



Kitten College: Small Program, Huge Impact

Adopt A Pet

February 11, 2025

**Marnie Russ, Founder -*National
Kitten College &
Program Administrator, Humane
Rescue Alliance***



What is Kitten College?

Kitten College is a nonprofit organization offering vital support to animal shelters and rescues working to save neonatal kittens. Through education, resource sharing, and training we strive to decrease euthanasia while increasing quality of life. We are committed to fostering a compassionate community, dedicated to saving the lives of the most vulnerable felines and ensuring they receive high quality care. Our goal is to provide these services at little to no cost to shelters and rescues



Launching and Operating a Successful Kitten Nursery

A review of approaches and practices
for animal shelters and rescue organizations



Prepared by
The National Kitten Coalition
February 2017

Visited 5 nurseries

- ASPCA
- Austin Pets Alive!
- Best Friends – Los Angeles
- Jacksonville Humane Society
- San Diego Humane Society



Midsized Animal Shelter

- Open Admission shelter based in Arlington, VA
- Total intake of 2956 in 2023
- Private with county contract
- 1663 of which were transfers
- 98% Live Release Rate



Kitten College – In the Beginning



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Creating a Safe Community for Kittens Without Breaking the Bank

- Time
- Money
- Staff

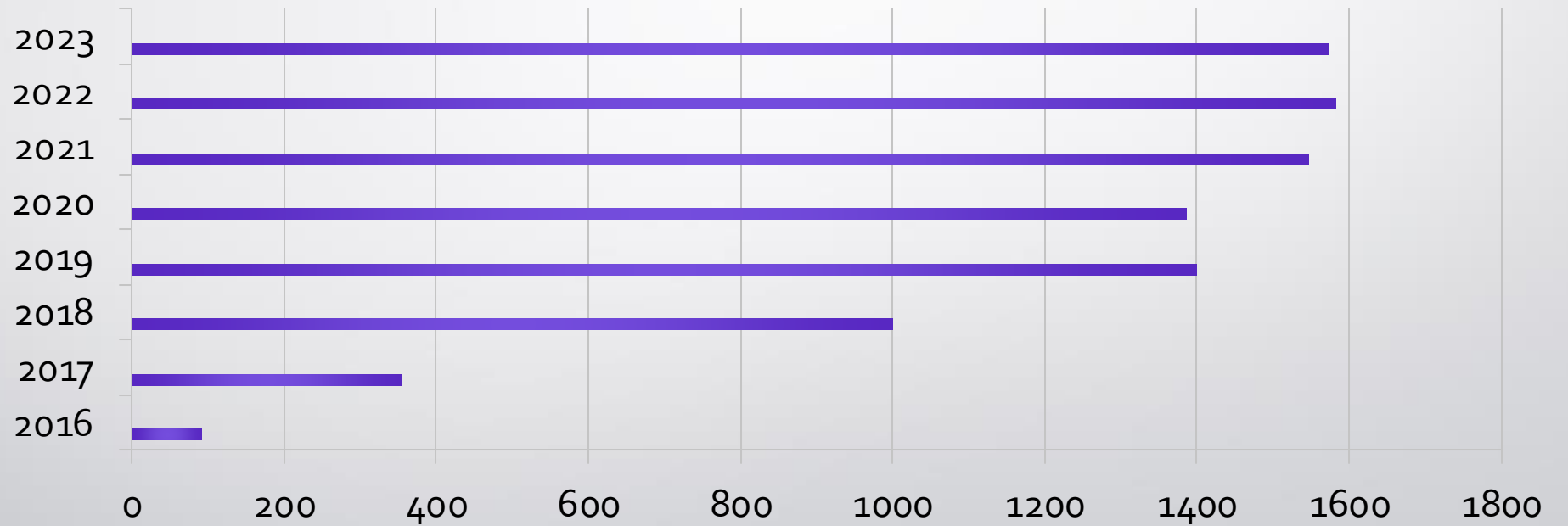


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KITTEN COLLEGE





HOW IS THE PROGRAM DIFFERENT?

- Kitten College Concept
- Program sustains itself
- Keeping kittens out of the shelter
- Foster flexibility
- A place for everyone





FOSTER POWER- THE KITTEN COLLEGE

SENIOR

- Smallest Bottle Babies
- Special Needs
- Requires an ability to recognize distress





FOSTER POWER- THE KITTEN COLLEGE

JUNIOR

- Just Starting to Wean
- Older Bottle Babies
- Mild Medical Conditions





FOSTER POWER- THE KITTEN COLLEGE

SOPHOMORE

- Eating independently
- Smaller
- Daily Meds – URI or Diarrhea
- Socialization





FOSTER POWER- THE KITTEN COLLEGE

FRESHMAN

- Healthy
- Eating independently
- Weight gain
- Mild Socialization





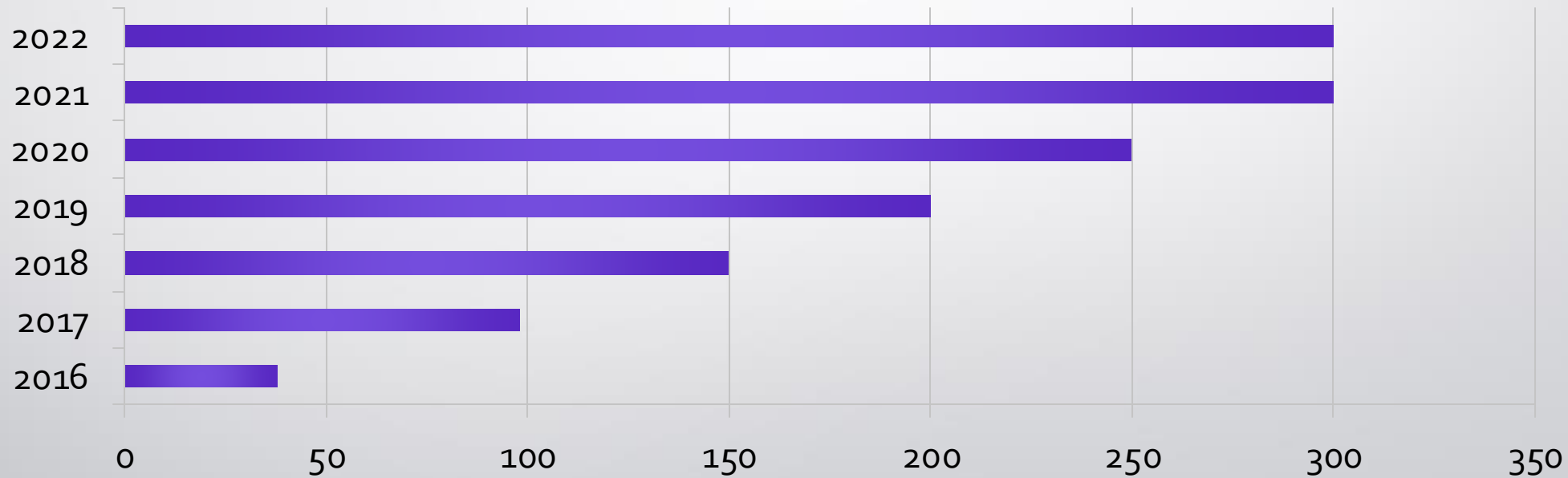
FOSTER POWER

- Foster Mentors
- Foster Support
- Foster Recognition
- Foster Influencers





FOSTER POWER





Foster Recruitment & Retention



- Think Outside the Box
- Vet Clinics – Vets & Vet Techs
- Community Education & Involvement
- Foster Word of Mouth
- Preparing Positive Outcomes



THE KITTEN COLLEGE- WHY IT WORKS

- IMPACT ON KITTEN SOCIALIZATION
- LESS COMMITMENT FROM FOSTERS
- FOSTERS SUPPORTING FOSTERS
- CONVEYOR BELT FOR KITTENS
- COMMUNITIES COMING TOGETHER





BETTER TOGETHER:

Kitten Draught & Saturation



- Transport Opportunities
- Revenue Opportunities
- Resource Sharing
- Saving Lives



BETTER TOGETHER

Developing Kitten College Satellite Campuses

- Targeting areas we have historically pulled a high volume of kittens.
- Providing resources and training to develop sustainable kitten programs in underserved communities
- Making the DMV a Kitten Safe Community
- 5 targeted areas





AWLA's KITTEN COLLEGE WELCOMES FIVE NEW CAMPUSES!



Thank you for supporting our mission to save kittens!





KITTEN COLLEGE



Bridging the gap between the high euthanasia rates of underage kittens and the high adoption rates of adoptable kittens requires a multifaceted approach.

- High functioning kitten program at the Humane Rescue Alliance in Washington, DC
- Serves as the model program for the educational component of National Kitten College
- National Training Center
- The educational component to this program
- Sharing vital resources to shelters and rescues across the country
- Creating a national community of support based on recommendations from major shelter medicine programs



The Power of EVENTS

- Drag Queen/Tiny Kitten Bingo
- Kitten Yoga
- Kitten Naming Games and Raffles
- Bringing kittens out in the community – 911, homebound etc.



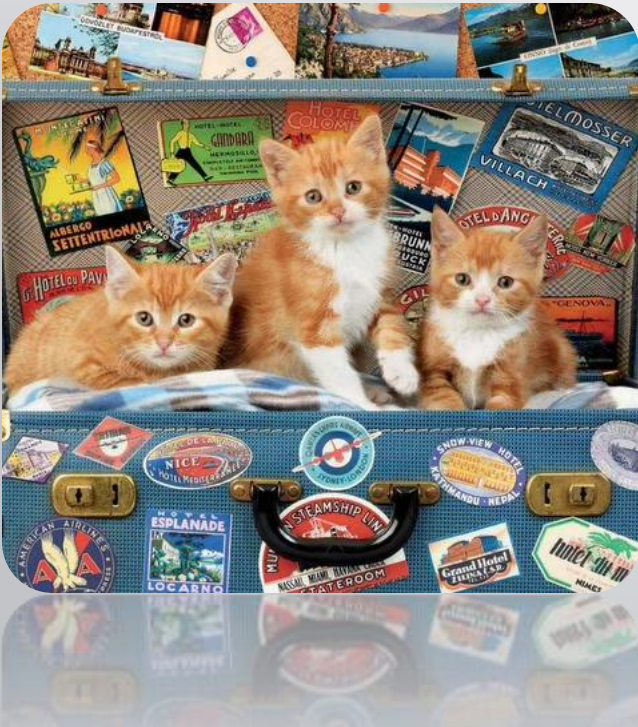


Kitten College Apprenticeship Program

Full day session broken out by topic:

- How to build a kitten program using existing resources
- Basic intake and neonatal assessment
- Meet with HRA's shelter vets to go over basic protocols
- Meet with HRA's fundraising and development team
- Meet with HRA's leadership to discuss outreach and community impact
- Advanced Critical Care Kittens and/or Satellite Campus Development Lessons .





- Assess resources to maximize impact.
- Offer foster training on neonatal kitten care; basic kitten care; kittens with medical needs; socializing kittens and/or specialties such as tube feeding & sub-Q fluids.
- Present to staff on cultivating and maintaining an engaged foster base.
- Present to staff on the development of the Kitten College.
- Review and share all documents – protocols, manuals, marketing, contracts etc.
- Follow up support after visits will be available whenever needed.



NEXT STEPS: NEW MANUAL





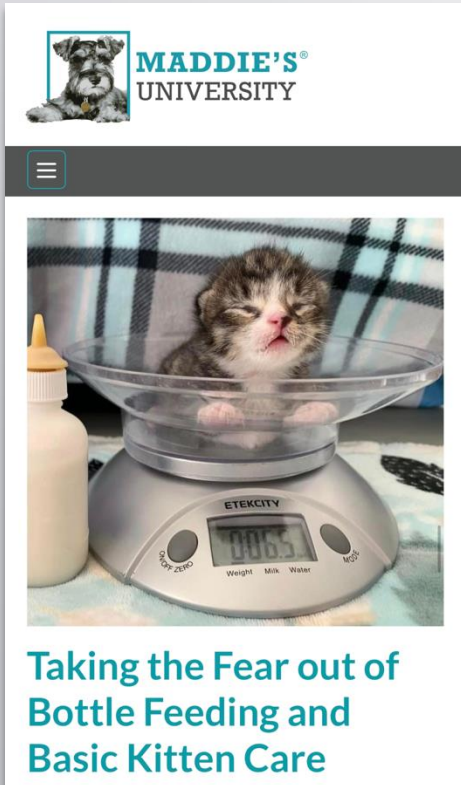
Moving Forward

- Defining HQHV Kitten Care
- Aligning with shelter medicine
- The power of shared resources; creating a national network
- Maddie's University Partnership
- When we can't save, we can learn from them
- Educate and empower





Taking the Fear Out of Bottle Feeding & Basic Kitten Care



- Maddie's Fund Partnership
- Training that is suitable for most rescues/shelters – no shelter protocols
- Review UC Davis/University of Wisconsin Shelter Medicine guidelines for neonates
- Kitten College/Maddie's University Diploma
- Partnership with Dr. Julie Levy from the University of Florida



FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Free Erythromycin?



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FACEBOOK GROUP

KITTEN COLLEGE COMMUNITY

- Shelter/Rescue Staff Only
- Shelter Vets

NEWSLETTER

- Open to all

SOCIAL MEDIA

@nationalkittencollege

STAY CONNECTED!

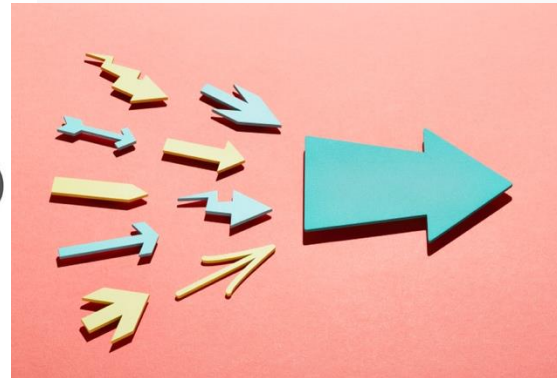
NEWSLETTER



<https://bit.ly/42Hi7j9>



Join us March 4th for Camp Maddie: Kitten Edition



- Dr. Julie Levy
- Marnie Russ
- Monica Tarant
- Tabitha Kucera



QUESTIONS?



Marnie Russ

Founder, National Kitten College

Program Administrator, Humane Rescue Alliance