



## **WOUNDED WARRIORS CANADA AND THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION ONTARIO COMMAND FORM SERVICE DOG PARTNERSHIP**

**April 26, 2018 - Aurora, ON** - The Royal Canadian Legion - Ontario Provincial Command (RCL-OPC) and Wounded Warriors Canada are proud to announce a partnership that will see Wounded Warriors Canada's PTSD Service Dog program expand within the Province of Ontario.

The RCL-OPC will provide \$225,000 to fund ten PTSD Service Dogs who will be paired with ill and injured Veterans and their families in Ontario. This announcement follows the recent news that the Canadian General Standards Board has withdrawn its intent to produce a National Standard of Canada for Service Dogs.

**Phil Ralph, National Program Director of Wounded Warriors Canada**, commented, *"This is an historic partnership announcement for our organization, and marks the single largest contribution to our PTSD Service Dog program in our history. The message today is very clear: we're stronger when we work together and we're stronger when we're in this together for mental health. On behalf of Wounded Warriors Canada we thank the Royal Canadian Legion – Ontario*

*Provincial Command for their support and look forward to the life-changing outcomes this partnership will provide.”*

**Sharon McKeown, Provincial President, Ontario Command,** commented, *“In 2015, a moratorium was placed on the use of Poppy Funds for service dogs, until Canadian National Standards were developed. Over three years later, frustrated with the lack of progress in developing these standards, we began resourcing other Provincial Commands with Service Dog Programs. We wanted to lift the moratorium to permit donations to a Service Dog Program, however, it was essential the provider be recognized. Partnering with WWC, who had been working with our Comrades in the East and West was a natural step. The mandates of WWC and the Royal Canadian Legion are basically alike, ours the care and comfort of Military and RCMP Veterans, theirs includes First Responders. Going forward, we will work together to develop a successful partnership in service to our Veterans and their families.”*

**ABOUT WOUNDED WARRIORS CANADA PTSD SERVICE DOG PROGRAM:**

The Wounded Warriors Canada PTSD Service Dog Program is a national program to increase the number of properly trained PTSD Service Dogs for ill and injured Veterans and First Responder population. Wounded Warriors Canada will pair 25 PTSD Service dogs in 2018, a total funding commitment of \$300,000.

Since 2012, Wounded Warriors Canada (WWC) has made significant investments in PTSD Service Dogs. As a voting member of the Canadian General Standards Board study on the efficacy of PTSD Service Dogs, this process has reinforced and provided early clinical evidence of that which we knew to be imperially true: properly trained PTSD Service Dogs can and do change and save lives.

**ABOUT THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION, ONTARIO PROVINCIAL COMMAND:**

The Royal Canadian Legion, Ontario Provincial Command is committed to making a difference in the lives of Veterans and their families, providing essential services in our communities, and remembering the men and women who sacrificed for our Country. We are a not for profit organization that relies on fundraising for our programs by hard working volunteer members and Ladies Auxiliaries at the Branch, Zone, District and Provincial levels as well as the generosity of the public who provide assistance through donations to the Poppy Fund. For more information please visit: [www.on.legion.ca](http://www.on.legion.ca)

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