

Ashley (Ash) DeAnn Collins
Donor Relations Specialist
Dane County Humane Society
5132 Voges Road
Madison, WI 53718
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October 11, 2018

APHE Nominating Committee
Association of Professional Humane Educators

Dear APHE Nominating Committee,

I am committed to growing as a professional in the field of humane education, and I believe serving as a Board of Directors member with the Association of Professional Humane Educators would be an impactful opportunity to me and the organization. I would have the opportunity to contribute my knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm to the success of the organization's endeavors of empowering those who promote empathy through education and give back to this organization that guided me in my years as a humane educator. As a previous professional humane educator and a current fundraiser in animal welfare, I have valuable experience within the world of humane education and development, which is a skillset that would be a great benefit to this organization. As demonstrated by my success as a humane educator, experience in fundraising and organizing events, and passion for education and animal welfare, I am well equipped and prepared to accept the responsibilities of this role.

When I began my career at Dane County Humane Society as their humane educator in 2015, I was beyond excited – my love of education and animals had combined to be the perfect job! As the educator, I organized and led over 280 events which included birthday parties, tours, and camp programs at DCHS, teaching children and adults alike about my organization, animals, and compassion. In 2017, I led 286 education programs, reaching over 4,600 people in my community. APHE was an invaluable resource during my time as humane educator, providing me with tips, guidance, and support as I navigated that role. After almost three years of experience in this role, I was ready for a new adventure and fully entered the world of fundraising. However, I have stayed involved with the education department at DCHS, providing support to new staff, leading tours and presentation for my community, and spending time with campers.

Currently, as the Donor Relations Specialist at DCHS, I have honed my skills working with donors, businesses, and organizations in the community to support DCHS through fundraising, donation drives, and major events. These connections made through my current role have created strong relationships with businesses and donors, leading to donations of funds, time, and items to help DCHS care for over 9,000 animals a year. My fundraising experience would be beneficial to my role as a board member with APHE to help fund its mission and provide support to the development committee so scholarships, resources, and quality presentations and conference experiences can continued to be provided to members. I have also organized major events, with my largest event being Dogtoberfest. This event welcomed over 600 people and their dog friends, and involved securing venue and food vendors, sponsors, and local celebrities. It raised over \$15,000 for DCHS. This event planning experience would allow me to provide valuable support to the conference committee within APHE, and I am excited to use these skills to share the world of APHE with other educators.

A large part of my role as the Donor Relations Specialist includes marketing and advertising for the many independent fundraisers that support DCHS. I have created a variety of content, including informative flyers and website text. I have additionally acted as a spokesperson for DCHS in television appearances and radio segments, as well as through countless social media posts. The skills I have gained through this experience would allow me to share the successes of APHE through social media and other advertising outlets to support the marketing committee.

My firsthand experience with DCHS as a humane educator and fundraiser will make me a valuable member of the APHE Board of Directors. Please contact me with any questions through email (acollins@giveshelter.org; ashcollins180@gmail.com) or by phone (608-838-0413x167; 404-313-9716) should you need any additional information. I look forward discussing the position with you. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Thank you again,

Ash Collins

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1. Why do you wish to serve on this board?

I am excited to give back to the world of humane education! When I entered this field after graduating with my Master's in Agricultural Leadership, I was so excited – I had found the perfect job! I loved teaching children and adults in my community about the positive impacts of Dane County Humane Society, adoption, spay and neuter, and more. APHE was a valuable resource during my time as a humane educator, and I am very excited for the opportunity to serve other humane educators as an APHE Board of Directors member and share my experiences with this organization. Humane education is a growing field of education teaching compassion and empathy to our future generations, and I want to be a part of this positive change on the world.

2. What abilities do you have that you feel would be an asset to the organization?

My skills as a previous humane educator and a current fundraiser have prepared me for the responsibilities for the role of an APHE board member. Two degrees in education, almost 3 years of experience as a humane educator, as well as my previous experience in education, has provided me with knowledge and hands-on skills that will have a positive impact on this organization. I have created and enacted lessons and educated thousands of people in Wisconsin and beyond, and believe my teaching experience has provided me with a solid foundation to be a board member for an education organization. I have familiarity with classroom management and teaching across wide age levels, as well as abilities in the world of fundraising and advertising. I am responsible for raising over \$150,000 for Dane County Humane Society, and have already exceeded my goals for this year's budget. My fundraising abilities would assist APHE in continuing their endeavors of empowering those who promote empathy by raising funds to provide resources, scholarships, and more to members. I also have assisted in advertising hundreds of events for DCHS, spreading the word of my organization and promoting our events to engage more community members and raise more funds for our animals in need.

3. How will your experiences in the field help you to be a quality board member?

My knowledge and experiences in humane education and fundraising would make me a quality board member and provide a positive impact on APHE. My fundraising experience would be beneficial to my role as a board member with APHE to help fund its mission and provide support to the development committee so scholarships, resources, and quality presentations and conference experiences can continued to be provided to members. I am confident in contacting businesses and donors to discuss sponsorships and financial support, and look forward to using these skills to support APHE. My experiences of planning education programs, camp programs, and major events would allow me to provide valuable support to the conference committee within APHE, and I am excited to use these skills to share the world of APHE with other educators. While I am no longer a full time humane educator, I have stayed involved with the education department at DCHS, providing support to new staff, leading tours and presentations for my community, and spending time with campers and other youth involved with DCHS. I also have the support of my organization behind me, and I am excited to attend the APHE National Humane Education Conference and other mandatory meetings for board members during my term.

4. Tell us about your work history in this field.

As the educator, I organized and led over 250+ yearly events which included birthday parties, tours, and camp programs at DCHS, teaching children and adults alike about my organization, animals, and compassion. In 2017, I led 286 education programs, reaching over 4,600 people in my community. As the Donor Relations Specialist I have worked with businesses to who want to support DCHS, organized major events such as Dogtoberfest, which raised over \$15,000, and provided advertising for fundraising efforts, all to raise over \$150,000 to benefit animals in need. See attached resume for details of work history in the fields of humane education, fundraising, and animal welfare.

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Education **Master's Degree in Agricultural Leadership** May 2015
The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia
Certificate in Nonprofit Management
Thesis Title – School Garden Outcomes on Urban Youth
4.0 GPA

B.S.A. Degree in Agricultural Education May 2013
The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia
Certificate in Organic Agriculture
Interdisciplinary Certificate in Leadership and Service
3.54 Overall GPA – Cum Laude

Professional Experience **Donor Relation Specialist** April 2018-Current
Dane County Humane Society (DCHS), Madison, WI
Supervisor: Sarah Linn

- Raise over \$150,000 annually to support operations for Dane County Humane Society through major events and establishing and nurturing business relationships
 - Provide support to education department by training new staff, assisting in decision making, and providing beneficial feedback of programming
 - Connect with businesses, organizations, and individuals in the community to provide an effective and positive liaison between them and Dane County Humane Society to support their independent events and thank them for their donations
 - Track and report event effectiveness to supervisors, making recommendations for future event plans and outreach strategies
 - Coordinate all logistics of the major event Dogtoberfest by hiring musicians, recruiting volunteers and vendors, establishing advertising, securing sponsorships and more to raise over \$15,000
 - Secure sponsorships and in-kind donations for other major events and programs at DCHS to fund the mission of the organization
 - Negotiate discounts and in-kind services for events and the animals at DCHS
 - Identify, create, and implement donor stewardship events to engage high-level donors and provide them with meaningful experiences
 - Write impactful stories of DCHS animals and programs to connect with donors in the community
 - Utilize social media and e-newsletter software to promote #GivingTuesday efforts and create and develop all content for the virtual event
 - Acknowledge donors by writing thank you cards, creating social media posts, and personal calls and meetings to thank them for their support
 - Coordinate and manage volunteers for 3 major events per year, as well as various community events
 - Advertise independent fundraisers and major events through social media, creating flyers, and writing articles for shelter publications
 - Appear on television news stations and radio shows to promote DCHS
 - Experience with entering data into Raiser's Edge database to track communications with donors, businesses, and other supports
 - Track fundraising efforts and spending to ensure proper budgeting success
 - Attend many United Way rallies and other fundraising events a year as a representative of DCHS
 - Manage and edit the event and business support pages of DCHS's website
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**Professional
Experience
Continued**

Humane Educator

July 2015-April 2018

Dane County Humane Society (DCHS), Madison, WI

Supervisor: Sarah Linn

- Effectively managed a budget for the education department, monitoring spending and increasing revenue from summer camp program to over \$118,000 (exceeding the goal of \$103,000)
- Exceeded overall budget goals of \$123,000 for the education department in 2017
- Coordinated and recruited businesses in the community to support the education department by presenting at camp programs as an in-kind donation to further support the efforts of DCHS, and create connections with members of the development team with possible new donors, businesses, and sponsors
- Initiated and grew relationships with community members through effective communication skills to organize and implement all DCHS education programs
- Served as lead education expert for DCHS and present to the public through over 250 education programs a year, as well as in donor and sponsorship meetings
- Oversaw all logistics of organizing and implementing various educational programs, such as a summer camp program, field trips, presentations, tours, club meetings, birthday parties, individual day camps, and girl scout workshops, reaching over 4,600 people in the community in 2017
- Served as contact for schools, youth clubs, and youth organizations to coordinate fundraisers and donations drives to benefit DCHS
- Recruited, trained, and mentored 5 camp counselors per summer on effective management skills for children and ways to engage them in activities to ensure campers have an positive and education experience
- Recruited, trained, and mentored over 50 volunteers to lead engaging education programs for the public
- Collaborated with other members of the Development team to achieve goals for education and DCHS and assist the team in reaching overall goals for the shelter
- Advertised educational programs through social media, creating flyers, and writing articles for shelter publications
- Managed and edited the education pages of DCHS's website
- Assisted in grant writing - gathering data, proofreading, and creating programs for funding
- Develop and implement interactive lessons on animal welfare and care to groups of all sizes and ages, with an emphasis on child engagement
- Provided care for DCHS education animals, including a corn snake, Madagascar hissing cockroaches, rats, guinea pigs, and bearded dragons

Educational Outreach Intern

August 2013-June 2015

The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia

Supervisor: David Berle

- Led weekly volunteer groups of UGA undergraduates and adult community members in organic farming practices and tasks
- Wrote grants and gathered data to raise funds for programs to increase program participation and support
- Led informational workshops for teachers and other educational professionals to instruct how to utilize a school garden
- Conducted a needs assessment to expand the school garden program
- Worked with middle school youth in the garden, teaching agricultural and culinary skills through experiential learning

Teaching Assistant

August 2013-May 2015

The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia

Supervisor: Dr. David Knauft

- Recruited students and public-school classrooms for the program
 - Built connections between UGA students and public-school classrooms in Clarke County
 - Led efforts to expand program to include retired STEM professionals through recruitment and curriculum development
 - Developed curriculum and instructed fifty STEM undergraduate students on hands-on science education for UGA course titled Project FOCUS
 - Managed the student project portal website for the course
 - Implemented new aspects of program, such as professional portfolio development
 - Evaluated program impact and effectiveness on past participants through online surveys
 - Assisted in formulation of online case study program to be utilized by third and fourth grade classrooms
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Volunteer Experience	Area Coordinator/ Fundraising Coordinator July 2010-June 2015 <i>The Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Athens, Georgia</i> Supervisor: Deana Izzo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised over \$10,000 to sponsor future service dogs by organizing and advertising different fundraising events through social media • Organized online contests, percentage nights, and shirt sales as fundraisers • Provided leadership and management of volunteers of various backgrounds and ages, from college undergraduates to middle-aged adults, in training future service dogs • Led educational outreach programs at local schools and community events • Recruited new volunteers for the organization and trained them in new leadership and fundraising positions • Raised three future service dogs
	Foster Caretaker July 2013-October 2013 <i>Athens Canine Rescue, Athens, Georgia</i> Supervisor: Andrea Collier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostered puppies pulled from kill-shelter situations • Attended adoption days and fundraising events • Evaluated adoption applications and conducted home interviews with potential adopters

Publications and Conference Poster Presentations

Duncan, D., **Collins, A.**, Fuhrman, N., Knauff, D., and Berle, D. (2016). The impacts of a school garden program on urban middle school youth. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 70 (4), 174-185.

Perkins, G., **Collins, A.**, Knauff, D., & Fuhrman, N. (2015). Positive impacts of a STEM-centered university service-learning course. Poster presented at the *Georgia Scholarship of STEM Teaching & Learning Conference*. Georgia Southern University Campus; Statesboro, GA.

Collins, A. (2015). Science lessons in urban agriculture. Poster presented at the *Georgia Organics Conference*. Athens, GA.

Collins, A., Duncan, D. (2014). Benefits of school gardens on parent involvement. Poster presented at the *Sustainability Science Symposium and Workshop*. University of Georgia Campus; Athens, GA.

Duncan, D., Register, J., Flanders, F., Hamlin, T. & **Collins, A. (2012)**. The impact of school gardens on the local school community. Poster presented at the *Southern Agricultural Education Research Conference (SAERC)*. Birmingham, AL.

Professional Affiliations

Association of Fundraising Professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the Young Professionals Committee for the Madison Chapter • Assist in planning and coordination of 2 professional developments a year hosted by the YP Committee 	September 2017-Current
Association of Professional Humane Educators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presented at the 2018 APHE National Humane Education Conference on “Altering Curriculum for All Ages” • Attended the 2016 APHE National Humane Education Conference 	August 2015 - Current
