



ADOPTION OPTIONS 2015

Monday, October 19, 2015

Embassy Suites Hotel

1815 S Meridian Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73108

Join us! Petfinder and Petco Foundation have brought together some of the most popular presentations and speakers in animal welfare and mixed them with plenty of networking opportunities. *(Please register at least 10 days in advance.)*

9 am – 9:30 am

SIGN IN AND FUEL UP: COFFEE AND DANISH

9:30 am – 9:45 am

HOUSEKEEPING AND GETTING TO KNOW YOU

One person from each organization should be prepared to introduce your group. Feel free to bring business cards, brochures, news and/or fundraising items.

9:45 am – 10:00 am

PETCO: THINK ADOPTION FIRST

Mary Samples

Join us for an introduction to the Petco Think Adoption First Program, where partnership can increase your adoptions, community awareness and volunteer base.

10:00 am – 11:45 am

SHELTER MEDICINE 101

Brian DiGangi, DVM

This workshop will review some of the common challenges shelters and rescue groups face in preventing infectious diseases and keeping the animals in their care healthy. We'll focus on tips and tools that are critical to improving health and welfare, including optimal animal care practices, strategies to reduce disease transmission, health examinations, vaccination protocols and sanitation procedures. A summary of available resources for further information will be provided as well as some time for Q&A to cover those topics most important to you.

11:45 am – 12:45 pm

VEGETARIAN LUNCH, NETWORKING TIME

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

TOP TEN TIPS FOR INCREASING ADOPTIONS WITH PETFINDER

Melissa Vecera

Melissa will review the many benefits and resources that Petfinder offers members, including a brief look at Petfinder's free service to the animal welfare community. This presentation includes various tips and tricks to showcase your adoptable pets in the best light for increasing adoptions. Tips will include everything from taking and posting great pictures and crafting creative pet descriptions to different ways of promoting pets online as well as offline.

1:45 pm – 3:15 pm

HELPING PETS BY SUPPORTING PEOPLE: A Comprehensive Approach To Community Welfare

Kim Wolf

In every community certain pets are more "at risk" for entering the shelter system and less likely to leave through the front door. But the animals are just one part of this story: for every pet that ends up in the shelter, there is a human component as well. This presentation will take a holistic approach to helping "at risk" animals by understanding the challenges and barriers facing people in our communities, especially those that threaten the human-animal bond. The presentation will show how a multidisciplinary approach can more accurately assess risk factors and identify opportunities for improvement. Drawing upon social work, economics, marketing and public policy to help attendees assess their community's strengths and challenges, the presentation will share best practices from results-oriented groups around the country. By moving our discussions beyond animal welfare to community welfare as a whole, we can implement a comprehensive approach that benefits people and pets alike.

3:15 pm – 3:30 pm

BREAK

3:30 pm – 5 pm

TRAINING SHELTER DOGS

Jenn Barg

The field of animal welfare has progressed significantly, to the point that the mental health of the dogs in our care is viewed as being equally as important as disease prevention and cleanliness. This workshop covers how to create low-stress environments for shelter dogs as well as how to help them stay mentally stimulated and learn impulse control while in our facilities. Information on how to start and what is included in a "behavior program" will be presented. Demonstrations with local shelter dogs as well as PowerPoint video will be used.

Our Speakers

MARY SAMPLES, PETCO FOUNDATION

Mary is the national adoption program manager covering the West Coast, Northwest, and Southwest and Alaska and Hawaii for Petco for the past two years. Mary's love for animals goes back to childhood. She knew she wanted to work in the animal industry one way or another. Mary has been with Petco for over four years. She started her Petco career in the animal care and education department working under the vice president of veterinary medicine, Dr. Tom Edling. Gaining extensive knowledge of Petco standards for animal care, she was able to transition to the Think Adoption First team, working with Lori Morton-Feazell, the director of animal care, education and compliance. Mary rescued her first pet, Jake, a yellow Lab, about nine years ago. Since she has been on the Think Adoption First team, her family has grown. She has adopted a bearded dragon, Drago, and a kitten, Charlie. "I am truly blessed to be a part of an amazing company with the mission to think adoption first and reduce euthanasia," Mary says.

BRIAN DIGANGI, DVM, MS, DABVP, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Dr. Brian DiGangi obtained his D.V.M. from the University of Florida in 2006. While at UF, Dr. DiGangi completed clinical externships in both shelter medicine and exotic animal medicine. He became the first shelter medicine resident to graduate from UF in 2010, became a diplomat of the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners in canine/feline practice, and received his M.S. in veterinary medical sciences shortly thereafter. Dr. DiGangi has published research on feline adoption, pregnancy detection and immunology. He is currently a clinical assistant professor at UF and serves on the board of directors of the Association of Shelter Veterinarians.

MELISSA VECERA, PETFINDER

Melissa is a shelter outreach specialist for Petfinder. She has over eight years of volunteer experience, including writing press releases and attending meet-and-greet events on behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League, Inc., and hands-on shelter experience at the MDSPCA. Since 2012, in her role as manager of the North American Adoption Options conference series, she has traveled to over 50 cities to bring the latest animal welfare knowledge to local communities. She works near Baltimore, MD, and shares her home with her Dachshund named Lily and her Hedgehog named Olive.

KIM WOLF, BEYOND BREED

Kim Wolf is the executive director of Beyond Breed (BeyondBreed.com), a nonprofit corporation dedicated to supporting the bond between people and pets. She runs a project called "Ruff Riders" that assists pet owners in under-resourced neighborhoods in New York City. Kim is also employed as a social worker for a program supporting senior citizens and their pets in Manhattan. Her previous experience in animal welfare includes positions at the Pennsylvania SPCA, Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Farm Foundation. She has presented at numerous animal welfare and aging conferences around the country and has received awards for her community outreach and advocacy efforts. Kim lives in Brooklyn, NY, with her six adopted dogs.

JENN BARG, MS, ACAAB, CDBC, DENVER ANIMAL SHELTER

Jenn Barg is the behavior coordinator for the Denver Animal Shelter. She holds a B.S. and M.S. in biology and is an associate certified applied animal behaviorist and certified dog behavior consultant. She has a diverse background in animal welfare that spans 14 years, including serving as the shelter manager for Pueblo Animal Services in Pueblo, CO, head of behavior and training for the Upper Valley Humane Society in New Hampshire and also ran her own private behavior consultation business. Jenn is also currently a regular speaker for Petfinder's Adoption Options workshops nationwide. In her previous career she was a research scientist studying migratory bird behavioral ecology. Jenn served the New England Federation of Humane Societies board and is currently a board member of Colorado Federation of Animal Welfare Agencies.

Thank you to our host, Pet Angels Rescue | pro.petfinder.com/adoptionoptions | adoptionoptions@petfinder.com