It’s humbling to think of where this organization began – with various conversations on the sidelines of other conferences or meetings – and to think of where we are today.

It’s a testament to the generosity of our funders, to the strength of our board of directors, partners and volunteers, and to how deeply animal sheltering and rescue organizations value data and what we can learn from it.

2017 marked yet more key milestones for our organization, as we released our first full-year dataset, rolled out the powerful Coalition Builder tool, and brought on our first Chief Executive Officer, Sara Kent. We’re thrilled to have someone with her depth of skill and experience at the helm and are enthusiastic about the year to come.

One of my greatest hopes is that by approaching all of our opportunities and challenges with a spirit of transparency—guided by SAC’s mission to create and share the national database of shelter animal statistics, providing facts, and enabling insights that will save lives—that we’re also bringing our field closer together, sharing across county and state lines a responsibility to do the best we can for any dog and cat at risk in the United States.

Thank you for being part of that spirit and joining with us!

Warmly,
Jodi Lytle Buckman, Founding Member and Board Chair
Shelter Animals Count
TO OUR COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS, SPONSORS AND PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

We are excited to share that participation in the National Database continues to grow. We began 2017 with 4,144 participating organizations, and ended the year with an additional 708, for a total of 4,852 participants across every state in the country!

We’re encouraged to continue to sustain less than 2% of participants opting out of publicly sharing their data, demonstrating the commitment to transparency from our rescue and shelter community.

Ready. Dataset. Go!
Shelter Animals Count released the first, full-year dataset last summer, including complete 2016 data records from over 2,200 groups in four interactive dashboard views.

This was followed by an even bigger and better mid-year 2017 data publish in November, which expanded to include historical data back to 2011 and data from over 3,700 organizations!
I was honored to be chosen as Shelter Animals Count’s first CEO in September, after 17 years with Petfinder.com as Director of Shelter Outreach.

As my first event, I attended the November Society of Animal Welfare Administrators Conference and enjoyed hearing from many shelters participating in Shelter Animals Count. During the workshops, Shelter Animals Count was frequently referenced by industry leaders, showing the increasingly strong role data is playing in animal welfare.

Together, with the Board of Directors, we have set forth exciting advancements for the next few years, from increasing shelter participation to facilitating data contributions and sharing the dataset to help the animal welfare community in making informed decisions.

In the coming year, I look forward to gaining more insight from industry stakeholders, shelter participants, shelter software providers, and other data-minded professionals to advance our collective interest in a complete and representative view of sheltering data in our country.

I am poised to build upon the accomplishments in 2017 and the solid groundwork laid by our dedicated board as I look ahead to an exciting 2018 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Sara Kent, Chief Executive Officer
Shelter Animals Count
The highest participation through 2017 came from these top 10 states, accounting for nearly half of total SAC membership:

1. CALIFORNIA
2. TEXAS
3. FLORIDA
4. NEW YORK
5. GEORGIA
6. TENNESSEE
7. VIRGINIA
8. ARIZONA
9. OHIO
10. NORTH CAROLINA

**Composition of Participating Organizations**

**Participation by Organization Type Through 2017**

- Government Animal Services: 15%
- Shelter with Gov. Contract: 27%
- Rescue with Gov. Contract: 10%
- Shelter without Gov. Contract: 1%
- Rescue without Gov. Contract: 7%
- Unspecified: 10%

**Annual Estimated Intake of Participants Through 2017**

- < 100: 16%
- 100 - 999: 30%
- 1,000 - 5,999: 2%
- 6,000 - 11,999: 1%
- 12,000+: 51%
2016 + 2017 Progress in the Targeted 50 Most Populous U.S. Counties

Top 50 Most Populous Counties (in rank order):

- Los Angeles
- Cook
- Harris
- Maricopa
- San Diego
- Orange
- Miami-Dade
- Kings
- Dallas
- Riverside
- Queens
- San Bernardino
- King
- Clark
- Tarrant
- Santa Clara
- Broward
- Bexar
- Wayne
- New York
- Philadelphia
- Alameda
- Middlesex
- Suffolk
- Sacramento
- Bronx
- Nassau
- Palm Beach
- Cuyahoga
- Hillsborough
- Allegheny
- Oakland
- Franklin
- Orange
- Hennepin
- Fairfax
- Contra Costa
- Travis
- Salt Lake
- St. Louis
- Montgomery
- Pima
- Honolulu
- Westchester
- Milwaukee
- Fulton
- Mecklenburg
- Fresno
- Shelby
- Wake

Participating Organizations

- 1,122 Participating Shelters

+14% Growth Over 2016

Top 50 by Type:

- 33% Government Animal Services
- 6% Shelter with Gov. Contract
- 9% Rescue with Gov. Contract
- 49% Shelter Without Gov. Contract
- 2% Rescue Without Gov. Contract
- 1% Unspecified

Decline Since Prior Year:

- 33% 2016 Participation
- 25% 2017 Participation
- 49% 2016 Participation
- 28% 2017 Participation
- 12% 2016 Participation
- 28% 2017 Participation
- 17% 2016 Participation
- 20% 2017 Participation
- 10% 2016 Participation
- 20% 2017 Participation
- 14% 2016 Participation
- 19% 2017 Participation
- 11% 2016 Participation
- 28% 2017 Participation
- 9% 2016 Participation
- 24% 2017 Participation
- 9% 2016 Participation
- 21% 2017 Participation
- 2% 2016 Participation
- 22% 2017 Participation
- 1% 2016 Participation
- 22% 2017 Participation
- 2% 2016 Participation
- 14% 2017 Participation
- 1% 2016 Participation
- 14% 2017 Participation
- 1% 2016 Participation
- 14% 2017 Participation
We’ve continued to expand and enhance the Data Portal as a result of user feedback and our own management needs, adding data fields, increasing user functionality, incorporating dashboard alerts, adding notifications, and more.

In addition to those ongoing, continuous improvement releases, we had a few significant launches in 2017:

The May release of the Shelter Animals Count digital platform brought with it several enhancements. We officially rolled out the Coalition Builder tool from the learnings during our beta phase, and grew use throughout the year to 58 active coalitions.

In the Data Portal, the Basic Data Matrix input form was significantly enhanced through simplifying beginning and ending counts, adding row subtotal by species, row totals by activity, and ensuring data is saved prior to users exiting the page. Additionally, the ability for organizations to run and export reports based on date range and location was introduced.

In June, we released the first, full-year dataset, including over 2,200 groups’ completed 2016 data records in four interactive dashboard views.

In November, the mid-year 2017 data release was published, which expanded to include historical data back to 2011 and data from over 3,700 organizations.
Thanks to the invaluable feedback from so many of our participants in our recent user survey, our team is at work reviewing and prioritizing further enhancements to deliver more ease and value in the year ahead!

Some common themes we heard that we’re assessing (some of which were already in progress):

- Further integration with shelter software providers
- Evolving the public data dashboards to increase ease of use and visualization
- Enhancing the Basic Data Matrix input form to minimize entries of “zero” and carry forward prior ending inventory to the following month
- Introducing more webinars, tutorials and success stories on data features and use

We are so appreciative for the high response and engagement level to the survey. We’re pleased to learn our participants value SAC membership, are finding it easy to report data, are sharing it with their community and using it to make decisions for their organizations!
We implemented the Summer 2017 Data Drive campaign on August 15, in preparation for our mid-year data publish. The campaign was scheduled to run through August 28, but we extended it to September 5 in consideration of those rescues/shelters impacted by Harvey and relief efforts.

The campaign was successful in increasing groups with complete data by 83%, as well as generating over 150 new registrations. Thanks to our campaign grant sponsor, PetSmart Charities, $25,000 in grants were awarded to the following organizations:

- **Grand Prize: $7,500 Grant**
  San Diego Humane Society

- **1st Prize: $5,000 Grant**
  Tulsa Animal Welfare

- **2nd Prize: $2,500 Grants**
  Dragon Dream Team Rescue, New Beginnings for Animals, and The Feral Companion

- **3rd Prize: $500 Grants**
  Black Dog Animal Rescue, Inc., Darby & Gracy’s Dog Rescue, HALO Animal Rescue, Independent Cat Society, Operation Warm & Cozy Inc., Purrfect Friends Cat Rescue, Save A Purrfect Cat Rescue, Seal Beach Animal Care Center, Sonoma Humane Society, and Whitman County Humane Society

*Thanks to all for making this another successful Data Drive!*
One Team. One Vision. That’s the motto of our diverse board of directors, leaders and stakeholders.

Our work is governed by 16 Board Members and supported by an additional seven Board Advisors who bring particular skills and expertise to our work. Our total list of actively engaged associations, academic institutions and national, regional and local organizations is below.

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
ANIMAL HUMANE SOCIETY
ASSOCIATION OF SHELTER VETERINARIANS
BEST FRIENDS ANIMAL SOCIETY
HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE PIKES PEAK REGION
HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES
MADDIE’S FUND
NATIONAL ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PET POPULATION
PETCO FOUNDATION
PETHEALTH
PETSMART CHARITIES
SOCIETY OF ANIMAL WELFARE ADMINISTRATORS
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE
WISCONSIN HUMANE SOCIETY
Chief Executive Officer, Sara Kent, joined the team in September 2017 from Petfinder.com, where she served as Director of Shelter Outreach. Sara brings over 17 years of animal welfare leadership, with a particular interest in shelter and rescue communications, program management and technology development.

In addition to bringing Sara on as CEO, Marie Abbondanza accepted our offer of full-time Data Manager in December, after having supported SAC for nearly two years as a contractor and service support to our participant community.

Join us in welcoming Sara and Marie!
2017 was a strong year financially for Shelter Animals Count as we continued to receive support from our national partners:

- American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- Best Friends Animal Society
- Maddie’s Fund
- PETCO Foundation
- PetSmart Charities, Inc.

We were thrilled to also welcome new funders in 2017:

- Spring Point Partners
- Dr. Scholl Foundation
- Society of Animal Welfare Administrators
- Adopt-a-Pet

We are excited to see the momentum, growth and wide-spread interest in this groundbreaking work, and want to thank you again for the participation, trust, support and generosity that is making it all happen. Together, we are turning data into life!
“We use data to drive our strategy, planning, resources, decisions, etc. It helps us measure ourselves against others, and it helps us establish goals, standards, etc.”

“I believe very strongly that all shelters have a responsibility to report data as an industry. This is an extremely important tool for all of us, and we need to use it and encourage others to do the same.”

“We track our progress and make goals for improvement based on these numbers.”

“We love SAC ... it has helped us tremendously.”

“Our participation helps to contribute to the animal welfare industry with our own numbers and to see what the real data is across the country. Plus, to get more of an idea of what is happening locally.”

“We believe this is a critically important tool for the field of rescue and sheltering and adoption!”

“Shared data under one platform (and format) is imperative to making changes in animal welfare throughout the country.”

- From the Shelter Animals Count User Survey, December 2017