



ADOPTION OPTIONS COMMUNITY

CONFERENCE TOUR

2019

August 8th: Alexandria, VA

8:30-9:00: Registration

9:00 – 10:00: **Welcome & Getting the Most out of Petfinder – Katie Schmuke, Purina/Petfinder**

10:15 – 11:30: **Adoptions: Are We Making it Hard for People to Do the Right Thing? – Betsy McFarland**

People have choices when seeking to add a pet to their family – pet stores, the internet, breeders, rescues, neighbors, friends, and so on. Currently, about 30% of pets in homes came from shelters or rescues, the rest from those other sources. How YOU engage and treat potential adopters can mean the difference between someone saving a homeless pet, or supporting an inhumane puppy mill! In this session, we'll identify potential barriers to adoption, what happens when we turn someone away from our shelter or rescue, and what we can do to help people in our communities do the right thing.

11:30 – 12:30: **Networking Lunch with Speakers and Attendees**

12:30 – 1:45: **Utilizing Marketing for Overlooked Pets – Christina Hill, Atlanta Humane Society**

Make your animals more marketable and market them more efficiently to reduce length of stay! This session will teach you how to create a marketing timeline for your adoptable animals as well as implement proactive efforts to help overlooked pets get adopted before they become overlooked. You'll be provided a toolkit of ways to implement a marketing-based adoptable animal timeline (including ideas on when to update photos, reduce adoption fees, and review animal bios) within your organization, and learn how to work with volunteers to make it a reality.

2:00 – 3:15: **Beyond Spay/Neuter: Innovative Programs & Practices to Decrease the Number of Pets Relinquished to Animal Shelters & Rescue Groups – Kim Wolf**

Over the past few decades, the animal welfare field has made tremendous strides in reducing the homeless animal population through spay/neuter programs. While we still have a ways to go, new programs have emerged to keep pets out of shelters/rescues and in their original homes. This presentation will provide an overview of innovative programs that are effectively addressing the risk factors for pet relinquishment. Topics will include access to affordable veterinary care and pet food, temporary pet care for people experiencing a crisis (e.g., domestic violence, emergency hospitalization, inpatient treatment programs for mental health or substance use disorder), support for vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities, and safety nets for people living in poverty. Audience members will learn evidence-based practices for conducting needs assessments, building a new program, funding and sustaining a program, and collaborating with community partners. Whether you are a brick-and-mortar shelter or a home-based rescue group, and regardless of your staff size and budget, this presentation will give you practical tools and tips to keep more pets with their original owners and decrease the number of animals that are relinquished in your community.

3:30 – 4:45: **More than Just Fun and Games: The Impact of Shelter Playgroups – Emily Grossheider**

It's more than just fun and games; play groups save lives! After visiting over 200 shelters across the United States and Canada, the team at Dogs Playing for Life™ has done more than have a lot of fun playing with dogs. We will share case studies and evidence that playgroups improve the quality of life of dogs and their caretakers. We will also share how shelters across the country have effectively used play groups to facilitate better adoption matching, more accurate

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sociability assessments, and improved shelter operations. Dogs live to play... we let them play to live!

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