



The Patriot Gala Benefits Local Military Families

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATE MOORE PHOTOGRAPHY & PATRICIA LAURENCE

The Patriot Gala 2016 held Saturday, November 5 at Quail Hollow Club was another remarkable event to raise money to support our men and women who serve this great nation. Patriot Military Family Foundation holds this event and many more to raise funds for our local military and their families in the Carolinas.

The premier black-tie Gala featured a gourmet dinner with fine wines and cocktails along with a silent and live auction. This was the tenth annual event.

The evening's program featured the stories of four memorable speakers – CPT Elyse Ping Medvgy, Dr. David Ohlson, D.O., Thomas Ferguson and 2LT Harold Earls who is the President of U.S. Expeditions and Explorations.

This exciting climbing team of active duty and veteran men and women climbed Mt. Everest in the Spring of 2016 (the first amputee to accomplish this incredible feat) and was showcased on CNN, Fox News, ESPN and other major networks. The climbing team shared their life-changing experiences as well as their mission to assist veterans faced with challenges as they return to civilian life. The purpose of their climb was to put a spotlight on veterans' issues such as PTSD and veteran suicides.

As part of their sponsorship, Diamonds Direct raffled boxes containing a silver crystal bangle. One special box contained a 14K 2.20 Carat Total Weight White Gold Bracelet with 21 round diamonds, valued at \$4,490. Jenny Callaway, wife of Dr. Dave Callaway, was the lucky winner! All proceeds of the

raffle went to The Patriot Gala to support their various programs for Carolina veterans and their families.

CJ Brother Max and The Outbacks presented their third service dog through the charity. These talented young men play gigs for tips and donations across the region to raise funds for service dogs. The audience was overwhelmed by their dedication and sense of community service at their young ages of 15 and 14, along with bass player, Aidan Nolan, age 15. The night ended with live music and dancing with Peace & Love.

The Patriot Gala sponsors included Ernst & Young, Piedmont Natural Gas, Investor Jackson Christie's International Real Estate, UTC Aerospace Systems, Diamonds Direct, Perry's Fine Antique and Estate Jewelry, Charlotte Living Magazine and WSOC-TV. Visit patriotmilitaryfamilyfoundation.org. ■



Giving Love and Hope to Veterans

Four Service Dogs Awarded at The Patriot Gala

TEXT BY MATTHEW PAUL BROWN

Hope, Strength, Love and Peace... This is what service dogs bring to their owners each day. Without the help of The Patriot Gala, this may not be a reality for some of our service men and women who have sacrificed for our country and our freedom. We cannot imagine what they go through every day, enduring the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and combat/operational stress.

Asking for help in these cases is not a sign of weakness, but strength. Exposure to traumatic combat and operational experiences affects service members and veterans spiritually, psychologically, physically and socially. A veteran with a good job, support system, and healthy routine may have an



easier time adjusting to civilian life. War scars can get in the way of daily relationships, work, or other important activities. The service dogs provide a loving companion who the service men and women trust with their lives.

The Patriot Gala awarded four service dogs on the evening of the Gala, Saturday, November 5th at Quail Hollow Club. to four deserving, local veterans suffering from PTSD. These dogs mark 18 service dogs that the charity has donated in the past four years. Over the past 10 years, the charity has donated over \$1.5 million locally to support veterans and their families in the Carolinas. Patriot Military Family Foundation raises money year-round through

a variety of events, including The Patriot Gala.

Together we can make a difference in providing continued rehabilitation and support for the men and women who have given so much more. Visit patriotmilitaryfamilyfoundation.org to find out how you can help. ■

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it.

— Proverbs 3:27

