

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

With 125 participants, the National Technology Assessment Workshop on Animal Assisted Programs brought together an unprecedented assembly of program administrators, researchers in the field of animal assisted interventions, and national experts in evaluation research. (See Appendix A for list of conference participants.)

Program Participation

Workshop participants included administrators and staff from some 45 animal assisted activity and animal assisted therapy programs. (See Appendix B for list of participating organizations.) These programs are held at shelters, schools, hospitals, mental health institutions, and correctional facilities. The participating programs target a wide range of children and young adults, including emotionally troubled, at-risk, and adjudicated youth. The programs involve a range of animal species, including dogs, horses, farm animals, and wildlife.

Organizations that run dog training programs for youth at risk were particularly well-represented at the conference. The conference included ten organizations with dog training programs – four organizations that run either shelter-based programs or train shelter dogs and six service dog training organizations that hold ongoing dog training programs at a wide range of schools, mental health institutions, and correctional facilities.



Several additional dog training programs for youth at risk also participated as well as shelters with an interest in establishing dog training programs.

Researcher Participation

The conference program featured recognized leaders in animal assisted intervention and human-animal bond research. These leaders in the field include Dr. Randall Lockwood (ASPCA), Dr. Andrew Rowan (HSUS), Dr. Barbara Boat (University of Cincinnati), Dr. Aubrey Fine (California State Polytechnic University), Dr. Arnold Arluke (Northeastern University), Dr. Mary Lou Randour (HSUS), and Kathy Kruger, MSW, who also represented Dr. James Serpell (Center for the Interaction of

Animals and Society Matthew J. Ryan Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania). Our collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Youth Violence resulted in the involvement in the conference of leading scholars in the youth violence prevention field, including Dr. Philip Leaf (Director, JHU Center for Youth Violence Prevention), Freya Sonenstein (Director, JHU Center for Adolescent Health), and David Altschuler (Principal Research Scientist, JHU Public Policy Institute). Dr. Martha-Elin Blomquist provided an additional voice from the juvenile justice policy perspective.



The conference also brought to the table for the first time several of the foremost leaders in evaluation research. The participation of Dr. Alan Kazdin (Professor of Psychology at Yale University and President-Elect of the American Psychological Association), Dr. Valerie Maholmes (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development), and Dr. Allan Cohen (Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation) added further heft to discussion around evaluation methodologies and the importance of evaluation to gaining legitimacy, institutional acceptance, and funding for animal assisted interventions.

In order to encourage the participation of new researchers, HSUS established a Graduate Student Scholarship Program for graduate students doing research in the field of animal assisted interventions. Recipients included Lacey Levitt, Department of Clinical and School Psychology, University of Virginia, Charlottesville - Ph.D. Candidate; Marivic Rosabelle, Department of Psychological Studies in Education, Stanford University - Ph.D. Candidate; Leah Brookner, Graduate School of Social Work, Portland State University - Combined Ph.D. and MSW Candidate; Amanda Taylor, Oregon State University, Ph.D. Candidate; Hazel Weiss, Assistance Dog Institute - M.S. in Assistance Dog Education Candidate; Magaly Madrid, Department of Education, Webster University - MA in Teaching Candidate; and Roberta Thompson, School of Social Work, University of Buffalo - Masters in Social Work, Health and Mental Health Candidate.

In total, twenty colleges and universities were represented at the conference. Several non-university-based research institutes also participated in the conference. (See Appendix B for lists of universities and research institutions.)