

## Media Release

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Woods Humane Society Teams with Cal Poly to Teach Kids about Pet Overpopulation**

***As World Spay Day approaches on February 26, 2019, College Apprentices Gear up to Bring Free Humane Education Presentations to County-Wide Elementary Schools***



**(SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA) February 1, 2019** – Just in time for World Spay Day on February 26, 2019, and in support of their new, affordable Daphne Fahsing Spay & Neuter Clinic in Atascadero, Woods Humane Society has teamed up with Cal Poly Liberal Studies Majors to teach local 4th to 6th graders that “It’s Hip to Snip,” as a new Woods promotional tee-shirt says.

The partnership program trains undergraduates who are on track to getting their teaching credential to bring free, one-hour, shelter-animal-assisted classroom presentations about pet welfare issues to area elementary classrooms.

Woods’ Humane Education Coordinator Jamie Relth and Cal Poly Liberal Studies Science Teaching Specialist Anne Marie Bergen piloted the program in the 2017-2018 schoolyear, seeing that it matched the community’s need for more education on these topics with undergraduates’ need for more “Learn by Doing” opportunities. This year, the apprenticeship course (LS380), made possible by the support of Mary L. Bianco and The MOCA Foundation, has expanded to include 12 Liberal Studies Majors who will have the option to continue the course in the spring quarter.

“With an estimated 70 million homeless pets in the country, and thousands of stray and feral cats and dogs here in our own region, we continue to face a crisis of pet homelessness,” says Relth. “By multiplying our humane education efforts, we hope to reach more of the future pet owners of the Central Coast to help end pet homelessness and suffering.”

The classroom presentation includes an interactive story about cat reproduction that brings multiplication into a new light for the middle-schoolers. They learn that unaltered cats can have two to three litters of 5-10 kittens per year, and those kittens can reach reproductive maturity in just four months, which can result in more than 100 cats in one year from one un-spayed female and her offspring.

“By the end, kids are often exasperated by the fictional family that has failed to spay its cat after so many kittens have been born that they can’t even fit in the house,” Relth says. “It really drives the issue home for them.”

The Apprenticeship course and outreach effort dovetails well with Woods Humane Society’s focus to spread awareness about its new Daphne Fahsing Spay & Neuter Clinic (located at Woods North County, 2300 Ramona Road, Atascadero), where, in celebration of **World Spay Day, Tuesday, February 26, 2019**, Woods will host a special two-hour **“Cat Whisperers”** youth volun-tour event from 3:45-5:45. Directed toward youth in third grade and up, registrants will enjoy a behind-the-scenes tour of the new clinic, participate in a future-veterinarians activity, make a cat toy and receive a copy of the children’s book *It’s Raining Cats and Cats* by Jeanne Prevost, illustrated by Amelia Hansen, which they will have the opportunity to read aloud to the cats in the shelter.



Youth who want to attend the Spay Day event can sign up and pay online at <http://www.woodshumanesociety.org/shelter-services/education.php> (\$20; spaces limited). Teachers interested in scheduling a Humane Education presentation can email [HumaneEd@WoodsHumane.org](mailto:HumaneEd@WoodsHumane.org). Pet owners can schedule a spay or neuter surgery for their pets online at <http://www.SpaySLOCounty.com>. For more information about Woods Humane Society, visit <http://www.WoodsHumane.org>.

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### About Woods Humane Society

Founded in 1955, Woods Humane Society has proudly served the homeless animals of San Luis Obispo County for 64 years. Woods Humane Society is a privately funded, non-profit, animal sheltering and welfare organization, based in San Luis Obispo that annually places over 3,000 dogs and cats into loving homes. Visit [woodshumane.org](http://woodshumane.org) to donate or learn more.