

LIFELINE

HEROES FOR HEROES



LifeLine Service Dogs
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Greetings,

My name is Tina Anderson-Powe, Executive Director, LifeLine Service Dogs. We are a 501(c)(3) organization registered in Arkansas.

The mission of LifeLine Service Dogs is to provide purpose bred canines proven from quantitative and qualitative genetic selection and provide task trained, service dogs to our Veterans, Active Duty, First Responders, Gold Star Families and Children at no charge to them. Our program is the only non-profit of its kind in Arkansas utilizing the service dog resource we have developed. Currently, our service dog program serves 50 Veterans and 11 children teams. Through our program, we have provided purpose bred, health tested, expertly trained service dogs for our LifeLine recipients. The need exists here among our community of Veterans, this isn't an issue we can think is "somewhere else", they are here among us.

In the United States there is a critical need for highly trained PTS canines especially among our combat Veterans. We know the need exists, and in the July 20, 2023 publication by the American Addiction Centers, the suicide rate among Veterans is reported at 1.5 times higher than that of the general population. Comparing the rate among women Veterans to non-Veteran adult women the rate is 2.5 times higher. If this need goes unmet, suicide remains a real threat to our Heroes suffering with PTS and TBI. The US Veterans Administration reports the average number of suicides per day rose from 81 per day in 2001 to 121 per day in 2020. We also hear similar statistics in conversations with the Veterans we serve. Arkansas's last published statistical report revealed Arkansas exceeded the Veteran suicide rate both nationally and the southern region.

LifeLine Service Dogs is at the front line of this fight against Veteran Suicide. It may surprise some that a Veteran will reach out to peer to peer programs or service dog programs, before they often reach out to a loved one or a mental health provider.

Our program for Veteran service dogs provides purpose bred, health tested, highly specialized service dogs that combine both the hands on experience and scientifically proven success using quantitative and qualitative genetic selection. The canine resource for this specific program exceeds current industry canine success rates by 80%, utilizing a method and approach that is emerging as one of the most successful program efforts to date Helping our combat Veterans attain post traumatic growth and independence . These services will assist additional service dog teams, for our men and women by expanding our training roster of PTS , TBI and Med Alert Service Dogs. By expanding our services through our Veteran Service Dog Program, we expect to see the continued impact through the Veterans who “choose to stay”. LifeLine Service Dogs is honored to be working with Veterans who have struggled with combat related PTS and TBI, and are making a comeback, and are thriving with their service dogs at their side. We feel so privileged to share that 100% of all Veterans served through LifeLine Service Dogs are still with us today.

Additionally, LifeLine Service Dogs has been providing purpose bred, health tested, expertly trained medical alert service dogs for children and teens living with diabetes, autism, seizures, POTS and long QT syndrome since 1993. We have 11 training teams enrolled and focused on service dog training specifically for medically fragile children and teens.

In a 2021 systematic review on the impact of service dogs on children, youth and their families published in the Disability and Health Journal, noted that 23 out of 29 reported improvement in the health conditions of the children and the many other life changing benefits of service dogs. Our mission is, and continues to be, providing purpose bred, health tested and expertly trained service dogs at no charge to those in need. Medically fragile children living with a chronic condition have so many challenges and not only are these medical alert canines providing a lifesaving service, but they also offer unconditional love, hope, companionship and so much more. We are the only service dog resource in Arkansas for our medically fragile children. Why is that important? Two of our most requested services are for alert and response dogs for children with juvenile diabetes, epileptic seizures and autism. Intractable Epilepsy fails to respond to any treatment currently available. Task trained service dogs can alert the child to an impending onset alerting the child to seek safety, protect the child's head during a seizure, call for help using a canine “911” button, alert a parent. If you can imagine for a moment the psychological toll this takes on a child, for example, “our” 5 year old little boy experiences on a daily basis. A day where he may have 1 seizure or 40 seizures. Often feeling isolated from school activities and friends because he navigates an illness unlike they do. The psychological impact a service dog can have for a child is a monumental benefit to the lifesaving work these service dogs do.

Statistically it costs approximately \$48,000.00 for each canine and training for most organizations, but for our LifeLine Hero Teams, however we have eliminated the need for canine procurement through our in house program, overall reducing the overall budget. (* see impact report)



Our lead trainer has had the opportunity to sit across from the men and women who served this country and start the conversation of hope. The battle plan for victory has no single solution which is why LifeLine's Grow From Here Program is so important. LifeLine Service Dogs maintains the training of each team for the service career of the canine (8 years) and remains involved in the mental health journey for our Veterans. Our Grow From Here Program incorporates Veteran and service dog activities such as individual and team training, outdoor/recreational activities to encourage community engagement through peer to peer support, with other teams in training, networking with mental health professionals in both clinical and non-clinical disciplines to explore the opportunities that align and work for each individual Veteran. The Grow From Here program, to date, has a 100% success rate with continued Veteran participation and retention.

Just as there is no single solution to ending Veteran suicide, there is no one single person who can "pull the wagon". We have to have your help to grab the leash and walk beside these men, women and children who are navigating some of the toughest chapters of their lives.

PTS isn't remembering trauma is RE-LIVING trauma and for lack of a better example, PTS it's its own terrifying and traumatic version of the movie "Ground Hog Day", where the nightmares and memories try to destroy you. It's an invisible enemy and without help, can seem impossible to defeat.

We are honored to have the support of our area VFW, DAV, American Legion and Marine Corp League. We are recommended by our District Congressman, Texas Health HEB, The Arkansas Service Dog Association, The Texas Service Dog Association and have a Platinum Guide Star rating.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to introduce LifeLine Service Dogs and our Service Dog Program, to you, for funding consideration. We appreciate the support you provide to our community of Heroes. If you would like to discuss further details, We can be reached any day of the week between 7AM - 9PM, by phone at (479) 858-8820, cell: (360)827-2696 or email at lifelineservicedogscorp@gmail.com

We look forward to hearing from

Thank you for your consideration,
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