



MOSS CREEK MARINES OPERATION HELPING HEROES



Helping With K9's For Warriors Service Dog

ADOPTED HERO NO. 33
LCpl. RODERICK WITH SAGE



WARRIOR-CANINE STORIES: RODERICK & SAGE

The way Roderick discovered K9s For Warriors was a classic case of the influence of community outreach. Originally from St. Louis Missouri, Roderick moved to Jacksonville to be a student at Florida Coastal School of Law. While attending, he saw a presentation from a warrior graduate who brought his dog and spoke at the school about the innovative program. The graduate said he'd found happiness again, and it was because of K9s For Warriors. Then, Roderick saw a special report on a local news channel. Roderick decided it was time for him to create his own story at Camp K9.

The chapters leading up to it were filled with trials and devastation. Roderick was an Artillery Marine, as well as military policeman during his five-year contract with the Marines. His unit was one of the first to go to Iraq when the war was declared in 2003.



“One-third of the grunts [infantry Marines] with us were casualties. I knew some of them personally. Since then, three Marines from my unit have committed suicide, the last just a couple weeks before I left for my training at Camp K9.”

Fortunately for Roderick, his story continued on the path of hope and renewal. Roderick arrived at Camp K9 for the October 2017 class and was paired with Sage, a rescue dog from Orlando. He trained and bonded with Sage alongside their nine other class members for the three-week program. His goals were to feel comfortable leaving his house again, build confidence to meet new people, and to be more active altogether. He successfully graduated and returned home to achieve his post-service goals with his new battle buddy, Sage.

“The training has given me the tools to handle new and different situations in my personal life.”