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November 30, 2021

A Hero's Name Edition



Dear Friends,

Camán Valor – it is a name that shouts courage, bravery and loyalty.

So it is fitting that it is now the official name of the dog on the American Military Hero Dog Monument.

That's because I'm pleased to tell you that Aurora Ashcraft, a fifth-grader at Jupiter Elementary School in Jupiter, and Tyler LeClair, a seventh-grader at Eagles Landing Middle School in Boca Raton, have been selected as the winners of the dog-naming contest for the American Military Hero Dog Monument. We honored these two bright young people at a ceremony on Veterans Day, November 11, 2021, at the Tri-County Animal Rescue, the site of the monument.

Tyler picked the name Camán. He explained in his video entry that each letter of the name represents a branch of the Armed Forces: C represents Coast Guard, A represents Air Force, M represents Marines, A represents Army, and N represents Navy.

Aurora chose the name Valor. She explained that valor means having great courage in the face of danger, especially in battle, and that all the military dogs who have helped in America's wars and battles have loyalty, bravery, companionship, and most of all, valor.

We presented each winner with a check for \$2,500. Each of their schools also received a \$2,500 check.

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This monument represents the unbreakable bond between the courageous canines and the valiant warriors who have served alongside each other in our Armed Forces. It is a celebration of heroes – those on two and four legs, those with hair, and those with fur. And it is a teaching tool – to educate people, from elected officials to the general population, that heroes come at both ends of the leash.

Military working dogs do so much, from carrying out lifesaving missions and detecting explosive devices to searching areas that their human handlers cannot reach and providing companionship, not just in the cauldron of war, but long after the battle is over. A great way to show them respect was to give the dog on this monument a name deserving of the service and sacrifice they have made. So the dog's name will be Caman Valor.

The dog-naming contest, open to all elementary and middle school students in the Palm Beach County Public School District, received 125 entries. I want to thank my fellow judges who joined me in the challenging task of choosing the winners: monument sculptor Austin Weishel; Robert C. Miller, a Board member of the Lois Pope LIFE Foundation; Dr. Robin Ganzert, president and CEO of American Humane; and Diana Fedderman, the school district's Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning.

Thank you to all who came out to join us on this memorable day.

With all my very best,

Lois



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