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**ONE WOMAN GIVES MAN AND MAN'S BEST FRIEND A CHANCE
AT REDEMPTION IN ANIMAL PLANET'S *PIT BULLS AND PAROLEES***

– Six-part Miniseries Premieres Friday, October 30 –

– My Mission is to Rescue in Hope That One Day I Won't Have To –

***-- Tia Maria Torres
Founder/Owner, Villalobos Rescue Center***

Pit bulls are eager to please, faithful and enthusiastic friends and pleasant with children according to credible canine organizations. Really, it's true. Yet, the public largely associates these dogs with fear, danger and unyielding aggression toward people.

Pit bulls actually were once ranked among American's top five favorite pets and also known as the "nanny dog" for their gentleness with children. But they have fallen from grace. Now often associated with gang members, dog fighting and attacks, pit bulls are misunderstood, misjudged and under-appreciated. Their bad rap stems from many misconceptions – the biggest is that they are "killer" dogs that pose a threat to society. While most dogs are known as man's best friend, people have lost hope for the pit bull.

That's about to change. Animal Planet introduces you to this dog's greatest ally, and she's not a man – she's a fiery red-headed leading lady, and she's determined to end the needless hostility toward pit bulls. Meet Tia Maria Torres – 49-year-old mother, top pit bull trainer and founder and owner of Villalobos Rescue Center – the country's largest rescue facility for pit bulls. In **PIT BULLS AND PAROLEES**, which premieres **Friday, October 30, at 10 PM et/pt**, Torres is dead set on fighting the perception that pit bulls are the pariahs of the dog world and giving the ones in her care the love they deserve.

At her center, set upon 10 dusty acres outside of LA, Torres rescues, rehabilitates and retrains over 200 pit bulls, so they can be placed in good homes. And she pairs those misunderstood

animals with a half-dozen ex-convicts on parole to provide both man and man's best friend a chance at redemption.

"Not many are willing to give a second chance to these parolees," says Torres, "but I have. And now the 'bad boys' of society meet the so-called 'bad boys' of the canine community, and boom! Just like that – they create magic together. They bring out a side of each other that's sweet, warm and unbelievably touching."

Because of irresponsible ownership, pit bulls have been blamed for the wrongdoings of their owners. Nowadays, pit bulls unjustly are viewed as unadoptable, with many shelters automatically deciding to put them down. Fighting stereotypes against both pit bulls and parolees, Torres wants people to understand that these dogs can make incredible pets and that people should think twice before they judge this breed and the men at her ranch who help save them.

"I know what it's like to be misunderstood," says Torres. "I grew up on the edge of society, hanging out in gang-infested neighborhoods and ultimately marrying into that 'watch-your-back' way of life. The guys I hire are ones whom no one else wants. I always have wanted to put my 'bad-girl attitude' to good use, so I combined my lifestyle with my love for animals by giving parolees the chance to make a real difference."

PIT BULLS AND PAROLEES follows the turbulent drama and bittersweet moments as ex-convicts and ill-reputed dogs come together to strengthen one another. Sharing the same dominant traits of a pit bull – determination, agility, strength and energy – Torres has the power to make a positive change for the prison community and the dog world. Watch as one woman pulls the weight of 1,000 men to fulfill her dream of saving pit bulls from dangerous situations and giving parolees a chance to repair their reputations and their lives.

PIT BULLS AND PAROLEES is produced for Animal Planet by Rive Gauche Television and 44 Blue Productions. Mark Rafalowski is executive producer for Rive Gauche Television, and Rasha Drachkovich is executive producer for 44 Blue Productions. Lisa Lucas is executive producer for Animal Planet. Marc Etkind is vice president of development for Animal Planet.

Animal Planet Media (APM), a multi-media business unit of Discovery Communications, is the world's only entertainment brand that immerses viewers in the full range of life in the animal kingdom with rich, deep content via multiple platforms and offers animal lovers and pet owners access to a centralized online, television and mobile community for immersive, engaging, high-quality entertainment, information and enrichment. APM consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 96 million homes in the US; online assets www.animalplanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; the 24/7 broadband channel, Animal Planet Beyond; Petfinder.com, the #1 pet-related Web property globally that facilitates pet adoption; and

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