

Association for Corporate Growth Honors SPA for 'Puppy Fleet' Community Service

Employee Volunteers Raise Future Service Dogs and Guide Dogs for Veterans and First Responders with Disabilities

ALEXANDRIA, VA, UNITED STATES, June 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The “[Puppy Fleet](#)” of Systems Planning & Analysis (SPA), a leading global provider of data-driven analytical insight and technical innovation supporting critical national security objectives, has won the Community Service Project of the Year, awarded by the Association for Corporate Growth (ACG) National Capital. ACG serves 400 capital-region companies in helping to build corporate growth and value. SPA was one of six finalists for this prestigious award.



SPA CEO Rich Sawchak

SPA initiated the Puppy Fleet in 2024 in partnership with the Guide Dog Foundation/America's VetDogs of Smithtown, NY. These sister organizations train and place highly skilled service dogs

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and guide dogs for veterans and first responders with disabilities, free of charge. Before advanced training can occur, puppies must first be socialized and learn how to behave in a variety of real-life settings. The socialization stage occurs through volunteers who raise the puppies for their first 12-18 months. Companies sponsor the training through donations and employee volunteers.

SPA's participation is unique among sponsors. In addition to contributing financially to the foundation, SPA includes

full workplace support for volunteer puppy raisers, encouraging employees to bring their young trainees to headquarters every day. According to the Guide Dog Foundation/America's VetDogs, no other sponsoring company does this. As the puppies learn to behave in a busy professional environment, they become well known in the area, riding buses with their trainers to the

Pentagon or attending conferences and meetings in a variety of settings.

In 2024 SPA's partnership with the Guide Dog Foundation/America's VetDogs enabled nine SPA employees to train puppies in socialization. SPA employees underwent interviews before being selected and then attended multiple training sessions to prepare for welcoming a puppy into their homes. The initial Puppy Fleet has graduated, and a second class of trainees is about to enter.

Longtime SPA employee and Navy veteran Bill Hoeft worked with company leadership to establish the Puppy Fleet. Hoeft accepted the ACG award for the company and commented, "We greatly appreciate ACG's recognition of the work we do to support the guide and service dog community. It's a life-changing mission for all involved, and it can only begin by having enough volunteers. I've been raising pups that go on to assist veterans and first responders for 23 years, and I have no intention of stopping!"

SPA CEO Rich Sawchak commented, "We have been thrilled with our delightful new "employees," and we thank Bill for his vision in helping to make this happen. At SPA we are especially gratified to know that many of the pups, once fully trained, go on to assist veterans afflicted with PTSD. We fully support the mission of the Guide Dog Foundation/America's VetDogs, and we wholeheartedly thank the Association for Corporate Growth for recognizing the critical work of our employee volunteers."

About SPA

SPA is a global, independent analytical and technical innovation firm supporting complex national security programs and defense priorities. SPA's portfolio of differentiated capabilities and tools delivers comprehensive support to the most critical programs for combatting threats, influencing long-term strategic priorities, and shaping policies at the highest levels. With over 2,500 professionals, SPA's employees are subject matter experts in numerous domains, including Land, Undersea, Surface and Air Warfare Operations; Intelligence Community, Radar and Sensor Systems; Unmanned Systems and Counter Systems; Defense Industrial Base and Economic Security; Space Systems; Ballistic Missile Systems; Cybersecurity Analysis and Policy; and Hypersonics. Awards include Washington Post Top Workplace consecutively since 2014, and Department of Labor HIRE Vets Gold Medallion consecutively since 2018. SPA is a portfolio company of Arlington Capital Partners. For more information: www.spa.com.

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