FY2023 Buncombe County Tipping Point Mid-Year Grant Report

Organization Name:	Warrior Canine Connection
Project Name:	Connecting Buncombe County Veterans Through the Healing Power of Dogs

Activities Accomplished	**Annual Goal**	**Amount Completed**
Number of unique Veterans provided Mission Based Trauma Recovery programming	150	90
Number of assistance dogs placed with disabled Veterans	15	9
Percent of Mission Based Trauma Recovery participants with reduced PTSD symptoms	80%	84%

Expenses (please list all grant related expenses)	**Amount Spent**
Personnel	$ 2,500.00
TOTAL:	$ 2,500

Narrative summary of grant related activities

North Carolina is home to the 8th largest Veteran population in the country, and unfortunately, has one of the highest Veteran suicide rates as reported by VA. This significant need is what first prompted Warrior Canine Connection (WCC) to expand its services to North Carolina in 2018. WCC began its operations in the state through partnership with the Buncombe County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC). At the time of this grant application, the organization was at a pivotal point to increase the number of Veterans served by adding one additional full-time staff person. Demand for WCC's services had been growing since 2018, and WCC hoped to meet this need by VA and other nonprofit organizations serving wounded Veterans. With generous a Tipping Point Grant from the County, WCC anticipated the additional personnel would allow the organization to increase capacity at the ocation by 100% within 12 months; engage 150 unique Veterans in its Mission Based Trauma Recovery (MBTR) program—a unique form of Animal Assisted Therapy; reduce PTSD symptoms in 80% of MBTR participants; and place 15 assistance dogs.

At the mid-point in this grant cycle, WCC has the new additional staff member in place. The organization has successfully provided its MBTR to 90 unique wounded Veterans in Buncombe County, with 84% reporting a reduction in PTSD symptoms. Additionally, in the first six months of the grant, WCC has placed 9 assistance dogs with Veterans and Military Families. Based on this strong progress, WCC fully anticipates meeting the goals outlined in the grant. In 2022 WCC formalized its partnership with the Charles George VA Medical Center and was selected as the nonprofit service provider for the PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act at that location. In addition to the VA, WCC continues to collaborate with Buncombe County VTC, as well as nonprofit partners such as the Veterans Healing Farm and Wounded Warrior Project to compliment services they provide. WCC has further connected the community by engaging local residents in a collective 3,112 hours of volunteer service during this grant cycle.

WCC is grateful for the partnership of Buncombe County in its work to improve the health and wellness of disabled Veterans so that they can reconnect with life, their families, their communities, and each other. We look forward to sharing with you our continued progress.