

Paws for the Cause Fundraiser

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### Paws for the Cause (Fundraiser)

#### **Overview of Fundraiser**

Our fundraising event, “Paws for the Cause,” is a dog walk that is organized to raise money for the Norfolk SPCA. Raising money and awareness will help protect our pets from disease and the overpopulation of animals in our communities. The fundraiser took place on Saturday, April 6th from 10am-12pm in front of the Webb Center on the ODU college campus. There were around 20 participants for the events (12 humans and 8 dogs). The weather was cool and dry which was nice because there was no need to worry about muddy paws or overheating dogs.

Local businesses consisting of breweries, pet shops, and restaurants were contacted in hopes of receiving donations. Sadly most of the businesses did not respond or declined to donate to the event. However the members of the group were resourceful so they made treats to sell at the event along with receiving in person and online donations. As a collective the group was able to raise \$200 for the Norfolk SPCA to use to help fund their daily operations which include but not limited to; housing animals without a kill policy, neuter/ spay formerly stray animals, feed them, wash them, and give them the shots they need.

To be more specific the SPCA contacted a member of the group to let them know that the contribution made was able to help a 2 year old dog. The dog was sick, underweight, and was not spayed. Thankfully with the funds donated the dog has been able to gain weight, get her shots, and is now ready for her forever home!

#### **Needs Assessment**

Each year, millions of stray dogs and cats are found roaming in our communities creating disease and overpopulation. Stray animals normally are not vaccinated and in return can cause

the spread of rabies and other diseases to not only their own population but to other wildlife. Also an infected animal can contaminate food and drinking sources through their feces which also creates more illness and parasitic outbreaks to the places that they roam. This problem does not end with our animals, certain diseases such as rabies can also be contracted by humans, leading to life threatening conditions without proper treatment. Also, when pet owners do not spay or neuter their animals, it contributes to the overpopulation. While many animal shelters take in these stray animals, the shelters also become overpopulated ending up with millions of animals being euthanized each year. There is a high need for individuals and families to adopt at local animal shelters rather than buying from breeders or pet stores.

The Norfolk SPCA rescues, rehabilitates, treats, and helps to provide forever homes to the many animals in our community. They have also recently opened up a animal clinic to the public so that the upkeep of our animals is easily accessible and affordable. These rescued animals are provided with high quality treatment and care while under the supervision of professionally trained staff. In order to help relieve the problem, the Norfolk SPCA provides spaying and neutering services, vaccinations, a flea and heartworm preventative, and microchips to each pet that is being adopted through their organization.

Our fundraiser will help spread awareness about the ongoing problems we have with strays as well as our own animals in our communities. Most importantly, we will help raise money that allows the Norfolk SPCA to continue to care for these animals and operate their business. Because they are a non-profit private organization, they rely strictly on donations such as these from local businesses and organizations. With the help of our fundraiser we are able to be apart of the change that we want to see for our community's future pets.

The fundraising event presented various barriers which consisted of weather, event location, individuals experiencing allergic reactions to dogs, individuals being afraid of dogs, and donation options. The weather is a barrier factor, because the event requires nice weather to complete the one mile dog walk, therefore fundraiser committee selected a different date and location for the event in case rain. The event location was a barrier factor, because the fundraising committee proposed multiple locations that could be best for the dogs and not pose a liability for Old Dominion University. The cost of the fundraising event was an estimated fifty dollars contributed from the fundraising committee for event refreshments. The fifty dollars consisted of ten dollars from Krispy Kreme twelve count donuts, five dollars for bottled water refreshments, thirty dollars for homemade dog treats sold during the event, and five dollars for donut balls.

### **Plan of Action**

Our plan of action was formed first by dividing up all the responsibilities equally between our group members. We had to figure out a date that worked best for all of us, communicate with the Norfolk SPCA, reach out to local businesses in hopes of receiving donations, plan the fundraiser and brainstorm what all we wanted to include in the actual event, advertise to the public, and communicate and motivate each other so that we could all stay on top of things.

The beginning of the planning process consisted of getting everyone to agree on supporting and fundraising for the same nonprofit. Luckily, we all love dogs and were completely okay with raising money for animals. Then we decided we would go ahead and raise awareness and funds for the local SPCA by planning and implementing a dog walk on campus. From that point on we put our heads together every time we met during our class period and began to figure

out the simple and most efficient way to raise money for the SPCA. We figured that putting together a dog walk around campus, where students and other members of the community had the opportunity to bring their dogs out for a morning walk and donate if they felt inclined, was one of the best ways to raise awareness and money for our local shelter.

We reached out to local pet businesses in search of any type of donation, but unfortunately we either did not hear back or were turned down, so we will be providing refreshments and dog treats with our own hard earned money. Trey got the ball rolling in a sense because he was the one who contacted the Norfolk SPCA to make sure it was alright for us to have a fundraiser for them. Andrew was able to contribute dog toys that were leftover from one of his charity events and also provided t-shirts for the group to wear so that we could all be matching. Harlie created a donation box that held all of the dog food, toys, leashes, and whatever else was donated by attendees. Erin made homemade dog treats and sold them for one dollar a baggy; all proceeds have been sent directly to the shelter. Claude provided complimentary water bottles for the attendees and created our awesome flyer that served as our advertisement piece. Jamie provided donuts for those who participated so that we could keep their bellies full while they walked.

### **Marketing Plan**

The marketing plan for the Paws for the Cause includes a mix of Facebook ads by post, word of mouth, local business advertisements, flyers, and advertisement in the public advertisement space on the campus of Old Dominion University. We believe that each one of these marketing tactics will be the best way to expand our approach to potential donors and gain a higher audience by being flexible in our approach. Through posting on social media on Facebook, we have created four different fundraisers post with the goal of 50 dollars each. The

post will be shared through Facebook displaying the time and date of the event as well as the donation button that allow us to donate the money directly to the Norfolk SPCA. Our next marketing tactic is to advertise utilizing both word-of-mouth through student organizations on campus and utilizing the various advertisements spaces on the campus. We have networked with several organizations such as Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity and T.R.U.S.T, all of which has spread the word of our events to the members in their organizations and the student body. We have also utilized various campus locations such as the university Webb Center, Constant Hall, Engineer Building, and the New Education Building. We believe that both of these tactics will bring a tremendous amount of support both financially and socially to our event. The next marketing tactic that we have utilized was advertising through local businesses such as Muddy Paws, Hair of the Dog, Norfolk SPCA, and PetSmart. These businesses have agreed to post our flyer and mention their involvement with the project as well as support us through marketing the event with their customers. We believe that this is important to get the community involved in the event and gain a bigger audience to help us gain more donors. We plan to keep targeting companies that help animals and are known to the community as no-kill shelters and gain a partnership for the event to make all proceeds be charitable to the Norfolk SPCA. Lastly, we plan to host a walk around the Webb Center, Constant Hall, and Kaufman Mall that is equivalent to a mile. We plan to have the Norfolk SPCA available with animals on hand, Animals by the guest will be welcomed at the guests' own discretion. We plan to have at least 200 dollars at the end of the event and plan to donate dog toys, and dog scarfs to the SPCA at the end of the event. We also believe that we do not have any barriers/competition for the event, as the event has been scheduled for the 6th of April and the location has been set to be in front of the Webb Center.

### **Critique /Lesson learned**

In self-reflection of the fundraiser “Paws for the Cause”, I believe that the lessons I learned through this fundraiser could be broken into three parts. The first part I would like to go over is the marketing aspect of the event, I believe that I learned that marketing requires a lot of hands and partnerships to utilize free advertisement space, local advertisement deals with local shops and expenses in paper and ink. I also believe that we did a great job doing this utilizing social media, which really improved our turnout for the event. The second part of a huge lesson learned through this event, I learned that fundraising events take a lot of effort and planning that requires a lot of additional support from sponsors and other members of the community. We utilized our partnerships through the Webb Center and also other shops such as hair of the dog, and Muddy Paws. Lastly, I feel that we did a great job organizing the event as we did had to keep the dogs safe as well of the owners of the animals. I feel that we offered a great sense of time management to our participants that showed up and also came up with alternate plans due to an event that was pre-planned before us.

### **Peer Evaluations**

In my peer evaluation of myself and my group, I will be addressing which each of us did and how well I believe we performed in our individuals' contributions to the group. For myself, I created the marketing plan for the group and partnered with Leadership and Student Involvement as well as with the professor to retain a time period for our event to take place on. I feel that I did good in my role and had little to no difficulty completing the tasks. Erin and Harlie provided extra fundraising ideas through Facebook and also contributed the most to our overall turnout of the event through their friends and family. Jamie and Claude contributed through donations of food items that we sold at the event and I feel that they really helped through set-up and take

down of the event. Trey contributed by making the first point of contact to the Norfolk SPCA and also helped us create a link to the Hair of the Dog for advertising space. Lastly, Everyone contributed in a timely manner for their individual parts in the sections of the fundraiser paper and we had no discrepancies among each other.