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Pawsitive Perspectives Assistance Dogs (PawPADs) Joins With University of Wisconsin River Falls to Train Service Dogs

Lakeville, MN, 8 December 2017

Lakeville, MN based Pawsitive Perspectives Assistance Dogs (PawPADs) has partnered with the University of Wisconsin-River Falls (UWRF) to create the Assistance Dog Education Program and Training (A.D.E.P.T.) partnership for UWRF students - the first of its kind within the University of Wisconsin system.

A.D.E.P.T. is an innovative intern partnership between PawPADs and the UWRF. It unites PawPADs' positive training methods and philosophy with the UWRF mission to "help prepare students to be productive, creative, ethical, engaged citizens and leaders with an informed global perspective." It is the brainchild of PawPADs Founder and Executive Director, Linda Ball and Dr. Beth Rausch, Assistant Professor of Animal Science, who is the lead person for the animal science/companion animal emphasis courses and activities. The program operates under the umbrella of the University of Wisconsin River Falls Animal Science - Companion Animal emphasis.

"In combining students' needs for hands-on dog training opportunities with the needs of individuals with disabilities, both can share in the challenges of facing our world hand-in-hand," says Ball. "PawPADs is uniquely positioned to provide this program to the University because of our positive training methods, global outlook, and extensive experience. As with all the programs we offer, such as our prison program and Project YES! in the Lakeville School district, we view the training time for a service dog as having real personal value to the trainer as well as the dog."

UWRF Students apply for the internship through UWRF. PawPADs provides the service dog's in-training. These dogs generally come to PawPADs as puppies from a variety of places: rescue shelters, breed specific rescue organizations, family kennels, and carefully screened professional kennels. Dogs trained in this program are intended to be placed as assistance dogs for persons with physical disabilities, diabetic alert dogs, and autism support dogs.

PawPADs provides the specific foundational training skills and socialization training to the students. The students are responsible for the training and socialization of the assistance dogs in-training participating in the A.D.E.P.T. program. This includes a high level of socialization, obedience skills and task training such as retrieves, turning on lights, alerting to blood sugar changes and tugging open doors. Every student is responsible for the daily care, supervision, training, and sanitation of dogs. Currently the program engages 12 UW-River Falls students in the comprehensive hands-on training of assistance dogs, from puppy selection to partnering of a finished dog with a person with disabilities.

PawPADs receives no taxpayer dollars or other Government subsidies for the program and covers the costs associated with raising and training the dogs, including veterinary services, food, our extensive dog training library of books and DVD's, other educational supplies for the students/staff, instructors' costs, and travel. These costs are covered by donors, student fundraisers, grants and gifts in-kind.

Dogs Ready for Placement

PawPADs is currently processing applications for the next Partner Training Camp. Those seeking a Service Dog or Diabetic Alert Dog can learn more about the application process, by visiting:

www.pawpads.org/apply

Volunteers Needed

PawPADs is currently seeking volunteers for a limited number of volunteer vacancies. Those interested in learning about volunteer opportunities with PawPADs can visit

www.pawpads.org/volunteer

About PawPADs

Pawsitive Perspectives Assistance Dogs (PawPADs), is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Lakeville, MN, that provides trained assistance dogs to wounded warriors, other persons with disabilities, and diabetes.

For more information, please visit www.PawPADs.org or call 612.643.5671.

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