



HEARTS 4 HEROES USA

Founded by First Responders for First Responders!

Executive Director, Firefighters Burn Institute - Joe Pick

Joe Pick has served as the Executive Director of the Firefighters Burn Institute (FFBI) for the past six years, continuing a relationship with the organization that began more than two decades earlier as a dedicated volunteer. His years of service reflect a longstanding commitment to helping burn survivors and their families through recovery, connection, and ongoing support.

Before taking on his leadership role with FFBI, Joe built a career spanning more than 30 years in the fire service. He retired as a Fire Captain with the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District, bringing decades of firsthand experience serving his community and understanding the challenges faced by first responders and the people they assist. That experience continues to shape his work today as he helps guide FFBI's programs, outreach, and support for burn survivors.

An especially meaningful part of Joe's work is his partnership with Boots 4 Burns, a four-year-old Goldendoodle who has become a beloved member of the FFBI family. As Boots' handler, Joe has seen firsthand the unique way a therapy dog can create comfort, connection, and moments of joy for children and families navigating difficult circumstances.

Boots attends FFBI camps for children recovering from burn injuries, where he provides companionship, encouragement, and a reassuring presence for young burn survivors. Whether spending time with children during camp activities or simply being there when someone needs a little extra comfort, Boots has become an important part of the supportive environment FFBI works to create. He also serves as a therapy dog at Shriners Hospital for Children, extending that same comfort and companionship to children receiving care.

Beyond his work in person, Boots has developed a following of his own on Instagram at @boots4burns, where his work, adventures, and impact within the community are shared with supporters.

For Joe, Boots' work is a natural extension of the mission he has dedicated so much of his life to: showing up for people during challenging moments and helping them feel supported along the way. Their partnership demonstrates how compassion can take many forms and how meaningful connection can play an important role in healing.

Joe and the Firefighters Burn Institute are proud partners of Hearts4HeroesUSA and The Paw Platoon, united by a shared commitment to supporting first responders, children, burn survivors, and families. Through continued partnership, outreach, and the healing presence of dogs like Boots, they are helping create moments of comfort, hope, and connection for the communities they serve.