

# PATRIOTPAWS

SERVICE DOGS



## MEET THE

# INTERNERS

It is not widely known that besides being fully accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) as a service dog provider, Patriot PAWS is also certified by the State of Texas as a service dog trainer training school. Although our curriculum adheres strictly to ADI guidelines, it was crafted under the direction of Lori Stevens drawing upon her decades of dog training experience.

This certification is finally being put to good use because, being in need of additional trainers and not being able to find enough qualified applicants, we established our inaugural trainer internship program in June in order to train our own. Six interns were hired to go through a 30-month program of intense instruction, overseen by Lori herself, to learn service dog training from the ground up.

The interns began by working their first month in the kennels to learn proper dog care and are now working their way through the curriculum learning to train service dogs the Patriot PAWS way. Each intern was assigned 4 puppies to follow from intake to graduation, including follow-up after being placed with their veterans. Among the many things they must learn is to recognize each dog's strengths and weaknesses and to work with each dog as an individual because, just like humans, no two dogs are the same. Knowledge of dog anatomy and dog psychology is also crucial because each dog must not only be healthy, but happy as well, in order to succeed as a service dog candidate. In addition, the interns rotate being "leader" for a week to give them leadership experience. Those who successfully complete the 30-month program will be the first to receive full accreditation from Patriot PAWS as service dog trainers.

### SO NOW, MEET THE INTERNS!

**Danielle Reed** was a dog trainer at PetSmart who wanted to continue training but also give back to our veterans.

**Elizabeth Maupin** has a BS in Zoology and has worked at various animal-related jobs but wanted to be involved in "training for a purpose."

**Kamrey Ross** knows first-hand the benefits of a service dog, having had one herself, and wanted to use her experience to help others get the help they need.

**Kristina Longoria**, who graduated from Texas A&M in May, was a puppy raiser for a student organization and wanted to learn to train service dogs.

**Lindsey Rodriguez** was a PetSmart dog trainer who comes from a military family and wanted to be a part of the Patriot PAWS mission.

**Matt Kunstmann** was a basic obedience dog trainer who has wanted to train service dogs ever since he was a child when he saw a working therapy dog.

Everyone at Patriot PAWS is excited to have such a talented and enthusiastic group of young people on board, and we wish them well in their pursuit of such a worthwhile career.







**LETTER FROM LORI**

Patriot PAWS has experienced unbelievable growth over the last few years, and with this growth has come the need to make a change. In order to streamline the day-to-day operation of our organization, I have turned the business reins over to **Randy Chambers**, our new COO, so that I can focus on overseeing the training of our dogs and spend more time interacting with our veterans. Having an experienced businessman such as Randy oversee the business end of our organization will allow me to concentrate on what I do best, dog training, because our commitment is, and always has been, to produce the highest-quality service dogs possible. I am humbled to have so many good people, staff and volunteers alike, working together to achieve our goals, and thankful to you, our loyal supporters, for helping us come this far and for making it possible for our mission of helping disabled veterans to continue.

*“Animals are such agreeable friends - they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms.”*

*George Eliot*



**SPOTLIGHT**

**ON RANDY CHAMBERS**

Randy Chambers has been a Patriot PAWS Board member for the past 3 years and joined the staff in late August in the newly-created position of Chief Operating Officer. His extensive background in business includes serving as Petco Regional Vice President of Operations for 8 years and working recently as a business consultant for a Canadian supermarket chain. Randy hopes that the experience he brings to the table will enable the organization to accelerate its forward momentum in increasing the number of dogs placed each year and in possibly developing an in-house dog breeding program in the near future. “I believe in the mission of Patriot PAWS and am honored to be a part of such a worthy organization.”



*Welcome, Randy!!*

**ELI'S CORNER**

Everyone at Patriot PAWS is excited about the new trainer internship program, but having had an intern myself, I can appreciate first-paw all the hard work that goes into it on both sides. Leo came to us at a very young age knowing nothing about dogs, so as his mentor, my work was cut out for me. Whether you're a 2-legged or 4-legged dog trainer, there is much to learn about those complicated creatures before you can be successful in their training. Teaching them to tolerate and even like cats sometimes isn't easy, but it's always rewarding to know that Leo and I have contributed to the overall success of a service dog candidate. Going out into the world with his veteran, he'll view felines as friends rather than foes, and who wouldn't rather have a friend than a foe? I'm very proud of Leo's accomplishments so far and know that as he hones his skills, he'll one day be as good a dog trainer as I am. Well, maybe not, but we'll see.

*Until next time, dear friends.*

*Eli*







**VETERAN MEL CARMACK & KYLE**

Navy SCPO **Mel Carmack** of Texas served for 28 years, 11 of which were sea duty, and retired as a Navy Recruiter. During his long career, he traveled all over the world. Mel has been diagnosed with depression and has anxiety issues. As a friend of Patriot PAWS for many years, he had seen first-hand the extraordinary ways that service dogs can help, so he applied knowing that he could benefit from one as well.

At the July 2018 graduation held at the training center, Mel received service dog Kyle, a male black Lab. "Patriot PAWS is awesome and treats veterans unlike any other organization. Kyle has made such a positive change in my daily life. I now look forward to each new day."

**VETERAN TYAHNA POUNCIL & DUDE**

Army SSG **Tyahna Pouncil** of Texas served for 19 years and was deployed to Iraq. She was a 91B, or Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic. Tyahna has mobility problems due to her back and anger issues due to PTSD resulting from service-related trauma.

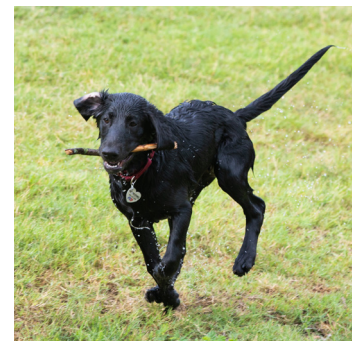
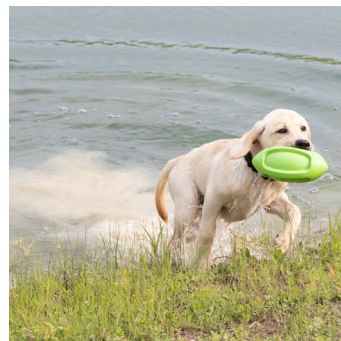
At the July 2018 graduation held at the training center, Tyahna received service dog Deuteronomy (Dude), a male yellow Lab. "I knew it was Dude from the first. Even when he was working with the other veterans, he kept looking over at me. He is really amazing. He keeps me smiling and watches over me when I sleep, and if something is wrong, he will lay across me. As long as he's there, I'm OK. I just really enjoy my Dude-man."

**VETERAN KY TRUONG & GEORGIA**

Army SGT **Ky Truong** of Texas served for 8 years and was deployed to Iraq. He worked in Communications and helped the Iraqi Army set up communications of their own. Ky has both mobility problems and emotional issues.

At the July 2018 graduation held at the training center, Ky received service dog Georgia, a female yellow Lab. "Since having Georgia, I can see why Patriot PAWS has been so successful. It's that look, the touch, the presence. I already have so many moments that she has helped me with. These moments provide so much more than I can ever explain. I would like to thank all that were a part of Georgia's life and her development to become a service dog."

**IN THE GOOD 'OLE SUMMER TIME...**



Photos by Donna Lee Riffle Dickson



## FROM THE KENNELS

Dr. Rhonda Phillips, DVM, and Carrie Robinson, CVA III, are a fabulous veterinary team dedicated to ensuring that each Patriot PAWS dog is provided with the best care possible.



Dr. Rhonda and Carrie have been a team for over 11 years. Get to know more about them by reading below!

### When did you first decide to pursue an occupation involving animal care?

**Dr. R:** I was in 7th grade when I started thinking about being a veterinarian. I pursued it from then.

**CR:** I got my first job at a vet clinic when I was 17. It was then that I realized caring for animals was my calling.

### What is your most memorable operation here at Patriot PAWS?

**Dr. R:** The recent case with Boyd has been extremely interesting. We performed surgery to correct a congenital deformity in his tongue causing a draining tract under his jaw.

**CR:** Removing a 1.3-pound lipoma from service dog Spot that was inhibiting his range of motion. It was a blessing to provide relief for both Spot and his veteran, Keith!

### What is your favorite thing about working with the dogs every day?

**Dr. R:** I feel extremely grateful for my God-given ability to give back to veterans through taking care of the dogs who will be caring for them. It's one of my ways to give back to those who have given so much for me to be able to live in the greatest country of the world.

**CR:** Veterinary medicine has come so far. To be able to provide medical care for animals that can't say, "Hey, I don't feel well!", will always be rewarding for me.

**Thank you** to everyone who so generously donated to make our fully-equipped veterinary medical room possible!

See our list of medical room donors at: [www.patriotpaws.org/news](http://www.patriotpaws.org/news), "VET CLINIC: UP & RUNNING!"

## ENGRAVED BRICKS FUNDRAISER UPDATE:

As of late August, 154 bricks and 9 benches had been ordered to go into our future garden area, Patriot Garden. Construction of the new veterans' house, courtesy of the Dallas Builders Association, is underway and expected to be completed sometime this Fall, after which landscaping for the actual garden can begin. Additional bricks or benches may be ordered from our website under "Donate" or by contacting the training center for an order form.



## NEW TO OUR NEWSLETTERS OR MISSED AN ISSUE?

Every past Patriot PAWS newsletter is archived on our website. Just go to [www.patriotpaws.org](http://www.patriotpaws.org) and click on News/Newsletters to read what you've missed and see how we've grown!

### IN MEMORIAM

The Patriot PAWS Family's hearts go out to **Veteran Brent Jurgensen** for the loss of his service dog, **Houston**.

*Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal.*  
— Author Unknown

• 972-772-3282 •

## Consider today what you can do to help us help them...



*"The atmosphere here is unreal and reinforces the fact of how great it is to be an American veteran! What is really amazing is how the commitment of Patriot PAWS never ends. They are here forever for each veteran who receives one of their great animals..."* — Arlie Matthews, 2016 Graduate

### PLEASE DONATE TODAY

- We accept all major credit cards on our website at [www.patriotpaws.org](http://www.patriotpaws.org)
- Cash, checks and money orders by mail or in person. **Address:**  
**254 Ranch Trail**  
**Rockwall, TX 75082**

### ALSO CONSIDER:

- Setting up a recurring donation
- Honoring or memorializing someone
- Matching your employee's donation
- Pledging for a 3-year period
- Becoming a PAWS ambassador
- Conducting a fundraiser
- Volunteering or becoming a puppy raiser
- If you are a Federal employee, you may make donations using our CFC# 35710
- Every time you shop at [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com), Amazon will donate .5% of the purchase price to Patriot PAWS at no cost to you.