



THANKING OUR VETERANS WITH FREE PET ADOPTIONS

“His love gave me a chance to give the world another try.”

Tomas Baez, Companion Pets for Vets Adopter

WHAT: The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that every day, 18 veterans will take their own lives. Post-traumatic stress disorder and other injuries can make reintegrating to civilian life difficult. The power of a pet can help our heroes heal.

That’s why the Buckhead Rotary Club and Marine Corps League Greater Atlanta are teaming up with the Atlanta Humane Society to provide free pet adoptions to veterans with the *Companion Pets for Vets* program.

Just in time for Veterans Day, talk to one local veteran about the difference a dog has made in his life. In 2008, Tomas Baez joined the military. As an Airborne Infantry Soldier, he spent more than four years fighting for our country in Afghanistan, Iraq and on humanitarian missions in Haiti. Overseas, he thought sleepless nights were normal. Upon returning home and slowing down, sleeping became even harder and he found himself depressed. That’s when he came to the Atlanta Humane Society. He found Dagger, a black lab mix, and knew he had found a forever friend.

“Dagger helped me tremendously. The last thing that I would’ve thought was that he was going to rescue me. I can sleep now. He is there with me every night. His love gave me a chance to give the world another try.”

The 28-year old Atlantan is a black belt in karate and now teaches at The Dojo in Peachtree Corners. He wants to share his story in hopes that other veterans will take advantage of this great program and help an animal in need find its forever home.

WHEN: **Veterans Day is November 11!** Media interviews are available at any time.

WHO: **Spokespeople available for interviews:**

Tomas Baez, veteran and *Companion Pets for Vets* adopter
Dr. Maya Gupta, clinical psychologist & exec. dir., Animals and Society Institute
Cal Morgan, President and CEO, Atlanta Humane Society
Candace Klein, Buckhead Rotary Club

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About the Atlanta Humane Society

The Atlanta Humane Society is the oldest private charitable organization in Atlanta, founded in 1873. AHS places approximately 8,000 animals into forever homes each year. We are committed to finding homes for all adoptable pets. It is our mission to prevent neglect, abuse, cruelty and exploitation of animals and to assure that their interests and well-being are fully, effectively and humanely protected by an aware and caring society. We are proud to be a part of the solution to ending pet homelessness and overpopulation in the Southeast United States. For more, visit www.atlantahumane.org.