

# **PAWs Chicago**

## Medical Center Internship

By: Brianna Plecki



# About The Intern



- **Education:** Brianna is a senior at Loyola University with a Biology major.
- **Future Goals:** Unclear with what she wants to do after graduation, Brianna was excited to have the chance to apply to the PAWs Medical center internship. She loves working with animals and was excited to learn what kind of careers there were at PAWs.

# About PAWs

- Non-Profit
- Based in Chicago

**History:** PAWs began with founders, Paula and Alexis learning about the mass euthanasia of animals in shelters. They launched PAWs in 1998 with an adoption event. Since then PAWs has added many new locations add have decreased the amount of animals euthanized in Chicago by 91%.

# **PAW's Mission**

- **To build No Kill communities,** starting with a No Kill Chicago, that respect and value the life of every cat and dog.
- **To end the overpopulation of homeless animals** through solutions, practices and education.
- **To transform animal welfare** by setting higher standards in the way animals are treated and developing a sustainable, solutions-based model.

# About The Internship

- At PAWs Medical Center and Lurie Clinic
- February-April

- **Departments:** Brianna Has been working in the Animal Care and Shelter Medicine departments. She has also worked in the Spay/Neuter Clinic.
- **Learning Objectives:** For each department Brianna developed learning objectives, as well as learning objectives to help develop her future goals.

# Animal Care



- **Learning Objective:** Learn basic care and handling for the animals, and become familiar with the procedures at PAWs.
- **Tasks:**
  - Feeding cats and dogs
  - Cleaning animal habitats and the building
  - Enrichment and Socialization
  - Utilizing signage and paperwork to properly take care of the animals and monitor their health.

# Experience

- In Animal Care Brianna often assists a member of staff as they complete their tasks for the day. This includes attempting to get all dogs in the building out on 3 walks a day, cleaning and deep cleaning the animals habitats, and feeding the animals.
- Brianna is currently able to handle animals PAWs designates as level 2, which means they might be more reactive or difficult to handle. She is currently working to become level 3. The designations are 1, 2, 3, and staff dogs.
- Recently, Brianna received her own tasks for the day and worked on her own. Her tasks included mostly dogs with UTIs which requires proper PPE to prevent spread of the infection. These dogs also have a separate path to walk on. She also had animals with specific diets and medical requirements that she had to keep in mind

# Shelter Medicine



- **Learning Objective:** Know several ailments affecting the animals and know different treatments.
- **Tasks:**
  - Assisting veterinary staff with supply preparation
  - Utilizing medication, diet, or other treatments
  - Socialize with sick animals
  - Shadowing



# Experience

- In Shelter Medicine, Brianna is often preparing different treatments and filling prescriptions. Some days she also is able to shadow a veterinarian as they do exams, or help bathe, or collect samples from the animals.
- Brianna has also socialized with the animals in this department. For example, Newman and Romney, both shown on the last slide, were both in pretty bad condition when they came to PAWs. Both were found to eat and drink more when someone was with them. So it was important they had socialization so they could stay nourished enough to heal. While Romney immediately warmed up to Brianna, Newman barely moved or acknowledged her. With a slow introduction and a few pets Newman eventually purred and took a few bites of food.

# Spay/Neuter Clinic



- **Learning Objective:**  
Understand PAW's procedures for surgery and post-surgery
- **Tasks:**
  - Sanitize medical instruments and create surgery packs
  - help animals recover from surgery
  - prepare vaccinations
  - assisting staff with supply preparation and paperwork

# Experience

- In the Spay and Neuter Clinic, Brianna has been working in Recovery. Recovery takes the animals after surgery and helps them come off of anesthesia and prepare them to either go home or be housed at PAWs. This involves moving and petting the animal to help them wake up quicker. While they are under their nails should be cut and ears cleaned. Recovery also sanitizes the equipment they used in surgery and prepare it to be used again.
- Brianna is often asked to help in the vaccine clinic too. There, she has learned how to prepare several different vaccines. She supplies the vets with the materials they need as they try to get through 30-40 clients in about 3 hours.



# Conclusions

What was Learned and Future Possibilities

- While at PAWs Brianna has learned how to handle and care for animals with a variety of ailments. She has also learned how to care for animals post-surgery and prepare medications.
- Her final learning objective was to develop skills and determine her comfortability in this field. While she feels confident for the skills she has gained, she still wants to continue to learn more about different careers.



# The End

**Thank You**

And Thank You to PAWs  
for the amazing  
opportunity.