



# Newfoundland Dogs Spreading Hope & Healing

## Hope on a Leash Presenters

### **Patricia Sutherland**

### **Co-Founder/Director of Animal Therapy**

Patti has more than 25 years of Animal-Assisted Therapy experience. She was at the forefront of the industry when she launched the first of its kind in school dog therapy program in Buncombe County, North Carolina. She has 30 years of public school administration and teaching experience, and she is the Co-founder of TimberKnoll Newfoundland, one of the nation's leaders in Newfoundland dog breeding. TimberKnoll Newfoundlands have earned over 70 AKC Therapy Titles and over 100 AKC Champion and Grand Championship titles. Patti is the former President of the Southeastern Newfoundland club and has 15 years of nonprofit board management experience.

### **Lisa Schiller**

### **Co-Founder/President**

Lisa has over 25 years of operational leadership, marketing, and nonprofit management experience. She led the growth of a world leader in recruitment outsourcing solutions, managing a global client base that included Procter & Gamble, TD Ameritrade & Wells Fargo. Lisa led the Fortune 500 companies' Veterans task force, and she has counseled substance abuse survivors for more than 20 years. A Sundance Award-winning Film Producer published in Fortune, her work with her Therapy Dog Chewie, helped inspire the organization's mission.

### **Benita Edds**

### **Co-Founder/Director of Animal Training**

Benita is a U.S. Olympic Archer, and she brings that level of excellence to her dog training and breeding operations. As the Co-Founder of TimberKnoll Newfoundland's, she's responsible for the success that led to their Newfoundland dogs being awarded top honors at the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, the National Dog AKC (Eukanuba) National Championship, and the Newfoundland Club of America's National dog show. Benita is a national working dog Judge whose Newfoundland's have earned more than 400 AKC and NCA titles combined. Benita's Therapy Dog, Amelia, is a national celebrity, having earned the position of #1 ranked Newfoundland.

### **Jennifer Williams**

### **First Responder Program Advisor**

Jennifer Williams, brings 18 years of fire service, EMT and Helicopter Search and Rescue experience to the Newfie Therapy team. She's a dedicated professional who is passionate about saving lives and fostering well-being. Jennifer's exceptional skills led to her role as a founding member of the South Carolina Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team (SC-HART), a unique blend of military and civilian experts specializing in Aviation and Water Rescue. Her deployments to disaster-stricken areas, including Hurricanes Harvey, Katrina, and Sandy, showcased her courage and proficiency in intense rescue missions. Jennifer has 8 years of experience training Newfoundland dogs in water rescue, draft and obedience training, she's an active member of the Southeastern Newfoundland Club and a founding member of the TimberKnolls Spirit Cove Board of Advisors.

**Ed Thompson****First Responder Program Advisor**

Ed Thompson served his community for over 13 years as a firefighter. The turning point came on June 18th, 2007, during a warehouse fire where 9 fellow firefighters lost their lives. This tragic event triggered severe, treatment-resistant PTSD, leading to Ed's retirement from the Charleston Fire Department. He enrolled in a transformative clinical study in early 2015, focused on therapeutic treatment for severe PTSD in combat veterans, police, and firefighters. The study saved his life and paved the way for healing and his commitment to helping others heal as well. Ed founded a startup company developing a software platform for first responders. This innovative platform aimed to automate incident management, prioritize tasks, and monitor the well-being of firefighters in emergencies.

**Hannah Glenn, LCMHC****Mental Health Program Advisor**

Hannah is a Licensed Mental Health Advisor and dedicated psychotherapist with over 4 years of experience providing clients with effective addiction and mental health treatment. She received her Masters from UNC Charlotte with a concentration in Addiction Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Play therapy. Her experience includes being a Clinical Director and Primary Therapist with extensive experience guiding patients through issues relating to anxiety, depression, relationship conflict, stress and life transitions. Hannah has experience with her own rescued Newfoundland Mosey who she is training for animal therapy.

**Jane O'Donnell****Mental Health Program Counselor**

Jane is a licensed counselor at one of the top 10 rehabilitation centers in the Northeast for alcohol and other drug abuse. She has been working intensively with recovering alcoholics and other drug addicts for the last 29 consecutive years. Jane has a master's degree and an Advanced Education Specialist Degree in School Counselor Education from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, MA, and she is formally educated in the evidence-based therapies and coping skills of the 12 steps of A.A., career support, physical exercise, meditation, and animal therapy.

**Mary Bylone****Director of Volunteer Services**

Mary holds her Master of Science in Management, is a licensed R.N. with over 30 years of experience in nursing, critical care nursing, and nursing administration, and holds a postgraduate certificate in human resources. Mary is the President of the New England Chapter of the Newfoundland Club of America and has raised and trained Newfoundland dogs for over 20 years. She has 15 years of experience in animal-assisted therapy and has served in Colchester, Massachusetts, as a First Selectman and Volunteer Firefighter. Mary has the unique firsthand insight to help guide our programs that serve healthcare workers and first responders and has the extensive volunteer management experience to help engage and expand our growing team of therapy dog handlers.

**Kelly Benton****School Staff Advisor/Creative Director**

Kelly is an ASHA certified Speech-Language Pathologist who is currently serving as the Lead SLP in the Fort Mill School District in S.C. She has over 15 years working with children, from preschool through high school, with many differing abilities. Kelly earned her bachelor's degree in Communication from N.C. State University and her master's in Speech-Language Pathology from University of Northern Colorado. Prior to going to graduate school, Kelly spent over 7 years working at the YMCA. Her experience consists of directing day camp, preschool, and teen programs, as well as training staff at local and state-wide

conferences. Kelly has two therapy certified Newfoundlands, is a member of the Newfoundland Club of America, a board member of the Southeastern Newfoundland Club, and loves using her creative side to help Newfie Therapy.

