



## **Service Dog Trainer / Animal Assisted Therapist**

Warrior Canine Connection – Boyds, MD

### **Experienced Service Dog Trainer / Animal Assisted Therapist needed - train service dogs and help Veterans!**

Warrior Canine Connection has an immediate opening for an experienced Service Dog Trainer / Animal Assisted Therapist at our Bethesda, Maryland program location. If you are a passionate, experienced mental health professional who loves dogs, this just might be your dream job!

Warrior Canine Connection is a nonprofit organization with a unique and highly effective service dog training model we call Mission Based Trauma Recovery. In short, active duty Service Members and Military Veterans with combat related stress are engaged to help us train Golden Retrievers and Labradors to be service dogs. By learning to train service dogs, these Warrior Trainers are given a chance to develop practical skills such as patience, positive reinforcement, emotional regulation, and effective communication skills, while simultaneously helping to prepare the dog to assist a fellow injured Veteran in the future. Our service dogs learn up to 90 commands during a comprehensive, two-year training process. After those two years of training, the dogs are professionally matched with a disabled Veteran who has mobility impairments or psychological injuries.

As a WCC Service Dog Training Instructor, you will provide one-on-one instruction and teach small group classes to these volunteer Warrior Trainers, as well as to puppy parents, clinical staff, and community volunteers. For the current opening, most of the work will occur at a military medical facility in Bethesda, Maryland where our unique program is offered as compliment to clinical treatment programs.

This position requires service dog training experience, as well as state licensure and at least two years of experience as a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), occupational therapist (OT), or related clinical field. ***(Please see the complete list of qualifications below)***

This is a job that will truly make a difference in the world, and in the lives of the individual Veterans and Service Members we work with every day.

### **What the job involves:**

- Train Golden Retrievers and Labradors to be service dogs, from puppyhood to final placement, through various onsite and field activities.
- Provide one-on-one instruction and teach small group classes on service dog training to volunteer Warrior Trainers recovering from both the hidden and visible wounds of war (e.g. Post-Traumatic Stress, Traumatic Brain Injury, and other psychological health or physical injuries).
- Provide hands-on service dog training instruction to puppy parents and puppy sitters.
- Monitor and evaluate the dogs as they progress through training and socialization stages.
- Track and enter important data, and complete required forms and reports in a timely manner.
- Function as the project manager and program liaison between WCC and other stakeholders.
- Assist with coordination and management of team members working at the clinical location, ensuring that the highest standards of professionalism and ethics are maintained.
- Maintain a clean, safe environment for the dogs and humans at the program sites.
- Comply with or exceed Assistance Dog International minimum standards and ethics.
- Participate in staff meetings, professional development and community activities as directed.



### **Required Experience, Skills, Background:**

- Appropriate higher education, state licensure, and at least two years of clinical experience as a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW), occupational therapist (OT), or related clinical field.
- Possess certification of completion of an industry-recognized animal assisted therapy education program.
- Minimum of one (1) year working experience as an animal assisted therapist.
- Demonstrated experience working with individuals with TBI and/or mental health conditions, an understanding of TBI and/or PTS/PTSD symptomology, and experience working in a healthcare environment.
- Experience as a service dog trainer (candidates with experience training other types of assistance dogs or significant work as a professional dog trainer will also be considered).
- Comfort in leading one-to-one or group dog training sessions.
- Detail oriented and demonstrably strong work ethic – this can be demanding work.
- Friendly, calm, mature, patient, and professional demeanor with excellent communication skills.
- Desire to work with Veterans and the knowledge, skills, and ability to effectively interact and work with Veterans who have experienced combat trauma and/or psychological health or physical injuries.
- The ability to work independently with minimal supervision – you must learn quickly.
- Ability to prioritize work tasks - organization skills and time management are critical.
- Ability to instruct people with a variety of backgrounds and skill levels in the WCC training methodology and best practices for service dog training.
- Knowledge of, and ability to implement, effective training methods, problem solving and instruction for all phases of training (puppy through graduate training).
- Ability to learn and manage a variety of administrative processes.
- Basic computer skills and competency in Microsoft Office applications in order to maintain dog records, training charts, puppy evaluations, etc. Salesforce experience is a plus.
- Ability to pass background check for clearance to work on Federal property (livescan finger printing, TB tests, no felony convictions, etc.).
- Possess a valid driver's license, working vehicle and insurance.
- This is a full-time position with occasional weekend/evening hours.

### **Desirable Qualifications:**

- Previous experience working with Veterans with combat trauma.
- Comfort and experience in public speaking, presentations and interacting with community members, sponsors and public relations partners.

### **Compensation and Benefits:**

Exceptional compensation package including salary, medical, dental, and retirement benefits for full-time employees.

### **To Apply:**

To apply for this position, please provide a cover letter and resume to [HR@warriorcanineconnection.org](mailto:HR@warriorcanineconnection.org) Attention: Hiring Manager.



Warrior Canine Connection is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Job Type: Full-time