



October 13-15, 2023
All times listed are Eastern Time.

Special thanks to our Premier Sponsors:



Friday, October 13

7:00–7:15 p.m.

Stacy LeBaron, Community Cats Podcast and United Spay Alliance
Opening Remarks

7:15–8:15 p.m.

Stacy Pursell, Founder and CEO, The VET Recruiter

Recruiting and Retention: the Twin Challenges of the Veterinary Profession

Recruiting, hiring, and retaining veterinarians is more difficult now than at any time in the profession. But why is that the case? And what can be done about it? Join Stacy Pursell, founder and CEO of The VET Recruiter, for this insightful and information-packed session for United Spay Alliance, during which she will address and analyze the challenges facing the profession. Among the topics that Stacy will discuss include:

- The role that the veterinarian shortage is playing in marketplace dynamics

- How the Law of Supply and Demand is affecting veterinarian recruiting and retention
- The rising role of counter offers in the profession
- How “ghosting” can affect both job candidates and employers
- The importance of being considered an “employer of choice”

Participants will emerge from this session with:

- Knowledge of what it takes to hire veterinarians in this market in terms of the starting salary and sign-on bonus
- Four (4) steps for better candidate engagement during the recruiting process
- Seven (7) strategies for improving the retention rates of current employees
- The twelve (12) characteristics of what it takes to be known as an “employer of choice,” which is the key to simultaneously improving recruitment success and retention rates

About Stacy Pursell

Stacy Pursell, is an internationally respected Executive Search Consultant and Recruiter, based in the United States and ranked in the top 1% of search consultants worldwide. Considered the “go to expert” in the Animal Health industry and Veterinary profession for talent centric solutions, Stacy is a workplace/workforce expert, Certified Personnel Consultant (CPC) and Certified Employee Retention Specialist (CERS).

Stacy is the founder and CEO of The VET Recruiter, an executive search and recruiting firm, serving the Animal Health industry and Veterinary profession. Stacy has 25+ years of executive search and recruiting experience in the Animal Health industry and Veterinary profession and has placed more professionals in positions in the Animal Health industry and Veterinary profession in the United States than any other recruiter. She was the first recruiter to focus exclusively on Animal Health and Veterinary Medicine.

8:15-8:30 p.m.

Stacy LeBaron

Cat Trivia

Saturday, October 14

10:00–10:15 a.m.

Stacy LeBaron

Welcome

10:15–11:15 a.m.

Dr. Jeffrey Young, Founder, Planned Pethood International, Animal Planet’s *Rocky Mountain Vet!*

It is never too late to correct our course!

The number one cause of death for cats and dogs in the developed world is euthanasia. Between 1990 and 2010, there was an 80% drop in shelter euthanasia. Yet since then, progress has slowed and reversed as we have been distracted to think we can rescue, warehouse, and adopt our way out of pet overpopulation. To become a part of the honest solution, which is not rocket science, we must return the focus of companion animal welfare to the prevention of litters and education (in schools, behavioral counseling and training classes to the public).

As of now, we have failed to follow through on what we know to be the solution. However, it is not too late to correct the course that we as a country—and a movement—have taken. Support and give to make a real difference. And remember, while brick-and-mortar looks great, it does nothing to solve the problems we have. Also, remember that simply being alive does not imply quality of existence. We know the solution; our task is to break down the barriers and just get the job done. We can do it.

About Dr. Jeffrey Young

Dr. Young graduated from Colorado State University School of Veterinary Medicine in 1989. He established Planned Pethood Plus, Inc. (PPP) in 1990. PPP is best known for its low-cost mobile neutering services, Native American reservation work, and training of veterinarians from around the world in more efficient surgical techniques. Dr. Young has served on or consulted with numerous humane society boards nationally and internationally. He has founded his own non-profit group called Planned Pethood International (PPI). PPI was established to help fund spay/neuter work and veterinary training involving numerous veterinary hospitals and veterinary schools around the world. PPI has a well established International Training Center (ITC) in Playa del Carmen, Mexico, offering free training for qualified candidates and having had hundreds of veterinarians and veterinary students come for hands-on training. There is also a new training center in Conifer, Colorado.

Dr. Young is most proud of having personally sterilized over 185,000 animals in the last 32 years, and he is an outspoken proponent of early age neutering for companion animal population control. Dr. Young has the number one ranked TV show on Animal Planet, “Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet”. He has used this platform to promote population control and basic medical needs for all companion animals. Dr. Young is driven by a simple underlying mission, “to significantly reduce companion animal overpopulation and suffering throughout the world.” His motto, “Think Globally Act Locally.”

11:15 - 11:30 a.m.

Break

11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

A Michelle Gonzalez, DVM, Veterinarian, Rascal Unit

Affordable and Accessible Spay/Neuter Programs Through the Use of Mobile Veterinary Clinics

This presentation will provide information on how the Rascal Unit, a mobile veterinary clinic located in Ohio, works with humane organizations and the community to provide affordable and accessible sterilization and wellness care. This will include planning, budgeting, and training to provide an efficient and effective program while still providing high-quality care. The presentation will also briefly discuss how we can use this program to train and involve other veterinarians and veterinary students interested in HQHVSN.

About A Michelle Gonzalez, DVM

Dr. Gonzalez was born and raised in Puerto Rico. Obtained a BS in Zoology from Michigan St University, DVM from The Ohio State University, and completed an Internship in Small Animal Medicine, Surgery, and Critical Care at the University of Missouri. Dr. Gonzalez founded the Rascal Unit in 2006, a mobile veterinary clinic aimed at providing affordable and accessible care to underserved areas in Ohio. In addition to HQHVSN, Dr. Gonzalez has a MS in Veterinary Forensics from the University of Florida and a MS in Forensic Psychology from Southern New Hampshire University and works with local and national humane organizations in animal welfare initiatives and cruelty and neglect investigations.

12:30–1:00 p.m.

Lunch break

1:00–2:00 p.m.

Karen Little, Executive Director, Alley Cat Advocates
Dr. Katie Todd, Lead Veterinarian, Alley Cat Advocates

Do You Need More Spay/Neuter Capacity? You Can Do It!

Are you constantly struggling to find time in private clinics' schedules to alter one or two community cats a week? Are you challenged by the seemingly limited number of veterinarian resources in your community? The presentation describes how one group tackled this problem in a way that not only solved it for the moment but set the groundwork for moving the entire community forward toward embracing TNR for the long haul. In this presentation, out of the box thinking will be shared that helped build a successful, life-changing program in Kentucky with the goal of helping you develop a program that will work perfectly for your community.

About Karen Little

Karen and her husband founded the nonprofit Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) group Alley Cat Advocates in 1999. Based in Louisville, Kentucky, the group has altered over 60,000 community cats and has worked to transform the culture of care provided community cats in the region. The group altered their first 24,000 cats using a mash style spay/neuter clinic in a transformed janitorial warehouse. In 2012, Karen was instrumental in helping pass an ordinance change that propelled the implementation of an extremely successful municipal Return-to-Field program, moving the city's Save Rate for cats to over 95% where it has remained for the past 5 years. Since 2018, Alley Cat Advocates has held the citywide contract for Trap-Neuter-Return and all related community cat issues. In 2020, under Karen's direction, a successful capital campaign concluded with the opening of a Community Cat Complex dedicated solely to the care and well-being of community cats. The complex houses a high quality, high volume spay/neuter clinic as well as medical space for housing and caring for community cats needing extra care.

About Dr. Katie Todd

Dr. Katie Todd is a 2012 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. She has been a volunteer with Alley Cat Advocates for over 15 years, first as a technician, then as a volunteer surgeon and board member. She is now serving in the role of Lead Veterinarian for the organization. She also volunteers with the HSUS Rural Area Veterinary Services (RAVS) program and Louisville's Pets4Life, both focused on providing access to veterinary care for underserved populations. Dr. Todd provides relief veterinary services across the U.S., both in HQHVSN surgery as well as general practice and emergency medicine

2:00-2:30 p.m

Break

2:30–3:30 p.m.

Becky L. Morrow, DVM, MS, CAWA, Assistant Teaching Professor, Penn State University; Adjunct Faculty, UF College of Veterinary Medicine; President and Medical Director, Frankie's Friends Cat Rescue; Medical Director, Vetinari (Molecular Diagnostics)

HQHVSN – It's a Team Sport

HQHVSN is more than just specialized surgical techniques, it requires a highly functional and efficient team. Just as in sports, having a "playbook" and excellent communication, verbal and non-verbal, is essential. When HQHVSN team members know what to expect and communicate effectively, they can reach peak efficiency and adapt to unexpected situations quickly. This session will give you a peak in the "playbook" that Frankie's Friends has developed over the past 15 years, after tens of thousands of spays and neuters. This time-tested system has been successfully used in multiple stationary clinics, mobile surgery units, and even a veterinary school with vet students. Get ready for the HQHVSN Olympics!

About Dr. Morrow

Dr. Becky Morrow is a shelter veterinarian and professor who is very active in the animal rescue community. She founded Frankie's Friends Cat Rescue in 2010 after she cared for over 400 cats rescued from Tiger Ranch, a massive institutional hoarding facility. She has performed tens of thousands of spays and neuters and teaches High Quality High Volume spay/neuter techniques to other veterinarians and veterinary students. Dr. Morrow is often called upon to speak on topics related to community cats and TNR and has worked with dozens of shelters and rescues in Western Pennsylvania to bring the mobile surgical unit to underserved regions. In addition to being President and Medical Director at Frankie's Friends, Dr. Morrow is an Assistant Teaching Professor at Penn State University and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine's Online Shelter Medicine Program.

3:30 - 3:45 p.m.

Break

3:45 - 4:45 p.m.

Mark Cushing, Founder and CEO, Animal Policy Group

Loren Breen, Director of Policy and Research, Animal Policy Group

The Landscape of Veterinary and Animal Legislation

A comprehensive look at legislative and regulatory trends affecting the veterinary industry and animal health in all 50 states.

About Mark Cushing

Mark is the Founder & CEO of the Animal Policy Group. A long-time political strategist, government regulatory advisor, corporate executive and former litigator, Mark focuses his advocacy practice on providing high-level strategic advice and services to clients with needs at any level of government, and key trade/industry associations in the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Mark has recently penned Pet Nation, a book that tells the inside story of how companion animals are transforming our homes, culture, and economy. Mark is a frequent speaker at veterinary medicine and other animal policy-related conferences.

About Loren Breen

Loren is the Director of Policy and Research at Animal Policy group. She works with Founder and CEO, Mark Cushing, to develop policy strategies and build strong coalitions to increase veterinary access and advocate for animal welfare. She conducts in-depth research and analyzes national legislative and regulatory affairs.

Loren has her Masters in Public Policy. While obtaining her degree at University of Arizona taught Introduction to Statistics for the Social Sciences and interned at the Arizona House of Representatives.

4:45 - 5:00 p.m.

Stacy LeBaron

Cat Trivia

5:00 p.m.

Close

Sunday, October 15

10:00–10:15 a.m.

Stacy LeBaron

Welcome

10:15–11:15 a.m.

Vicki Deisner, Esq., USA State Leader, Ohio; Executive Director, Ohio Animal Advocates

Liz Rudder, USA State Leader, Missouri; President, Operation SPOT

Cheri Storms, USA State Leader, Indiana; Executive Director, Pet Friendly Services of Indiana

Building a United Front: A Panel Conversation with USA State Leaders

State leaders are a critical resource for United Spay Alliance – and for the people and pets looking to find spay/neuter resources in their communities. While USA is working to update and maintain a list of low-cost spay/neuter services, our state leaders help answer questions and make referrals that only a local could know. Hear more about what it's like to be a state leader with USA, and what these folks are doing to lead the charge for spay/neuter in their home states.

About Vicki Deisner

Vicki is the Executive Director of Ohio Animal Advocates (OAA), and a founding member of the Coalition of State Animal Advocacy Organizations. OAA is United Spay Alliance's (USA) Ohio partner, hosting the Ohio S/N Connection that provides statewide resource lists including low-cost S/N, TNR, pet food pantries and where to report cruelty. OAA's community cat programs include annual statewide and regional community cat summits, where last year, along with our partner Together Initiative for Ohio's Community Cats, introduced the first statewide comprehensive list S/N and TNR resources and the report on Ohio's TNR deserts.

Vicki is also currently the State Government Affairs Advisor for the Animal Welfare Institute, and was formerly the Midwest Legislative Director of the ASPCA, where she was responsible for legislative and advocacy initiatives in the states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Kentucky. Prior to that she served as the Associate Director of the National Water Resources Campaigns for the National Wildlife Federation in Washington, DC, Executive Director of the Ohio Environmental Council and Ohio Assistant Attorney General, Environmental Enforcement Section in Columbus, Ohio.

Vicki received her J.D. from Salmon P. Chase Law School at Northern Kentucky University, her clinical degree in Respiratory Therapy from the University of Chicago, her M.S in Physiology from the University of Cincinnati, Medical College, and her B.S. in Zoology from The Ohio State University.

About Liz Rudder

Liz is the President of Operation SPOT (Stop Pet Overpopulation Today) in St Louis, Missouri. In 1995 in the St. Louis area, too many healthy dogs and cats were being euthanized in area pounds and shelters. Representatives from almost all of the animal welfare organizations and municipalities joined together to address the problem and look for answers to what everyone was experiencing, killing healthy animals simply because there was no room in the shelters. Liz was one of the charter members of this task force.

The answer to the pet overpopulation crisis needed to be a 3-part approach: public education about responsible pet ownership, legislative efforts to help the shelters and animal controls safeguard the dogs and cats, and an area wide program to provide affordable and accessible spay/neuters.

OpSPOT was formed as a 501c3 organization and went straight to work. Liz was elected as the first president and tasked with providing those spay/neuter services. In the beginning, OpSPOT worked with local vet clinics, reimbursing them for spay/neuter procedures. From there, they acquired a used transport vehicle and developed programs to transport pets to local vet clinics. Then, the donation of a SWBell

mobile office allowed OpSPOT to outfit a mobile spay/neuter clinic which continued to work in targeted communities, both rural and inner city. Today, OpSPOT has delivered over 53,000 procedures.

About Cheri Storms

Cheri is the Executive Director of Pet Friendly Services of Indiana. She made the jump from environmental policy work to animal welfare, joining the board of Pet Friendly Services of Indiana in 2005 to help grow the grassroots organization. Within five years, Pet Friendly Services obtained a specialty license plate, providing the organization with the needed revenue stream to fund spay/neuter surgeries across Indiana. Pet Friendly Services now has a network of 125 vets and provides financial assistance to shelters and rescue groups, as well as to limited-income pet owners.

Due to the need to stabilize outdoor cat populations, and decrease shelter intake, Cheri launched the Community Cat Program to financially support organizations that trap-neuter-return (TNR) feral and free-roaming cats. As a result, Indiana increased the number of TNR programs from 25 to more than 150.

The paperwork involved in running a statewide financial assistance organization was ever mounting. Cheri's team responded by fully automating their processes, allowing Pet Friendly Services to run more efficiently and expedite the spay/neuter certificate process. Automation also included vet reimbursement, allowing participating vets to easily invoice Pet Friendly Services for their work.

11:15 - 11:30 a.m.

Break

11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Brianna Lovell Myers, Administrative Director, United Spay Alliance

Go Green! An Update on the USA Spay/Neuter Directory

United Spay Alliance is dedicated to promoting affordable, accessible spay/neuter services around the country -- because when we help more pets and people get the help they need today, we can prevent untold suffering tomorrow. With this in mind, USA has been working to build and maintain accurate listings of spay/neuter resources, and foster a growing network of leaders in all 50 states (plus DC and New York City!) to provide the best help possible to anyone in need. Internally dubbed our "Go Green" campaign, tune in for an update on our progress so far. Hear where things stand around the country in terms of spay/neuter services and referrals, the important role our state leaders have to play, and where help is still needed.

About Brianna Lovell Myers

You may know Brianna from the management and support she provides for the Community Cats Podcast. She is also the administrative director for United Spay Alliance! As the administrative director, she oversees the day-to-day operations of the organization, including the nationwide spay/neuter directory, the state leader network, and the Go Green campaign. Brianna also serves on the Board of Directors for Community Cat Alliance in Winchester, Virginia. She previously worked for Alley Cat Allies, where she held various management roles in outreach, programs, and events, and led the charge for their flagship National Feral Cat Day and Global Cat Day campaigns. Brianna holds a Master of Public Administration degree from West Virginia University. She currently lives in Maryland with her husband and their senior rescues.

12:15–12:45 p.m.

Lunch break

12:45- 1:00 p.m.

Stacy LeBaron

Cat Trivia

1:00–2:00 p.m.

Jessica Bustamante, Fundraising Coach, Get Fully Funded

Let's raise some money! What do you say?!

Want to know how to use social media, newsletters, and how to write the most impactful fundraising letter possible? Jessie is going to share her passion for fundraising and provide tips and tricks to elevate your own fundraising. We guarantee you will walk away motivated to raise more money and save more animals! If you are looking for fun, creative and easy-to-understand ideas, then this workshop is for you.

About Jessica Bustamante

Jessie puts the FUN in fundraising. She brings her energy and enthusiasm for fundraising in all that she does. Jessie is a fearless fundraiser by day and by night! She is currently a fundraiser herself, a fundraising coach, fundraising instructor, and in her spare time she's volunteering at a local animal rescue saving lives. Jessie has dedicated her professional, and personal, career to serving others and helping homeless animals. Jessie has been fundraising since around 2010 when she fell into the profession after she was asked to serve on a "fund development" committee but thought she heard "fun development." Well she ultimately put the fun, in fund, development and she's been hooked ever since. She has had roles in nonprofits including Executive Director, Major Gifts Officer, Vice President of Development and Chief Advancement Officer. At the end of the day, Jessie is committed to raising more money so that nonprofits can do more, save more, and make our communities a better place to live, work, and play. She is an advocate for the voiceless and knows that this is her furever career.

2:00-2:30 p.m

Break

2:30–3:30 p.m.

Jen Hobgood, PhD, Member, USA Veterinary Shortage Task Force; Senior Director of State Legislation, Southern Division, ASPCA

Cheri Storms, Chair, USA Veterinary Shortage Task Force; USA State Leader, Indiana; Executive Director, Pet Friendly Services of Indiana

Dr. G. Robert Weedon, Member, USA Veterinary Shortage Task Force; HQHVSN Surgeon, Humane Society of Polk County

Crossing State Lines: Veterinarian License Portability to Increase Spay/Neuter Capacity

On July 1, 2023, a new Florida law went into effect that will broaden access to spay/neuter in the Sunshine State during the ongoing veterinary workforce shortage and beyond. The new law exempts veterinarians who are licensed and in good standing in another state from Florida state licensure, provided they are performing sterilization and preventative wellness services at the time of sterilization as an unpaid volunteer and working under the responsible supervision of a Florida-licensed veterinarian.

How will the new law work? What is the potential for similar legislation in other states? This presentation by the United Spay Alliance Veterinary Shortage Task Force and the ASPCA will discuss Florida's new law, how the coalition worked with state lawmakers to pass the legislation, and how similar legislation can maximize spay/neuter capacity-building impact in other states.

About Jen Hobgood, PhD

Jen is Senior Director of State Legislation for ASPCA's Government Relations Southern Division. She is based in Tallahassee, Florida and oversees the ASPCA's legislative initiatives in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina.

About Dr. G. Robert Weedon

Dr. Weedon is currently a High Quality, High Volume Spay-Neuter (HQHVSN) Surgeon with the Humane Society of Polk County, in Winter Haven, FL, after retiring as a Clinical Assistant Professor and Service Head of Shelter Medicine at the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine, where he trained veterinary students in HQHVSN techniques.

As an advocate for solving the problem of pet overpopulation, particularly that of community cats, Dr. Weedon volunteered with Friends of Felines, a group that surgically sterilizes feral cats in the Wilmington community and was a volunteer surgeon at the onsite spay/neuter facility at New Hanover County Animal Control Services, where animals were surgically sterilized prior to adoption. Dr. Weedon serves on the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Contraception in Cats & Dogs, an international organization whose goal is to develop and implement non-surgical sterilants to help solve the problem of pet overpopulation worldwide, and was elected Vice-Chairman for 2010, 2011 and 2012. He has been trained in the administration of Esterilsol and Zeuterin, a chemical sterilant for male dogs, and served as a master trainer for its use. Since December 2022, Dr. Weedon has been a member of the Vet Shortage Task Force convened by the United Spay Alliance, and is a volunteer Scientific Advisor for Alley Cat Allies, a global advocate for the humane treatment of all cats.

Dr. Weedon served as the veterinarian on the New Hanover County (NC) Board of Health for six years, and was a member of the Animal Control Services Advisory Committee. At the December 2008 meeting, he was elected Chairman of the Board of Health by his peers to serve in that capacity during 2009. Dr. Weedon served on the Board of Directors of the Public Health Foundation of New Hanover County, having been elected President for 2009, and UNC Public Health Foundation Board. In June 2008, he received the Bill Lehman Memorial Award from the National Animal Control Association as the outstanding animal control volunteer in the United States. After retiring from clinical practice, and prior to assuming the faculty position at the University of Illinois, Dr. Weedon accepted the role of Veterinary Outreach Coordinator with the Global Alliance for Rabies Control in 2009, and prior to that, he was a volunteer ambassador with GARC, giving lectures on rabies prevention. Dr. Weedon is the coauthor of the chapter on rabies in the textbook, Infectious Disease Management in Animal Shelters, 2nd Edition, as well as coauthor of two chapters in the recently published textbook, High-Quality, High-Volume Spay and Neuter and Other Shelter Surgeries.

Dr. Weedon attended Purdue University where he received his Bachelor of Science in Animal Science and his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degrees. He received his Master of Public Health from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

About Cheri Storms

See Cheri's full bio under her previous session on Sunday, October 15 at 10:15 a.m.

3:30-3:45 p.m

Break

3:45 - 4:45

Dr. Kim Houlding, Story County Veterinary Clinic

Dr. Caitlyn Neal, Capital Area Humane Society

Dr. Jeffrey Young, Founder, Planned Pethood International

Feline Fix by Five in Practice: A Panel Conversation with FFF Veterinarians

We know that spaying and neutering kittens early is key to preventing unwanted litters, but what do veterinarians really think about Feline Fix by Five (FFF)? How do they talk to their clients about the best time to spay and neuter kittens? And how does FFF fit into their overall work to provide more spay/neuter and prevention services to the community? Join us, as we talk with a handful of veterinarians from our list of Participating Veterinarians who support FFF.

About Dr. Kim Houlding

Dr. Houlding currently owns Story County Veterinary Clinic in Ames, Iowa. She began her career working with a wide variety of animals, but eventually settled her focus on small animal practice in 1992, which continues to this day. In 1981, she worked with local caregivers to create the concept of a barn cat program. In her spare time, Dr. Houlding works as a horse show official judge and steward, and during the winter, she is a volunteer ski patrol. She graduated from Iowa State University. She also earned her MS in Veterinary Forensics from the University of Florida and helps consult on forensics issues.

About Dr. Caitlyn Neal

Dr. Neal is a spay/neuter clinic veterinarian for the Capital Area Humane Society in Lansing, Michigan. She is a 2014 graduate from Western University of Health Sciences College of Veterinary Medicine. She has practiced in the field of Shelter Medicine and HPHVSN surgery since graduation and has a special passion for TNR.

About Dr. Jeffrey Young

See Dr. Jeff's full bio under his previous session on Saturday, October 14 at 10:15 a.m.

4:45 - 5:00 p.m.

Stacy LeBaron

Cat Trivia

5:00 p.m.

Close

Special thanks to all our conference sponsors:

Feline Fix by Five, a program of United Spay Alliance and Marian's Dream
SpayMart
Two Mauds
RLD Consulting Services
Ohio Animal Advocates
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