

Express Donates Search-and-Rescue Dog to Oklahoma Task Force 1

Ceremony to be Held Nov. 22 Leading Up to Bombing Anniversary

OKLAHOMA CITY, Nov. 20, 2019 – As part of the 168-day countdown to April 19, 2020, Oklahoma Task Force 1 will receive a new search team member ready to leap into action if another disaster strikes—Indy, the Golden Retriever.

“We are honored to host this Passing of the Leash,” said Kari Watkins, Executive Director, Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum. “This is a critical part of our story, to Look Back and Think Forward, as we approach the 25th anniversary of the bombing.”

Indy, the search dog will be officially gifted to emergency responders in a ceremony Friday, Nov. 22 at the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum in the Center of Education & Outreach room to Express Employment International’s Philanthropic Committee.



“Express, along with our more than 800 franchises, is committed to changing lives, whether that’s through employment or investing in life-saving resources in communities,” said Bill Stoller, CEO of Express. “It’s an honor to partner with these incredible organizations in the donation of Indy to Oklahoma Task Force 1.”

Indy was gifted to Oklahoma’s Ground Zero Emergency Training Center, which was founded by Barry and Becky Switzer. As an owner surrender, the Ground Zero staff quickly realized that Indy was meant to save lives as he excelled through the rigorous program. As Barry Switzer says, “these are the Heisman winners of canines since only 1 in 1,000 dogs can do what they do.”

“After the Murrah Federal Building bombing and multiple tornadoes in Oklahoma, Becky and I knew we needed to do something,” Switzer added. “Ground Zero’s volunteers, staff and supporters are proud to train these dogs and their handlers for important life-saving work.”

During the ceremony, OK Task Force 1 member and Moore firefighter Tyler Barry will accept Indy and his leash from representatives of the Ground Zero organization, as well as Express CEO Bill Stoller and President Bob Funk. The ceremony will begin at 11:30 a.m. and the public is invited to celebrate the partnership of Indy and Tyler. All attendees should enter through the 6th Street entrance.

“As the countdown to the 25th anniversary begins, we celebrate the resilience of the families, first responders and the community at large, while remembering the great loss experienced by all of us,” said Cathy Keating, Oklahoma’s First Lady at the time of the bombing and chair of the Express Philanthropic Committee. “Along with their first responder partners, these highly trained dogs played a vital role in

the rescue and recovery efforts after the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building. At our time of loss, these K9 friends provided unending hope and today that hope continues.”

Funk also sees Indy as a reminder of hope that brings Oklahomans together in tough times.

“We’ve celebrated during good times and came together in difficult times to support one another,” he said. “There’s a remarkable spirit of compassion and giving among Oklahomans, and it makes me proud to call this place home.”

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