



Tony La Russa's
**Animal
Rescue
Foundation**

Job Title: Pets & Vets Lead Trainer
Reports to: Veterans Program Manager
Department: Pets & Vets
FLSA Classification: Non-Exempt
Updated: March 2020

Core Values

- Open
- Driven
- Educator's Spirit

Strategic Anchors

- Save Lives
- Inspire Learning
- Connect Hearts

Position Summary:

The Pets & Vets Lead Trainer will help to take our flagship Pets & Vets program's training to the next level and mentor new trainers, assistants, and volunteers to build a strong pool of support. Additionally, they will lead classes and one-on-one sessions for military veterans who are experiencing PTSD and other service-related mental health conditions and their shelter dogs that have been selected for their temperament and service potential.

Principal Duties:

- Teach and lead clients in group classes to train their dogs using established 10-12 month curriculum for basic, intermediate, and advanced obedience, public access, and approved psychiatric service skills to mitigate specific symptoms including hypervigilance and anxiety.
- Teach one-on-one sessions assisting clients with instilling basic obedience skills, modifying behavior, making up missed class curriculum, and focusing on advanced service skills.
- Prepare clients for the AKC Canine Good Citizen test and ADI Public Access test including coordinating and conducting practice tests, field trips, and setting up novel situations.
- Conduct alumni training including re-assessment of graduated teams on an annual basis.
- Educate clients on laws and rights relating to service animals and public access.
- Mentor Pets & Vets trainers, training assistants, and training volunteer corps comprised of veterans who have completed the Pets & Vets training program to create a strong support for the training program.
- With program staff, make recommendations to update and maintain the Pets & Vets curriculum and materials to reflect best practices, new information, and improvements in methodology.

- Provide compassionate client service to clients at all times including creation of personalized behavior modification plans for dogs and counseling for clients, holding clients accountable for their commitment and encouraging them to achieve training goals.
- In all activities, impart knowledge of positive reinforcement concepts, canine learning theory, best practices for handling and training, and practical management of living with a service animal.
- In all activities, ensure clients are supported, feel a connection to ARF and the Pets & Vets program, and build mutually beneficial relationships with their dogs.
- Continue education on dog behavior, service animal laws and regulations, training best practices, PTSD, and issues facing returning veterans from both the Vietnam Era and Gulf War/Post-1990 Era including the OIF, OEF, and OND conflicts.
- Communicate in person and via phone and email in a timely and professional manner.
- Attend weekly team meetings and report on training process of clients.
- Collaborate with team members to make constructive improvements to training program and recommendations for other program areas impacting clients in training.
- Maintain training forms, keep records, and file materials as necessary including making notes in Pets & Vets client database.
- Maintain cleanliness and good working order of class spaces, equipment, and training supplies and purchase supplies within budget parameters.
- Always promote a humane and caring attitude toward all animals.
- Always treat people and animals with respect, contribute to effective teamwork, promote staff cooperation, and foster public relations beneficial to ARF.
- Maintain the confidentiality of all information.
- Comply with all Federal, State and local safety regulations and laws, as well as ARF policies and guidelines. Follow established procedures governing safe work practices; and perform duties in a manner that assures the safety of oneself and others.
- Perform duties in a manner, which encourages attainment of goals, contributions, and business for ARF and its programs.
- Promote teamwork, communication, and cooperation with all other departments.
- Drive ARF vehicles as assigned by supervisor.
- Follow safe driving practices, obeying all traffic laws at all times when driving for ARF business purposes.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

Physical/Environmental Requirements:

- Work environment includes constant exposure to animals and animal allergens.
- Push/pull moderately heavy objects up to 25 pounds.
- Lift and move objects and animals weighing up to 30 pounds for short distances and humanely restrain animals when necessary.

- Kneel, bend, stoop, squat, reach above and below shoulder level, grasp and turn objects, stand and/or walk frequently and repetitively throughout each shift.
- Flex the neck upward and downward; twist the neck and the waist.
- Dexterity to handle animals and small objects.
- Assess medical and behavior changes in animals using a variety of techniques including, but not limited to, visually and audibly.
- Sit for long and short periods of time using a computer.
- Tetanus and rabies inoculations are required or must be waived.
- Drive a vehicle.

Education Requirements:

- Four-year degree college degree, especially with emphasis in Zoology, Biology, or Psychology; qualifying work experience will be considered as an alternative for this requirement on the basis that one year of directly relevant experience may be substituted for one year of education.
- Completion of a behavior and training course of study emphasizing science-based, positive reinforcement methods (Academy for Dog Trainers, Animal Behavior College, or similar).
- Candidates who have earned CPTD-KA or CPTD-KSA certification by the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers will receive preference in the hiring process.

Experience, Abilities and Qualities Required:

- Minimum of two years of experience directly working with clients in a dog training environment utilizing positive reinforcement methods without the use of force or aversive methods.
- Immense passion for working with military veterans; the ability to understand and adapt to their needs.
- Belief that pets and service animals contribute to enhanced quality of life for veterans.
- Exceptional people skills to work closely with those experiencing difficult mental health conditions as a result of trauma sustained during military service.
- Ability to construct healthy boundaries with clients and willingness to support other team members.
- Comfort with speaking to large groups and leading classes and one-on-one sessions.
- Solid understanding of canine learning theory and the ability to clearly articulate to clients.
- Demonstrated initiative, ability to remain flexible with shifting priorities, and the proven ability to work as part of a team.
- Experience working with military veterans.
- Experience training public access service dogs to perform tasks is strongly preferred.
- Personal experience with the military; knowledge of military culture and familiarity with issues facing returning veterans is strongly preferred.
- Experience training a wide variety of dogs, particularly shelter or rescue dogs.

- Affection for animals, concern for their welfare and a willingness to accommodate animals in the work place.
- Ability to communicate with the public, volunteers and co-workers in a pleasant, courteous and tactful manner at all times.
- Demonstrate maturity, good judgment and professional manner and personal appearance.
- Comfortable and skilled in working with a culturally diverse staff, volunteers and community.
- Must have a valid California Driver's License and must not have more than two at-fault incidents in a three-year period and no major at-fault violations in the last ten years, and must be insured.
- Must be able to pass a background check.

Hours:

Full time: 32 to 40 hours per week; possibility to negotiate a minimum of 25 hour part time position, without health benefits, for the right candidate. Daily reporting hours and days of the week may vary according to the needs of the department with at least one weekend day required on a regular basis. Occasional evening work is required to accommodate events and client schedules.

Compensation & Benefits:

- \$24 to \$27 per hour, commensurate with education and experience.
- Benefits for full-time employees over 30 hours include medical, dental, and vision plans, life insurance, disability and long-term disability insurance, 403(b) retirement plan with employer matching, employee assistance program, flexible spending account for medical and child care expenses, pro-rated leave for vacation, illness, bereavement, and holidays, employee-paid supplemental insurance, and staff discounts.

To Apply:

An employment application is available for download on ARF's Career Homepage. To apply for this job, please send your cover letter, resume, and employment application to sbragg@arflife.org, fax to (925) 977-9079 or mail to "ARF Jobs, 2890 Mitchell Drive, Walnut Creek, CA 94598".