



## **Pilot Project Makes Great Four-Legged Strides on the Road to Recovery Serenity Ranch Welcomes a Pacific Assistance Dogs Puppy-in-Training to Join Their Comprehensive Addiction Treatment Facility**

**April 29/10 Tees, AB** - Serenity Ranch, Alberta's first private drug and alcohol treatment facility, has opened their doors to a new staff member - Pacific Assistance Dogs (**PADS**) Puppy-in-training, Pacer. This young black Lab is working with her puppy-raiser, June Olson, in an exciting new pilot project at Serenity Ranch: canine assisted therapy.

While Pacer was unavailable for comment, June spoke enthusiastically about animal assistance in the addictions field. "PADS dogs are trained to help clients with physical or hearing disabilities. Pacer will be invaluable at Serenity Ranch because she is incredibly intuitive. These dogs help people process painful emotions. Pacer can also teach the importance of discipline and unconditional love."

The unconditional love that a dog can bring to the table influences people in a powerful way. Pacer with her quite patience and infinite listening ability has been able to break down emotional walls, fostering trust and communication while promoting the healing process. Pacer and June are working closely with participants of the six-week residential program in a classroom setting. They help to re-introduce those suffering from an addiction to trusting others and thinking outside of themselves. This is an important step for individuals whose lives may have revolved around getting and using substances.

**PADS Calgary Puppy-raising Supervisor, Heather Kidd**, added, "While Pacer is still in training, she is showing signs of the gifts a PADS Therapy Dog can bring to people in need. We are excited about this opportunity to be involved with Serenity Ranch. Other animal assisted programs, such as equine therapy, have been implemented with great success at Serenity Ranch. Pacer, the service-dog-in-training, will definitely be the pack leader when it comes to brand new ways to help men and women who suffer from addiction to alcohol and/or drugs. For more information about these wonderful dogs please check them out at [www.pads.ca](http://www.pads.ca)

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