



HEARTS 4 HEROES USA

Founded by First Responders for First Responders!

Board of Directors

Mark Piacentini - Vice President

My name is Mark Piacentini.

I began my EMS career in 1990 as an EMT with Foothill Ambulance then, and AMR today. I became a paramedic in 1993 and joined the Fire Service in 1995 with the Folsom Fire Department. I worked at both agencies until 2015, leaving AMR and completing my career at Folsom, retiring in December 2024 at the rank of Assistant Chief. I did a total of 34 years of active service. I am currently an instructor at a local paramedic program, teaching EMT and paramedic students. For fun, I referee youth and high school soccer.

I have been married to my beautiful wife, Jane, since 2004, and we have two children. Our daughter is a nurse in Portland, Oregon, and our son is home in heaven.

One of my bigger accomplishments at Folsom Fire Department was establishing our department's Peer Support Team. Prior to that, there were very few resources available to help firefighters process and decompress from horrific situations. Little did I know that I would become one of the biggest users of a program I started just a year prior. In 2018, I was burned over in the "Camp Fire" wildfire in Paradise, California, while deployed on a strike team. Then again in 2024, when I lost my son.

I had recognized that dogs, for some reason, made things better. I had always wanted a "Firehouse Dog." With some out-of-the-box thinking and just luck-of-the-draw encounters, I became involved with Hearts4Heroes USA at its creation. Together, we were able to place the first therapy dog in service. I have been honored to serve as the handler for Blitz, short for Blitzen. If you were lucky enough to stop by Fire Station 35, you would always be greeted by Blitz at the front counter.

I am still active with Hearts4Heroes USA as the handler for Blitz, where we continue to support the Folsom Fire Department and surrounding communities.