

Vets Donate Spay/Neuter Services Abroad

Veterinarians, students offer time, services for cats and dogs in Costa Rica and Peru.

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Pet owners began lining up at 4 a.m. in San Isidro, Costa Rica, to bring their cats and dogs to a spay/neuter clinic. Photo courtesy Colorado State University. Colorado State University students recently donated their time and services to spay and neuter more than 240 dogs and cats during a five-day clinic that took place in San Isidro, Costa Rica. Many of the animals received rabies vaccinations, which were donated by the Costa Rican government. The animals were also dewormed and given a general health check.

The students were joined by a CSU veterinary anesthesiologist and partner veterinarians from Kansas, Colorado and New York. They worked in a school gymnasium using baby cribs and school desks as surgery tables and soccer goalie boxes as IV carts.

Pet owners began lining up outside of the clinic at 4 a.m., according to CSU. Because of the strong response, more than 250 animals were turned away due to limited supplies and time.

"The experience for the students was tremendous," said Pedro Boscan, DVM, Ph.D., a CSU veterinary anesthesiologist who organized the trip with the nonprofit group VIDAS (International Veterinarians Dedicated to Animal Health). "They had the opportunity to perfect their full health-check protocol, surgery and recovery skills. All of the students had the opportunity to participate in at least five operations each. We're very grateful to the community for their donations of items and money to make this trip possible. It truly impacted the health of animals and communities."

Dr. Boscan said that they hope to go back again next year.

The trip was funded through donations from the Fort Collins area and from the Costa Rican government.

In related news, Jennifer Brown, DVM, Dipl. ACVS, a clinical assistant professor of surgery at Virginia Tech's Marion DuPont Scott Equine Medical Center, recently traveled to Requena, Peru, to help neuter and spay almost 200 dogs and cats. Veterinarians do not reside in this particular area, according to the vet school.

Dr. Brown joined seven other volunteers involved with Veterinary Ventures, an organization that schedules and arranges spay/neuter campaigns in developing countries.

They established a "clinic" in a school classroom since school was not in session for the summer. The volunteer group brought all of its own medical supplies, including a gas anesthesia unit.