

Purina Dog Chow Announces New Category in New York Dog Film Festival to Spotlight PTSD Service Dogs for Veterans

Submissions now open for new "Service Dog Salute" film category

ST. LOUIS, March 21, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- Purina Dog Chow is presenting the 9th annual New York Dog Film Festival and introducing the "Service Dog Salute" film category, inviting filmmakers to explore the unique ways post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) service dogs transform the lives of the military veterans they serve through the power of visual storytelling.

How to participate

From now through July 15, 2024, filmmakers can enter original films up to 10 minutes in length to the new "Service Dog Salute" Category. They can utilize any creative technique including, but not limited to, animation, stop-motion, lo-fi and illustrated narratives. Films must be based on subjects filmmakers have identified or use resources available at www.DogChow.com/filmfestival. Three finalists from the "Service Dog Salute" category will be selected and receive an all-expense paid trip to join Dog Chow at the New York Dog Film Festival for the pre-screening in New York City on October 23, 2024, where the winner will be announced with the help of a celebrity guest judge.

The winning filmmaker will receive a \$5,000 cash prize to foster their film career, while each finalist will receive a \$1,000 cash prize. In addition, all the final selected films will be shown in theaters across the U.S. throughout 2025 as part of the New York Dog Film Festival's annual film tour.

Following the public premiere on October 24, 2024, the winning "Service Dog Salute" film will be released to the public on Dog Chow's YouTube channel. For every view through Veterans Day (November 11, 2024), Dog Chow will donate \$5 to the Association of Service Dog Providers, a coalition of non-profit service dog providers, up to \$75,000, to help train more PTSD service dogs.

Service Dogs & Their Impact

Veterans are more likely to develop PTSD than civilians, with 7 out of every 100 veterans suffering from PTSD at some point in their life.¹ While the use of service dogs has been demonstrated to reduce the severity of PTSD symptoms and suicidal behaviors², only 1% of those who seek a service dog receive one each year. This year's New York Dog Film Festival presented by Dog Chow aims to raise awareness on the benefits of service dogs so more veterans can be paired with these special animals.

"We are excited to work with Dog Chow to help bring attention to the life-changing impact of PTSD service dogs for veterans," said Tracie Hotchner, founder of the New York Dog Film Festival. "The festival is a celebration of the love between dogs and their people, so this new category is a natural next expression of how dogs have the special power to support their owners in unique ways. Through this new category we hope to shed light on the power of PTSD service dogs and help more veterans get the support they need."

Supporting Veterans through the Service Dog Salute

Participating in the New York Dog Film Festival is the newest way that Dog Chow is helping bring attention to the impact of PTSD service dogs for veterans. Dog Chow has proudly supported the military since its founding almost 100 years ago, and the strong commitment to service members continues today.

In 2018, the brand launched its Service Dog Salute campaign, which highlights the life-changing benefits that service dogs provide to veterans experiencing PTSD. Dog Chow has since donated more than \$1.2MM to service dog organizations to help support the care and training of more service dogs at no cost to the veterans.

For additional information visit www.DogChow.com/filmfestival.

To submit a film directly, visit www.FilmFreeway.com/DogFilmFestival.

Sources:

1. U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs: National Center for PTSD, "[How Common is PTSD in Veterans](#)"
2. O'Haire Lab Research Summary 2022: Service Dogs for Veterans with PTSD

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About the Association of Service Dog Providers

The Association of Service Dog Providers (ASDP) is a coalition of non-profit service dog providers for military veterans and first responders 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 and first responders 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

For further information: Patricia Escueta, pescueta@golin.com

Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(1\)](#)