Wounded Marine Who Found Healing Through His Dog is Changing How Veterans Rediscover Purpose and Connection

Sierra Delta Founder BJ Ganem available for Interviews Sept. 20-21 in Connecticut and NE region as nonprofit prepares to expand its reach in its second decade



Sierra Delta service dogs for Veterans

RIDGEFIELD , CT, UNITED STATES, September 17, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Sierra Delta, a Wisconsin-based nonprofit announced today founder BJ Ganem a decorated Marine veteran who lost his leg to an IED in Iraq is bringing a very different approach to the traditional service-dog model to Connecticut — and he is available for in-studio and other media interviews Sunday, September 20 and Monday, September 21.

Ganem will be in Ridgefield, Connecticut for the organization's annual Sierra Delta Golf Classic on Monday, September 21 at Silver Springs Country Club. But the golf tournament is only the backdrop to a much bigger story: how an extraordinary relationship between veterans and dogs became a national nonprofit — with deep roots in the Northeast.

> The dog becomes a buddy, but the relationship can become so much more. It can create routine, responsibility, connection, and a reason to participate in life"
>
> *BJ Ganem Veteran, founder Sierra Delta*

Ganem believes veterans should not have to wait for, or be matched with, a specially selected service dog to benefit from the human-dog bond.
Through Sierra Delta, veterans can choose their own dog — whether a service dog, companion dog or family pet — and choose the professional trainer they want to work with. Sierra Delta then provides financial support for that training.

Sierra Delta's Northeast connection runs deep. Blue Buffalo Dog Food has been one of Sierra Delta's major supporters, and Blue Buffalo founder Bill Bishop, a fellow Marine, and his family reside in the Northeast. Bishop encouraged Ganem to create a nonprofit focused on helping veterans and their dogs — and backed up that encouragement with financial support. Blue Buffalo and Walmart are also helping raise funds for Sierra Delta through a promotion in which 50 cents from every Blue Buffalo dog food product sold at Walmart during August and September is donated to support the organization's mission.



Sierra Delta Founder and CEO BJ Ganem

SIERRA DELTA BY THE NUMBERS:
- More than 1,100 training grants funded for veterans nationwide in the last 9 years
- Nearly 200 grants expected in 2026, putting Sierra Delta on a record pace
- The organization is approaching its 10th anniversary in 2027
- Sierra Delta's model gives veterans the ability to choose their own dog and their own trainer

BJ GANEM IS AVAILABLE TO TALK ABOUT:
- Why the traditional service-dog model isn't the only way dogs can help veterans
- The powerful bond between veterans and their own dogs
- How dogs can help veterans rebuild routine, responsibility and connection
- Why Sierra Delta allows veterans to choose their own dog and trainer
- Ganem's own experience losing his leg to an IED in Iraq
- The origins of Sierra Delta and the important role the Northeast played in getting the nonprofit started
- The growing need for trained dogs and support for veterans nationwide

Also available for interviews is Lee Otto, a decorated U.S. Army veteran who earned three Purple Hearts and will attend the tournament with his service dog, Sayge.

To make connecting and scheduling interviews with the newsmakers in this release easy and hassle free – reach out to publicist Robb Leer 612.701.0608 or via email Robbl@leercommunication.com

Veterans and their dogs can also be made available for interviews, demonstrations, and

compelling visual content.

The Sierra Delta Golf Classic is sold out, but viewers and members of the public can still support the mission by donating to help a veteran begin professional training with their dog. Go to www.sierradelta.com

About Sierra Delta:
Sierra Delta is a Wisconsin-based national 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to empowering military veterans through the human-dog bond. Founded by former U.S. Marine Sergeant BJ Ganem, Sierra Delta provides veterans with access to professional dog training through grants, along with education, resources and a community built around veterans and their dogs. Through its Life Buddy Program, veterans choose their own dog and professional trainer, while Sierra Delta provides a $3,500 training grant paid directly to the trainer. The training may support a service dog, companion dog or family dog, depending on the veteran's individual goals. Since its founding, Sierra Delta has funded more than 1,100 grants for veterans across the country.

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