



WARRIOR FREEDOM SERVICE DOGS

A 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to connecting Veterans with service induced brain injuries, such as Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) or TBI, to trained service dogs free of charge.

Annual Report 2025



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In February 2025, I stepped into the role of Executive Director of Warrior Freedom Service Dogs not only as a nonprofit leader, but as a Veteran who understands — personally — the invisible wounds that can follow service.

I know what it means to live with complex post-traumatic stress. I know how it can shrink the world, strain relationships, and make even simple moments feel overwhelming. That lived experience shapes how I lead, how I listen, and how deeply I believe in the mission of Warrior Freedom Service Dogs.

Throughout 2025, our organization continued to strengthen our program, graduated 5 Veteran–Service Dog teams, and building a community committed to lifelong support. Behind every graduation are hundreds of hours of training, trust, and consistency — and the quiet, powerful moments when healing begins.

Your support allows us to provide Service Dogs to Veterans at no cost, removing financial barriers and opening doors to recovery and independence. Whether you gave, volunteered, fostered, advocated, or partnered with us, you are a vital part of every success story.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains clear. We will continue to uphold the highest standards of training, accountability, and care, while pursuing long-term sustainability. Most importantly, we will continue to serve Veterans with the dignity, respect, and understanding they deserve.

On behalf of the Veterans, Service Dogs, staff, and Board of Directors of Warrior Freedom Service Dogs — thank you for standing with us.



Monica Piper, Executive Director
Warrior Freedom Service Dogs

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP & GROWTH

2024–2025 Overview

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, Warrior Freedom Service Dogs made meaningful financial progress in 2025.

In 2024, the organization raised \$327,070.50. While expenses were carefully managed, fundraising fell short of what was needed, and the year ended with a financial loss.

In 2025, community support grew significantly. Warrior Freedom Service Dogs raised \$413,257.59. This growth allowed us to invest in our programs, strengthen our operations, and better support the Veterans we serve.

The increase in support in 2025 directly strengthened our programs and the Veterans we serve. Additional funding allowed Warrior Freedom Service Dogs to expand training capacity, invest in daily care and consistency for our Service Dogs, and add staff support to ensure each Veteran–Service Dog team receives the time, attention, and follow-up needed for long-term success. Because of this growth, we were able to focus not only on placements, but on doing the work well — ensuring lasting impact for every Veteran in our program.





2025 WFSD GRADUATES

On December 13, Warrior Freedom Service Dogs proudly celebrated the graduation of five remarkable Veterans, each of whom completed an intensive training journey and stepped into a new chapter of life alongside their highly trained Service Dog.

This milestone represents far more than a graduation — it marks renewed independence, restored confidence, and a strengthened connection to daily life for each Veteran we serve.

We were honored to recognize the following graduates:

- SPC James Howard, U.S. Army paired with Service Dog Ace
- Maj. Melissa Grilliot-Hill, U.S. Army paired with Service Dog Isla
- SGT Gary Phillips, U.S. Army paired with Service Dog Cash
- TSgt Jason Russell, U.S. Air Force paired with Service Dog Mike
- MSgt Rodney Glass, U.S. Air Force paired with Service Dog Storm



DONOR SPOTLIGHT: CHARLES BRILL & JACKIE SANDS

Jackie Sands and Charles Brill are long-standing champions of Warrior Freedom Service Dogs whose generosity and leadership have made a lasting impact on our mission. As a married couple deeply committed to serving Veterans, they have donated multiple dogs to our program—directly expanding our ability to train and place Service Dogs with Veterans in need.

Beyond their generosity, Jackie and Charles have been instrumental in bringing our community together through fundraising. They organized last year's Annual Bowling Fundraiser and are once again leading the effort for our 2nd Annual Bowling Fundraiser, helping raise critical funds to support our training programs and ongoing Veteran support.

Their dedication exemplifies what it means to stand beside our Veterans— not just in words, but through action. We are profoundly grateful for Jackie and Charles's continued commitment, generosity, and belief in the life-changing work of Warrior Freedom Service Dogs.

WHY WARRIOR FREEDOM SERVICE DOGS?

ARICIA GALLAHER, WFSD BOARD MEMBER

My “why” for supporting Warrior Freedom Service Dogs has been part of my life for as long as I can remember. I come from a long line of military heroes. My grandfather served in World War II, and his story is one of courage, sacrifice, and deep love for his family. During one of the Japanese invasions in the Philippines, he helped lead his family through the jungle to safety. Without his bravery, my family's story — and my own — would look very different today.

His lifelong dream was to become an American citizen and serve in the U.S. Army. When he finally did, he served with honor and humility and was later awarded the Congressional Gold Medal — something he never spoke much about, but something our family holds close to our hearts.





Some of my most vivid childhood memories with him are from Fourth of July celebrations. I remember standing beside him as fireworks filled the sky, holding his hand, and seeing tears roll down his face. He loved this country deeply — not loudly, but in the quiet, powerful way so many Veterans do.

That legacy continued with my father, who also served in the U.S. Army. From both of them, I learned early that freedom isn't free. It is earned through sacrifice, long nights, heavy hearts, and service that often goes unseen. I also carry the memory of a dear friend, Gary "Big Cat" Willmon, a Vietnam Veteran. Gary had a gift for filling rooms with laughter and warmth. He carried the memories of war but never let them take away his light. Losing him was hard, but his example — of continuing to serve, love, and show up — stays with me.

So, when I learned about Warrior Freedom Service Dogs, something immediately clicked. It felt like coming full circle — a way to honor my family, my friend, and every Veteran who carries the invisible weight of service. Warrior Freedom doesn't just change lives — it saves them.

Our Veterans are fighting battles most of us will never see: anxiety, trauma, sleepless nights, and memories that never fade. Service dogs bring calm to that chaos. They restore independence, strengthen families, and help Veterans rediscover hope and purpose.

Warrior Freedom is a grassroots organization built on heart, faith, and grit. Every dollar raised goes directly toward helping a Veteran reclaim their freedom.

My “why” may have started with my family's story, but it continues with every Veteran we serve. Together, we have the power to restore freedom for the heroes who gave us ours.



WHY I FOSTER PUPPIES FOR WARRIOR FREEDOM SERVICE DOGS

KAREN WHEELER, WFSD FOSTER

Fostering puppies for Warrior Freedom Service Dogs is more than just a volunteer opportunity - it's a calling that combines my passion for animals with a desire to make a meaningful difference in the lives of veterans. There are many reasons why I choose to dedicate my time, energy, and heart to this rewarding organization.

As someone who deeply respects the sacrifice of our service members, fostering puppies is a way to give back to those who have given so much. The dogs I help raise will eventually provide comfort, independence, and support to veterans who have post-traumatic stress (PTS) or a traumatic brain injury (TBI).



Each foster experience is a learning opportunity for me to become a better foster mama. I help socialize the puppies, teach them basic manners, and expose them to various situations so they can grow into well-adjusted adult dogs. Sure, some days are challenging – puddles on the floor, chewed-up slippers, rainy 3 a.m. potty trips outside – but they are outweighed by the pride I feel watching the puppy figure out a new task or mastering a new skill. What is learned in the first year of the puppy's life lays the foundation for their advanced training and eventual placement with a veteran.

By fostering, I have become part of a passionate community dedicated to supporting veterans. By sharing my experiences with family, friends, and different groups, this helps raise awareness about the importance of service dogs and the ongoing needs of those who have served. Together, we create a ripple effect of awareness and support that extends far beyond our organization's walls.





Ultimately, the greatest reward is knowing that the work I do helps change lives. There is nothing like seeing the dog I once cradled in my arms now wearing their Service Dog vest and walking proudly beside their veteran. It's a feeling of accomplishment and pride that words can hardly capture. Of course, it is bittersweet because I am saying farewell to the puppy that I have protected and raised for over a year, but I believe the bond between a service dog and their veteran is life-changing, and being a part of that journey, even for a short while, is an honor I cherish deeply.

Fostering puppies for WFSD is a journey filled with purpose and heart. It's about honoring veterans, nurturing future service dogs, and being a part of something bigger than myself. I continue to foster because every puppy's paw prints lead to hope and healing for someone who truly deserves it.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR AMAZING SUPPORTERS!





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