

**Measuring the One Health Impacts of HSUS' Pets for Life  
Institute for Human-Animal Connection, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Pets for Life**

***Job Description***

Title: Research Assistant

Employment Term: 4 years

Time Commitment: Full-time (40 hours per week)

**Duties and Responsibilities**

- Conduct door-to-door surveys in the study community.
- Conduct data base analyses (e.g. internet searches, public record requests) to obtain secondary source data on human, animal, and ecosystem health in the study community.
- Manage the One Health data set in the study community.
- Work collaboratively with Dane County Humane Society, Pets for Life staff, and the Institute for Human-Animal Connection's Research Team to implement the study.

**Position Summary**

The One Health framework, collaboratively proposed by the American Veterinary Medical Association and the American Medical Association, recognizes that human, non-human animal, and ecosystem health (henceforth referred to as the One Health triad) are interconnected. While individual correlations have been drawn between the components of the One Health triad, there have been no studies specifically documenting how effective companion animal welfare programming might drive improvements in both human and ecosystem health. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) Pets for Life (PFL) program offers a unique opportunity to rigorously study the One Health framework from an animal welfare perspective. PFL removes barriers to accessing companion animal-care services (e.g., spay/neuter, vaccinations, wellness exams, and behavioral training), supplies, and information in underserved communities through a person-centered approach. The focus of the PFL intervention on a single component of the One Health triad – companion animals – provides a unique opportunity to test the broader concept by measuring the secondary effects on the other two components.

The Institute for Human-Animal Connection (IHAC), located in the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver (DU), is a leading academic center with an innovative research agenda aimed at advancing the understanding of the role of the human-animal bond across the lifespan at the individual, organizational, and community level. IHAC and PFL are collaborating on this study to measure the broad impacts of PFL programming on communities.

The study will consist of two urban and two rural communities that will receive the PFL intervention. Each study community will have a dedicated full-time Research Assistant (RA) to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from their community over the four-year study period. The RA will operate out of University of Wisconsin-Madison's Shelter Medicine program in the study community and will be supervised by IHAC's Research Associate. Data will be collected in the four study communities by the RAs using DU Institutional Review Board-approved protocols. Each RA will be responsible for collecting data from their community using a combination of survey of individual community members, desktop analysis of secondary data sources, and public information requests. All quantitative data will be collected using Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) survey software using dedicated electronic tablets. The RAs will not, however, be responsible for delivering PFL programming. Standard PFL programming carried out by the local animal welfare partner organization under the supervision of the HSUS PFL leadership team will ensure generalizability of any findings to other PFL communities. The RA will work with graduate students at the University of Denver's Institute for Human-Animal Connection who will be available to support the process of identifying data sources,

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cleaning and analyzing data, and writing reports (with particular emphasis on conducting the literature reviews to frame the study findings within current practices in the field).

The community-based RA role is critical to the success of the study. The RAs will be skilled in interpersonal communication, including community-specific language (e.g. fluency in Spanish). All community RAs will participate in a 2-day training at the University of Denver at the onset of the study (April 2018) where they will receive detailed instruction on the data collection protocol. RAs will also participate in a 2-day training with the Pets for Life team (date and location TBD). All expenses for this training (travel, meals, etc.) will be covered.

**Qualifications**

- Interest in advancing issues of cultural competence and work with underserved communities
- Excellent interpersonal communication skills, including community-specific language, with preference for bilingual (Spanish-speaking) candidates
- Excellent time management, with ability to work independently and adhere to a standard protocol
- Capability to work with remote team members
- Excellent organizational skills with strong attention to detail
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office programs, especially Microsoft Excel
- Recommended:
  - 2-years of research experience including data collection, management, and database analysis;
  - Professional or volunteer experience in public health or human healthcare;
  - Proficiency in REDCap software for managing online surveys and databases or other data management software