HEART Matters 2016/2017 Winter Newsletter

FOSTERING COMPASSION AND RESPECT TOWARD OTHER PEOPLE, ANIMALS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

HEART Wins Animal Welfare Education Award

We were thrilled to receive the Pet Philanthropy Circle’s 2016 award for providing outstanding animal welfare education. It was an honor to celebrate the accomplishments of many amazing organizations, people and dogs at their 5th anniversary Pet Hero Awards ceremony! Pictured is Brad Goldberg, Chair of HEART, and board member Candy Udell.

Prizes for Student-Created Games

HEART partnered with Games for Change in its student challenge to provide guidance and resources to students developing digital games on dog and cat homelessness. We were excited that a high school student who created Puppy Dash, a game about puppy mills, won the grand prize across all theme categories, including civic journalism, literacy, smart cities, and youth justice. The team winner for the animal welfare theme created Cat Quest, an engaging game focusing on the dangers faced by stray cats. These talented students had their digital creations displayed at the Museum of the Moving Image and at the Mayor’s Alliance for NYC’s Animals’ mega adoption event.

Photo credit: Games for Change
High school students from two HEART facilitated animal protection clubs in Oregon have joined forces to create a city-wide effort called Youth Animal Advocates of Portland (Y.A.A.P). Y.A.A.P. members will meet regularly with a HEART facilitator to discuss effective advocacy strategies, raise community awareness on various animal protection issues, and recruit local teens who are interested in speaking up for the voiceless. Some of these motivated teens even raised funds to attend the Los Angeles Animal Rights conference where they took turns tabling for HEART.

Students at the Academy for Global Citizenship in Chicago took part in a litter clean up, collecting over four bags full of trash from their school’s park. Noticing that a lot of the litter was candy wrappers and plastic bottles that were likely thrown on the ground by their peers, the students created and displayed signs to remind everyone not to litter.

As part of a theme exploring various forms of discrimination, students learned that negative stereotypes about Pit Bulls have put these dogs at high risk. In a semester-long service project at PS 36 in the Bronx, students researched facts about Pit Bulls, created educational and advocacy materials to spread the word about what great companions they can be, and hosted a donation drive in the school community to send food and needed items to a local shelter that has a special Pit Bull adoption program.

Bronx 5th grade students learned about ways that different groups within their community might be vulnerable and focused on supporting the elderly, many of whom struggle with poverty, health issues and loneliness. Students arranged a multi-generational event at a local library – inviting seniors from neighborhood centers to join them in an afternoon of games, art projects, storytelling, and life interviews around the theme of gathering elder wisdom.

We had engaging summer programs in all of our cities. In Indianapolis, for example, we conducted a popular Climate Camp with Youth Power Indiana and the Peace Learning Center. We taught campers about the risks of climate change and how they can support peaceful, sustainable living through hands-on learning experiences.
Meet Our New Staff

BOB SCHWALB
is now teaching our humane education programs in Madison, WI area schools. Bob worked for HEART from 2005-2013, initially serving as our very first humane education instructor and later as Chicago Program Director. We are delighted to have him back! Bob holds a M.Ed. in humane education from Cambridge College and also offers mindfulness programs for prison inmates through the Wisconsin Mindfulness Program Initiative.

KYLE LIAO
is our Educational Technology Consultant who is adapting our resources for expansive digital distribution on teacher and student facing platforms and delivery systems. Kyle received his M.A. in Instructional Technology from Teachers College, Columbia University. He is an educational technology coach in NYC schools and was previously a middle school English teacher.

JAZMYN BLACKBURN
is an under-graduate student at Princeton University concentrating in Sociology with a certificate in the Program for Teacher Preparation. Awarded the Bogle ’51 Fellowship, Jazmyn is endeavoring to develop a service-based approach to teaching for preschool children, known as “Animal Welfare and Empathy Education” (AWEed). She is currently adapting HEART’s lessons to reach preschool children in New Jersey.

Teacher Trainings

We met so many talented and dedicated teachers all over the country this past year in our professional development workshops!

HEART again offered its online 36-hour credit-bearing professional development course through the NYC DOE on promoting science and literacy skills through humane education. We also conducted a professional development workshop for the United Federation of Teachers showing NYC school teachers how to conduct some lessons from our resource guide.

We partnered with Tribes Learning Community in Indianapolis, which was selected as a model program by the Collaborative for Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), to add a humane education component to its existing SEL training and successfully piloted this program.

In Chicago we delivered two professional development workshops through WITS (Working in the Schools) on SEL and Service Learning. We also co-facilitated a literacy workshop with the Puppy Mill Project.

We conducted a 3-day professional development workshop for schoolteachers, counselors and administrators in Utah at a training sponsored by the Ogden Weber Humane Education Society.

HEART presented a workshop called Taking Action for Others: Teaching Activist Skills in Upper Elementary and Middle School at a social justice conference on Critical Teaching in Action in Los Angeles.

Rebranding Project in High Gear

Our goal for a new rebranding program got a major boost when we were able to join the Taproot+ program, which provides pro bono consulting between industry professionals and nonprofits for short term projects. We were fortunate to receive the services of two amazing marketing specialists who devoted many hours to helping us identify a new name for our organization. Stay tuned!
Webinar Series

We now have a robust teacher training webinar series and we are archiving webinars that you can listen to for free at http://teachhumane.org/webinars. Our topics include: Compassionate Connections in the Classroom; Teaching Compassion for Animals; Justice for All—Honoring MLK’s Legacy; Making Earth Day Education Every Day; Youth Empowerment—Service Learning for Elementary Students; Creating a Kinder World through Humane Education Clubs; and Humane Education—How Everyone Can Get Involved.

Humane Resource Guide

Our resource guide with 40 animal protection lessons and activities for K-12 has now been downloaded and seen by thousands of people, mainly educators, in more than 30 countries and over 40 states. We have also distributed hundreds of hard copies of our guide to participants enrolled in our training workshops. The entire manual can be downloaded for free from our website: http://teachhumane.org/humane-resource-guide/.

The Results Are In

Thanks to our program evaluator Mika Marayuma, a psychology professor at Clark College, we evaluated the impact of our 10-week Taking Action for Others program on 450 4th graders. The results indicated that our students significantly improved along several different dimensions of socio-emotional development, such as their sense of citizenship, perspective taking abilities, and empathy. Additionally, our program significantly increased students’ knowledge of animal care and environmental issues.

Be the Change Museum

Our humane education museum with the Peace Learning Center in Indianapolis continues to be very popular with over 1400 visitors so far. We created 30 interactive, informative and engaging exhibits where people can think, touch, see, and discover the power of living consciously by exploring issues like spaying and neutering, food choices, water usage, and climate change.

NY Has HEART

We are grateful for continuing grants for 2017 from NYC Council Members Palma and Dromm and NYS Assembly Members Rosenthal and Kavanagh to support programming in their districts in the Bronx, Queens and Manhattan.

A Big Thank You to Our Supporters!

HEART’s services rely on the generosity of individuals like you who are dedicated to humane education programming!

Please make a contribution online at teachhumane.org/donate, or mail your donation to HEART, P.O. Box 738, Mamaroneck, NY 10543. All gifts are enormously appreciated! For more information on HEART, contact Meena Alagappan, Executive Director, at meena@teachhumane.org, 212-744-2504, or Kim Korona, Senior Program Administrator, at kim@teachhumane.org, 313-282-7597.