

Human-Animal Interaction Focus of Conferences

The University of Missouri is hosting the event, which focuses on the human-pet bond and its impact on health.

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The target audience for the conferences includes vets, therapists and people who work in animal-assisted therapy. "Human-Animal Interaction: Impacting Multiple Species" is scheduled for Oct. 20-25 at the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine's Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction (ReCHAI).

The event consists of two sequential conferences: the International Society for Anthrozoology's 18th annual Conference (Oct. 20-23) and ReCHAI's Human-Animal Interaction Conference (Oct. 22-25).

The target audience includes veterinarians, people who work in animal-assisted therapy and animal-assisted activity, physical and occupational therapists, investigators and practitioners working in the human-animal interaction (HAI) field, nurses, physicians, social workers, students of professional disciplines and members of the public who are interested in HAI.

HAI is a growing field of research showing how the human-animal bond impacts health in people and animals, according to the center.

The goal of the conferences is to serve as a conduit between those working in HAI research and those working in HAI practice. Conference themes will include challenges for enhancing HAI, bio-psycho-social-spiritual wellness across species, animal-assisted therapy and animal-assisted activity, HAI impacting professional practice and HAI crisis planning (i.e. animal emergency and the Pet Evacuation Act), among others.

A special symposium will focus on how HAI may help fight obesity.

Sponsors include Mars Inc. of McLean, Va.; the Waltham Center for Pet Nutrition in the United Kingdom; Nestle Purina of St. Louis, Mo.; The Roetheli Lil' Red Foundation of Kansas City, Mo.; Pets Best Insurance of Boise, Idaho; Hill's Pet Nutrition of Topeka, Kan.; and The Pet Care Trust of Washington D.C.

Continuing education credit is available through the University of Missouri.