2018 Annual Report

Valor Service Dogs

Partners in Independence
A Letter from the Executive Director

2018 marked another remarkable and challenging year for Valor Service Dogs. Once again, I was humbled by our amazing volunteers and supporters. Without you, none of this would be possible.

This year we placed three more service dogs with their forever veterans. These brave men sacrificed so much for this Country and I couldn’t be prouder to be part of their healing journey.

This past year we attended more community outreach events and added more puppies to our training program than ever before. Additionally, we had the opportunity to attend two industry association conferences where we got to learn and network. It was an exciting year that certainly tested our time management, but I wouldn’t change a thing. To see Valor Service Dogs grow and reach more people was incredibly exciting.

Thank you for putting your trust in me and this organization. I love what I do, and this dream wouldn’t be a reality without your support and encouragement. 2019 has many exciting things in store and I can’t wait to share them with you.

Sincerely,

Carol Lansford
Our Mission

Valor Service Dogs is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization that helps post-9/11 wounded veterans regain their independence, return to civilian life, and maintain successful partnerships through the training and placing of mobility assistance and PTSD service dogs.

Valor Service Dogs also strives to bring awareness and education to the public on service dogs, their training, and the laws that give service dogs and their handlers access and protection.

What Makes Us Different

Our Founder and Executive Director started Valor Service Dogs because of her husband, a combat wounded veteran with complete and permanent physical disabilities. She understands the real-life challenges facing these wounded veterans and their families and she has an exceptional ability to connect with them, ask the right questions, and pair them with their future service dog. She is unwavering in her commitment to high training standards and she is incredibly selfless when it comes to our veterans,

While there are several veteran-focused service dog organizations out there, we are unique in four ways: 1) Our Executive Director was one of the few government-contracted service dog training instructors at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, bringing best-in-class training techniques to Valor Service Dogs. 2) We are one of the few organizations that focus on mobility AND post-traumatic stress disorder service dogs (PTSD), allowing us to help more veterans with a wider range of needs. 3) We train dogs to meet the needs of a specific veteran, not a one-size-fits-all approach. Each veteran can know that their dog was specifically selected and trained just for them. 4) We place service dogs in all 50 States, not just within a limited radius of our headquarters.
How We Make an Impact

Train  We use purpose-bred golden retrievers for our two-year training program. During these two years, our Director of Training will lead the service dog through our specially-designed training program with the assistance of a foster family (Puppy Coach) who houses and helps teach obedience and commands. All supplies needed are provided at no cost to the foster family.

Place  We have a thorough application and placement process that enables us to ensure that qualified veterans can receive a service dog trained specifically to their unique set of needs. We provide these service dogs at no cost to the veterans across all 50 States.

Educate  We believe that educating the public on service dogs and the laws that protect them are critical to the ongoing success of veteran/service dog working pairs. We take pride in our public outreach and education efforts.

Who We Help

We place mobility and PTSD support service dogs with post-9/11 wounded veterans in all 50 States, at no cost to the veteran. To be eligible to apply, veterans must meet the following requirements:

- Post 9-11 combat wounded (includes simulation and training exercise related)
- Current status must be medically retired or honorably discharged
- Has been deployed to a combat zone
- Able to travel to Tampa, FL for up to 2 weeks

Valor Service Dogs realizes that there can be unique circumstances that require exceptions to these rules. We do our best to evaluate each application carefully and thoughtfully while remaining focused on our Mission.
2018 Impact and Growth

In 2018, Valor Service Dogs graduated and placed 3 more service dogs. The journey for these dogs started back in 2016 as 8-week-old puppies in training, so to finally see the years of dedication and training result in successful and life-changing placements meant the world to all of us. Their puppy coaches did a wonderful job and truly represent the spirit of volunteerism. All three of these dogs have given their veterans the confidence and independence that they have longed for since being wounded and each dog has been a positive addition to the families that they joined.

2018 Graduates!

**DIMMER** graduated in March 2018 and was placed with an Army veteran who has over 23 years of service. Dimmer loves his new human sister and enjoys waking her up each morning. This working pair has done a great job at overcoming obstacles together and we can’t wait to see what new adventures they have in store. Dimmer and his family live in Florida and we enjoy when they stop in for a visit.

**HUEY** graduated in May 2018 and was placed with an Air Force veteran with over 13 years of service. Huey joined a happy family with two dog brothers to play with. Huey and his veteran travel the country together for sporting events and warrior retreats. We know that they are a confident working pair who are enjoying many adventures together. Huey and his family live in Alaska and Huey absolutely loves the snow.

**BRADLEY** graduated in December 2018 and was placed with an Air Force veteran with 26 years of service. This pair bonded immediately, and they have settled into a great partnership together. Bradley has a very calm personality, which is a perfect fit for his veteran. This working team enjoys going on runs and trying new adventures as a family. Bradley lives in Florida and enjoys going to work every day with his veteran.
This chart illustrates program growth since our launch in October 2015. Dogs are in our training program between 20-22 months, so puppies added in a certain year are typically scheduled to graduate two years after joining the program.

In 2018, we added 8 new puppies to our training program, which is 4 more than the year before, giving us a max program size of 15 service dogs in training. This growth was made possible by our donors and volunteers, so thank you!

We are incredibly proud of the fact that we’ve increased the size of our program year over year, meaning that we always added more puppies to the program than we were graduating. Additionally, we’ve only released 2 dogs from the training program and they were both placed as Military Family Support Dogs.

Here are the dogs currently in our service dog training program:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Graduating Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOFie</td>
<td>March 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apollo</td>
<td>March 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higgins</td>
<td>April 2019</td>
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<td>Norman D</td>
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In 2020, we are scheduled to graduate 10 service dogs, more than double what we are scheduled to graduate in 2019. To make sure that all graduates reach our highest training standards, we hope to add an additional trainer in 2019. This new trainer will work under Carol and help hold puppy coach classes, prepare dogs for Joint Training, and onboard new puppies. We can’t wait to welcome a new team member!
The largest contributors to our Program Service expenses were our service dog in training costs, Executive Director/Director of Training and Director of Operations salaries, and occupancy of a leased training facility.

Service dog in-training costs, which include all direct service dog in training expenses, accounted for $40,572, or 39%, of our Program Service expenses. Puppy purchases, food/treats, and preventative veterinary and health care accounted for majority of these expenses. Harmony Vet Care is our veterinary clinic partner. They provide all in-house care to our dogs in training at no cost to us, which saved us thousands of dollars in 2018. Preventative veterinary and health care expenses not included in this partnership are flea and tick monthly preventatives, heartworm monthly preventatives, joint supplements, vitamins, immune system supplements and outside lab work.

Salary and occupancy costs were allocated to all three expense classifications and the following values are for the Program Service expense classification only. Occupancy of a training facility accounted for $22,076, or 21%, and the salaries of our Executive Director and Director of Operations accounted for $28,443, or 27%. In 2018 we added a Director of Operations to our payroll. This position manages the day to day operations necessary to ensure that we meet our goals as an organization, aids with veteran intake and Joint Training, and allows our Executive Director/Director of Training to focus more of her time on dog training.

The largest contributors to our revenue in 2018 were a gift from Ken Lamb and Mimi Aye, the sponsorship of a future service dog’s training by Nutramax Laboratories, the sponsorship of Peter Tare’s training by Michael and Mary Trueblood, and a grant from The Robert Irvine Foundation. These four contributions accounted for 48% of our revenue in 2018.
Partner and Sponsor Spotlight

We wouldn’t be where we are today without the help of our Corporate and Foundation Partners and Sponsors. Thank you!

**Gold Star**: donated $10,000 or more in financial support or goods and services

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**Silver Star**: donated between $4,000 - $9,999 in financial support or goods and services
Help Us

With your support, we can continue to help veterans regain their independence, return to civilian life, and maintain successful partnerships.

DONATE TODAY!

✧ Send checks payable to: Valor Service Dogs
   5307 N. Falkenburg Rd.
   Tampa, FL 33610

✧ Donate Online: Find links to donate on our website and Facebook page
✧ In-Kind Donations: Visit our Amazon “VSD Wishlist” and make in-kind donations
✧ Shop Amazon Smile: Choose Valor Service Dogs as your charity of choice!
✧ Workplace Giving: Talk to your employer about payroll deduction options
✧ Donate Airline Miles: contact Emelie@valorservicedogs.org for info

VOLUNTEER!

We can’t accomplish our mission without dedicated volunteers. If you live near Tampa and are looking for a life changing volunteer opportunity, contact us about becoming a Puppy Coach. No dog training experience needed!

SPREAD THE WORD!

Follow and share us on social media to stay up to date on all our fun filled training days and activities.