



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Montgomery County

Program Title: Animal Care and Adoption Center - Surgery Wing

Program Category: Regional Collaboration

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Angela M. Hill

Title: Deputy County Administrator/CFO

Signature: *Angela M Hill*

VACo Achievement Award Nomination: ACAC Surgical Wing

Award Category: Regional Collaboration

Executive Summary (1 page):

In general, Montgomery County, Virginia, strives to foster collaboration throughout the community and surrounding areas in a variety of ways. Public-private partnerships, as well as strong partnerships with other surrounding localities and agencies is the norm. As a result, the leader and staff at the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center (ACAC) work with the community daily to build strong relationships in order to not only care for the animals at the ACAC, but also to help the community through various programs like their pet food pantry for those who may find themselves in need of some extra help in caring for their own pet.

When the ACAC was built in 2017, there was a vision to do as many things in-house as possible when caring for animals housed there. However, it was up to Montgomery County staff to work on relationships and partnerships to help bring that vision to reality. A direct result of the hard-work and dedication of the ACAC staff is the opening of the surgical suite at the ACAC. Staff worked to collaborate with the leadership and faculty at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine (VMCVM) in order to find a path that was mutually beneficial and provided care for the animal at the ACAC. As a result, more than 700 exams and treatments, as well as 430 surgeries have been conducted in house at the ACAC by supervised VMCVM students since September 2022.

In addition to providing the animals a less stressful experience by eliminating the transportation to and from area clinics for treatment and the time of staff to schedule and transport the animals for necessary care and surgery, VMCVM students are gaining invaluable hands-on experience with the opportunity to provide care to animals under the supervision of veterinarians and licensed veterinary technicians. Finally, this mutually beneficial partnership and program has also provided a significant cost savings to Montgomery County.

Brief Overview (2-3 paragraphs):

In September 2022, the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center (ACAC) partnered with the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine (VMCVM) to help make necessary treatment and surgery for animals a little easier, as well as beneficial for all involved. Students at the VMCVM now provide free medical exams, surgeries and treatments for cats and dogs at the ACAC. This allows the VMCVM students to practice hands-on experience in a shelter environment as they care for animals under the supervision of two veterinarians and one licensed veterinary technician. This also allows the animals to receive care at the ACAC instead of undergoing the stress of being transported to and from local veterinarian clinics.

Finally, this allows employees of the ACAC to spend time working on site instead of scheduling and transporting stressed animals between the ACAC and area veterinarian clinics. Since September 2022, 430 surgeries have been conducted at the ACAC by supervised VMCVM students. In addition, the cost to Montgomery County for each surgery is now approximately \$28. Prior to the surgical suite opening at the ACAC, the average cost to Montgomery County for spay and neuter surgery was \$68 for cats and \$83 for dogs.

The Challenge:

Prior to September 2022, cats and dogs at the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center (ACAC) had to visit local veterinarian clinics in order to receive care. This was challenging for all involved: the staff at the ACAC had to schedule appointments with area clinics and arrange to transport the animals to and from the clinic for care and surgery and it was stressful for the animals to be transported for care. Meanwhile, students at the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine (VMCVM) were seeking invaluable educational opportunities under the supervision of veterinarians and licensed veterinary technicians.

In an effort to both prevent additional stress on the animals in the care of the ACAC by transporting them to and from a clinic for treatments and surgery and to save Montgomery County money, the staff at the ACAC partnered with the VMCVM. In doing so, students at the VMCVM receive hands-on experience in a shelter environment as they provide basic physical exams and husbandry, as well as spay and neuter surgeries and after care to animals at the ACAC at the cost of supplies for the treatment and surgeries to Montgomery County.

The Solution:

This mutually beneficial collaboration between by the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine (VMCVM) and the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center (ACAC), allows the nine to 10 students who participate in the Shelter Medicine Rotation under the supervision of two veterinarians and one licensed veterinary technician to receive hands-on experience in a shelter environment. This rotation allows students to provide basic physical exams and husbandry as well as spay and neuter surgeries and after care to the cats and dogs housed at the ACAC. These invaluable educational opportunities for VMCVM students also provide a cost savings to Montgomery County because the animals receive medical exams, surgeries and treatments at only the cost of the supplies. The surgical suite equipment was primarily supplied by the VMCVM. All the consumables for the surgeries (suture material, Oxygen, gauze etc.) are supplied by Montgomery County.

When the ACAC was built in 2017, there was a vision to do as many things in-house as possible when caring for animals housed there. However, it was up to Montgomery County staff to work on relationships and partnerships to help bring that vision to reality. An operational surgical suite at the ACAC was yet another step in providing high-quality care to animals housed at the ACAC. The first surgeries took place on September 14, 2022. Since then, 430 surgeries have been performed by supervised VMCVM students at the ACAC. Since opening, the suite has facilitated 95% of the spay and

neuter surgeries for the ACAC's adoptable animals. In addition, about 700 treatments or exams have been conducted by VMCVM students on ACAC animals since September.

Program Cost:

The cost savings has been significant. Prior to September 14, 2022, the cost for having the animals fixed at a local spay and neuter clinic was on average \$68 for cats and \$83 for dogs. Now, the cost to Montgomery County for each surgery is approximately \$28. The collaboration has even allowed the ACAC to keep animal adoption fees low.

The Results:

Since the surgical suite at the Montgomery County Animal Care and Adoption Center (ACAC) became operational in September of 2022, 430 surgeries have been performed by supervised Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine students. As a result, the suite has facilitated 95% of the spay and neuter surgeries for the ACAC's adoptable animals.

Pictures of Surgical Suite:

