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Running a Lifesaving Animal Sanctuary (RLAS)

(Details subject to change)

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Course Description

Running a Lifesaving Animal Sanctuary (RLAS) is offered through a collaboration between Best Friends Animal Society and Southern Utah University. This hybrid course offers the best of both worlds through online self-study, live weekly Zoom calls and a six-day, in-person experience at Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Kanab, Utah. The in-person experience includes an in-depth tour of the Sanctuary, live group classes with subject matter experts, and creating your own individualized schedule of immersion sessions.

RLAS is a three-month journey with Best Friends co-founders Jana de Peyer and Silva Battista, along with other co-founders and subject matter experts. It is geared toward people who are interested in starting an animal sanctuary and are not looking to work in a municipal shelter or humane society. Many people have the skills, resources and talents to help animals in their communities. They may need and benefit from Best Friends' history, experience, knowledge, resources and insights in creating a successful organization.

- Total contact hours -150
- Dates of course delivery: June – September 2024
- Modality: Hybrid
- List activities and estimated additional hours that will be required outside of contact hours.:
 - Tour of community shelter/animal control and interview of staff: 8 hours

Expected Learning Outcomes

- Outline steps and processes necessary to create an animal sanctuary.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the skills needed to run a lifesaving animal sanctuary.
- Illustrate how to ensure the well-being of the animals in a sanctuary.
- Recognize and analyze the needs of the animals in their individual community.
- Evaluate if starting a sanctuary is the best utilization of their skills and talents.
- Develop a plan to take action on behalf of the animals.

Course Materials

Required Materials

- Book: [Best Friends: The True Story of the World's Most Beloved Animal Sanctuary](#) by Samantha Glen
- [Prodigal Pets: A History of Animal Sheltering in America and the Origin of the No Kill Movement](#) by Susan K. Houser

Optional Materials

- Book: [Power of Joy in Giving to Animals](#) by Linda R. Harper Ph.D.
- Book: [The Little Book of Boards: A Board Member's Handbook for Small \(and Very Small\) Nonprofits](#) by Erik Hanberg
- Book: [Fundraising Realities Every Board Member Must Face](#) by David Lansdowne

Modules: Scope and Objectives for online portion of the course

1. History of Best Friends

- Scope: This module will share the history and creation of Best Friends Animal Society.
- Learning Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will recognize how the founders of Best Friends' created societal change and transformed the narrative of how people addressed the issue of homeless pets. In addition, students will be able to describe why the practice of identifying animals' needs, thinking outside the box, and creating and employing solutions is key to creating and running a lifesaving sanctuary.

2. How to Set up a Non-profit

- Scope: This module will explore the benefits and drawbacks of different types of organizational structures available, concentrating on the legal implications and requirements of creating a nonprofit.
- Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this module, participants will understand the steps necessary to legally begin their organization and be prepared to create and gather the necessary information.

2. Passion to a Plan: Strategic Planning

- Scope: This module outlines the importance of strategic planning, describes the elements that comprise a strategic plan, and recommends a process for planning and putting a plan into action. Participants will gain an understanding of the difference between policies and procedures and annual and strategic plans.
- Learning Objective: Once completed, course participants will be able to explain why strategic planning is essential to lifesaving. They will be able to outline a process for creating a strategic plan, identify key components and draft their next steps based on their current lifesaving needs.

4. Cats and Kittens

- This module will give an overview of Cat World at Best Friends Animal Sanctuary. Outlined are operations and protocols utilized for the care of house cats and kittens awaiting adoption.
- Learning objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to identify the medical and social needs of cats and kittens and employ learned techniques to give them the best quality of life while preparing them for adoption.

5. Community Cats

- Scope: This module gives an overview of the components of a comprehensive community cat program.
- Learning objective: Upon completion of this module, students will be able to identify the current status of cats in their community and describe how to participate in or create a community cat program.

6. Fundraising

- Scope: This module will explore the philosophy and methods of successful non-profit fundraising.
- Objectives: Upon completion of this module, participants will have a familiarity with the different modalities, strategies and techniques that are employed in fundraising. They will be able to identify the elements needed to create a fundraising plan and be prepared to confidently ask for funds for their organization.

7. Dogtown

- Scope: This module covers Dogtown at Best Friends Animal Sanctuary and its operations and protocol to care for and house dogs successfully while preparing them for adoption.
- Learning Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to identify the medical and social needs of dogs and employ learned techniques to give them the best quality of life while preparing them for adoption.

8. Animal Housing

- Scope: This module will familiarize participants with the tools needed to create high quality, safe, and efficient housing environments for various companion animals, as well as for the caregivers who work in them.
- Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be prepared for the steps necessary to create appropriate animal housing; including recognition of planning and building regulations and the ability to design a building layout that will meet the specific needs of the animals in their care.

9. Making Digital Work for You

- Scope: This module gives an overview of what is entailed in creating a successful digital presence for engagement and fundraising.
- Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will recognize the key technological components necessary to design and run an online fundraising program. They will be prepared to formulate and employ the digital platforms their organization will need to raise funds online and calculate the necessary metrics to gauge their fundraising scope and successes.

10. Communicating Your Message

- Scope: This module gives an overview of what is entailed in establishing your organization's brand identity and engaging with the public to grow awareness and support for your organization and programs.
- Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be prepared to establish their organizational brand, and build and execute a communications plan that includes marketing, outreach, social media and public relations.

11. Basic Veterinary Care

- Scope: This module outlines the importance of veterinary care and medical decision-making in a sanctuary or shelter setting.
- Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to outline appropriate and timely medical care for the animals in their charge, including preparing and utilizing effective vaccination, quarantine and spay/neuter protocols.

12. Long Term Care for Animals

- Scope: This module outlines the specific medical and psychological issues often found in animals who need long-term care in a sanctuary setting.
- Objective: Upon completion, participants will be knowledgeable of chronic long-term care conditions and be able to both describe the causes and recognize the importance of maximizing quality of care for sanctuary animals.

13. Risk Management

- Scope: This module outlines risk management as it applies to animal welfare work.
- Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to identify potential losses and implement resources and methods to minimize them. Additionally, they will be able to develop specific plans to protect their investments and assets in daily and emergency situations.

14. Working Together to Save Them All on the Pathway to 2025

- Scope: To provide an overview of Community Supported Sheltering and its connection to achieving no-kill communities.
- Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to identify needs and locate resources regarding the status of animals and shelters in their communities. Additionally, they will understand how to evaluate their passion against their community's animal issues and needs and be able to design programs that are inclusive and engage their entire community.

15. How to Engage Volunteers

- Scope: This module will outline a well-designed volunteer program which is key a key strategy to achieving your organization's mission and animal lifesaving.
- Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to describe the need for volunteers and the importance of volunteer retention. They will have the ability to build a volunteer engagement model that includes assessing needs, identifying volunteer opportunities, and applying successful training, communication and appreciation programs.

16. Adoptions, Fostering and Transports

- Scope: This module will outline lifesaving programs that will allow you to say YES to more animals by finding them positive outcomes through adoption, transport partnerships, and foster homes.
- Objective: Upon completion of this module, participants will be able to employ open adoption policies and design foster and transport programs to expand lifesaving capacity.

Sanctuary Visit Portion of Course

During the visit to Best Friends Animal Society participants will have the opportunity to:

- Complete an in-depth tour of the Sanctuary.
- Follow an individualized schedule of immersion sessions based on goals and interests.
- Participate in group classes and other activities.

While in Kanab, there will be a mix of activities, including an in-depth tour of the Sanctuary, optional immersion sessions and group classes. Each student will create their own individualized schedule based on their goals and interests. Sessions are led by key staff and include demonstrations as well as provide the opportunity to learn about the day-to-day operations of our Sanctuary.

The immersions are learning opportunities as opposed to in-depth practical trainings. The size of the of immersion sessions is dependent on the number of students who register for each selection and may range from 1 to 6 students. These are separate from the Sanctuary volunteer shifts.

Hands-on opportunities with the animals are dependent on the session and the types of animals involved. For example, a session on human reactive dogs will be observations and demos only; a session on enrichment for cats will offer more hands-on. If you want more hands-on, we suggest you add time to your visit to the Sanctuary.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Scholastic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent. You are expected to have read and understood Policy 6.33 Academic Integrity and the current issue of the student handbook (published by Student Services) regarding student responsibilities and rights.

ADA STATEMENT:

Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations or auxiliary aids will need to contact the Southern Utah University Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), in Room 206F of the Sharwan Smith Center or phone (435) 865-8022. SSD determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT STATEMENT:

In case of emergency, the University's Emergency Notification System (ENS) will be activated. Students are encouraged to maintain updated contact information using the link on the homepage of the mySUU portal. In addition, students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the Emergency Response Protocols posted in each classroom. Detailed information about the University's emergency management plan can be found at: <https://www.suu.edu/ad/em/>.

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DISCLAIMER:

Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading, late assignments, makeup work, and attendance policies, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.