



Six Puppies United With War Veterans Following Puppies Behind Bars Graduation

February 17, 2015

There was a feeling of pride and new beginnings after the Dog Tags Graduation at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility February 9, 2015. The graduation is the end result of the Puppies Behind Bars program where prison inmates raise service dogs for veterans suffering from PTSD, or traumatic brain injury, and for law enforcement officials who search for dangerous explosive devices. The puppies arrive at Bedford when they are eight weeks old and undergo training for 16 weeks with their assigned inmate trainer. After the training is complete the veterans arrive at the facility for several weeks of learning along side of the inmates on how to execute proper commands. The program achieves several goals including building confidence through socialization, learning commands, obedience work, and being able to go into public places. Training was conducted between puppy raisers, veterans, and the Director of Puppies Behind Bars, Ms. Gloria Gilbert Stoga. Acting Commissioner Anthony J. Annucci, who was the keynote speaker for the graduation, stated that programs like Puppies Behind Bars not only support the veterans who served our country, but offer an opportunity for inmates involved in the program to make positive contributions to society.

