



MISSION

Patriot Rovers is a healing mission that provides professionally trained and certified Psychiatric Service Dogs, instruction, therapeutic group camaraderie and support services to Veterans struggling with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury as a result of their service to our country.

VISION

The vision of Patriot Rovers is to honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice while in service to our nation, and to help bring healing to the loved ones left behind. Our Gold-Star families deserve our love, honor and respect. Our mission achieves this while simultaneously providing a lifetime therapeutic companion for a veteran that is on duty 24/7.

PURPOSE

To assist and empower wounded service men and women, provide direct services and programs to meet their needs and encourage and support the transition back into their families, communities and civilian life.

ESTABLISHED

Patriot Rovers began in 2010 and was incorporated December 15, 2010. The organization later became a recognized 501(c)3 nonprofit in March 3, 2011 retro to the December 15, 2010 incorporation date.

HISTORY

Patriot Rovers Founder, David R. Cantara, is a U.S. Army Veteran, and canine behavioral expert. As a member and ride Captain with the Patriot Guard he has

attended hundreds of funerals of Veterans who have served our nation with honor and distinction. In late 2009, early 2010 he witnessed first hand a disturbing trend of soldiers who survived combat deployments only to return home and succumb to post traumatic stress. It is difficult to be graveside with families mourning a combat loss, but even more so for the soldiers who have made it back only to lose their lives on US soil. This is the call to action that started the Patriot Rovers Mission.

Combining his compassion for his fellow veterans, his affinity for dogs, and knowledge of canine behavior and training, David promptly set in motion the creation of a program that would later become a non-profit organization. Memories of how his own dogs never failed to provide him unconditional love and support, the organization could provide a Psychiatric Service Dog that could do all of this, and more. David invested his personal money, time and passion into providing medical care and extensive training for the dogs acquired for his program. He researched best practices for service dog training and the work being done with service dogs to help PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injuries.

He worked with the Veteran's Administration Polytrauma Unit to identify soldiers whom would benefit from Psychiatric Service Dogs. These soldiers train alongside their assigned dogs, developing a bond with their dog, learning about dog behavior, and learning skills as a handler before bringing the dog home. David's relationship with Gold Star Families brought about the third part of the Patriot Rovers mission. Gold Star Families can request that a Rover be named after their loved one who paid the ultimate sacrifice in their service to our country. David tested the program on a limited basis and when he saw the tremendous impact it made he brought together a Board of Directors and started the organization.

PROGRAMS

Patriot Rovers programs are designed to support the veteran through the use of a highly trained Psychiatric Service Dog and provide the soldier with the dog handling skills and confidence needed to reintegrate into family and community with dignity and self-sufficiency. Our programs include the Rover service dog program, skill development, camaraderie and service opportunities and ongoing support.

- Patriot Rovers is the signature activity of the organization. This program rescues acquires dogs, cares for them and trains them as psychiatric service dogs that provide medical alert, other task services and emotional support. They are then matched with veterans returning from service who are struggling with PTSD and/or TBI.
- Job Skill Training. We employ the owner/trainer model as the second phase in our service dog training program. It is our vision to begin a Job Apprenticeship Program to give soldiers the opportunity to learn skills that will allow them to reenter the workforce and potentially provide them with employment opportunities in our organization as we expand the number of dogs/soldiers

we can help. We are currently in the initial stages of implementation of the work program.

ABOUT PSYCHIATRIC SERVICE DOGS_____

Our Rovers are trained to perform specific tasks under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). These tasks include, but are not limited to, brace, get help, lights, doors, pull, dress, retrieve, reverse – all standard service dog training tasks. Our program results demonstrate that our trained psychiatric service dogs meet the following needs:

- Medical Alert and response
- Direct task services for daily functioning
- Strengthens Morale and Well -being/Suicide Prevention
- Stabilization and a sense of purpose
- Socialization and reintegration
- Potential workforce training through new skills
- Physical Balance and Stability

Additional Psychiatric Service Dog tasks include medical alert and response, tactile stimulation, alerting, interrupting, stabilizing, calming, waking, initiate activity, initiate interpersonal interaction, and the creation of personal space. Additional non-task functions include providing a combat Veteran with constant 24-hour reassuring, unconditional love and companionship.

MEDIA CONTACT

David Cantara

David@patriotrovers.org

(336) 664-6990