



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Petco Foundation Invests in K9s For Warriors Service Dogs**

*Grant of \$90,000 will extend efforts to give veterans and rescue dogs a new leash on life at Florida-based nonprofit.*

**Ponte Vedra, December 12, 2016** – K9s For Warriors today announced it has been awarded a \$90,000 grant from the Petco Foundation to support its effort of saving dogs in the fight to end veteran suicide.

K9s For Warriors is a nonprofit organization that pairs highly trained service dogs with post-9/11 combat veterans to mitigate the symptoms of Post-traumatic Stress, traumatic brain injury, and/or Military Sexual Trauma. Over 90% of the dogs used in the program are rescues. Since its inception in 2011, K9s For Warriors has saved 550 dogs, graduated 267 warrior-canine teams, and served warriors in 40 states.

“K9s For Warriors is an incredible program saving both people and pets. By saving dogs from shelters and training them to improve the lives of our nation’s veterans, they are highlighting the capabilities and potential of shelter pets. All of us at Petco and the Petco Foundation are honored to support this important lifesaving work,” said Petco Executive Director, Susanne Kogut.

The grant was made possible through the Petco Foundation’s annual Helping Heroes fundraising campaign, in partnership with Natural Balance Pet Foods. During the campaign each October, customers are invited to donate in Petco stores across the country to support service and therapy animals and organizations.

The Petco Foundation investment will help support part of a class of warriors and their service canines complete the three-week training academy. After, the teams will return home to their families and communities with renewed hope and confidence to continue on the road to recovery.

“Petco’s generous grant will allow us to strongly push forward in our effort to stop the 22 daily suicides of our nation’s military veterans. We know that service dogs work, and we are proud that Petco is joining us in our commitment to saving animals in need - often homeless or on the brink of euthanasia - by giving them a new purpose in life in a loving home,” said Rory Diamond, K9s For Warriors’ Executive Director.

For more information about K9s For Warriors or the Petco Foundation, visit [www.k9sforwarriors.org](http://www.k9sforwarriors.org) or [www.petcofoundation.org](http://www.petcofoundation.org). Join the conversation on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) or by using the hashtag #PetcoFoundation.

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### **About K9s For Warriors**

K9s For Warriors was founded in 2011 by Shari Duval. After her son, Brett, returned home as a contractor from Iraq with Post-traumatic Stress, Duval recognized that there was a need to treat innovatively and effectively the devastating epidemic. What started out as an idea developed into a passionate nonprofit organization committed to saving the lives of rescue dogs and military heroes alike. Since 9/11, there have been 130,000 veteran suicides (22 lives lost a day to PTSD). Through a three-week, live-in training program – at no cost to the veteran – K9s For Warriors graduates are able to return to civilian life with dignity and independence while reducing their risk for suicide. The mission of K9s For Warriors is to stop these 22 daily suicides altogether. The organization has become the nation's preeminent organization providing service dogs to post-9/11 veterans suffering from PTSD, traumatic brain injury and/or military sexual trauma. To date, 267 veterans have been matched to service dogs.

### **About the Petco Foundation**

At the Petco Foundation, we believe that every animal deserves to live its best life. Since 1999, we've invested more than \$170 million in lifesaving animal welfare work to make that happen. With our more than 4,000 animal welfare partners, we inspire and empower communities to make a difference by investing in adoption and medical care programs, spay and neuter services, pet cancer research, service and therapy animals, and numerous other lifesaving initiatives. Through our Think Adoption First program, we partner with Petco stores and animal welfare organizations across the country to increase pet adoptions. So far, we've helped more than 5 million pets find their new loving families, and we're just getting started. Visit [petcofoundation.org](http://petcofoundation.org) to learn more about how you can get involved.