



## Operation Kindness Brings in Record Breaking Attendance for 2024 Texas Unites for Animals Conference

The animal welfare non-profit produced the annual conference with Texas Unites for Animals for the first time, bringing training and educational opportunities to animal control workers in Texas

CARROLLTON, TX (May 3, 2024) — [Operation Kindness](#)' first conference providing new training opportunities to animal welfare workers following their merger with [Texas Unites for Animals](#) brought in record-breaking attendance. The 15<sup>th</sup> annual Texas Unites for Animals Conference, held at the Renaissance Austin Hotel in Austin, Texas, from April 26-29, hosted 456 animal welfare professionals from 28 states and 66 counties in Texas over the four-day event.

The Texas Unites for Animals program of Operation Kindness enhances professionalism in the animal welfare industry by hosting training opportunities and required continuing education courses for animal welfare workers. The Texas Unites for Animals Conference brings animal welfare professionals from all types of organizations together to collaborate on the shared goal of providing the best possible care and outcomes for animals. The 2024 conference was the first time for Operation Kindness to produce the event with Texas Unites for Animals, with more than half of all registrants this year attending the conference for the first time.

*"Operation Kindness' first conference merging with Texas Unites for Animals Conference brought the top animal welfare professionals in the state together for inspiration and education on how to strengthen our impact for animals in our communities,"* said Ed Jamison, CEO of Operation Kindness. *"Operation Kindness is excited to have a new role in developing the conference following our merger with Texas Unites for Animals, and this first conference together shows how much potential we have to educate and save lives for years to come."*

The 2024 conference featured an opening keynote presentation by title sponsor [Petco Love](#), plus programming covering a variety of topics, such as an animal law track created in conjunction with the Texas Humane Legislation Network and a shelter medicine track designed in collaboration with the Texas Veterinary Medical Association. Animal welfare organization Best Friends Animal Society, a leading animal welfare organization working to save the lives of cats and dogs in America's shelters, presented a keynote panel presentation titled Growing Expectations of Animal Services. Members of the panel, moderated by Best Friends Animal Society senior director of lifesaving programs Brent Toellner, included Roel Ray Rodriguez, P.E. city manager from the City of McAllen, Christie Banduch, animal services manager of the San Marcos Regional Animal Shelter, Kasey Schwartz, animal shelter supervisor for the City of Lampasas and MeLissa Webber, senior vice president and chief operating officer for SPCA of Texas.

In Texas, animal control officers are required to earn 30 hours of continuing education training every three years. Certified Animal Welfare Administrators, Veterinarians and Licensed Veterinary Technicians also have continuing education requirements. Texas Unites training courses and the annual conference help animal welfare workers meet these requirements.

The 2024 conference was made possible through the generosity of Lone Star sponsor Petco Love, Heart of Texas sponsor Best Friends Animal Society, Monarch sponsor the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals® (ASPCA) and Bluebonnet sponsors The National Animal Care and Control Association (NACA) and Maddie's Fund.

The Texas Unites for Animals Conference, a program of Operation Kindness, will meet again for its annual conference on May 7-11, 2025, at the Marriott Dallas Allen Hotel and Convention Center. Information about the conference and upcoming Texas Unites trainings are available on the [Operation Kindness website](#).

*Photos from the 2023 Texas Unites for Animals Conference are available [at the link](#).*

*Interviews are available by Zoom, phone or in-person.*

###

### **About Operation Kindness**

Operation Kindness, a 501(c)(3) non-profit animal welfare organization, operates a lifesaving animal shelter and programs to assist people and pets. Founded in 1976, Operation Kindness is a pioneer in Texas for assisting animals in need of veterinary care, companionship and most of all, a home.

In addition to pet adoptions and lifesaving medical care, Operation Kindness' programs provide foster care for vulnerable animals, behavior and training support for pet parents, affordable veterinary services for community pets, a pet food pantry, volunteer opportunities and professional training. To learn more about Operation Kindness, please visit their website at [www.operationkindness.org](http://www.operationkindness.org).

### **About Texas Unites for Animals**

Texas Unites for Animals' mission is to provide a system of information, support and guidance by enhancing professionalism in the animal welfare industry, strengthening the human companion animal bond, and promoting respect and compassion for all life.

### **Media Contact**

Natalie Richter, Senior Director - Marketing & Communications  
Operation Kindness

Cell: 972-813-9944

[nrichter@operationkindness.org](mailto:nrichter@operationkindness.org)