

# THE HERO PROJECT



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Service Dogs 4 Servicemen Inc. is a Non-Profit Organization founded by their president Sara Donadei-Blood. The idea was inspired by her grandfather, a highly decorated Army Veteran of World War II. Later in his life, his two adopted retired racing greyhounds learned on their own how to assist their master in service tasks to help him get around the house.

Daniel De La Rosa, Karen Pryor Academy Certified Trainer and Owner of Petropolis Park, Cageless Boarding and Dog Daycare in Hollywood, Florida, joined Sara to become Vice president and Director of Training for the organization. Together they formulated a plan to use retired racing Greyhounds as Service Dogs to be donated to veterans in need.

“The Hero Project” was born on May 2011 when Service Dogs 4 Servicemen adopted their first retired racing Greyhound with the help of Barbara Masi, founder of “Awesome Greyhound Adoptions” and shortly after SD4SM’s Director of Public Relations. The Greyhound is not a popular breed of choice by most trainers for Service Dog work. However, Sara and Daniel believed they would be the perfect choice for PTSD and Mobility Support for Veterans. Daniel volunteers his time to live with and train the Hero dogs for the program. The goal of “The Hero Project” is to have a dog trained and placed in four to six months.

The program selects the veteran and then pairs them with a dog whose temperament is suited to their lifestyle. Then Daniel trains the dogs for his or her needs. There is No Cost to the veteran. Ongoing training and support is provided once the dog is placed. SD4SM is privately funded and relies on the generosity of the public to support our program, our dogs, and our veterans.





What are some symptoms of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and how can a Service Dog help?

People with PTSD are often stressed by crowds. The PTSD Service Dog is trained to lead their handler in and out of a crowd. By focusing on the canine companion, the person is less aware of the crowd and can follow the dog to their destination. Service Dogs 4 Servicemen retired greyhounds are about 25 to 28 inches tall at the shoulders and over 70 lbs. People will usually clear a path for the “Hero” dog team.

PTSD Service Dogs provide an extra pair of eyes to “Watch My Back” when stopped out in public. The handler places the dog behind them where it will stay and create a barrier for their owner. The handler feels more at ease knowing their back is protected. Handlers may also place the dog in front of them to provide a more comfortable distance between themselves and another person. PTSD Support dogs are very good at sensing stress and providing relief as needed by their Veteran owners. The PTSD dog learns to accept hugging and comforting and will seek attention. The veteran by caring for their Service Dog have a reason for getting up in the morning as dogs need to be fed and walked. A dog can be a very good companion for anyone but especially for a war veteran with PTSD can provide focus, and security, and independence that they would not have without their dogs.

To become certified, the dogs go through four to six months of intensive training. The dog must demonstrate its obedience by passing a Canine Good Citizen “CGC” test. This test includes ten obedience exercises. The American Kennel Club nationally recognizes this test. Additionally, the dog must pass a Public Access Test “PAT” to demonstrate their behavior and Service Dog tasks in an indoor public setting.

HERO I

"The AmbassaDOG"





Hero is the AmbassaDOG for Service Dogs 4 Servicemen - for demonstration and public appearances.



Dorsey Nicholas, Daniel De La Rosa's sister, provides the permanent home of Hero - the first greyhound in the program.

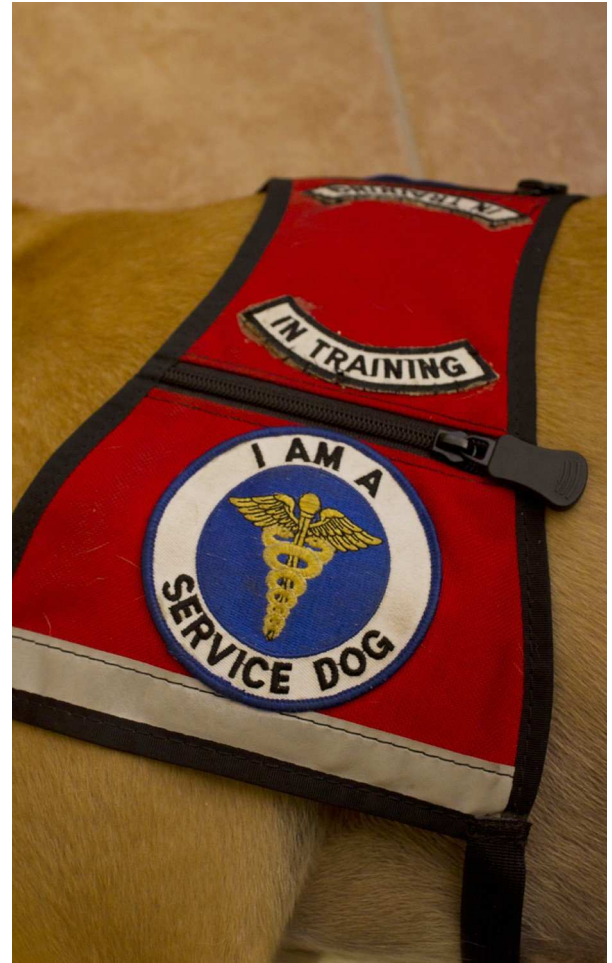




Greyhounds can be very calming to be with.



Hero provides a comfortable place to rest.



Service Dog In Training vest is worn in public to let people know that dogs are not yet fully certified. In Training dogs may not always be perfectly behaved.



Road Trip.



Keeping Watch.

HERO II



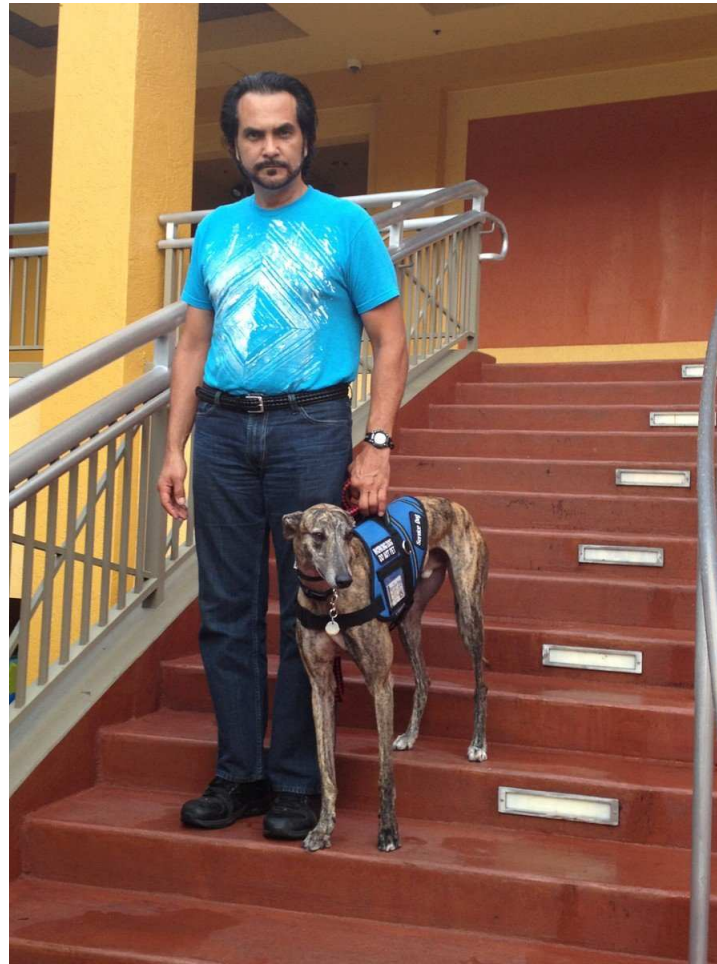


Hero II





Leading out of a crowd.



Daniel De La Rosa, Director of Training, teaching Hero II to take one step at a time.



"Watch My Back"



Hero II posing for the camera.





Dogs just like to have fun!

HERO III  
"Doc"





Hero III "Doc"



Doc's serious look.





Hero III lays calmly under the table while at a restaurant.



Providing comfort in a public place.



Temptation. Hero III "Doc" must learn to behave around food.



HERO IV  
"Gunner"



Hero IV "Gunner"

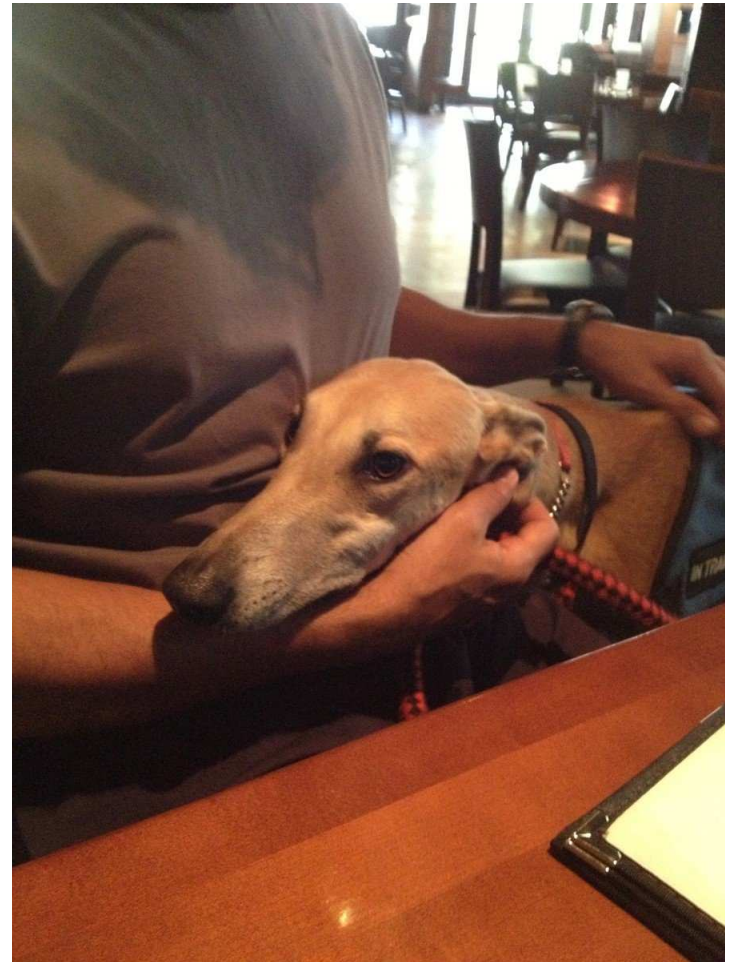




Training indoors in public.



Standing in front, in public provides comfortable space.



“I WANT!” At the beginning of training dogs must learn to ignore food. Good boy!





Waiting for permission to exit vehicle.



Training.

Family Fun Day  
Oleta River State Park





Daniel walks with GYPSY, Gunner, and Doc.



GYPHY is the personal demo dog of trainer Daniel De La Rosa. She assists in Service Dog training.





Barry Offenburger, Army, with Hero II presented to him on Memorial Day 2012.





Jesse Bergeron, Marine, with Hero III “Doc”



William Gonzales, Marine, with Hero IV "Gunner"





Hero II and family.





"Doc" with his new family.



"Gunner" with his new family.





Hero I and II enjoying the park.





Hero dogs enjoy family outings together.





After a nice day.

Veteran's Day 2012  
The Presentation





Hollywood, Florida, Mayor Peter Bober joins Sara Donadei-Blood and Daniel De La Rosa in presenting the Hero Dogs.



Hero Dogs I, II, III, IV with Sara, founder and president of Service Dogs 4 Servicemen.





Daniel presents Hero III “Doc” to Jesse Bergeron.





Daniel presents Hero IV “Gunner” to William Gonzales.



Service Dogs 4 Servicemen is proud to give thanks to our veterans by providing these wonderful Service Dogs at zero cost. Join Service Dogs 4 Servicemen on Facebook to follow "The Hero Project." SD4SM is privately funded and depends on public support. To show your thanks and support visit [ServiceDogs4Servicemen.com](http://ServiceDogs4Servicemen.com) to make a donation.

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“The Hero Project” of Service Dogs 4 Servicemen is a Thank You to our troops and veterans for making the ultimate sacrifice for our county, The United States of America.

To donate to SD4SM:

Go to [ServiceDogs4Servicemen.com](http://ServiceDogs4Servicemen.com)