

# Purina Dog Chow Launches "Visible Impact Award" to Recognize Outstanding PTSD Service Dogs

*Award kicks off 5<sup>th</sup> annual Dog Chow "Service Dog Salute" program, which will reach \$1MM in Donations to Help Connect More Military Veterans with PTSD Service Dogs*

ST. LOUIS, June 22, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- As part of its 5th annual Service Dog Salute program, Purina® Dog Chow® is launching the brand's first-ever **Visible Impact Award** in partnership with the Association of Service Dog Providers for Military Veterans, a national coalition of service dog organizations. The award will celebrate the remarkable impact service dogs have on the daily lives of veterans experiencing posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and recognize these outstanding service dogs and the organizations that trained them.

## How to Participate

From now through July 22, 2022, veterans and their family or friends are invited to nominate their PTSD service dog for the opportunity to win the Dog Chow Visible Impact Award. Nomination requirements include a photo submission of the veteran and their service dog and sharing how the service dog has made an impact for the veteran on [DogChow.com/service](https://DogChow.com/service).

Up to five service dog finalists will be selected based on those who best illustrate the life-changing impact and unique skill set of a well-trained PTSD service dog.

Starting September 1, 2022, through October 17, 2022, dog lovers can join in selecting the first-ever Dog Chow Visible Impact Award winner by voting on the selected finalists. For every vote, Dog Chow will donate \$5 to the Association of Service Dog Providers, up to \$75,000, to help train more PTSD service dogs at no cost to veterans. Additionally, the Grand Prize winner will receive a \$10,000 cash prize, a trip to the National Dog Show presented by Purina and \$25,000 for the organization that trained the service dog.

## The Impact of PTSD Service Dogs

Roughly 3.5 million military veterans suffer from PTSD, and service dogs are demonstrated to reduce the severity of PTSD symptoms and suicidal behaviors.

"Research shows most veterans with trained service dogs experience lower symptoms of PTSD," said Dr. Maggie O'Haire, Associate Professor of Human-Animal Interaction, Purdue University and a leading researcher on PTSD service dogs. "We've seen reduced depression and increased social participation compared to those who utilize more traditional clinical care for PTSD alone."

Even with evidence-based results, due to the cost and time it takes to train a service dog, only 1% of those in need who seek a service dog receive one each year. Dog Chow is on a mission to help change that. This year will mark \$1 million in donations from Dog Chow to service dog organizations since the start of the Service Dog Salute program in 2018. In addition to funding the training of more service dogs for military heroes, Dog Chow has supported critical research within the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to recognize service dogs as a legitimate intervention option for PTSD, worked to help pass important national legislation to enable more veterans to receive these highly trained dogs, and brought attention to the life-changing benefits that service dogs can provide.

## **Recognizing Outstanding Service Dogs**

"This year, the Dog Chow Visible Impact Award provides another way to give back to deserving veterans and their service dogs while continuing to shed light on the impact these dogs provide to veterans with PTSD," said Steve Degnan, veteran and Chief Human Resources Officer for Nestlé Purina North America. "We hope that our efforts in partnership with the Association of Service Dog Providers help propel this life-saving treatment forward to as many veterans as possible."

"We are grateful to partner with Dog Chow and their Service Dog Salute program," said Jeremiah Blocker, Executive Director of the Association of Service Dog Providers for Military Veterans. "Their work to highlight the impact of PTSD service dogs allows us to further our mission of advocating for the expanded use of qualified service dogs and ensuring that best practices are utilized by qualified organizations across the country."

In addition to the Association of Service Dog Providers, the Service Dog Salute campaign will continue to support Dog Chow's long-term partners, Got Your Six Support Dogs and Tony LaRussa's Animal Rescue Foundation Pets and Vets program, who will each receive a \$25,000 donation.

To nominate a PTSD service dog and for more information, visit [DogChow.com/service](https://DogChow.com/service).

### **About Nestlé Purina PetCare**

Nestlé Purina PetCare creates richer lives for pets and the people who love them. Founded in 1894, Purina has helped dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives by offering scientifically based nutritional innovations. Purina manufactures some of the world's most trusted and popular pet care products, including Dog Chow, Purina ONE, Pro Plan, Fancy Feast and Tidy Cats. Our more than 8,700 U.S. associates take pride in our trusted pet food, treat and litter brands that feed 51 million dogs and 65 million cats every year. More than 500 Purina scientists, veterinarians, and pet care experts ensure our commitment to unsurpassed quality and nutrition. Purina promotes responsible pet care through our scientific research, our products and our support for pet-related organizations. Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than \$150 million towards organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive. Purina is part of Nestlé, a global leader in Nutrition, Health and Wellness. For more information, visit [purina.com](https://purina.com) or [subscribe here](#) to get the latest Purina news.

### **About the Association of Service Dog Providers for Military Veterans**


The Association of Service Dog Providers for Military Veterans (ASDPMV) is a coalition of non-profit service dog providers for military veterans suffering from posttraumatic stress, traumatic brain injury and military sexual trauma working to prevent suicide and improve military veterans' mental health. The goal of ASDPMV is to ensure that best practices are utilized by qualified organizations to ensure that veterans are paired with the most beneficial service dogs; increase awareness and understanding of the medical evidence that supports the use of service dogs; and advocate for the expanded use of qualified service dogs.

SOURCE Purina Dog Chow

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