



## Atlanta Humane Society and the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine Announce Shelter Medicine Partnership

**March 16, 2016 (Atlanta, GA) – The Atlanta Humane Society (AHS) and the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine (UGA CVM) are partnering to provide veterinary students experiential learning opportunities in a shelter medicine setting.**

The agreement allows fourth-year UGA veterinary students an elective shelter medicine rotation at the AHS, during which the students may perform spays, neuters, other basic surgeries, and dental procedures, all under the supervision of the AHS veterinarian. The partnership, which represents the first formal agreement between the UGA CVM and the AHS, will provide students with valuable learning opportunities in a busy shelter environment. Shelter medicine was recently recognized as a veterinary specialty by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

“We believe this agreement is a valuable addition to our students’ clinical practice curriculum. It will provide our students with a valuable experiential learning opportunity to develop their skills and confidence as they prepare to join the veterinary workforce,” said Dr. Spencer Johnston, head of the UGA CVM’s Department of Small Animal Medicine and Surgery, who helped broker the agreement.

Up to two students will be assigned to each three-week rotation, during which they will also participate in shelter animal rounds, provide medical assessments as part of animal admissions, assist with AHS’ mobile spay/neuter program, participate in emergency animal rescues, and be involved in companion animal adoption promotions. The rotation is available to all UGA veterinary students who want to get additional experience in surgery or in a shelter medicine environment.

Dr. Jennifer Morris, DVM and Director of Shelter Medicine at AHS says the partnership will offer students invaluable experience.

“This program will make these students better veterinarians, whether or not they pursue a career in shelter,” Dr. Morris states. “Students will be exposed to issues, injuries and illnesses they may never see in a private practice or hospital environment. Homeless animals entering shelters have received little to no medical care and are often lacking in socialization. We also have a cruelty and rescue team that will save animals from hoarding situations, puppy mills and cruelty and neglect. High-density shelter populations are also at a higher risk for infectious diseases and learning to manage the spread of illness is a crucial part to animal health and wellbeing.”

The Atlanta Humane Society is the oldest private charitable organization in Atlanta, founded in 1873. 25,000 animals are served annually through the many programs and services of Atlanta Humane Society and the SPCA of Georgia. We are committed to finding homes for all adoptable pets. It is our **mission** to prevent neglect, abuse, cruelty and exploitation of animals and to assure that their interests and well-being are fully, effectively and humanely protected by an aware and caring society. We are proud to be a part of the solution to ending pet homelessness and overpopulation in the Southeast United States. For more, visit [www.atlantahumane.org](http://www.atlantahumane.org).



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The program aims to increase student awareness of animal welfare issues while improving the lives of homeless animals in Fulton County, Georgia and the surrounding areas.

“The UGA College of Veterinary Medicine is proud to partner with the Atlanta Humane Society to provide veterinary care for shelter animals, and to advance the education of our students,” said Sheila W. Allen, dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine.

**For more information, contact:**

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