

VETS TO VETS UNITED, INC

March 2021 Newsletter



Our Vision

Improving lives, saving lives, one veteran and one dog at a time.

Our Mission

We pair veterans with disabilities with rescued dogs for an enhanced quality of life.

Vets to Vets United supporter extraordinaire!

Meet Mary Charles Blakebrough

Mary Charles was there in the beginning to give advice and support as Dr. Morris contemplated giving up her Veterinary Research, to rescue dogs and assist veterans.



Not only was that a life changing decision for Dr. Morris and her family but also many families on the receiving end of that decision. Mary Charles is no stranger to the military; her father was a career Army officer and one of her two daughters served in the Air Force. After retirement from IBM, she moved to the Triangle and selected

Durham as her home. She consulted as a career coach for IBM employees in RTP for 13 years.

Vets To Vets United is very special to Mary Charles, who has been giving of her time and many talents to making Raleigh/Durham a great place to live and work. Her financial support, fund raising, and volunteering to do whatever was needed at the time, has helped to make Vets To Vets the success it enjoys today. Mary Charles Blakebrough, "Thank You" for giving of yourself to all of our community and especially Vets To Vets United, Inc.

Congratulations to Dan and Bailey!

Dr. Terry Morris presents Dan Portaro and Bailey a gift card for \$60.00 and a Certificate of Appreciation for their fund-raising efforts to support Veterans to Veterans United. Dan secured \$8,000 in grants from Walmart. Dan and his wife both had a bout with Covid, with Dan spending time in the hospital. Both are doing well in recovery, with Dan and Bailey back working hard with their training.

How to be awarded a gift card and certificate of appreciation



from Dr. Morris: Any participant or volunteer that raises \$5,000 or more will be eligible each quarter. How you do that, do like Dan. Share your excitement in the program and ask! Keep some brochures with you all the time. When you are out as a Veteran/dog team proudly wear something to acknowledge you are a Veteran. People will listen to your story. Vets to Vets United strives to serve Veterans without cost to the veteran. We do not want any Veteran to be

unable to participate in the program due to lack of funds. Private dog training lesson cost the handler and dog \$100-\$150 per lesson on average. There is no cost to our participants. Each Veteran and dog team from start to finish/graduation is a \$10,000 investment from Vets to Vets United. So where does the money come from? Individual donations, volunteer time, and corporate donations. Vets to Vets United has been able to continue through this Covid year unlike many of our sister organizations, albeit with some belt tightening and generosity of many.

Would you like to help Vets to Vets United?

There is always a need for veterinarian sponsorship of a team. VTVU has a letter to a Vet Clinic that can be used as an introduction to the program. You only need to drop it off to your local clinic and follow up in a few days. If you belong to a civic organization, they can sponsor you or another team. Who do you know that would enjoy working with a great rewarding non-profit? There are numerous opportunities for us all to support VTVU. Don't keep VTVU a secret!



March 29th is National Vietnam Veterans Day. Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 530 will be holding ceremonies at 12:00 (noon). There will be displays also for everyone. The Vietnam Memorial is located off the Butterfly House parking lot at the Museum of Life Sciences. (Watch for Signs). Vets to Vets United will be there showing their support. Please join us if you can.

If you feel you can participate in an event, do it. Vets to Vets United will have table and supplies ready for you. The meet and greet events are done to show sponsors that we appreciate their support.



Meet and greet opportunities coming up:



April 3rd Phydeaux Pet Supply Store, 1:30-3:00
2535 Atlantic Avenue, Raleigh

April 10th Veterans Health and Benefits Drive Thru
11:00-2:00. Cree Corporation parking lot
4600 Silicon Drive, Durham

April 11th Unleashed Pet Supply Spring Fling,
11:00-3:00 NC Fairgrounds, Hillsborough St Raleigh

April 17th Aberdeen Dog Fair, 10:00-2:00
Downtown, South Sycamore Street, Aberdeen

April 17th and 18th Raging Bull Harley Davidson
11:00-7:00 both days. 300 Muldee St, Durham, NC

April 24th Petsense from 10:00-2:00
Forestville Crossing Shopping Center
3011 Leland Dr, Raleigh, NC 27616

Come if you can and use it as a training event. Stay as long as you feel comfortable. Share your fur buddy, wear your Veteran pride, and have a good time.

Drive-Thru Veteran & Service Member Resource Fair:
April 10th at 4600 Silicon Drive, RTP Durham. Need help with your military benefits or a personal need, this is the place to get it. There will be Veteran Service Organizations present to assist. Come get the services you need and or help out at the Vets to Vets table. VTVU is participating in a nonperishable food drive that will be available at the fair for Veterans. If you would like to make a donation contact Bill Dixon 919-434-7345.

Art classes for Veterans by the Joel Fund.

Operation ART classes are for active-duty military, veterans, and their families. The Joel Fund improves the lives of veterans and their families by providing a connection to effective non-traditional services. Classes available: Virtual writing for Truth, Virtual Yin Yoga, Virtual Photo Editing, Virtual Photography and Virtual Acrylic Painting. Learn more and sign up: www.joelfund.org

Graduation time is coming.

Are you ready? VTVU now has three outstanding outside trainers at your service. Some will train virtual, and some will virtual and in person, all at no charge to you. **Please**, if circumstances in your life are currently such that you are unable to attend classes, let VTVU know. One of the 27 Veterans on standby could use that slot, and you are always welcome to come back when you are ready. Let's all help each other. There is a lot of need out there.

VA to increase participation of women Veterans in genetic research to aid in improving women's health. On this first day of Women's History Month, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) launched efforts to increase women Veteran participation in VA's Million Veteran Program (MVP) to aid in genetic research focused on women health issues. MVP is currently researching genetic and clinical markers to predict breast cancer risk in women Veterans. "While there are roughly 2 million living women Veterans, only 75,000 are currently enrolled in MVP representing only 9%.

Sgt. Stubby, the war dog, was an American Pit Bull Terrier that was found as a stray by Private Robert Conroy while he



attended basic training on the campus of Yale University in 1917. Conroy managed to smuggle Stubby to France in WWI where he participated in numerous battles and saved the lives of many soldiers. Conroy later smuggled him back to the states where Stubby died of old

age in 1926. For his valorous actions, Stubby is still recognized as the most decorated dog in American history and the first canine ever promoted to the rank of Sergeant in the United States Army. Read more about this incredible dog. Book Titled: **Stubby the War Dog: The True Story of World War I's Bravest Dog** ([Amazon Books](#)). An animated movie was released in 2018 called **Sgt. Stubby: An American Hero** and can be viewed on HBO MAX and Prime Video.