

Request Letter from Staff Sergeant Pat Harmon

**Princess, a black Labrador Retriever puppy, was donated to K-9s 4 Heroes on May 7, 2011.
Pat and his family came to meet her before she entered training at the prison.**

Ma'am,

My name is Patrick Harmon and I am a sixty percent disabled Air Force Veteran. I served eight years of honorable military service. I was medically discharged from the Air Force due to PF Syndrome in both my knees, arthritis in my lower back, sacro iliac dysfunction, chronic Achilles tendonitis and chronic back pain. I have a constant ringing in my ears due to the noise exposure (tinnitus) during my service. These are all injuries I received while serving my country on active duty. Before this, I was very active in physical fitness all through my life and career.

When I was removed from mobility status due to my medical condition, this really had an impact upon me. My unit deployed to Afghanistan and I was not able to be there for my brothers and some of my brothers did not return. I live with the sense of regret every day. If I could have been there for them, would things be different for their families today. I feel often that I should have given my life, so that they could be home with their kids. Needless to say, I have been diagnosed with PTSD and I do not sleep much at night because of horrible nightmares. I wake up every morning yelling and disoriented.

When watching my three children, I have work extra hard to keep up with all that is going on around them. I am concerned. I cannot move quickly enough to help my children if something happens to them. Instead, I depend on them. If I drop the TV remote, my daughter has to help me get it. When I am home alone, I have no one to assist me with these tasks nor anyone to turn to during a flashback.



I used to have a black lab named Mollie, but we could not keep her when I was medically discharged from the military due to my medical condition. I did everything with her and she was such a help to me. Mollie could sense when I was having a difficult emotional time and she would lick me or cuddle with me. This would help to bring me out of that moment. Mollie would always help me keep an eye on the kids when they were outside playing. I never knew what a blessing she was until now.

It is my hope that a trained service dog would be able to assist me with my daily tasks. I believe a trained dog would be able to comfort me emotionally, take the burden of assisting me with daily tasks off of my family and help keep me grounded. I want to be the best husband and father for my children, but really need help now. A trained dog could help me live a more normal life in public and in private. That is important to me and my family.

Sincerely,

Staff Sergeant Patrick J. Harmon
Honorably Discharged from the US Air Force for medical reasons