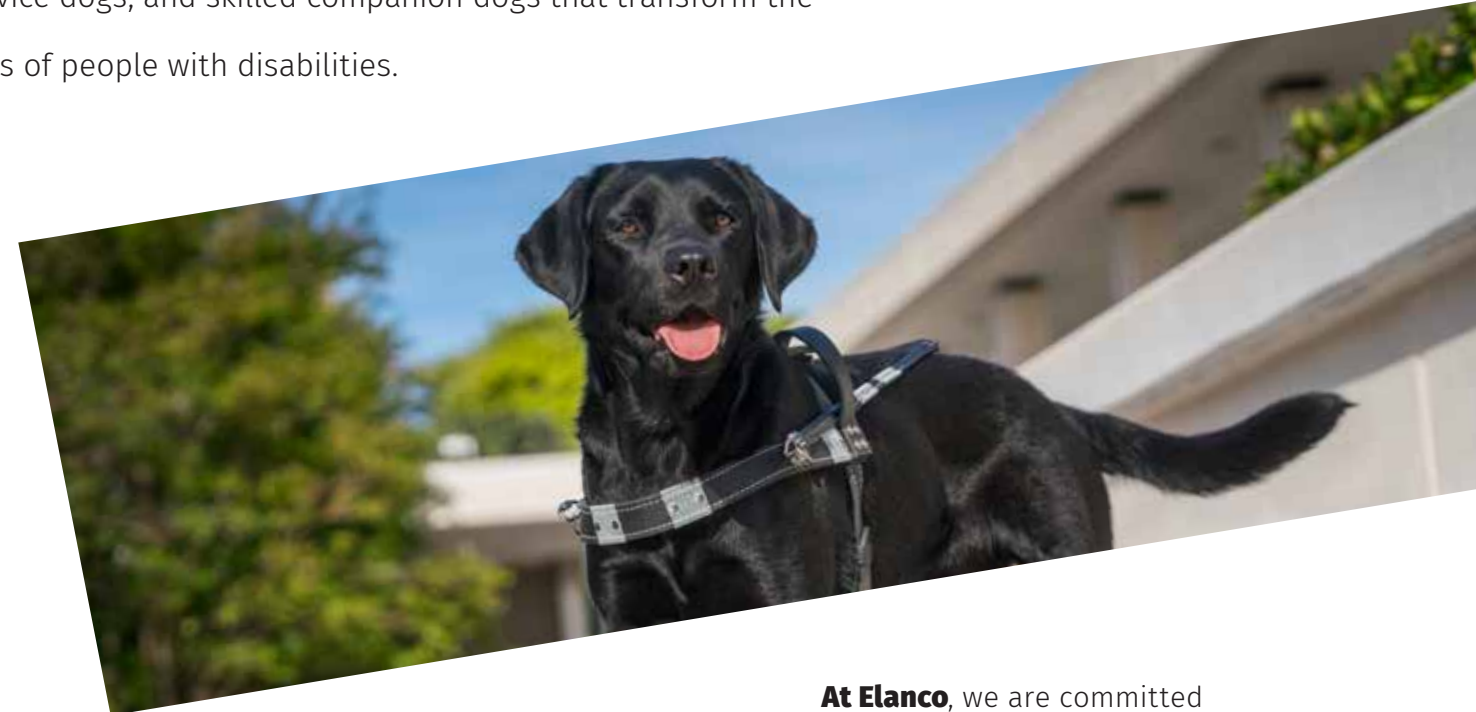


Your generosity makes bonds like this possible.



Elanco is proud to be the Official Sponsor of Preventative Health Products for Dogs Inc.

We support long and healthy lives for the incredible guide dogs, service dogs, and skilled companion dogs that transform the lives of people with disabilities.



At Elanco, we are committed to creating a healthier life for animals everywhere. That means a more comprehensive portfolio of products along with unparalleled service and support for the health of animals, and for the good of people and the planet. **Elanco Healthy Purpose™**



HELP US MEET
THE **\$1 MILLION**
HEROES CHALLENGE

MISSION OF HOPE

2X your donation

Double Your Gift

During the Heroes Challenge, your donation doubles, supporting the pups who help America's heroes and their families. **Every dollar you give is instantly matched up to \$1 million.**

In the quiet moments, when the weight of past battles lingers, a gentle paw and a wagging tail have the power to open the door to healing—to hope.

Our dogs offer a warm embrace to the brave ones who carry silent scars, the families whose hearts wait, and the children holding memories close. A mission that holds steady, rekindling hope.

Thanks to your support, our dogs become faithful companions to those who sacrifice so much. They carry the sound of laughter and calm restless hearts—all because of your kindness.

★ The Heroes Council ★

Thank you to our Heroes Council, a group of friends who put veterans first by coming together to create our \$1 million Heroes Challenge. Because of their generosity, your gift goes twice as far.

Our Council Members

Chairman: Vice Admiral Joe Maguire, USN retired

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Susan & Alan Citron | Anonymous |
| Coopersmith Family Foundation | Ohio Cigar Mafia |
| The Davis Elkins Charitable Foundation | John & Susan Rapp |
| Anonymous | Carol & Ed Sanders |
| Marcia Gosline | Jan Schmidt & Family |
| George & Mary Graner | Brian & Sherry Soucy |
| Anonymous | Estate of Larry Von Sutton |
| Maria Kenny & Bob Macpherson | Nora Wilcox, MD |

Double Your Gift Today at dogsinc.org/heroes





TRIALGE
of the heart

Stillness blanketed the sky—until the silence broke as a mortar round exploded beside the Army barracks, turning windows into shards of glass.

Christina Wills sprung from bed. Heart pounding in her chest, pounding to the horror of blasts.

The hallway door slammed open.

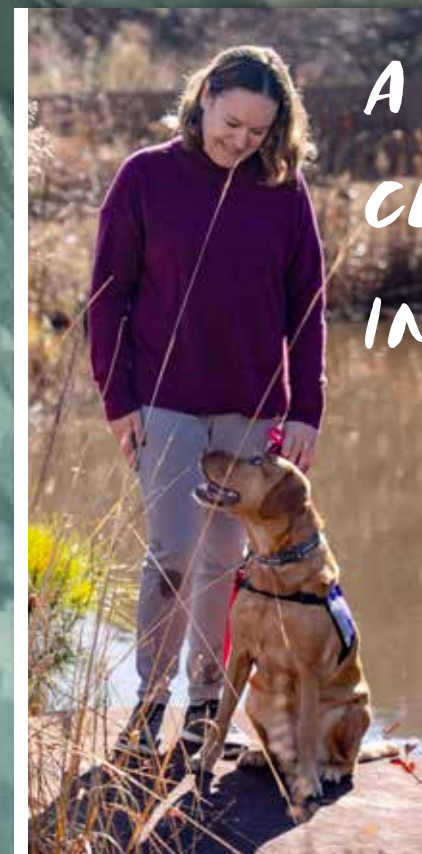
“They need a medic,” the Army sergeant yelled. “They need a medic now!”

Slicing through the drumming of her heart, the horrifying screams, and the settling shrapnel—something clicked. A switch. “This is my mission,” she thought. She knew.

Wounded soldiers lay on the ground. One stood, scanning the devastation, clutching a small first aid kit. She grabbed the kit, triaging the situation and giving orders. Saving lives.

She recalls leaving the trauma bay that night—her mission complete. The switch in her mind turned off, grounding her back into her body. Numb.

“I don’t even remember how I got back to my room,” Christina says. “At that point, I was like, oh my god. I almost just died.”



A DOG'S LOVE
CLICKS
INTO PLACE.

Christina Wills and
Service Dog Nick



Fifteen months in Afghanistan and six years of active duty left her struggling to triage peace in civilian life. Then, vital support arrived in four paws and a heartbeat of hope.

Each morning, Nick dons her service vest to escort Christina and her two children to school, where Christina takes on her new mission as the middle school's registered nurse.

As students scurry down the hallways, stirring up a din that presses on Christina's nerves, Nick nuzzles closely, resting a soft chin on her knee.

"I probably could not have made it this long in the position I'm in—in the middle school setting because there's a lot of opportunity for anxiety and a lot of noise," Christina says. "Nick being here to help me refocus allows me to do what I need to do."

Nick watches over Christina at work, even bringing a sense of calm to the other teachers who look to her during the chaos for a moment of peace.

As the memories of trauma bubble up, swirling in her nightmares and in the noisy hallways of the middle school, Nick moves in close.

Something new clicks.

Love, joy, peace—a new healing mission for herself.

"She's my happy place. My calming place," Christina says. ●

♥ THANKS TO YOU, PLACES OF PEACE AND CALM EXIST.

NICK watches over Christina at work, even bringing a sense of calm to the other teachers who look to her during the chaos for a moment of **PEACE.**



MEET ME at dogs inc

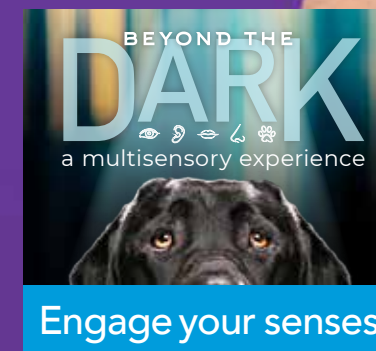


Welcome to Dogs Inc, where hope comes to life. Our world-renowned campus in Palmetto, Florida, will forever change how you view the human-canine bond. Here, extraordinary dogs train for life-changing careers, helping people nationwide. With wagging tails, soft paws, and big hearts, we invite you to experience the magic of our Dogs Inc campus.

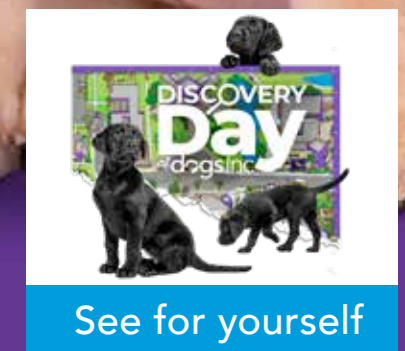
 Plan your visit to a world of wonder at dogsinc.org/visit



Tour our school



Engage your senses



See for yourself

Help our dogs bring healing and hope to veterans today.

FRIENDS OF dogs inc

Feel the magic of making a difference!

Your friendship creates hope and brightens the future for people with visual impairments, veterans battling trauma, and children struggling with loss. And when you invite your friends, colleagues, and others in your sphere of influence to join our mission, you expand the circle of friendship and impact of Dogs Inc.



Create your own fundraising webpage today!

Create a fundraising page online. Raise as a team or on your own.

Customize your fundraising with our easy-to-use flyers and templates.

Share heartwarming puppy photos and videos to inspire others to donate.

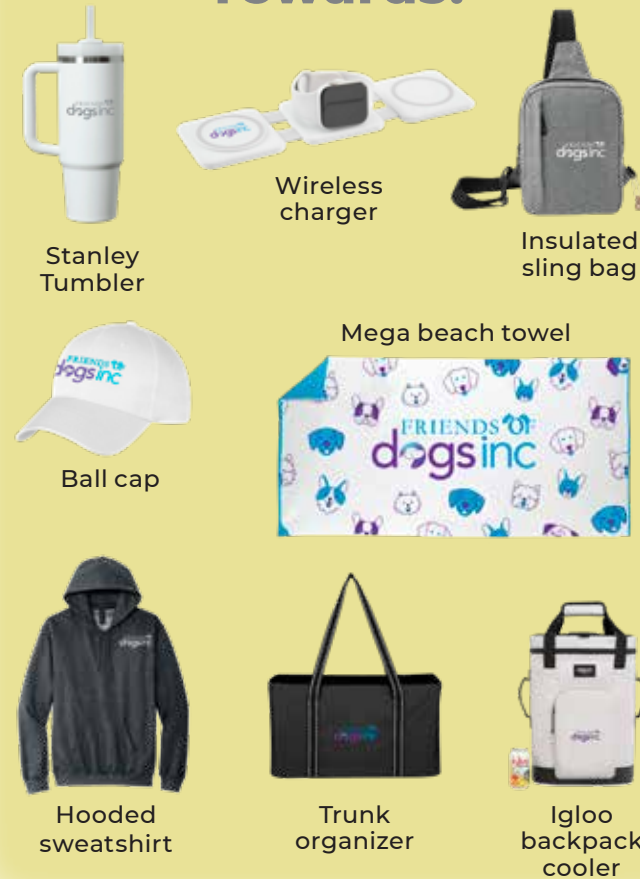
Harness fundraising tool kits, activities, and pro tips to maximize your impact.

Enjoy brand new incentive items as you reach your goals. 

Take your friendship to the next level!

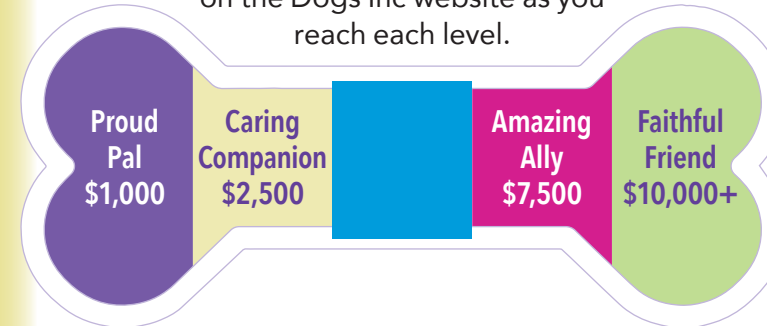
Find the perfect way to partner with us and our pups to create brighter futures.

New fundraising rewards!



Make the Honor Roll

Watch your name move up on our brand new Fundraising Honor Roll on the Dogs Inc website as you reach each level.



You share our mission.
 You inspire others to support it.
 You help our dogs help more people.
 You make the world brighter.
 It all starts with you.

JOIN TODAY

As a friend, every dollar you give during the Heroes Challenge is matched, up to \$1 million, giving life-changing help for the dogs who serve America's heroes and their families.

Become a friend of Dogs Inc today at friendsofdogsinc.org



fromm.
Family PET FOOD



We're proud to support Dogs Inc

At Fromm Family Foods, we pride ourselves on offering a wide variety of premium dog and cat foods produced using the finest ingredients. Countless families across the country trust us with feeding their four-legged family members. We are honored to be selected as the Official Dog Food of Dogs Inc, providing nutritional excellence to their extraordinary dogs throughout the United States.



To find a retailer near you, visit
frommfamily.com/retailers

