

**Florida Animal Protection and Advocacy Association and Animal Protection Foundation
Training Conference**

Friday, February 23rd, 2024

8:30am – 9:15am	Enforcement Track	De-escalation in Animal Services - Alexander “AJ” Caldwell, Senior Specialist, Best Friends Animal Society
	Shelter Track	An ED's Case for Getting Back to Basics - Chelsea Staley, Director of Lifesaving, Petco Love
	Leadership Track	Beyond Labels: Rethinking Breed and Reshaping Sheltering - Nicole Juchem, Manager of Operations and Public Policy, Animal Farm Foundation
	Certificate Track	Florida State Animal Response Coalition Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Awareness Level (Level 1). This course will last until 5:30 p.m. and students must attend the entire 8 hours to receive certification

Alexander “AJ” Caldwell, Senior Specialist, Best Friends Animal Society

Enforcement Track

45 minutes

“De-escalation in Animal Services” - A study of common verbal de-escalation tactics in relation to scene control without outward brute force. This course analyzes and evaluates methods of de-escalation used by law enforcement agencies nationwide while directly relating the said tactics to real situations in Animal Services and Humane Enforcement.

Alexander “AJ” Caldwell better known as AJ, is the national shelter support senior specialist for Best Friends Animal Society. As part of Best Friends’ work to offer customized, strategic support and training for animal sheltering agencies around the country, AJ provides assessments of agencies' field services and helps design and implement training programs proven to increase live outcomes, community engagement, officer safety, and assists said agencies to strive to put “Care” back into Animal Care and Control.

AJ began his career in animal services in 2018 with Columbus Animal Care & Control, where he still resides. During his time as an officer, he earned the ranking of sergeant, formed relationships with Rescue organizations within and outside of his community, as well as relationships with citizens through community engagement and proactive work.

Chelsea Staley, Director of Lifesaving, Petco Love

Shelter Track

45 minutes

“An ED's Case for Getting Back to Basics” - Back to Basics: Essentials to Unlock Your Shelter’s Potential (Before the Word Basic was Featured in Urban Dictionary) In the early 2000s, a

handful of open-admission shelters creatively and courageously developed innovative programs that have become the cornerstones of lifesaving: Adoptions, foster care, rescue transfers, shelter medicine for non-veterinarians, proactive redemptions, and technology. The best part about these revolutionary programs? They had low barriers to entry, meaning any shelter could execute them – and did. Shelters everywhere accepted and adopted the programs, resulting in a dramatic increase in the national save rate!

Once the cornerstones of lifesaving were set, the animal welfare industry continued to innovate. Daily playgroups, new technologies, broadening services to include low-cost spay/neuter and wellness, and pet retention counseling continued to increase the national save rate. And we haven't looked back. Until now.

Animal Welfare Organizations industry-wide are feeling the heat this peak-intake season and beyond. While post-pandemic intake has yet to rebound to 2019 levels, shelter pet adoption has stalled, resulting in shelters and rescues alike experiencing critical in-care numbers. For the first time in history, the national save rate declined in 2022 and is tracking to decline again in 2023*.

What changed? Nothing - except our focus.

Covid-19 birthed many beautiful lifesaving programs – most of which happen outside a shelter's walls. Community centered lifesaving is the future of sheltering, but we can't turn our focus outward until we're consistently saving the lives of pets in our care.

If you're new to animal welfare or overwhelmed at where to begin on your org's journey to lifesaving – this session is for you! Attendees will be encouraged to unlock their shelter's potential by getting back to basics. We'll review sheltering 101 essentials, including program highlights, decision making for impact, capacity for care, and lifesaving on a budget. Attendees will have a chance to win grant awards!

Chelsea Staley is the Director of Lifesaving, Petco Love since 2020. Prior to that was Executive Director at Kanawha Charleston Humane Associate.

Nicole Juchem, Manager of Operations and Public Policy, Animal Farm Foundation Leadership Track

45 minutes

“Beyond Labels: Rethinking Breed and Reshaping Sheltering” - Discover the most recent research that supports a shift in our thinking and discussion about "breed" in individual dogs. True success, which brings positive change to our community, happens when we let go of preconceived notions and biases and avoid labeling dogs solely based on these notions. We will explore the fundamentals of canine genetics and what the latest research tells us about the link between genetics and behavior. Scientific evidence shows that visually identifying dogs is unreliable and has a negative impact on shelter dogs. By moving away from classifying by perceived breeds and focusing on the individual characteristics of each dog, we not only increase adoption rates but also shape how communities perceive dogs and their individual potential. Let's embrace a modern, science-based approach to sheltering that acknowledges dogs as individuals, fosters transformative community success, and creates inclusive and compassionate communities for both dogs and people. Together, we can reshape the future of animal sheltering and enhance the well-being of shelter dogs.

Nicole Juchem has worked in a variety of leadership roles over the ten years working for Animal Farm Foundation, and in more recent years, the National Canine Research Council. She started her career in animal welfare in 2013, in that time she established many programs that focus on strengthening the bond between people and pets, including tools that help shelters to drop breed labels. In her new role as Manager of Operations and Public Policy, Nicole oversees many projects for NCRC and AFF but her main focus is on insurance breed restrictions, BSL, and of course, seeing all dogs as individuals. Like most of us who work for Animal Welfare, Nicole has many different roles and is also responsible for IT, web design, graphic design, and marketing. She also volunteers in her local community. Nicole lives with her partner Jesse and is currently fostering senior dogs for AFF. When not at work she enjoys hiking, traveling, and spending time with her family.

Melissa Foreberg, Lead Instructor, John Porche, and Desiree Bauman-Smith, Florida State Animal Response Coalition
General Session Track
8 Hours

****Preregistration is required, and all participants must complete all eight hours of instruction to receive a certificate of completion and a complementary Florida SARC uniform t-shirt and pet evacuation information bag.**

Full conference or Friday only conference registration required to participate in this course. Participants must also register for the course through Florida SARC after registering for the conference no later than January 31st, 2024, using the following link:

***The course requires a minimum of 15 participants.**

[FL SARC Registration](#)

“Florida State Animal Response Coalition Small Animal Sheltering Course – Awareness Level (Level 1)” - When disaster strikes, our team of trained volunteer responders will be there to shelter and protect Florida's companion animals. This Awareness Level (Level 1) class will give you the knowledge and skills you need to work in an emergency animal shelter or pet-friendly shelter. It will give you the expertise and practical experience required to become an emergency animal responder. The Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering class is certified by the Florida Department of Emergency Management and is required to respond in Florida to help companion animals during a disaster. This is the introductory level of emergency animal shelter. Modules include:

- The Disaster Process – Understanding how disasters are managed.
- Preparing for Deployment – Checklists and considerations so you are ready when needed.
- Building a Temporary Emergency Shelter – Strategies for shelter location and design. Basic equipment assembly

- Animal Behaviors – General understanding of animal behaviors, facial expressions, stresses, and more
- Daily Care – Skills and procedures to provide daily care of animals.
- Diseases & Parasites – Processes and skills for recognizing and reporting illness.
- Cleaning & Disinfecting – Considerations to limit the spread of disease. Procedures and options.
- Tear Down & Cleanup – Processes during tear down to improve readiness for the next disaster.

Melissa Foreberg is a certified animal control officer and certified cruelty investigator in both large and companion animals. She has responded to disasters, both natural and man-made since 1996. She has provided field rescue and emergency animal sheltering in Florida as well as nationally and internationally. She has trained hundreds of students with Florida Animal Response Coalition since 2010.

John Porche has been a member of FL SARC since April 2023, SARC Ambassador since September 2023, and program instructor since January 2024. John was a prior military training program manager with extensive international affairs and logistics management experience and was a member of the Florida Highway Auxiliary Patrol for 10 years before retiring in 2005. John was also employed by the ASPCA from 2016-2020, working as a manager in shelter operations, transport, logistics, animal care, and animal cruelty investigator. He is a Level 4 certified Animal Cruelty Investigator and has extensive background and experience in many other facets of animal rescue, sheltering, and investigations.

Desiree Bauman-Smith hails from Brooklyn, NY, beginning her career in the animal rescue field in 1998. She held past positions as an animal control officer, vet tech, and has participated in many trap-neuter-return operations. Desiree joined FL SARC in May 2019 after completing the Level 1 Awareness course. In March 2020 she completed the Level 2 Operations course, then deployed in August 2021 in support of ASPCA shelter operations helping rescued and abandoned pets associated with the Kentucky Floods. In 2022 she deployed in support of the Humane Society US rescue of over 170 hoarded cats in Jackson MS. She is passionate about animal rescue and considers herself a successful "foster failure"! She has opened her home to 2 dogs, 2 cats, and 2 pet rats.

9:30-11:00	Enforcement Track	Bird Rescue Basics. How it Applies to Animal Control - Cameron Grant, Animal Services Officer, Orange County Animal Services
	Shelter Track	Back to Basics - Animal Sheltering Fundamentals - Karen Walsh, Senior Director, Animal Relocation, ASPCA
	Leadership Track	Who You Gonna Call? (Hint: it's not Ghostbusters) - Keegan Spera, Disaster Assessment Coordinator & Data Specialist, Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida and Steven Carriere, Manager, Florida State Response Coalition
	Certificate Track	Florida State Animal Response Coalition Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Awareness Level (Level 1). This course will last until 5:30 p.m. and students must attend the entire 8 hours to receive certification

Cameron Grant, Animal Services Officer, Orange County Animal Services

Enforcement Track

90 minutes

“Bird Rescue Basics. How it Applies to Animal Control” - This course is to educate animal control officers and employees the basics of birds and rescue methods. I will identify generic groups of birds based on their body types. Proper methods of how to handle different birds will be covered; in depth, but not demonstrated. After identifying how to handle a bird, we can adequately investigate its condition. Common injuries and signs of sickness will be covered as well as possible outcomes. Evaluating basic conditions of pet birds and identifying whether compliance is necessary. Bird life cycles and how to respond to citizens finding baby birds will be an ending topic. This course is designed to help agencies better serve their communities and concerned citizens.

Cameron Grant is currently employed with Orange County Animal Services as an Animal Services Officer. Under Orange County, he has been employed as an Enforcement Field and Shelter Officer. Cameron has over 18 years of bird experience working with endangered species, conservation, mitigation, animal training, husbandry, enforcement, etc. Camerons goal is to share his knowledge and experience of birds to better serve other officers and agencies.

Karen Walsh, Senior Director, Animal Relocation, ASPCA

Shelter Track

90 minutes

“Back to Basics - Animal Sheltering Fundamentals” - As animal welfare professionals, we're all passionate about improving the lives of the animals in our care and pursuing positive outcomes. However, with the emergent changes following the pandemic, and the influx of team members that are new to the field, it's easy to lose sight of the foundations of animal shelter operations. An interactive exercise incorporating rounds, length of stay, managed intake, sanitation, and other basic concepts of animal sheltering will be covered. Whether a seasoned animal welfare

professional, or just starting out in the field, this presentation will provide tools and resources using evidence-based practices to build pathways that lead to positive outcomes for animals.

Karen S Walsh, CAWA, LVMT, CFE is the Senior Director of Animal Relocation for the ASPCA, the former executive director of the McKamey Animal Center in Chattanooga, TN and served as a Program Manager for the PetSmart Charities Rescue Waggin' program. She graduated from Blue Ridge in Virginia with a degree in veterinary technology and has achieved designations as a Certified Animal Welfare Administrator and a Certified Compassion Fatigue Educator. Karen has held leadership positions in both veterinary and animal welfare organizations and was appointed to serve on the Tennessee state Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners. She founded ChattaNeuter a high-quality high volume spay neuter clinic located in Chattanooga. Karen lives in Tennessee with her husband, Tom and a menagerie of furry and feathered family members on their small, but beautiful farm.

Keegan Spera, Disaster Assessment Coordinator & Data Specialist, Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida and Steven Carriere, Manager, Florida State Response Coalition Leadership Track

90 minutes

“Who You Gonna Call? (Hint: it's not Ghostbusters)” - When a disaster is imminent or has already happened:

*Do you know who to call (besides 9-1-1) or what resources are available to help your organization?

*What the heck is an ESF-17 and how do you find out if YOU are one?

*Is your shelter responsible for setting up pet-friendly shelters to house community members and their pets? Do you know how to do that?

*Who can submit Mission Requests? (Also, what ARE those?!)

*How long does your organization need to hold animals coming in after a disaster?

Ghostbusters can't answer any of these questions, but WE can! You don't want to miss this opportunity to find the answers to these and more! There may even be prizes involved. Woo!

Keegan Spera is a certified nerd (AKA shelter data wizard) and Meme Queen. Keegan has been in animal welfare for almost 20 years. She has experience working in management in animal shelters, spay-neuter clinics, and has worked in the data & research vector of animal welfare for the last decade. Currently, she is the Disaster Assessment Coordinator for the University of Florida's Shelter Medicine Program. From maintaining a database of Florida shelter emergency contacts, USDA accredited veterinary volunteers, responding partner organizations, and shelter logistics to communicating with shelters about resources and trainings available, their team helps Florida animal shelters prepare for and navigate disasters. During an active disaster, their team coordinates animal health assessments for FDACS and FL SART to get shelters the assistance and resources they need. They work in collaboration with many amazing agencies to make sure shelters' needs are met and communication is flowing. FL SART Partners and FLSARC mobilize at the same time these initial assessments are occurring. Once the SART Incident Command Post is running, or if there is no need for on-site ICP, the UF team transitions out of their more active role and refers requests to the ICP or appropriate organization. When Keegan isn't swimming in shelter data or disaster prep, she contributes to the team's work through marketing, photography, art, communications, and humor.

Steven Carriere – Steve Carriere has been the SARC Manager and FEMA Planning Specialist since January 2023, and FAAWO Advisory committee member for Disaster Response since April 2023. Prior to these roles he was a SARC responder since April 2019, and has instructed SARC classes since January 2022. He has over 27 years of search and rescue, planning, and disaster response with the U.S. Coast Guard. After retiring from military service in 2016 he earned his BS in Criminal Justice from Excelsior University, and MS in Emergency Management from the University of New Haven. While pursuing degrees he supported Team Rubicon disaster response, planning, and command support. He was the SARC liaison for donation management and incident command support for the ESF 17/FDACS Incident Command Post, DeSoto County, for Hurricane Ian in 2022.

11:15-12:00	Enforcement Track	FWC's Response to Human-Pet/Livestock-Wildlife Interactions - Jayne Johnston, Senior Wildlife Assistance Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
	Shelter Track	The Power of Collaborative Partnerships - Gina Botticello, Community Partnerships and Programs Supervisor, Pasco County Animal Services and Danielle Giroux, Founder and CEO Runaways Animal Rescue
	Leadership Track	Root and Bones: A New Look at Animal Control - Spencer Conover, Assistant Director, Pasco County Animal Services
	Certificate Track	Florida State Animal Response Coalition Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Awareness Level (Level 1). This course will last until 5:30 p.m. and students must attend the entire 8 hours to receive certification

Jayne Johnston, Senior Wildlife Assistance Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Enforcement Track

45 minutes

“FWC's Response to Human-Pet/Livestock-Wildlife Interactions” - This session will cover how the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) responds to calls about pet, livestock, and human injuries and death as a result of a wildlife encounter. We will cover how we mobilize a response, addressing feeding rules if that is a contributing factor, when we need support from local animal control, and how we work with the department of health.

Jayne Johnston graduated from Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) in 2016 with her Bachelor of Arts degree in environmental studies. She spent her college years volunteering as a shorebird steward and interning with the Wings of Hope Panther Posse (panther education for 4th and 5th graders). Her first position with the FWC was part-time as the first panther outreach specialist. She later transitioned into a full-time statewide wildlife assistance biologist (WAB) adding to her living with panthers’ education to include living with bears, bobcats, coyotes, snakes, bats, and many more. She is now a Senior Wildlife Assistance Biologist supervising 4 WABs across the state handling human-wildlife conflict calls. In addition to her work at the FWC, she is the volunteer coordinator for the fStop Foundation. In her free time, Jayne enjoys birdwatching, kayaking, snorkeling, and lazy days at the beach.

Gina Botticello, Community Partnerships and Programs Supervisor, Pasco County Animal Services and Danielle Giroux, Founder and CEO Runaways Animal Rescue

Shelter Track

45 minutes

“The Power of Collaborative Partnerships” - With adoptions showing a noticeable decline, municipal animal shelters must look to innovative solutions to ensure the future of positive

outcomes for their shelter pets. This can be done through a robust transfer program; however, many shelters find themselves at a disconnect with their local partners, and experience transfer programs that under perform. This discussion will shed new light on establishing shared missions and goals in an animal welfare community, and encourage a unique new perspective on collaborative partnerships, and the lifesaving value that they bring.

Gina Botticello began her career at Pasco County Animal Services in 2015, and quickly developed a passion for making meaningful connections in her community. Responsible for her agency's rescue transfer program, Gina quickly took the program from 498 transfers per year, to 2500. The rescue transfer program at Pasco now accounts for almost half the total live release rate, and Gina provides mentorships across the state on creating, managing, and leveraging partnerships with community advocates, supporters, donors, fosters, volunteers, and rescuers.

Danielle Giroux left her career in health care administration behind and became a full-time animal rescuer when she purchased a 7,000 square foot church and founded the Runaways Animal Rescue. In less than two years of operation, Danielle and her team have saved over 3,000 animals- most from her county's municipal shelter. In partnership with her municipality, Danielle is currently in development to build sustainable TNVR programs, low cost spay neuter, and operates a pet food bank to support pet retainment.

Spencer Conover, Assistant Director, Pasco County Animal Services Leadership Track

45 minutes

“Root Cause Analysis in Animal Control Investigations” - Across the country, the landscape of animal control is changing daily, and animal control officers are facing tougher, unique challenges every day. We as leaders need to ensure we are looking out for our people first and setting up our team for success in the face of unprecedented hardship. In this session, we will focus on assisting animal care and control professionals with skills and tools necessary to meet the needs of today's diverse communities. With a focus on seeking the root cause, asking the five why's, eliminating unnecessary processes and determining data to better drive success – this session will provide tangible tools, case studies, and examples for how to use the established method of process improvement to enhance the animal care and control experience for officers, agencies, and communities they serve.

Spencer Conover has dedicated his life to innovative, servant leadership at some of the top animal welfare organizations across the country including, the Dumb Friends League, Best Friends Animal Society, the Humane Society of Utah and Pasco County Animal Services. Spencer is passionate about leadership development and being surrounded with other lifesaving individuals. He is a certified Public Manager and certified green belt in lean six sigma process improvement. He has had the pleasure to lead various shelter operations teams including animal control, adoption, intake, customer care, foster care, volunteer, education/outreach, transfer/rescue and animal behavior. Spencer is a certified animal control officer, CPR and humane euthanasia certified with training in dangerous/fractious animal handling and Florida SARC certified in emergency animal sheltering. He has a passion for shelter operation, statistics, data driven decision making and life-saving innovative community-based programs.

1:00-2:00	Enforcement Track	Barking Dog Programs: Time for Change - Don Noll, Animal Warden, Cook County Animal Control
	Shelter Track	When Things Get Hairy: In-Shelter Handling of Dogs with Challenging Behaviors - Kodi Sadler, Director of Los Angeles Programming, Dogs Playing for Life
	Leadership Track	Legislative Update: A Panel Discussion - Diana Ferguson, FAPAA Contracted Lobbyist, Rutledge Ecenia Amy Wade-Carotenuto, FAPAA Legislative Committee Chair and Vice President, Director of Flagler Humane Society Kate MacFall, Florida State Director, The Humane Society of the United States Jennifer Hobgood, Senior Director of State Legislation, Southern Division, ASPCA's Government Relations Department
	Certificate Track	Florida State Animal Response Coalition Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Awareness Level (Level 1). This course will last until 5:30 p.m. and students must attend the entire 8 hours to receive certification

Don Noll, Animal Warden, Cook County Animal Control

Enforcement Track

60 minutes

“Barking Dog Programs: Time for Change” - Is your barking dog program effective? Does your current nuisance program balance the rights of both the dog owner and complainant? This presentation will discuss some lessons learned when creating or updating a barking dog ordinance and program. A program where animal services have an active role in a dog's health & happiness. These calls are often difficult for some officers to handle and sometimes even overlooked. The Barking Dog Program presentation objectives are:

Nuisance Ordinance Verbiage

Where We Were

Why We Changed

How We Did It

A New Program

Lessons Learned

Don Noll brings over 30 years of experience in the field of animal welfare. Starting his career as an animal control officer for OC Animal Care in California, he collaborated in creating a new barking dog program and ordinance which has been adopted in part by other agencies. He was also assigned as a barking dog officer for 4 years. Don then served as an animal control officer with the San Gabriel Valley Humane Society in California where he implemented a new barking dog program & dangerous dog program. Don is currently an animal warden with Cook

County Animal Control in Illinois. He is passionate about humane education and promoting responsible pet ownership.

Kodi Sadler, Director of Los Angeles Programming, Dogs Playing for Life Shelter Track

60 minutes

“When Things Get Hairy: In-Shelter Handling of Dogs with Challenging Behaviors” - There’s a vicious cycle that we know all too well in sheltering: a dog presents with behavior challenges, frequently due to shelter deterioration or because they are overwhelmed and experience fear, anxiety, or stress upon arrival. The dog may display jumpy/mouthy behavior, leash biting or climbing, defensive aggression, or handling sensitivities. Due to the challenging behavior(s), the dog misses out on opportunities to spend time out of their kennel because some or most handlers are unable to safely get them out. Spending more time in the kennel without a break aggravates the dog’s already-challenging behaviors, leaving them with even fewer handlers and fewer opportunities to get out.

An education in safe handling and an ability to read body language is essential for shelter personnel. Individuals with the confidence and skill to handle dogs with more challenging behaviors are invaluable in-shelter, be they staff or volunteers. Not only can skilled handlers provide basic care and enhanced quality of life to a more diverse population of dogs, they can also keep themselves safe when a situation escalates and becomes dangerous.

Kodi Sadler since the age of 27, has had the privilege to consider himself a student of the Animal Welfare industry for over 10 years. As the son of Aimee Sadler, he spent his childhood playing alongside dogs with varying behavior issues from before he could remember. Not unexpectedly, he found himself apprenticing with a sport dog trainer at the age of 18 while working part-time in his first animal shelter job. By 19, he was carrying Aimee’s satchel as one of Dogs Playing for Life’s first assistants and by 21, he was starting to lead his own seminars.

Over the next 6 years, Kodi honed his skill and knowledge of dogs and the struggles they face while sheltered as he was deployed to teach at over 170 facilities across 40+ states and 2 countries. If you ask him, Kodi will tell you he loves travel and does miss the fast-paced lifestyle seminar work provided, but he is very enthusiastic about his new role as DPFL’s Director of LA Programming. He can now be found running around Los Angeles working primarily with LA Animal Services increasing access to lifesaving enrichment for the local canine population. Kodi has been building his intimate knowledge of how one of the largest municipalities in the country operates in order to develop sustainable and effective enrichment programming that can be replicated and applied nationwide.

Diana Ferguson, FAPAA Contracted Lobbyist, Rutledge Ecenia

Amy Wade-Carotenuto, FAPAA Legislative Committee Chair and Vice President, Director of Flagler Humane Society

Kate MacFall, Florida State Director, The Humane Society of the United States

Jennifer Hobgood, Senior Director of State Legislation, Southern Division, ASPCA’s Government Relations Department

Leadership Track

60 minutes

“Legislative Update: A Panel Discussion” - Moderated by John Robinson, President of the Florida Animal Protection & Advocacy Association and Director of Escambia Animal Welfare. This panel discussion will involve FAPAA's contracted lobbyist, as well as representatives from FAPAA, the ASPCA, and the HSUS. Attendees will be informed of the challenges faced in the State's Capital as each organization works to advance their own legislative agenda, as well as how they all support each other's efforts. All relevant 2024 bills, FAPAA specific efforts, and all concerns each has will be discussed. Attendees will be given an opportunity to participate in the dialogue and ask questions of the panelist.

Diana Ferguson is a shareholder at Rutledge Ecenia. Her practice is concentrated in the areas of environmental and administrative law, regulated industries and government relations. Prior to joining the firm, Diana provided legislative counsel to the Florida Association of Counties, where she advocated for numerous local government issues, including animal control. Diana received a political science degree from the University of Missouri – Kansas City and a Juris Doctorate from Oklahoma City University School of Law. She is a member in good standing of the Texas and Florida Bar Associations and is the Legislative Chair of the Florida Bar Animal Law Committee.

Amy Wade-Carotenuto is a native Floridian, Amy has devoted nearly 40 years to protecting and advocating for animals. Amy worked through the ranks at Halifax Humane Society in Daytona Beach and became the director of Flagler Humane Society and Animal Services in 1992. She has led the organization through tremendous growth and construction. She prosecuted large scale animal cruelty cases including the Brinkley 500 dog puppy mill. In 1998 Flagler Humane Society staff facilitated the opening of one of the first pet friendly disaster shelters in the U.S. and continues to set up evacuation sites with every disaster. Today FHS hosts an educational radio show, a pet food pantry, a thriving wellness clinic, summer camp, a transfer program to help animals from less fortunate shelters and more. She is a certified humane euthanasia and stress management instructor. She is the Vice President of Florida Animal Advocacy and Protection Association, and she is on the board of Florida Association of Animal Welfare Organizations.

Kate MacFall – Bio coming soon

Jennifer Hobgood is senior state legislative director of ASPCA's Government Relations Southern Division. In this role, she oversees the ASPCA's legislative initiatives in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. Since coming on board at ASPCA over seven years ago, Jen has worked with policymakers to pass into law Florida legislation to advance animal welfare, including state legislation to help shelters quickly and reliably return lost or stray pets to their families, enable veterinarians to report animal cruelty to law enforcement, and ensure that domestic violence protection orders can include family pets. In recent years, Jen has supported ASPCA's efforts at the state level throughout the country to expand access to veterinary care such as telemedicine. Prior to joining the ASPCA, Jen was the Florida state director for The Humane Society of the United States, where she worked for twelve years.

2:15pm – 4:15	Enforcement Track	Testifying About Animal Crimes: Considerations for Florida Enforcement Officers - Justin Wyatt, Captain, The Humane Society of the United States
	Shelter Track	Shelter Flow - Get Everyone Involved - Emily Wood, Director, Broward County Animal Care
	Leadership Track	Back Away from Behavior - Aimee Sadler, Founder & CEO, Dogs Playing for Life
	Certificate Track	Florida State Animal Response Coalition Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Awareness Level (Level 1). This course will last until 5:30 p.m. and students must attend the entire 8 hours to receive certification

Justin Wyatt, Captain, The Humane Society of the United States
Enforcement Track

120 minutes

“Testifying About Animal Crimes: Considerations for Florida Enforcement Officers” - Testifying about animal crimes cases present a unique set of challenges for law enforcement officers. Approaching these cases from both the perspective of the prosecutor and the officer, this workshop will review tips for preparing for trials involving animal victims.

Topics to be covered:

- Special considerations for cases related to intimate partner violence
- How to effectively work with witnesses and utilizing experts
- Effectively navigating cross-examination

Captain Justin Wyatt is with the Horry County Police Department (SC) and a law enforcement trainer with the Humane Society of the United States. A rural North Carolina native, Captain Wyatt found his way to Myrtle Beach where he has had an impressive 20-year career in law enforcement. During that time, Captain Wyatt has served a variety of positions, including beach patrol, sex crimes, major crimes, special ops, and homicide units. He has been the commander of the training unit and captain of the regulatory division which includes the county's animal shelter and animal control officers. Community engagement is the foundation of his work, and under his leadership, HCPD has implemented a wide array of animal protection and community-oriented programming. Captain Wyatt's motto is “if those that can do good, do good then we have succeeded in helping our neighbor.”

Emily Wood, Director, Broward County Animal Care
Shelter Track

120 minutes

“Shelter Flow - Get Everyone Involved” - How do you make decisions and make them quickly, to avoid long stays in the shelter (or eliminate them entirely)? In this hands-on session, attendees will be asked to work on their own formats and attendee lists for daily shelter rounds (which should ideally include representatives across the organization) and to begin to draft their own decision-making document for how animals can flow through the shelter. Relying on

objective observations surrounding behavior and medical concerns, staff should be empowered to identify what the appropriate pathway for an individual animal is within the context of their organization's resources. We will discuss how every team has a role and can offer problem-solving input, from officers in the field to the person performing euthanasia. The goal is usable documentation and a plan for each organization represented in the course.

Emily Wood has been a part of teams in diverse communities, including San Francisco, the East side of Los Angeles County, and now in South Florida. She has also served diverse types of organizations - limited admission non-profit, non-profit with government animal control contracts, municipal organizations both with and without sworn officers. She enjoys a challenge and enjoys taking home both the youngest and the oldest animals as fosters.

Aimee Sadler, Founder & CEO, Dogs Playing for Life

Leadership Track

120 minutes

“Back Away from Behavior” - What is the role of shelter deterioration on dogs’ in-shelter behavior challenges? When is it better to supply out-of-kennel enrichment for the many rather than behavior modification for the few? At what point does it make sense for a shelter to develop a behavior program?

As lengths of stay are increasing at shelters across the country, organizations are experiencing increased difficulties maintaining their animals not only physically, but also behaviorally and emotionally. While the industry has more foster support than in years past, life in our brick-and-mortar shelters can be hard on the animals and their dedicated caretakers alike.

When shelters lack a daily outlet for dogs to expend energy and frustration, it is common for a majority of an organization’s canine population to present as if they need advanced training or behavior modification. On-leash reactivity, barrier reactivity, jumpy and mouthy behavior, and in-kennel spinning and vocalizing are common. On the other end of the spectrum, fearful dogs may be difficult to handle and exhibit defensive behaviors in their kennels. While it can be tempting to start a behavior program to address all these issues, oftentimes shelters are better served by first developing a robust out-of-kennel enrichment program that attends to the majority of the dogs in their care.

From our experience working with over 350 shelters nationwide, DPFL is eager to share what we've learned about the different levels of canine programming that can be implemented to help you work smarter, not harder. Let us help you meet your mission and maximize your efforts by identifying if you might be better served by "Backing Away from Behavior" and focusing more on enrichment programming to meet the needs of your animals and to better serve your community.

Aimee Sadler is the Founder and CEO of Dogs Playing for Life (DPFL). With 35 years of experience working with multiple species in varying venues, Aimee has become an internationally recognized trainer and speaker specializing in shelter programs that enhance quality of life and reduce canine euthanasia in animal shelters. The cornerstone of DPFL’s programming is Every Dog, Every Day!, an out-of-kennel enrichment program featuring

playgroups that is in increasing demand and has been introduced to more than 350 shelters across the U.S. and Canada. With measured programming, DPFL is contributing to 30% shorter lengths of stay while increasing canine lifesaving at an average rate of 3.5% at participating animal welfare organizations. Starting in 2017, dogs most at risk of behavioral euthanasia can get a second chance at DPFL's Canine Center Florida, an advanced training and behavior care center with an overall save rate of 84 percent.

Aimee regularly presents at animal welfare and professional dog training conferences such as HSUS' Animal Care Expo, Best Friends Annual Conferences, and the International Association of Canine Professionals Conference. DPFL's industry-leading, measured achievements were recognized when DPFL became the inaugural recipient of Petco LOVE's Love in Action Award. In 2016, DPFL was featured in Episode 4 of the PBS television series, "Shelter Me TV."

Aimee is a proud recipient of the Henry Bergh Leadership Award and the Maddie's Hero Award and has been inducted into the Members Hall of Fame for the International Association of Canine Professionals. Aimee currently resides in Longmont, CO, with her husband and their very full family.

4:30 – 5:30	Enforcement Track	Live Animal Documentation on Large Scale Seizures - Alison Kennedy-Benson, Forensic Veterinary Technician (CVT), ASPCA
	Shelter Track	Effect of Quiet Time of Dog Behavior - Spencer Conover, Assistant Director, Pasco County Animal Services
	Leadership Track	Strategies for Staying Afloat When Resources are Scarce - Cameron Moore, Maddie’s Shelter Strategy and Operations Consultant, University of Florida Shelter Medicine Program
	Certificate Track	Florida State Animal Response Coalition Small Animal Emergency Sheltering Awareness Level (Level 1). This course will last until 5:30 p.m. and students must attend the entire 8 hours to receive certification

Alison Kennedy-Benson, Forensic Veterinary Technician (CVT), ASPCA

Enforcement Track

60 minutes

“Live Animal Documentation on Large Scale Seizures” - When documenting tens to hundreds of animals on a crime scene, how do you balance thorough documentation, efficient workflow and compassionate handling? Subjects covered include documenting animals and their environment, creating animal inventories, chain of custody, considerations when planning large-scale seizures and challenges that may arise. Attendees will be asked to consider their own protocols, resources and experiences when handling large scale seizures.

Alison Kennedy-Benson is a Forensic Veterinary Technician and CVT with the ASPCA’s national Forensic Sciences team. She holds a Veterinary Technician A.S. from Penn Foster College, B.S. in Biological Sciences from Florida State University, and M.S. in Anthrozoology from Canisius College. Alison has worked in wildlife translocation, mass fatality response, academia and animal sheltering. In her current role, she supports forensic veterinarians with national large scale animal cruelty case response, research, and teaching. She is Human-Animal Bond Certified, Fear Free Elite Certified, and Low Stress Handling Silver Certified.

Spencer Conover, Assistant Director, Pasco County Animal Services

Shelter Track

60 minutes

“Effect of Quiet Time of Dog Behavior” - In October of 2022, Pasco County was hit with an infectious disease that forced the shutdown of all dog operations for thirty days. During that time, no dogs were to be removed from their kennels for extended periods of time and no volunteers were permitted into the building. During that time, the animal care team members noticed decreased kennel stress behaviors and decreased aggression from a large portion of the dogs in the population. How could this be? The dogs were getting out less and having less interaction with people.

Over the next 6-9 months, Pasco County Animal Services researched the effectiveness of this "quiet time" for the dogs in the shelter and tracked its effect on animals being started on kennel stress medications, effect on dog length of stay in the facility and the effect on animals being euthanized for kennel stress behaviors. In this presentation we will go through the results of the research and provide recommendations for shelters looking to implement similar programs.

Spencer Conover has dedicated his life to innovative, servant leadership at some of the top animal welfare organizations across the country including, the Dumb Friends League, Best Friends Animal Society, the Humane Society of Utah and Pasco County Animal Services. Spencer is passionate about leadership development and being surrounded with other lifesaving individuals. He is a certified Public Manager and certified green belt in lean six sigma process improvement. He has had the pleasure to lead various shelter operations teams including animal control, adoption, intake, customer care, foster care, volunteer, education/outreach, transfer/rescue and animal behavior. Spencer is a certified animal control officer, CPR and humane euthanasia certified with training in dangerous/fractious animal handling and Florida SARC certified in emergency animal sheltering. He has a passion for shelter operation, statistics, data driven decision making and life-saving innovative community-based programs.

Cameron Moore, Maddie's Shelter Strategy and Operations Consultant, University of Florida Shelter Medicine Program

Leadership Track

60 minutes

"Strategies for Staying Afloat When Resources are Scarce" - Is your shelter struggling with too many animals and not enough staff? Do you feel like your team is doing everything possible, yet forward progress isn't being made? Are you so busy being busy that there isn't time to implement change? Hear from a panel of shelter leaders around the state on how they are coping to balance demands with current resources available. Discussion will include tips for working smarter instead of harder, how to have effective conversations with municipal leaders and engaging the community to help.

Cameron Moore is a Strategy and Operations Consultant for the University of Florida Shelter Medicine Program. She works closely with municipal and nonprofit shelters around the country to provide comprehensive shelter consultations that address key challenges and identify opportunities to provide sustainable resolutions for pets and people within our existing framework.

Saturday, February 24th, 2023

8:00am – 9:45am	General Session, Annual Member Meeting followed by: Keynote Speaker	Annual Member Meeting followed immediately by: Navigating the Next Generation of Animal Control - Striking the Harmony Between Compliance and Compassion Keynote Speaker – Dr. Josh Fisher, President of the National Care and Control Association, Director for City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County
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Dr. Josh Fisher, President of the National Care and Control Association, Director for City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County

Keynote – General Session

75 minutes

“Navigating the Next Generation of Animal Control - Striking the Harmony Between

Compliance and Compassion” - In this dynamic session, we delve into the evolving landscape of animal control, exploring innovative strategies for the next generation. Discover the delicate equilibrium between regulatory compliance and unwavering compassion in our approach to animal welfare. Our speaker will share insights on modern practices, cutting-edge technologies, and community-centric initiatives that redefine the role of animal care and control agencies. Join us as we envision a future where regulatory adherence seamlessly integrates with a profound commitment to compassion, fostering a harmonious and progressive era for animal control.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Josh Fisher has an educational background in population management/medicine, public health, veterinary sciences, informatics, and healthcare administration. He has been working in the veterinary medical/animal welfare field for over 20 years holding management roles in private practices, cooperate practices, the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine, county government, and now as the Animal Services Director for the City of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County. A strong advocate for professional development and growth in the animal welfare industry, Dr. Fisher seeks to involve staff in continued education and training opportunities as well as in cutting edge industry research. His professional interests focus on keeping pets and people together by “helping both ends of the leash” as well as disease reduction/prevention, advanced marketing/placement and intake reduction tactics, strategic planning, and staff career development in the area of animal welfare. His projects include increasing interest of veterinary/veterinary technician students in the animal welfare industry as well as working with community veterinarians to break down barriers, develop relationships, and increase involved in community focused animal welfare (animal control and sheltering) practices. In addition to his work in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Dr. Fisher currently serves as the President of the National Animal Care & Control Association, Member of the Managing Executive Committee for the Human Animal Support Services Project, and Secretary/Treasurer of the North Carolina Public Health Association- Academic & Practice based Research Section.

10:00-12:00	Enforcement Track	Trial By Triage - Dr. Tamara Downs, Shelter Veterinarian, Orange County Animal Services
	Shelter Track	Stranger Danger! Expanding and Progressing Your Wary-of-Strangers Dogs - Aimee Sadler, Founder & CEO, Dogs Playing for Life
	Leadership Track	Media- the Good, the Bad and the Downright Frustrating - Karen Frick, Public Information Specialist, and Robert Hoel, Senior Animal Control Officer, Lee County Domestic Animal Services

Dr. Tamara Downs, Shelter Veterinarian, Orange County Animal Services

Enforcement Track

120 minutes

“Trial By Triage” - When you're on your own in the field and a pet medical emergency strikes, what do you do? Is it an emergency or can it wait? If it can't wait, where do you take it to get care? Is there something you can do to help during transport? In this session, Dr. Downs and Savannah Lewis offer practical insight from their knowledge and experience as medical and enforcement professionals. The topic of triage and what it means for animal control officers will be discussed along with common animal medical issues encountered including but not limited to, heat stroke, trauma, seizures, and infectious diseases. The goal of this session is to provide animal control officers with pragmatic advice on handling medical issues away from the shelter. Case examples will be discussed with time allotted for open discourse.

Dr. Tamara Downs, also known as Dr. D is a shelter veterinarian working at Orange County Animal Services. She graduated from University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine in 2017 with a Professional Certificate in Shelter Medicine. She became a full-time shelter vet at OCAS in 2019. In addition to spay neuter and medical management of shelter pets, Dr. Downs has also led initiatives to get fear free training into OCAS, integrated cold laser equipment into daily practices, and often develops training presentations and SOPs for her fellow shelter employees regarding triage, contagious diseases, and other shelter issues. She has 2 dogs, Fizzgig and Kira; 1 cat named Charlie; and a chinchilla named Jasper. Her passion is in surgery, education/excellence in shelter medicine, and interpersonal growth and communication among shelter employees.

Aimee Sadler, Founder & CEO, Dogs Playing for Life

Shelter Track

120 minutes

“Stranger Danger! Expanding and Progressing Your Wary-of-Strangers Dogs” – Dogs that are wary of strangers are often beloved by shelter staff and volunteers, but it’s common for organizations to struggle to introduce them to new handlers and potential adopters. This presentation will present a selection of case studies of real-life dogs that were sent to us at Dogs Playing for Life’s Canine Center Florida for stranger danger. Each mini case study will feature an abundance of videos, enabling attendees to feel like they are working the dog alongside DPFL’s trainers. The presentation will also include a detailed discussion of the protocols used in each

case so that attendees can implement them at their own organizations. We'll discuss how to build confidence, teach predictable routines, and help these dogs to develop the skills that will allow them to meet new handlers and potential adopters happily and successfully. We will also discuss protocols for in-home introductions, which can be passed off to a foster or adoptive home. Come learn how to safely and effectively reach this segment of the canine population through in-depth behavior analysis, dynamic video examples, and practical approaches designed for anyone who is trying to find solutions for the dogs who need this extra human support.

Aimee Sadler is the Founder and CEO of Dogs Playing for Life (DPFL). With 35 years of experience working with multiple species in varying venues, Aimee has become an internationally recognized trainer and speaker specializing in shelter programs that enhance quality of life and reduce canine euthanasia in animal shelters. The cornerstone of DPFL's programming is Every Dog, Every Day!, an out-of-kennel enrichment program featuring playgroups that is in increasing demand and has been introduced to more than 350 shelters across the U.S. and Canada. With measured programming, DPFL is contributing to 30% shorter lengths of stay while increasing canine lifesaving at an average rate of 3.5% at participating animal welfare organizations. Starting in 2017, dogs most at risk of behavioral euthanasia can get a second chance at DPFL's Canine Center Florida, an advanced training and behavior care center with an overall save rate of 84 percent.

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Aimee is a proud recipient of the Henry Bergh Leadership Award and the Maddie's Hero Award and has been inducted into the Members Hall of Fame for the International Association of Canine Professionals. Aimee currently resides in Longmont, CO, with her husband and their very full family.

Karen Frick, Public Information Specialist, Lee County Domestic Animal Services and Robert Hoel, Senior Animal Control Officer, Lee County Domestic Animal Services
Leadership Track

120 minutes

"Media- the Good, the Bad and the Downright Frustrating" - This session will discuss how to work with the media, both social and broadcast, to benefit your organization. The session will dive into building a relationship with the media and knowing which stories to pitch to which outlets. This session will also help attendees tell their organization's story as well as the stories of the animals in their care. The session will also discuss what to do with negative press and media and how to overcome and ultimately lead your organization's narrative. We will also give tips and tricks on how to creatively place posts on social media to get picked up by broadcast media and how to head off negative comments. Those working in the field will learn how to handle media on scene while continuing to do their job safely.

Karen Frick is the Public Information Specialist at Lee County Domestic Animal Services since 2015. Prior to working at LCDAS she worked at the Gulf Coast Humane Society and has worked in both non-profit and municipal arenas doing media coverage.

Robert Hoel is a Senior Animal Control Officer with Lee County Domestic Animal Services since 2021. He is the Field Training Officer and a Master Certified K9 Handler. He retired from the Portsmouth Police Department after 25 years of service.

1:00-2:00	Enforcement Track	Community Engagement: The Lifesaving Philosophy - Nick Walton, Senior Manager of National Shelter Support, Best Friends Animal Society
	Shelter Track	Press Pause on the Parvo Panic! Preventing a Case from Becoming an Outbreak - Dr. Brian DiGangi, Clinical Associate Professor, University of Florida
	Leadership Track	How To Write A Terrible Adoption Contract! - Brian Chase, General Counsel, Michelson Found Animals Foundation

**Nick Walton, Senior Manager of National Shelter Support, Best Friends Animal Society
Enforcement Track**

60 minutes

“Community Engagement: The Lifesaving Philosophy” - The term “community engagement” gets thrown around a lot, as if it is something that an officer can do if they have a few extra minutes. To unlock the full potential of community engagement, however, we must start thinking of it as less of a project and more of a state of mind. This lifesaving philosophy will not only help save the lives of animals but could potentially save an officer's life as well. In this course you will learn how embracing community engagement as a mindset can, and will, increase lifesaving efforts and officer safety.

Nick Walton is the National Shelter Support Senior Manager for Best Friends Animal Society and works with officers and shelters nationwide to implement progressive, community-focused practices that support lifesaving within the shelter, as well as increase officer safety and efficiency. Nick started his journey in animal welfare at a pet boarding facility where he was the designated “poop scooper”, and shortly thereafter transitioned to a dog-trainer role within the facility. This naturally led him to devote the next few years of his life to becoming a professional dog trainer in the metro-Atlanta area. While working in Atlanta, he would regularly drive by dogs that needed some help and this led him to Fulton County Animal Services. Nick committed himself to a community-oriented approach to animal welfare enforcement with the goal of changing how the community viewed animal services and its officers. Commonly referred to as the “dog food man” within the inner city of Atlanta, Nick was instrumental in developing trust within the community and becoming a welcome sight throughout underserved areas of the city. Prioritizing this philosophy, as well as utilizing resources such as Pets For Life, allowed Nick to save more lives by keeping pets in their homes and out of the shelter. As a Field Training Officer, he would train new employees on the philosophy of community-engagement, further solidifying this mindset into the culture of FCAS. Working in Fulton County afforded Nick many diverse experiences as an ACO and resulted in his instrumental role in a number of large-scale cruelty cases from voodoo cases to circus animal cruelty. The lifesaving techniques that Nick developed and championed at Fulton County Animal Services represent the next step for animal control field services: a proactive solution-based approach to animal issues with an emphasis on building a supportive and safe community.

**Dr. Brian DiGangi, Clinical Associate Professor, University of Florida
Shelter Track**

60 minutes

“Press Pause on the Parvo Panic! Preventing a Case from Becoming an Outbreak” - Canine parvovirus remains a constant and frustrating disease for many sheltering organizations. In such facilities the threat of a single case of parvovirus turning into an outbreak is real and the consequences can be severe for shelter animals, staff and volunteers, and the community at-large. This session will explore current concepts in management of canine parvovirus with a focus on disease outbreak prevention and the use of new, practical, and cost-conscious treatment options.

Dr. Brian DiGangi is a Clinical Associate Professor of Shelter Medicine at the University of Florida. After earning his DVM at UF in 2006, Dr. DiGangi completed a rotating internship, a residency in Shelter Animal Medicine, and MS in Veterinary Medical Sciences. Dr. DiGangi has published peer-reviewed research on canine heartworm disease, veterinary field clinics, feline adoption, pregnancy detection and immunology and authored textbook chapters on sanitation and asepsis, infectious disease management, animal welfare, and animal relocation. He is the lead editor of the 2nd edition of Animal Behavior for Shelter Veterinarians and Staff and is board certified in both Canine and Feline Practice and Shelter Medicine Practice by the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners. Dr. DiGangi has served terms on the Executive Boards for both the Association of Shelter Veterinarians and the American Heartworm Society.

**Brian Chase, General Counsel, Michelson Found Animals Foundation
Leadership Track**

60 minutes

“How To Write A Terrible Adoption Contract!” - In this session we will focus on how to write an adoption contract so awful that no judge would ever enforce it and will totally scare away good adopters. Heck, if we try hard enough, we can write something so terrible that it could end up getting your rescue or shelter sued if a dog you adopted out bites somebody! Sure, anyone can write a bad adoption contract, but it takes an expert to make one that is a legal dumpster fire. You will learn how to write a contract so silly, one-sided, and borderline crazy that it is not worth the paper it is printed on. Punitive damages! Unannounced home inspections! Refusing to state that an adopter owns the pet he or she adopted! After this session you too can write a contract that is such a mess that it ends up being made fun of in a PowerPoint presentation!

And, if you want to write a reasonable, enforceable, and clear agreement that protects you, pets, and adopters, we will help with that too. But that does not sound like nearly as much fun.

Brian Chase is General Counsel of Michelson Philanthropies, which includes the Michelson Found Animals Foundation. Prior to Michelson Philanthropies Brian was Assistant General Counsel for AIDS Healthcare Foundation, one of the world’s largest nonprofit providers of HIV/AIDS medical care. Brian opened the Dallas office of Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, a national LGBT legal organization. While working with Lambda Brian was part of the appellate team for Lawrence v. Texas at the United States Supreme Court. Brian attended law school at Tulane, and has an undergraduate degree in religion from Wake Forest.

2:15-3:15	Enforcement Track	The Emaciated Animal: Starvation vs. Cachexia – Dr. Adam Stern, Professor of Forensic Pathology, University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine
	Shelter Track	The Best Outcome for Every Cat: Implementing the Cat Superhighway – Dr. Julie Levy, Fran Marino Endowed Distinguished Professor of Shelter Medicine Education, University of Florida Shelter Medicine Program, Dr. Maria Serrano, Chief Veterinarian, Miami-Dade Animal Services, and Dr. Patty Dingman, Adjunct Lecturer in Shelter Medicine, University of Florida
	Leadership Track	Expanding Your Operation-Leveraging Volunteers to Broaden Your Reach - Sarah Sukhram, Volunteer & Foster Care Coordinator, Pasco County Animal Services

Dr. Adam Stern, Professor of Forensic Pathology, University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine

Enforcement Track

60 minutes

“The Emaciated Animal: Starvation vs. Cachexia” - Cases of animal neglect are commonly encountered by the Animal Control Officer. While it is fairly straightforward to identify an emaciated animal, it is the cause of the animal’s emaciated condition that is more difficult to determine. In this presentation, we will discuss common causes of emaciation and review the differences between starvation and cachexia.

Dr. Adam Stern is a Professor of Forensic Pathology at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine. He received a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the George Washington University and graduated from the University of Prince Edward Island Atlantic Veterinary College. Dr. Stern completed his residency training in anatomic pathology at the Oklahoma State University and is board-certified in veterinary anatomic pathology by the American College of Veterinary Pathologists (ACVP). He is a Founding Fellow of Veterinary Forensic Pathology within ACVP. He is a Director of the International Society for Animal Forensic Sciences. He gives lectures regarding veterinary forensics both nationally and internationally to students, veterinarians, attorneys, and law enforcement personnel. Dr. Stern co-organizes an Animal Cruelty Task Force in the Florida 5th and 9th Judicial Circuits. Some of his current projects include the investigation of mortalities in free-roaming cats and dogs, pentobarbital relay toxicosis in wildlife, and bone marrow analysis in cats, dogs, and horses. Dr. Stern has testified in court on numerous occasions in Illinois and Florida. In 2021, he was awarded the Sentinel Award by the Florida Animal Control Association for his achievements that have advanced the humane treatment of animals by compassionately working in their defense. In 2022, he received the President’s Award from the American College of Veterinary Pathologists for his educational work in veterinary forensic pathology.

Dr. Julie Levy, Fran Marino Endowed Distinguished Professor of Shelter Medicine Education, University of Florida Shelter Medicine Program, Dr. Maria Serrano, Chief Veterinarian, Miami-Dade Animal Services, and Dr. Dr. Patty Dingman, Adjunct Lecturer in Shelter Medicine, University of Florida

Shelter Track

60 Minutes

“The Best Outcome for Every Cat: Implementing the Cat Superhighway” - The emergence of Return-to-Field programs revolutionized the life-saving possibilities for cats and shelters. Originally seen mainly as an alternative to euthanasia for feral cats, we came to recognize the benefits for friendly cats as well -- reuniting more cats with their families and reserving the shelter for cats most in need. This evolution is reflected in the position statement from NACA that “indiscriminate pick up or admission of healthy, free-roaming cats, regardless of temperament, for any purpose other than TNR/SNR, fails to serve commonly held goals of community animal management and protection programs and...should be avoided.” This raises a key question: if indiscriminate intake is to be avoided, what is discriminate intake? What training and tools do staff need to assess and communicate whether any individual cat or litter of kittens should be admitted or redirected to community-based solutions, especially in a time of veterinary shortages and long waitlists for spay/neuter? How can we best use the limited resources of shelters to support the greatest number of cats (and other pets and people), knowing that sometimes the ideal solution is simply not available? This session will explore how the Cat Superhighways concept can help shelter operations and veterinary teams identify and implement the best outcome pathways for every cat. Topics will include options for cats thriving in place, cats lost or not thriving, cats that cannot be returned, large-scale kitten shelter diversion programs, and techniques for upsizing cat trapping and TNR veterinary services.

Dr. Julie Levy is a professor of Shelter Medicine at the University of Florida. She founded Operation Catnip, a nonprofit university-based community cat trap-neuter-return program that has spayed, neutered, and vaccinated more than 80,000 cats. She co-founded the Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida with Dr. Cynda Crawford, the Million Cat Challenge with Dr. Kate Hurley, and helped launch Maddie’s Million Pet Challenge to create transformative “communities of practice” that deliver access to care through humane, community-centric programming—inside and outside of the shelter—to achieve the right outcome for every pet.

Dr. Maria Serrano is the Chief Veterinarian at Miami Dade Animal Services (MDAS) and Clinical Assistant Professor in Shelter Medicine at the University of Florida. During her career, she has practiced small animal, zoo, emergency and shelter medicine. In 2003, she joined the Audubon Center for Research of Endangered Species, where as a PhD student, her team produced the first endangered cat clone, the first transgenic cat and developed the first cat embryonic stem cell line reported worldwide. She joined MDAS in 2009 and became the Chief Veterinarian in 2011. Dr. Serrano also serves as Miami Dade County’s Forensic Veterinarian since 2015, where she has testified in over 1000 cases as an expert witness, giving her the ability to provide a voice for victims of animal abuse. Under Dr. Serrano’s leadership, MDAS, one of the largest shelters in the country, has achieved unprecedented success, reaching positive outcomes for over 90% of the animals in their care. Dr. Serrano has been crucial in developing

one of the largest TNVR programs in the country, providing over 20K surgeries for community cats in Miami Dade County in 2023. Dr. Serrano has served on numerous MASH campaigns globally, fulfilling her passion for providing free veterinary services and access to care to underserved pets.

Dr. Patty Dingman is an adjunct lecturer in Shelter Medicine at the University of Florida and spay-neuter surgeon for multiple non-profits in Florida. Her career has focused on reducing the stray cat populations through TNR, access to care clinics, and shelter initiatives locally and internationally. Dr. Dingman has a strong interest in veterinary student training and has led a successful shelter medicine fellowship program, a pre-veterinary intern program, and has had numerous externs now equipped to address the unique challenges of working in animal welfare.

Sarah Sukhram, Volunteer & Foster Care Coordinator, Pasco County Animal Services Leadership Track

60 minutes

“Expanding Your Operation-Leveraging Volunteers to Broaden Your Reach” - Animal welfare organizations are constantly challenged with finding ways to do more with less. By maximizing your volunteer program, you can do exactly that! This session explores why a short-term investment into this workforce, can create sustainable long-term gains for your team. It all starts with leadership. We'll review the data around volunteerism in Florida, identify ways to shift your culture, and leverage the volunteers' "why" as a motivator to get things done. This is a workshop and interactive style presentation so be ready to get involved! If you want to learn key strategies to create better, faster, easier ways to accomplish your shelter's goals, then this session is for you!

Sarah Sukhram is the Volunteer & Foster Care Coordinator for Pasco County Animal Services. She has led her organization through certification & this past year, renewing that certification of being a Service Enterprise volunteer program with a world-class score of 95%. Sarah leads a national monthly series with Volunteer Leaders throughout the country that are in Animal Welfare organizations through HASS (Human Animal Support Services). She frequently mentors shelters on building a sustainable program & has also appeared on state trainings as well as podcasts to share the power of volunteerism. Her philosophy is that volunteers should be a workforce not a workload. This culture is built through practical applications that break down the barrier “us vs. them”. Instead, focusing on empowering organizations to expand their services for their community through what volunteers can do. Sarah was a 2023 recipient of the national Emerging Leader award through the Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement. She received her CVA (Certified in Volunteer Administration) in 2020 & is a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt.

3:30-4:30	Enforcement Track	Veterinary Forensic Evidence - Dr. Ashley Saver, Forensic Veterinarian, ASPCA
	Shelter Track	Testicle Talk and Other Difficult Customer Service Conversations - Gina Kenpp, National Shelter Engagement Director, Michelson Found Animals
	Leadership Track	Animal Cruelty and Interpersonal Violence: Protecting People and their Pets - Claire Coughlin, Coordinator, Animals and Interpersonal Violence Program, Animal Welfare Institute

Dr. Ashley Saver, Forensic Veterinarian, ASPCA

Enforcement Track

60 minutes

“Veterinary Forensic Evidence” The veterinary forensic examination begins at the scene, as the animal itself is just one piece of evidence that needs to be considered. Knowledge of the scene may be crucial to interpreting medical findings, making it preferred for a veterinarian to examine the scene in every case they investigate. But what if a veterinarian is not present? What can law enforcement do to help facilitate the appropriate identification, collection, and preservation of evidence in cases where a veterinarian is not initially available? This lecture will address these questions as well as discuss case examples involving both living and deceased animals.

Dr. Ashley Saver is a Forensic Veterinarian at the ASPCA's Veterinary Forensic Science Center in Gainesville, Florida. After earning her DVM and Master of Public Health at Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine in 2020, Dr. Saver completed a year-long Shelter Medicine Internship at University of Florida’s College of Veterinary Medicine. Her professional interests include forensics, access to veterinary care, and HQHVSN.

Gina Kenpp, National Shelter Engagement Director, Michelson Found Animals

Shelter Track

60 minutes

“Testicle Talk and Other Difficult Customer Service Conversations” - Attendees will have no choice but to reflect intently on their own customer service skills. This is a course that includes grit, humor and an opportunity to develop team activities to support and ensure that incredible customer service is delivered by every organization and that it is bred into the culture of the organization, excluding no one.

The training will offer tangible conversation management with external customers, but also focus on internal customer service, which is far more important and frankly dictates how external customers are ultimately treated. A small portion of the curriculum does include customer service basics (body language, tone, words), but dials a bit deeper into implicit bias and the recognition that we all carry disdain for some things/people and that those feelings can be overcome if recognized. The most important aspect of the training are the candid conversations that most of our colleagues are ill equipped to have. There is no playbook that

truly walks one through challenging topics. For example, how do you teach someone to talk about testicles and why dogs don't really need them? How does one tell the 85-year-old lady with the sick cat that we can't help her? Are there better ways to handle adoption returns to maximize the information we get while not disemboweling the adopter? Are you prepared to tell someone that euthanasia is the best option and leave them feeling like it was the best decision possible?

Animal welfare work is hard, but it could be so much less challenging if we spent some time really practicing these conversations and sharing approaches that seem to work. This portion of the session will be interactive, and students will have an opportunity to see practice conversations in action.

Gina Knepp is the National Shelter Engagement Director for the Michelson Found Animals Foundation. Her primary focus is increasing the return to home rate by engaging animal sheltering organizations in finding innovative ways of locating missing pet people and more importantly, helping people not lose their animals to begin with. Gina's background includes managing the Front Street Animal Shelter in Sacramento, California. Her experience leading a municipal, open intake, high volume shelter adds to her passion for helping lost animals get back home where they belong. Her current work with Michelson Philanthropies has offered the opportunity to work with shelters across the country, improving reunification efforts. Gina is currently on the Board of the Bitterroot Humane Association and on the Executive Committee of Human Animal Support Services (HASS) with American Pets Alive, launching national animal shelter reform. Gina lives in Hamilton, Montana with her husband Chris, two dogs, Lucy & Rex, her cat, Kit, 18 deer and 80 turkeys.

Claire Coughlin, Coordinator, Animals and Interpersonal Violence Program, Animal Welfare Institute

Leadership Track

60 minutes

"Animal Cruelty and Interpersonal Violence: Protecting People and their Pets" - People should not have to choose between personal safety and their pets. This presentation will address the link between animal cruelty and human violence, with particular attention paid to the relationship between animal abuse and domestic violence. Pet protection laws and reporting policies will be discussed, and recommendations will be made for assessing and addressing barriers to safety. Participants will be given practical tools for use in the field and Safe Havens for Pets, a national directory of sheltering services for the pets of domestic violence survivors, will be highlighted as a resource.

Claire Coughlin (she/her) has a master's degree in human development and family studies and extensive experience in both social services and animal advocacy. For over a decade, she specialized in evidenced-based education and support services for children and families impacted by abuse and neglect. She now coordinates initiatives for the Animals and Interpersonal Violence program at the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI), and oversees AWI's Safe Havens for Pets project. Claire is committed to protecting and improving the lives of both human and nonhuman animals, and she is particularly passionate about keeping people and their pets safely together.

4:45-5:30	Enforcement Track	Bats, Pets, and People – Lauren Barth, Wildlife Assistance Biologist, FWC and Dr. Danielle Stanek, State Public Health Veterinarian, Florida Department of Health
	Shelter Track	Thinking Outside the Kennel: How to Maximize Your Life Saving Impact with Petco Adoptions
	Leadership Track	Don't Lose Sight – Alexander "AJ" Caldwell, Senior Specialist, Best Friends Animal Society

Lauren Barth, Wildlife Assistance Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and Dr. Danielle Stanek, State Public Health Veterinarian, Florida Department of Health.

Enforcement Track

45 minutes

“Bats, Pets, and People” - This session covers how the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) responds to calls about pets that find bats on the ground and when bats are in close proximity to people. We will discuss types of bats in Florida, protections of bats in Florida, benefits to humans and pets with bats on the landscape, conflicts that arise from bats using structures, legal options for dealing with bats, and guidance on handling bats in a living space or when pets discover a bat on the ground.

Lauren Barth is a wildlife assistance biologist for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, serving the Northeast region for the past four years. In this role she works to prevent and resolve human-wildlife conflicts, ranging from property damage to potential safety issues with bears, coyotes, raccoons, bats, cranes, and other wildlife. She has earned a Bachelor’s degree from Florida Gulf Coast University and Master’s degree in Environmental Studies from Florida International University. She has taught university classes on environmental science and Florida ecology and has conducted field research of small mammals and birds in Florida, Texas, Nevada, and Utah.

Dr. Danielle Stanek earned a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology in 1985, and a doctorate in veterinary medicine in 1989, both at the University of Florida and is also a member of the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine. She practiced in mixed and small animal veterinary hospitals, as well as at Cornell and Washington State veterinary diagnostic laboratories. Following her return to Florida in 2005, Dr. Stanek investigated wild bird die-offs while employed at Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Her experience with disease-causing agents that negatively impact the health of both animals and people, such as rabies, vectorborne diseases, influenza and red tide, led her to the Florida Department of Health (DOH) in 2007. As State Public Health Veterinarian for Florida and Medical Epidemiologist for the state Zoonotic and Vectorborne Disease Program, she works on public health issues with colleagues in FWC and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and assists the County Health Departments and their partners.

Alex Pennell-Lemley, Regional Field Program Manager, Petco Love Shelter Track

45 minutes

“Thinking Outside the Kennel: How to Maximize Your Life Saving Impact with Petco

Adoptions” - Thinking Outside the Kennel: How to Maximize Your Life Saving Impact with Petco Adoptions It’s a narrative that’s becoming all too familiar: Animal Welfare Organizations, especially those in the South, are continuing to struggle with low shelter pet adoptions and critical in-care numbers. The decline in the national save rate we experienced in 2022 and 2023 may continue through 2024. That doesn’t have to be our reality, though. Through dynamic partnerships and our industry’s continued hard work and dedication, we can once again make progress towards our lifesaving goals.

With kennel space and foster homes at a premium, shelters and rescues alike need to once again explore alternative ways to get their pets seen and adopted. By partnering with Petco, we can help with both. Organizations have the ability to house cats in the on-site habitats and have the flexibility in scheduling adoption events at Petco Pet Care Centers. With Petco Love, our grant awards are paid out based on the number of adoptions at our Petco locations. We will also provide our approved animal welfare partners an Adoption Support Benefit page to support every adopter, not just adopters at Petco, to set their journey up for success. During this session, attendees will learn how to become an adoption partner and how to get the most out of their adoption partnership with Petco. Attendees of this session also have a chance to win grant prizes and qualify for a one-time adoption bonus! By partnering with Petco, you save not only one life, but two!

Alex Pennell-Lemley is the Regional Field Program Manager, Petco Love

Alexander “AJ” Caldwell, Senior Specialist, Best Friends Animal Society Leadership Track

45 minutes

“Don’t Lose Sight” - Guided workshop to assist shelter leadership in evaluating their organization's potential for modern lifesaving and expand on the understanding of being a quality leader in managing a staff that wants to save more lives but may not have the results to show.

Alexander “AJ” Caldwell better known as AJ, is the national shelter support senior specialist for Best Friends Animal Society. As part of Best Friends’ work to offer customized, strategic support and training for animal sheltering agencies around the country, AJ provides assessments of agencies' field services and helps design and implement training programs proven to increase live outcomes, community engagement, officer safety, and assists said agencies to strive to put “Care” back into Animal Care and Control.

AJ began his career in animal services in 2018 with Columbus Animal Care & Control, where he still resides. During his time as an officer, he earned the ranking of sergeant, formed relationships with Rescue organizations within and outside of his community, as well as relationships with citizens through community engagement and proactive work.

Sunday, February 26th, 2023

8:00 – 12:00	Enforcement Track	From Foe to Friend: Using Body Language and Behavior in the Field to Improve Safety, Minimize Fear and Stress for the Animals, and Achieve Positive Outcomes - Jenna Jones, Behavior and Training Manager and Philip Goen, Field Supervisor, Broward County Animal Care
	General Track	**Euthanasia Refresher Course - Dr. Rachel Barton, Chief Veterinarian, Tallahassee Animal Services

Jenna Jones, Behavior and Training Manager and Philip Goen, Field Supervisor, Broward County Animal Care

Enforcement Track

4 hours

“From Foe to Friend: Using Body Language and Behavior in the Field to Improve Safety, Minimize Fear and Stress for the Animals, and Achieve Positive Outcomes” - Engaging with animals and people in the field is a regular practice for many animal services professionals around the country. However, using a deeper understanding of behavior to better assess body language, approach, and handling is not commonly taught or used. In this presentation, learn how field service staff can apply a behavioral lens to their approaches, while increasing safety and positive outcomes for themselves, the community, and the animal. This interactive presentation will take an in depth look at reading and understanding body language cues, assessing our own body language and approach, assessing when intervention is needed and at what level, de-escalation of situations involving animals and people, and humane use of safety equipment.

Jenna Jones grew up in rural Indiana and her passion for animals started young. She was regularly bringing animals home and participated in obedience and agility competitions with her childhood dog. Jenna attended Indiana University where she began to turn her passion for animals into a career. She graduated in 2015 with a B.S. in Animal Behavior and quickly began working at a shelter in Chicagoland region as the Behavior Manager. During this time Jenna learned many things from the animals she worked with and also became a Certified Professional Dog Trainer-Knowledge Assessed and a Fear Free Certified Trainer. In August of 2021 Jenna moved to Fort Lauderdale and began working at Broward County Animal Care as the Behavior and Training Manager.

Phillip Goen began his career in animal welfare in 2004 as a Field Officer with Austin Animal Services. He has also worked in public health with the Texas Department of State Health Services, while continuing to volunteer in animal welfare. He rejoined the field full time and ultimately became one of two Field Supervisors with Broward County Animal Care. His team serves an estimated population of 2,003,268 residents, making it the second-most populous county in the state of Florida and the 17th-most populous county in the United States. Phillip and his team are working tirelessly to improve the lives of Broward County Residents and their pets and continuing to ensure the safety of residents and their companion

animals by providing resources and assistance to the public at large. He shares his home with a partner, various foster animals, and a chubby bearded dragon named Gilligan.

****Preregistration required for Euthanasia Refresher Course. Attendees will receive separate certificates of completion for this course in addition to the conference certificate of attendance.**

Register for Euthanasia Refresher course [HERE](#)

****Dr. Rachel Barton, Chief Veterinarian, Tallahassee Animal Services**

General Session

4 hours

“Euthanasia Refresher” - Whether you have been certified for 2 years or 20 years, this session is for you! As FACA certified euthanasia technicians, it is our responsibility to ensure we are knowledgeable of the current scientific, legal, and ethical guidelines for performing humane euthanasia. During this session we will review recent changes to Florida statutes and professional guidelines impacting euthanasia in the shelter setting. We will also discuss ideas for reducing stress during euthanasia (for the animals and the humans), strategies for minimizing errors, and techniques for unusual situations. Numerous case examples will allow attendees to share good practices and quash outdated habits. All attendees will receive an official certificate of completion.

Dr. Rachel Barton graduated from Michigan State University’s College of Veterinary Medicine in 1999. After a brief stint in private practice, she made the leap into the emerging field of shelter medicine in 2006, becoming the first veterinarian at Tallahassee Animal Services, a municipal animal shelter. Along the way she completed a Masters in Shelter Medicine and a Graduate Certificate in Veterinary Forensic Sciences both from the University of Florida. She currently serves as Tallahassee's Chief Veterinarian and works closely with animal control and law enforcement assisting with animal cruelty investigations and providing expert witness testimony in criminal cases. In addition to her day job, Dr. Barton is an adjunct at Florida A&M University’s Veterinary Technician Program (where she teaches the Law & Ethics course). She also provides veterinary forensic consulting services across the country.

***All participants will receive the newly updated, Euthanasia in Florida, 3rd edition manual and certificate of continuing education.**

8:00-12:00	Shelter Track	It's more than just fun and games; playgroups save lives! Dogs Playing for Life ** All attendees who wish to receive a certificate for participation must attend the 3 ½ hour class session followed by the 3-hour hands-on demonstration at Orange County Animal Services.
12:30-3:30	Shelter Track	Dogs Playing for Life hands-on demonstration at Orange County Animal Services

****Preregistration required for Dogs Playing for Life workshop and demonstration. Attendees will receive separate certificates for completing the workshop and the hands-on demonstration.**

Register for Dogs Playing for Life workshop and demonstration [HERE](#)

Dogs Playing for Life Workshop – Classroom at the conference and in person demonstration will be held at Orange County Animal Services

Shelter Track

3.5 hours Workshop/classroom

3-hour hands-on demonstration

“It’s more than just fun and games; playgroups save lives!” - After visiting more than 350 shelters across the United States and Canada, the team at Dogs Playing for Life has a lot to say about implementing playgroups and enrichment programming at a wide variety of organizations. From large municipal shelters serving thousands of dogs per year to small rescues that can house just 15 dogs at a time, we have learned what it takes to mentor staff and volunteers to implement safe, successful, lasting programs. We will share the why, what, and how of playgroup programs, walking participants through the myriad benefits playgroups provide, what shelters need to implement their own playgroup programs, and how to run safe and enriching groups. Count on hot topics including LIMA (least invasive minimally aversive), behavior evaluations versus behavior assessments, and doing right by dogs AND communities.

HANDS-ON DEMONSTRATION: After spending the morning learning about playgroups in a classroom setting, attendees will have the opportunity to watch playgroups in action at a local shelter where the instructors will provide an extensive demonstration.

Throughout the day, the presenters will engage in thoughtful discussions with attendees regarding how to provide each dog in an organization’s care with the opportunity to thrive. Via the scalable, customizable programming introduced and demonstrated in this learning lab, we hope to inspire shelters to prioritize quality of life as they work smarter (not harder!) to provide life changing and lifesaving programming to the dogs in their care.