



NoVA Program Manager & Service Dog Training Instructor

Warrior Canine Connection – Fort Belvoir, VA

Program Manager & Service Dog Training Instructor Needed - train service dogs and help Veterans! Warrior Canine Connection has an immediate opening for an experienced Service Dog Training Instructor and Program Manager at our NoVA program location. If you are a passionate, experienced service dog trainer with great people skills, this just might be your dream job!

Warrior Canine Connection is a nonprofit organization with a unique and highly effective service dog training model we call Mission Based Trauma Recovery. In short, active-duty Service Members and Military Veterans with combat related stress are engaged to help us train Golden Retrievers and Labradors to be service dogs. By learning to train service dogs, these Warrior Trainers are given a chance to develop practical skills such as patience, positive reinforcement, emotional regulation, and effective communication skills, while simultaneously helping to prepare the dog to assist a fellow injured Veteran in the future. Our service dogs learn up to 90 commands during a comprehensive, two-year training process. After those two years of training, the dogs are professionally matched with a disabled Veteran who has mobility impairments or psychological injuries.

As a Warrior Canine Connection (WCC) Program Manager, the Employee will oversee and manage all aspects of the remote area daily operations, program delivery and implementation, including planning, scheduling, training dogs and Veterans, internal and external communications, staff and volunteer supervision, recruiting and hiring, as well as assisting with strategic initiatives, community outreach, and development support as needed.

As a WCC Service Dog Training Instructor, the Employee will provide one-on-one instruction and teach small group classes to these volunteer Warrior Trainers, as well as to puppy parents, Fort Belvoir Soldier Recovery Unit (SRU) clinical staff, and community volunteers. Warrior Trainer instruction occurs at the Fort Belvoir US Army installation, as well as at some additional off-base veteran service programs. ***This job requires significant dog training experience*** – our service dogs learn up to 90 commands during a comprehensive, two-year training process. After those two years of training, the dogs are professionally matched with a disabled Veteran who has mobility impairments or psychological injuries.

This is a full-time position with some evenings and weekends required.

This is a job that will truly make a difference in the world, and in the lives of the individual Veterans and Service Members we work with every day.

What the job involves:

Duties and Responsibilities:

A. Program Manager:

- Manage and oversee all aspects of program delivery and implementation for all existing and new programs operated through the WCC Northern Virginia (NoVA) site location, including all necessary planning, scheduling, dog and Veteran training, recordkeeping, communications, staff and volunteer supervision.
- Maintain regular communication with WCC leadership, volunteers, SRU clinical site staff, NoVA area representatives, USO representatives and other stakeholders.
- Analyze potential opportunities for program expansion, make recommendations to WCC leadership, facilitate new relationships, cultivate existing relationships and execute approved plans.



- Work with leadership to ensure program efficacy, quality, and consistency. Communicate program information, maintain accurate records, and report on Key Performance Indicators as requested.
- Identify opportunities for program, administrative, and operational improvements, recommend appropriate modifications and document best practices.
- Work collaboratively with WCC's Development and Communications team and assist the Director of Development to support and enhance fundraising, outreach, and community activities in the Pittsburgh area.
- Help organize WCC's semi-annual celebrations and other community events as needed.
- Assist with recruiting, onboarding and training new employees and volunteers.
- Manage assigned employees, maintain regular communication, directly oversee work product and performance, maintain records, and assist with periodic reviews.
- Create schedules and program assignments that meet staff and organizational needs, ensuring program efficacy, professional development, job satisfaction, and achievement of KPI goals.
- Mentor staff in their continued professional development; ensure that they have all information and tools necessary to succeed.
- Ensure compliance and establish policies with community partners.
- Network, with all community partners to increase referral base and developing collaborative working relationships.

B. General

- Train Golden and Labrador Retrievers to be service dogs, from puppyhood through final placement, through various onsite and field activities.
- Conduct Puppy Parent and volunteer classes in accordance with the schedule and according to the WCC training manual.
- Communicate with Puppy Parents regarding schedules, proper handling, and care of the dogs, and ensure they complete and submit monthly reports.
- Communicate with Puppy Parents and WCC Directors regarding problem behaviors and training progress.
- Review puppy parent monthly reports in a timely manner. Respond to all PP reports, whether in person or in writing, and follow-up promptly on any concerning or unclear information provided.
- Monitor and evaluate the dogs as they progress through training and socialization stages; enter data and complete required forms and reports in a timely manner.
- Routinely evaluate service dogs-in-training and make recommendations for appropriate placement.
- Maintain a clean, safe environment for the dogs and humans at the program site.
- Comply with or exceed Assistance Dog International minimum standards and ethics.
- Participate in staff meetings, professional development, and community awareness activities.
- Participate in programs, trainings, and clinical supervision as required by WCC or the host facility rules.

C. Mission Based Trauma Recovery - MBTR

- Provide Mission Based Trauma Recovery (MBTR) services to recovering Warriors and their families at designated program site(s) in the NoVA area as assigned, and on field trips in accordance with program standards and goals.
- Work closely with the Assistant Director of MBTR Programs on strategic planning and program execution.
- Understand WCC's KPI, work closely with Assistant Director of MBTR to ensure that WCC is able to hit projected KPI metrics for current year and projected years.
- Communicate regularly with the Director of Dog Training and other WCC leaders regarding



program execution, potential improvements, questions, and other topics related to delivery of MBTR and dog placement recommendations.

- Coordinate with host facility point of contact (USO staff) to ensure compliance with HIPAA, patient goals, research guidelines, medical record requirements, and facility regulations.
- Establish and maintain strong relationships with referring agencies.
- Perform program responsibilities in compliance with contract requirements, host facility rules, instructions from WCC leaders, and WCC policies.
- Maintain proper and accurate record keeping of all administrative tasks, field notes, and indirect documents related to MBTR are completed in a timely manner.

D. Canine Health and Puppy Parent Communications and Support

- Communicate any emergency canine health problems directly to the Director of Dog Programs and employee's primary supervisor as soon as they are identified. Non-emergency issues should be communicated to your supervisor.
- Ensure WCC dogs-in-training receive monthly flea, tick and heartworm preventatives and any other medications prescribed by a veterinary care provider or Director for Dog Programs.
- Maintain and monitor supplies and equipment for service dogs-in-training and inform manager, or designated supply coordinator, when additional supplies and equipment need to be ordered.
- Transport program dogs, as directed, to receive veterinary care and provide support for exams such as eye and cardiac checks.
- Groom and care for dogs in accordance with Assistance Dogs International and WCC standards and best practices.
- Assist in recruitment of new Puppy Parent volunteers in NoVA region.
- Develop key relationships within the community to expand reach of the Puppy Parent Program
- Provide timely response to applications, and scheduling of interviews when appropriate.

E. Other

- Periodically represent WCC at events, participate in presentations to highlight WCC's mission, and conduct demonstrations with WCC dogs as requested. These events will occasionally require travel outside of the NoVA area.
- Participate in or assist with WCC Social Media platforms as needed (Yappy Hour, Puppy Yoga, etc.)
- Assist with WCC release dog placements, when applicable.
- Periodically assist with skill enhancements, support, evaluations, or recertification tests with graduate teams
- Maintain positive relationships with coworkers, individuals, community groups, government representatives, contractors, volunteers, and organizations that support WCC and/or wounded Warriors and their families.
- Maintain valid driver's license and reliable transportation.
- Other tasks consistent with the above, as assigned.

Required Experience, Skills, Background:

- At least three (3) years of experience training assistance dogs or professional dog training experience and one (1) year of experience in program management.
- Experience managing programs and/or overseeing program delivery.
- Knowledge, skills, and ability to implement and teach effective service dog training methods for all phases of dog training (puppy through graduate training).
- Comfort in leading individual and group training sessions.
- Ability to interact professionally and cooperatively with recovering Warriors and their family members, Veterans with disabilities, other WCC Instructors and staff members, clinical providers,



- puppy parents, and the public.
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision, take initiative, and follow through.
- Demonstrably strong work ethic, highly organized and detail oriented.
- Desire to work with Veterans and the knowledge, skills, and ability to effectively interact and work with Veterans who have experienced combat trauma and/or psychological health or physical injuries.
- Friendly, calm, mature, patient, and professional demeanor with excellent communication skills.
- Ability to instruct people with a variety of backgrounds and skill levels in the WCC training methodology and best practices for service dog training.
- Ability to learn and manage a variety of administrative processes.
- Knowledge of Assistance Dogs International standards for assistance dogs, clients, training programs, public access, and ethics.
- Basic computer skills and competency in Microsoft Office applications in order to maintain dog records, training charts, puppy evaluations, etc. Salesforce experience is a plus.
- Ability to pass background check for clearance to work on Federal property (livescan fingerprinting, TB tests, no felony convictions, etc.).
- Possess a valid driver's license, working vehicle and insurance.

Desirable Qualifications:

- Bachelor's or Master's degree in a relevant field of study.
- Previous experience working with Veterans with combat trauma.
- Comfort and experience in public speaking, presentations and interacting with community members, sponsors and public relations partners.

Compensation and Benefits

Competitive compensation package including salary, paid time off, medical and dental coverage, and retirement benefits for full-time employees.

Job Type: Full-time

Salary: \$60,000-\$65,000 annually, commensurate with experience.

To Apply:

To apply for this position, please provide a cover letter and resume to HR@warriorcanineconnection.org with the subject: *NoVA Program Manager & Service Dog Training Instructor*.

Warrior Canine Connection is an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will be considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.