



## Mission Accomplishments for the Year 7/1/17- 6/30/18

*Working Dogs For Vets Mission is to provide service dogs and training to veterans in need, empowering them as they return to civilian life with a new found independence, while simultaneously reducing the overcrowding in animal shelters.*

- Total Members for 7/1/17-6/30/18 Year-999
- Dogs to evaluate, match, train, and adopt out-406
- Adopted dogs-593
- Teams across the U.S. working on basics and continuing to train for Service Dog In-Training Evaluation-459
- Service Dogs In-Training learning tasks to become a Service Dog-100
- Graduated Service Dogs who continue to train, visit, and volunteer-34 this yr + 252 total
- Suicides this year 1
- Dogs euthanized 0
- # of Animals Rehomed 0- Dogs that were rehomed because they didn't make it as service dogs. Those who do not make it will have received basic/advanced training and will be placed into a new home as a pet.
- # of Animals Rehabilitated-593
- # of Animals Monitored Post Release-593
- Average # of service recipients per month-999
- # of recipients who are employed-354
- # of Clients who report that services and support is available when needed even in a crisis-999
- # of adults with disabilities receiving sufficient social and emotional support-999

### **Age groups**

18-34 =410

35-50 = 388

51-70 = 69

71+ = 18

### **Genders**

Women 277

Men 722

### **Branches of service**

Army 564

Navy 118

Marine 149

Air Force 104

Coast Guard 19

1st responders/other 45



Charting Impact:

### **What is the organization aiming to accomplish?**

- To provide trained service dogs to veterans at no out of pocket cost to the veteran.
- To reduce suicide rates among our veterans.
- To help reduce overpopulation among shelters.

### **What are the organization's key strategies for making this happen?**

- No Veteran Left Behind Program.
- Pairs Veterans in need of Service Dogs with volunteer trainers in the veteran's location. This eliminates much of the need to come to the WDFV facility for training.
- Before a veteran is entered into the program, WDFV ensures the following.
  1. That the veteran has been medically prescribed a service dog.
  2. That the veteran is capable of caring for a dog.
  3. That the veteran understands what will be involved to train a service dog.
- Once the veteran is enrolled in the NVLB Program, WDFV uses their nationwide network of volunteers, to find a volunteer trainer located near the veterans home.
- The volunteer trainer:
  1. Evaluates the veterans dog, if they have one, to see if their dog might be a candidate for training as their service dog.
  2. If their dog will does not pass the evaluation for training purposes, WDFV will find a suitable candidate through evaluation and adoption.
  3. The volunteer trainer checks-in with the team weekly.
- We have been building a nationwide network of professional dog trainers who are willing to donate their time to help veterans by evaluating and helping veterans to train their service dogs.
- We have also been building a nationwide network of shelters who are willing to donate dogs to the program.
- Through our volunteer trainers, we have been instructing veterans on how to train their own service dogs. The volunteer trainers monitor the progress of the handler and the dog and report results back to WDFV.



## What are the organization's capabilities for doing this?

- Working Dogs For Vets helps veterans of all eras. Some are active duty, but all are heroes and have served in the military.
- Many of our veterans suffer from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), both of which can be deadly disorders.
- We also help disabled veterans who have had loss of limb(s), and many other disabilities.
- Service dogs, properly trained, are amazing for recovery from PTSD, TBI, and other disabilities. We have been honored to serve these brave men and women that have given this country so much.
- There is no charge for our service, it is our duty, honor and privilege. We support our teams training for life!
- We have events that our teams are welcome to attend. Many lodge locally or camp at our facility, where they train and learn to re-enter civilian life.
- We are a small charity doing huge work and making a difference. Our men and women of our military fought for our tomorrows, so we fight for their tomorrows today.
- Our programs have been very successful, proving amazing results in recovery, but the need is critical and empowers us to continue.
- We are growing at a sustainable growth rate and have over 999 members that we are serving. But with your support we will be able to serve many more. Our plans are to continue to train our teams and leaders to help with our programs to serve more veterans in need.

## How will we know if we are making progress?

We continue to conduct self-assessments to determine our strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Recognizing the constraints imposed by financial realities, we have sought to identify the most important and achievable strategic initiatives on which we must concentrate our efforts in the coming years:

1. PROGRAMMING(Two goals):
  - To streamline our community and Service Dog-training programs and to identify new volunteer trainers to help recipient populations we serve. We will make improvements in the monitoring and supervision of our prison and community volunteer trainer programs.
  - Second, we will identify new volunteer trainers and environments in which our disabled veterans and service dogs will best benefit. We see particular opportunities in expanding our number of volunteer trainers and implementing additional training for prison dog training programs. All of our decisions about expanding the range of populations will be conditional upon our ability to guarantee the continuing high quality of our operations.
2. FACILITIES:
  - Our existing training facility constitutes a major impediment to the progress and growth of our programs. Many updates, including plumbing and structures for training during inclement weather and housing the dogs are simply not feasible at the current location. We tried to negotiate with the property owner to buy the property, but at a price tag of \$1,000,000 for just the property, WDFV decided we needed to search out a property better suited to the needs of our veterans and the organization. All of

those most closely associated with WDFV operations have identified the construction of a new training facility as one of the organization's most important strategic priorities.

- Recently, WDFV has located acreage to build a new training facility. WDFV campus, including its administrative offices, kennel, and training facility, site in a beautiful rural setting in Lawrence County, TN. The property is relatively level. One of the most important needs we have is facilitating ease of access for people using wheelchairs. This includes bathroom facilities that are Handicapped accessible. In addition, a kennel facility will need to be constructed. The land is spacious and attractive, and is laid out in a way that maximizes the organization's ability to maintain the good health of its animals as well as the good health and well being of the veterans we serve.



## What has and hasn't WDFV accomplished so far?

### 2017 Progress Report

- Working Dogs For Vets is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization! Founded in Lawrenceburg, Tennessee is one of the Nation's Largest Service dog providers.
- We now have veterans and volunteers in every state, and that number is growing daily! We are pulling dogs from over 100 shelters! WDFV is the 1st service dog provider in the state of TN that had veteran service dog teams stay in VA long-term treatment centers. We have service dogs/working dogs that have been accepted at military bases with some who are currently serving alongside active military veterans.
- Teamsters truck drivers now allow Working Dogs for Vets dogs to travel with truck drivers nationally.
- A first for the President and a first for Working Dogs For Vets. On June 4, 2018, a reception and memorial program was held for Gold Star Families at the White House. The event was hosted by President Donald J. Trump and attended by First Lady, Melania. Working Dogs For Vets had the 1st Service dog to ever be photographed with the President! American Gold Star Mother Cindy Tatum and husband Andy, with Working Dogs for Vets Service Dog Linus were in the official photograph taken with President Donald J. Trump!
- From 7/2017-6/2018 WDFV was able to pair and train 593 veterans with rescued dogs, train service dogs and serve over 999 teams monthly. That's 1,186 lives saved because of each person's contributions. Many of these service dogs were trained in-house at the Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, & Kentucky locations. WDFV was able to grow our membership to over 999 veterans! Our Family is growing and more veterans are being helped because of your support!

### Whats next?

- Our goal for 2018 is to train more service dog trainers across the country to assist those veteran teams that are not capable of getting to the WDFV training facilities. One of our challenges is that because our members are located in many states across the country, they have to travel to our National Headquarters when there are not any qualified volunteers in their area. We have however been able to train many of the veterans after they have successfully trained their own service dogs, to become area lead volunteers to help other veterans with training. Currently, W.D.F.V. has K-9 police officers and dog trainers across the country who have or are currently helping as volunteers for veteran/service dog teams in their area.
- At Working Dogs For Vets National Headquarters we have 4 annual events for all members. This is a great help to those who are able to travel. We are additionally open daily as weather permits for Veteran/Dog teams to come and train.
- One of our goals is to find a way to travel to the rural communities to host events to help the veterans who can not travel and host events to train the trainers in those areas.
- For the past two years. WDFV has partnered with American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. to raise awareness to the tragedy of Veteran Suicide. We have been able to promote the positive benefits that a service dog can provide to soldiers who are suffering from disabilities.
- Lastly, is to facilitate the purchase of a new training facility and build cabins for events with handicapped accessibility and team lodging. Currently our veterans lodge at local hotels, campgrounds, or set up tents in the open field behind the agility course.



**Quick Facts:**

**Founded: 2012**

**Incorporated and Non-profit status 501(c)(3): 2015**

**Service dog graduates: 252**

**Recertification Rate: 91%**

**Total of dogs rescued: 593**

**Volunteers: Over 1000 active volunteers serving over 40 hrs per week**

**Awards: Eagle Rare Life Award 2016**

**GuideStar Seal Of Transparency**

**Listed on Great Nonprofits**

**Measurements:**

- The average veteran is on 10-15 medications when beginning Working Dogs For Vets program. 81% reduce or eliminate medication post-graduation.
- 91% of graduates report improvement in health after having received their service dog training.
- 98% report being able to handle anxiety better after having received their dog.
- Before receiving their service dogs, 99% of graduates reported that they considered themselves to be in poor health. After receiving their service dog only 5% continued to rate their health as "poor."
- 98% report decrease in suicidal thoughts.
- 95% report a reduction in nightmares/night terrors.
- 95% reported handling flashbacks better after receiving their service dog.
- 100% noted that they benefited from the physical and mental bond with their service dog.
- Less than 35% of the participants reported being able to attend work or school before receiving their service dog. 75% increased attendance at school or employment services after receiving their services dogs.
- Before receiving their service dog, 85% of the participants reported that symptoms associated with PTSD played a major role in their inability to enjoy activities. After receiving their service dog, 5% of participants continued to report that their symptoms played a major role in daily activities.



