



State of Connecticut Department of Correction

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For Immediate Release **Department of Correction's K9s Drago and Tuco have received donation of body armor.**

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Department of Corrections K9s Drago and Tuco have received bullet and stab protective vests thanks to a charitable donation from non-profit organization Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. K9 Drago's vest was sponsored by M. Provost Trucking & Landscape Products, LLC of Putnam, CT and embroidered with the sentiment "Honoring those who served and sacrificed". K9 Tuco's vest was sponsored by Geraldine O'Shannon of Niantic, CT and embroidered with the sentiment "In memory of Esmerelda O'Shannon".

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., established in 2009, is a 501(c)(3) charity whose mission is to provide bullet and stab protective vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies throughout the

United States. This potentially lifesaving body armor for four-legged K9 officers is U.S. made, custom fitted, and NIJ certified.

Since its inception, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. has provided over 4,538 vests to K9s in all 50 states at a value of \$6.9 million, made possible by both private and corporate donations.

The program is open to U.S. dogs that are at least 20 months old and actively employed and certified with law enforcement or related agencies. K9s with expired vests are also eligible to participate. There are an estimated 30,000 law enforcement K9s throughout the United States.



**K9 Officer Gregory
Harpin with K9 Drago**



**K9 Officer
Jeremy Shepard
with K9 Tuco**

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Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. accepts tax-deductible contributions in any amount, while a single donation of \$960 will sponsor one vest. Each vest has a value of \$1,744-\$2,283, weighs an average of 4-5 lb., and comes with a five-year warranty. For more information, or to learn about volunteer opportunities, please call 508-824-6978. Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. provides information, lists events, and accepts donations at www.vik9s.org, or you may mail your contribution to P.O. Box 9, East Taunton, MA 02718.