

## Our New Former Marine Has Skills!

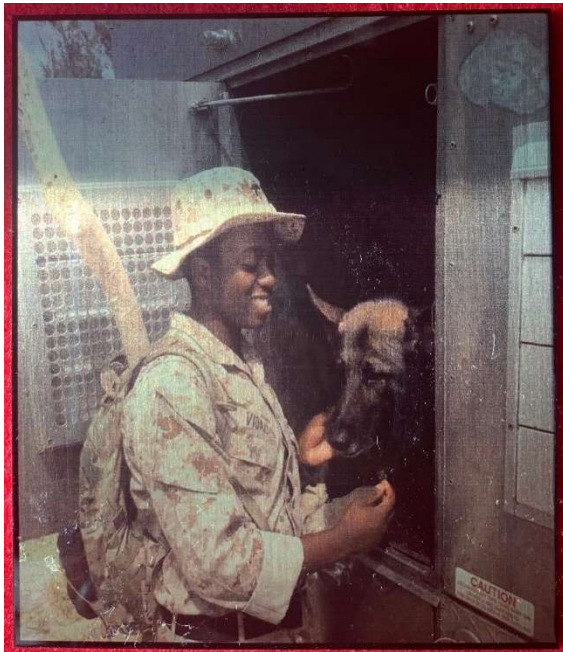
### Welcome Alisha Vidal

John Shoemaker

In a continuing effort to recognize those Veterans who live in Highland Beach or serve our community, we share a short story of each and post it on our town website:

[www.highlandbeach.us](http://www.highlandbeach.us) and specifically [Veteran Heroes of Highland Beach | Highland Beach, FL](#).

Please visit this tab to read stories and profiles of our citizens who have served or are serving our country and our town.



Alisha Vidal, a unique figure in our community, was born and raised in Hollywood, FL, where her parents still reside. She graduated from Stranahan High School and spent three years in the ROTC program. Her journey took a unique turn when Alisha enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in July 2012, with a specific goal of joining the MPs or military police. Following boot camp and four months of intensive training in Missouri, she embarked on a two-year assignment at Camp Hanson, Okinawa, Japan, where she could use her unique skills.

Then Alisha went to Houston for three months of training to take on a new challenge as a canine police officer. After training, she went back to Okinawa for another year of service. As a Sergeant, she learned how to work with a specially trained dog or Canine Handler and focused on Combat Training, searching for IEDs (improvised explosive devices) and drugs, and tracking people. During her daily activities, she learned a great deal about how to care for the dog, training, and especially health requirements, including vaccinations and other shots, medications, blood work, checking injuries, and more.

Returning from Okinawa, Alisha was assigned to Quantico for canine security details. The assignment was the same unit used for the advanced clearing of venues where the President of the U.S. would visit.

After five years in the Marines, Alisha decided to seek a new career in the medical field. Her interest in working with dogs peaked, and she looked for the next step, so she attended EMT school for three months at the Broward Fire Academy and McFatter Technical College.

However, needing to have more income, she joined Constellis Corporation, where she operated with a canine to search and clear large mail warehouses for explosives and other suspicious materials. Working seven days a week, ten hours a day for months was grueling. She also wanted to start school to be a Paramedic. She left Constellis and completed her Paramedic training in 2022.

With all this background, she went on to become an RN or registered nurse when she graduated from the Health Care Institute (HCL) with an Associate's Degree in 2023.

With all this training complete, what does Alisha do? She spent six months in the last half of 2023 training at the Fire Academy in Broward. And yes, she completed this and is now a trained canine operator, EMT, Paramedic, Nurse, and Firefighter!

When she heard of the opening at Highland Beach, she was excited as it was close to her home in Hollywood. Even being an original Floridian, she did not know of our little town but immediately fell in love with it. The new station and new team are an excellent opportunity for her to be part of the effort to develop and maintain a superb operation of fire and emergency medical personnel.

For Alisha, it is essential to build relationships. She loves a small town where she can get to know many of the residents. Then, there is the beach, where she joins other firefighters to run on the beach and stay in top physical condition. She is clearly hard-working, with a great work ethic and a sense of community commitment.

So, please welcome Alisha, our multi-talented fire safety and emergency medical technician, to our new Fire Station, Number 120, in Palm Beach County.



