

College counselor makes for dog advocates calendar

'Pinup' photo raises funds for pooches

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On weekdays, Bryn Nowell is an admissions counselor at Holyoke Community College. But she'll be on the calendar every day in May 2020 — as a model in next year's "Pinups for Pitbulls" calendar.

Nowell, 38, who lives in South Hadley, is a member of the Massachusetts chapter of Pinups for Pitbulls. The group operates as part of a greater international nonprofit organization, aiming to improve living conditions for dogs of all breeds.

For the past 15 years, Pinups for Pitbulls has launched a fundraising calendar featuring human and dog models. Several would-be models apply every year, with only a dozen spots available.

Nowell first began submitting applications three years ago. In 2019, she was finally chosen, landing an invitation to model in her first calendar shoot in May to be featured for the 2020 run of the calendar.

"If you asked me a year ago, I couldn't even imagine that this would be my life; I couldn't fathom it," said Bryn. "I didn't really believe that I was chosen until I was on the train, heading to Philadelphia for the photo shoot."

While the Stonington, Conn., native chose higher education as a career, Nowell has long been passionate about animals. The owner of two Boston terriers expanded upon her deep-rooted affinity for dogs.

"It's important to be mindful that every dog is unique, just like humans," said Nowell.

Nowell will host a calendar release party from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec.



Right, Bryn Nowell of South Hadley was selected as Miss May in the 2020 Pinups for Pitbulls calendar. Above, Bryn Nowell appears with Pinups for Pitbulls founder and President Deirdre Franklin. *Submitted photos*

7, at the Abandoned Building Brewery at 142 Pleasant St., Unit 103A, in Easthampton. Through the initiative, she hopes to raise money for the organization's mission.

"I'll have a sampling of stuff from T-shirts to bandanas for dogs to cookie cutters. That, and a decent amount of calendars," said Nowell. "We do have raffle prizes so there are four different raffle baskets that we put together. There's also dog photos with Santa from 5:30 to 7 p.m."

Nowell is optimistic that she can establish a local chapter of the organization. She delved into her motivation to do so.

"It's really nice to have a group of people who are involved in the Western Massachusetts area. A lot of people forget about us over on this side of the Pike," she said, noting that the chapters serve as a "voice" for smaller non-profit rescue organizations.

"I'm always looking for folks who are interested in joining me at events and helping with coordinating possi-



ble events down the road. Certainly, I'm looking for individuals who might be willing to visit us at events, even if they're not willing to participate," said Nowell.

Nowell will be "Miss May" in the

2020 Pinups for Pitbulls calendar, pictured beside Tiberius, a crisis response and therapy dog from New Jersey.

In her free time, Nowell also runs a popular blog titled "A Dog Walks into a Bar."