



SAN FRANCISCO FIRE DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

Released: 7:30 am on December 23, 2021

SAN FRANCISCO FIREFIGHTERS WELCOME PEER SUPPORT DOGS

San Francisco, CA – The San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) will accept the donation of two fully trained peer support/facility dogs from leading service dog non-profit, Thor's Hope Foundation, in partnership with Performance K9 Training, Inc., as they launch a new Peer Support K9 Program for the SFFD.

The Peer Support/Facility K9 Program launch is the latest addition to SFFD's robust peer support program, which includes over 40 trained members of the SFFD.

Dogs "Marley" and "Sadie" were specially selected and completed hundreds of hours of intense specialized training to support firefighters, Emergency Medical technicians, and Paramedics (EMS workers) with PTSD or high levels of stress in a variety of situations and settings. They assist in identifying individuals experiencing increased stress levels and are also trained to comfort those individuals. These two dogs are the first in a new Peer Support/Facility K9 Program in the SFFD. (See attached bios of dogs)

Over the last six years, the number of suicides for firefighters and EMS workers has surpassed the number of line-of-duty deaths nationwide. As our firefighters and EMS workers face an unprecedented wildfire season and ever-increasing call loads with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, their mental and physical health has never been more critical. The addition of peer support dogs will help first responders manage stress, whether related to large-scale incidents, extended deployments, or day-to-day issues.

WHO: SFFD Chief Jeanine Nicholson, Susan White, President of Thor's Hope Foundation, SFFD Behavioral Health Chief Natasha Parks, SFFD Peer Support Dog Handler Katherine Alba; SFFD Peer Support Dog Handler Christina Gibbs, Christina Macone Greene, Vice President of Thor's Hope Foundation and CEO of Performance K9 Training, Inc.; David Greene, Founder and Training Director of Performance K9 Training, Inc.

WHEN: Tuesday, December 28, at 10 am (Expected end time 1045)

WHERE: San Francisco Fire Station 4, [449 Mission Rock San Francisco, CA 94158](https://www.google.com/maps/place/449+Mission+Rock+San+Francisco,+CA+94158/@37.77111,-122.4211,15z)

HOW: This is a COVID-19 compliant press conference. All attendees must wear a mask and adhere to all social distancing protocols. Additionally, RSVP to firepio@sfgov.org

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Thor's Hope Foundation is dedicated to fostering low-income mobility impaired individuals with trained service dogs and residential facilities needing a therapeutic facility dog. Thor's Hope Foundation provides the dogs free to the Firehouse Project, providing peer support dogs to fire departments. Performance K9 Training Inc. offers advanced training for the dogs donated by Thor's Hope. Performance K9 Training, Inc. was founded by David Greene, who represented the United States on four world teams with his dogs, placing third and ninth in the world. Greene is also the founder of Performance K9 Training in San Diego County and serves as the Training Director of Thor's Hope Foundation.

<https://www.thorshope.org> <https://performancek9training.com>

For more information, please contact:

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