



**UNITED SPAY ALLIANCE  
ONLINE CONFERENCE**

October 12 - 13, 2024  
*All times listed are Eastern Time.*

**Special thanks to our Premier Sponsors:**



Saturday, October 12, 2024

10:00 AM - 10:15 AM.

**Brianna Lovell Myers, Administrative Director, United Spay Alliance**  
Welcome

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM

**Dr. Jeffrey Young, Executive Director, Planned Pethood International**

**Spay/Neuter Still Saving Lives**

This presentation will discuss the pros and cons of spay/neuter, current controversies, Dr. Jeff's personal recommendations, and why spay/neuter is still a valuable tool.

**About Dr. Jeffrey Young**

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

training for qualified candidates and having had hundreds of veterinarians and veterinary students come for hands-on training.

Dr. Young is most proud of having performed over 200,00 surgeries in the last 35 years, and he is an outspoken proponent of early age neutering for companion animal population control. Dr. Young has a popular TV show on Animal Planet called “Dr. Jeff Rocky Mountain Vet.” He has used this platform to promote population control and basic medical needs for all companion animals. Dr. Young is driven by a simple underlying mission “to significantly reduce companion animal overpopulation and suffering throughout the world.” His motto: “Think Globally, Act Locally.”

11:15 AM - 11:30 AM

**Break**

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

**Dr. Kimberly Mann, Clinic Medical Director, York County SPCA**

### **Maximizing Efficiency in a High-Volume Spay/Neuter Clinic**

Learn how to safely increase your surgical numbers with tips and tricks for veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and administrative staff. Small changes can amount to a big impact when your team works together to achieve your organization’s mission.

### **About Dr. Kimbelry Mann**

Dr. Kimberly Mann is the Clinic Medical Director and primary surgeon at the York County SPCA Spay/Neuter Clinic, a high-quality high-volume spay/neuter clinic in York, Pennsylvania. She attended the University of Pennsylvania, where she obtained her Bachelor of Arts in 2009 and her Veterinary Medical Degree in 2013. She has experience practicing in emergency medicine and primary care medicine, but has found her calling in high-volume spay/neuter. She has been with the York County SPCA since 2015, and has helped grow the Clinic’s impact from around 6,000 spay/neuter surgeries per year to over 11,000 per year in 2023, with a team of one doctor and up to seven full-time support staff.

Dr. Mann is a mission-driven individual, who is passionate about providing affordable spay/neuter services to as many patients in need as possible. She places special focus on patient and staff safety, surgical efficiency, and a team mentality when it comes to running a high-volume clinic. She has a soft spot for senior pugs and special needs cats, and currently shares her home with her husband Robert, and their three pugs and four cats.

12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

**Lunch**

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

**Pat Chan, Director, Fundacion Spay Panama**

### **Helping animals that confront crisis due to climate change**

In the fight against climate change, spay/neuter initiatives play an unexpected yet vital role. As communities around the world face the challenges of rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and ecological disruption, the health and management of animal populations become increasingly important. Effective spay/neuter programs help control populations, reducing the spread of disease and minimizing the strain on limited resources. In areas affected by climate change, these efforts can alleviate the burden on displaced communities, ensuring that both people and animals receive the care they need. By

promoting animal welfare and supporting sustainable population management, spay/neuter initiatives contribute to the resilience of communities facing the environmental impacts of a changing climate.

#### *Gardi Sugdub: A Sinking Island and the Loss of a Culture*

The Guna Yala archipelago, located off the coast of Panama, is home to the Guna people, an indigenous community with a rich cultural heritage and a deep connection to their natural surroundings. Among the archipelago's islands, Gardi Sugdub stands out for its beauty and ecological significance. However, the island is facing a dire threat from climate change.

The primary cause of Gardi Sugdub's sinking is rising sea levels, a consequence of global warming. In recent decades, the sea level around the island has risen significantly, submerging parts of the coastline and eroding its beaches. As the sea level continues to rise, the island's viability becomes increasingly precarious.

The sinking of Gardi Sugdub has severe ecological implications. The island is home to over 200 dogs and cats. In an effort to protect the Guna community, the Panamanian government has initiated a relocation project, moving residents from Gardi Sugdub to a sterile housing complex on the mainland.

As part of the relocation effort, SpayPanama, a non-profit organization, has launched a mission to sterilize, deworm, and vaccinate cats and dogs on Gardi Sugdub. This initiative is crucial to prevent the spread of disease and improve the overall health of these animals, which may face challenges in their new environment.

#### **About Pat Chan**

Patricia (Pat) Chan is a trailblazing retired financial planner who made history as the first female and Panamanian division chief for the Panama Canal Commission. Born and raised in Panama, Pat's love for animals began at a young age, and she felt a deep connection with them through their eyes. Despite facing numerous obstacles as a woman in a male-dominated field, Pat worked tirelessly to achieve her goals and became a respected leader in her profession.

In 2001, Pat sponsored two veterinarians to attend an animal conference in Costa Rica, where she met Esther Mechler, the Director of Spay/USA at the time. Mechler planted the seed to establish a Spay/Panama, which has since spayed/neutered over 350,000 animals. Pat's unwavering dedication to animal welfare has not gone unnoticed. In 2010, she was awarded the prestigious Animal Welfare Hero Award by the Humane Society of the United States. She has also been recognized by the Panamanian government for her contributions to animal welfare, and in 2017, she was awarded the Hero for Panama award.

Despite the challenges she has faced, Pat remains committed to her cause. She firmly believes that education is key to changing attitudes towards animals in Panama and hopes to continue to make a positive difference in the lives of animals in her country.

2:00 PM - 2:30 PM

**Break**

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Alba Michelle Gonzalez, DVM, Rascal Unit, Ltd.**

#### **Mobile HQHVSN 101: How to Bring S/N Where It's Needed**

Information on mobile clinics, different options and set ups, do's and don'ts, and how you can bring services to communities that need it.

### **About Alba Michelle Gonzalez, DVM**

Dr. Gonzalez graduated from The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine in 1999 and founded the Rascal Unit mobile veterinary clinic in 2006. Her main focus is providing affordable and accessible veterinary care throughout the State of Ohio and teaching veterinary students about community-guided programs. She also provides assistance in animal cruelty and neglect cases as a forensic veterinarian.

3:30 PM - 3:45 PM

**Break**

3:45 PM - 4:45 PM

**Rick DuCharme, Managing Partner, Community Cat Clinics & Consultant, RLD Consulting Services**

### **Community Cat Clinic: Providing spay/neuter and access to care in a for-profit model**

Hear about a new model of for-profit clinics that are designed to provide lower cost spay/neuter and increase access to veterinary care for felines. Community Cat Clinics are focused on providing affordable veterinary care and increasing access to care for all feline owners using affordable pricing, incremental care, a variety of payment plans, and partnering with a nonprofit fund to help cover veterinary costs. This is a model that works as both a for-profit and nonprofit model.

### **About Rick DuCharme**

Rick DuCharme is the Managing Partner of Community Cat Clinics, we have two clinics in the northern suburbs of Atlanta that offer general practice affordable services including spay/neuter. We offer services to pet cats, community cats, rescue groups, and shelters. We strive to increase access to care for all feline families by providing affordably priced services, practicing incremental care, offering a variety of payment plans, and we have access to a nonprofit to help cover care when needed.

He has a consulting company, RLD Consulting Services, he aids organizations and individuals in every stage of opening and operating a veterinary clinic from design, planning, selecting and establishing a business structure, vendor negotiations, team recruiting and retention. One of my specialties is project management of clinic construction.

Previously, he founded and was the CEO of First Coast No More Homeless Pets in Jacksonville, FL. An organization that I grew into a HQHVSN provider that performed 25,000+ spay/neuters annually as well as provided care for 60,000+ dogs and cats in our lower cost clinics. While at FCNMHP Rick was one of the founders of the Target Zero Institute and an innovator and/or refiner of many types of programs including Return-to-Field, Targeted S/N, Mega Adoption, S/N Transport, and more.

4:45 PM - 5:00 PM

**Brianna Lovell Myers**

Trivia/Close

Sunday, October 13, 2024

10:00 AM - 10:15 AM

**Brianna Lovell Myers**

Welcome

10:15 AM –11:15 AM

**Brianna Lovell Myers**

**Cheri Storms, Executive Director, Pet Friendly Services & Chair, Vet Shortage Task Force**

**Update from USA: Putting Spay/Neuter Back in the Spotlight (Where it belongs!)**

Join us for an update on the impactful work United Spay Alliance has been doing this past year. We will check in with our State Leader Network to discuss the challenges grassroots leaders face in spay/neuter efforts nationwide. Learn about our online spay/neuter directory and how you can help us keep our information current to help as many people and pets as possible. Plus, an update on the work of the Veterinary Shortage Task Force from our Chair, Cheri Storms.

**About Brianna Lovell Myers**

Brianna has been a dedicated advocate in the animal welfare field since 2013. She currently serves as the Administrative Director for United Spay Alliance, where she manages the organization's daily operations. Her responsibilities include overseeing key programs such as the nationwide spay/neuter directory, the State Leader Network, and the HQHVSN wet lab training program. In 2020, she started her own business, Breezy Consulting, to aid and empower organizations serving and supporting animals. Prior to this, Brianna worked at Alley Cat Allies, where she held various management roles in outreach, programs, and events, and spearheaded the National Feral Cat Day/Global Cat Day campaign. Brianna earned her Master of Public Administration from West Virginia University. She currently lives in Maryland with her family and their senior rescue cat, Finnegan.

**About Cheri Storms**

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

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

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

11:15 AM - 11:30 AM

Break

11:30 AM.–12:30 PM.

**Brianna Lovell Myers, Moderator**

**Panelists:**

**Clara McCabe, Executive Director, Nutmeg Spay/Neuter Clinic (Connecticut)**

**Peggy McCarthy, Board Member, GA Pet Coalition (Georgia)**

**Cary Payton, Clinic Coordinator, MSPCA (Massachusetts)**

**Dr. Beth Sperry, Maine Animal Health Alliance (Maine)**

### **Panel Conversation with HQHVSN Wet Lab Hosts**

The session will begin with a brief overview of the HQHVSN Wet Lab program at United Spay Alliance, detailing its origins, goals, and the results achieved so far.

Following this introduction, we will transition into an engaging moderated discussion with hosts who have partnered with United Spay Alliance and the HQHVSN wet lab program to facilitate training opportunities for veterinarians in their states. Discover their experiences, key takeaways, lessons learned, and potential pitfalls to avoid. Bring your questions for an interactive session!

### **About Brianna Lovell Myers**

See bio in previous conference session.

### **About Clara McCabe**

Clara McCabe is the Executive Director of Nutmeg Spay/Neuter Clinic in Stratford, CT. She has been in animal welfare for over 20 years. Starting in cat rescue and holding monthly spay/neuter clinics for stray and feral cats, Clara went on to found Nutmeg in 2012. Since opening, Nutmeg has spayed/neutered over 56,000 cats and dogs.

*Clara and the Nutmeg Spay/Neuter Clinic, in partnership with POA Spay!, have hosted 1 wet lab, providing training to 4 veterinarians in Connecticut.*

### **About Peggy McCarthy**

Peggy McCarthy has been a board member for the GA Pet Coalition (501c4) for the past five years. Her volunteer work involves legislative advocacy for animal-related issues at the state and local levels in Georgia. She has been specifically involved with policies to mitigate (1) the veterinary workforce shortage in shelter medicine, (2) inadvertent breeding of pets in underserved communities, and (3) unregulated transient pet sales in outdoor locations by reckless backyard breeders. On behalf of the GA Pet Coalition, Peggy collaborated with United Spay Alliance, DeKalb County (one of Georgia's most populous counties), the Georgia Veterinary Medical Association, and Lifeline Animal Project to provide Georgia's first HQHVSN wet lab for DeKalb veterinarians in 2024.

*Peggy and the collaborative team in DeKalb County have hosted 1 wet lab, providing training to 4 veterinarians in Georgia.*

### **About Cary Payton**

Cary Payton is the Clinic Coordinator for the MSPCA Cape Cod. She has been with the MSPCA for 9 years. Cary also serves as an Advisory Council member for the New England Federation of Humane Societies.

*Cary and the MSPCA have hosted 1 wet lab, providing training to 4 veterinarians in Massachusetts.*

### **About Dr. Beth Sperry**

Dr. Beth Sperry graduated from Bowdoin College in 1993 and from Tufts University of Veterinary Medicine in 2001. After nine years of private practice in New Hampshire and Rhode Island, she moved to Maine. In Maine, she received HQHVSN training from Humane Alliance (now ASPCAPro) and worked as a shelter veterinarian at the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland for almost 10 years. Dr. Sperry was able to gain varied experience in soft tissue surgeries during her time as a shelter veterinarian. In 2021 she started a MASH-style mobile spay-neuter business called Back Roads Spay Neuter, traveling to under-resourced areas of the state for three day spay/neuter clinics. In 2023 Dr. Sperry and her technician founded Maine Animal Health Alliance, a nonprofit s/n clinic that offers Wellness, affordable urgent surgeries, and HQHVSN training in collaboration with United Spay Alliance. Dr. Sperry has led 3

volunteer spay/neuter trips to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota and regularly spay-cations in the Dominican Republic.

*Dr. Sperry has hosted 3 wet labs, providing training to 13 veterinarians in Maine.*

12:30 PM - 1:00 PM

Lunch

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

**Leah Kennon, CVT, Medical Director, Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon**

**A Veterinary Technician's Perspective: Why do we work in spay/neuter and why do we stay?**

Many of us are experiencing an overwhelming shortage of both veterinarians and credentialed veterinary technicians. This is affecting how we reach our organizational goals and is taking a toll on the techs left in the field. Leah has performed many roles as a technician in a HQHVSN setting including being a Clinic Manager, the Operations Director, and now Medical Director, all the while performing technical duties in the clinic. She has hired, trained and mentored many technicians over the years and will share from her perspective the challenges presented to HQHVSN technicians, what you can do to recruit and retain them and why this is crucial to the spay/neuter movement.

**About Leah Kennon**

Leah Kennon is a Certified Veterinary Technician who has worked for over two decades to improve the welfare of feral and free-roaming cats in a HQHVSN setting. Under her leadership FCCO has performed over 135,000 sterilization surgeries on primarily free roaming cats, with 8,000 surgeries performed annually.

2:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Break

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

**Denise Bynum, PhD, RN, Director, Homeless Animal Relief Project**

**Linda Chitwood, Founder & Former Directory, Homeless Animals Relief Project**

**Segue to succession and beyond: Contingency planning for small grassroots nonprofits**

What happens when a leader is unable to lead your small nonprofit? Who will take over? Will the group falter or disband? Or could it become even stronger? And how will that transition be handled? Is it a temporary or permanent change?

In this session we'll first discuss how to formulate contingency plans that can help your group continue their mission through challenging, unpredictable events and leadership transitions. The second half of the discussion will focus on advancing your mission against cat overpopulation even further under this new leadership.

**About Denise Bynum, PhD, RN**

Denise Bynum began as a volunteer trapper and transporter for Homeless Animals Relief Project (HARP) in 2019. After her retirement from Northwest MS Community College in 2020 she started answering the client calls for assistance and making the appointments for HARP. She was a nursing instructor at Northwest MS Community College in Senatobia, MS for 28 years, serving as Director of the RN program for the last 6 years before her retirement in 2020. She currently teaches part time for Christian Brothers University in Memphis, TN. She became the Director of HARP in July 2021.

### **About Linda Chitwood**

Linda Chitwood, MS, founded Homeless Animals Relief Project in 1997 in response to the overpopulation of cats and dogs in rural North Mississippi. HARP has provided low cost or free spay/neuter care to over 20,000 cats and dogs living with the poor since then. The recipient of the Annie Lee Roberts Courage & Compassion Award, Linda has nearly 30 years of experience in pet welfare and spay/neuter advocacy. She is also the author of \$5 For A Cat Head, a book filled with hands-on tips for helping animals and getting started in spay/neuter. She retired as the volunteer Director of HARP in 2022 but remains on the board and active in spay/neuter.

3:30 PM - 3:45 PM

Break

3:45 PM - 4:45 PM

**Tammy Sollenberger, Executive Director, Low Cost Spay Neuter Clinic, Inc.**

### **Ordinary Beginnings, Extraordinary Impact: A Spay/Neuter Success Story**

Tammy's inspiring story begins with a visit to a friend – a friend who had a yard full of cats but limited resources to help them. As a self-described homemaker with no prior experience in animal welfare, Tammy didn't know anything about cats, but she knew she wanted to help. She started by fostering kittens in her bathroom. Gradually, she began to educate herself about local ordinances and the legislative process. Her determination ultimately led to the establishment of a low-cost, high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter (HQHVSN) clinic in Hamilton County, Indiana.

In this session, Tammy will share her journey from novice to community leader, demonstrating how one person can truly make a difference. She will discuss assessing the need for a clinic, the challenges she faced, the importance of spay/neuter for community cats, and the profound impact her work has had on the local community.

### **About Tammy Sollenberger**

A lifelong animal lover, Tammy has been practicing trap, neuter, and return (TNR) for feral cat colonies in Hamilton County for many years. She was the catalyst behind the formation of the Hamilton County Task Force and served as a member for two years. The Task Force addressed the animal issues by updating Hamilton County ordinances for owned animals and community cats, and developing plans for a low-cost HQHVSN clinic. The result of the work led to the establishment of the Low Cost Spay Neuter Clinic in Noblesville and Brownsburg, along with a transport program serving over 20 counties. Since December 2006, these efforts have resulted in the spaying and neutering of over 300,000 animals.

Tammy has extensive knowledge about pet overpopulation and how to mitigate this critical issue. She has worked in all aspects of the clinic operations, including assisting in the operating room, managing prep and recovery areas, scheduling, management, grant writing, and public education.

4:45 PM - 5:00 PM

**Brianna Lovell Myers**

Trivia/Closing

***Special thanks to all our conference sponsors:***

(in alphabetical order)

A-Plus Naturals LLC  
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Feline Fix by Five, a program of Marian's Dream & United Spay Alliance  
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With gratitude to the Joanie Bernard Foundation, Fifth Third Bank, NA, Trustee and Feline Fix by Five, a program of Marian's Dream and United Spay Alliance, for their generous support of the 2024 Scholarship Program.

*The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the Joanie Bernard Foundation, Fifth Third Bank, NA, Trustee.*