

Mapping The Career Path No One Told **You** About

Katherine Shenar, San Diego Humane Society
Jim Tedford, Society of Animal Welfare Administrators

New England Federation Animal Welfare Conference **April 2017**







Who are **we** anyway?



EVP/Chief of Staff
San Diego Humane Society

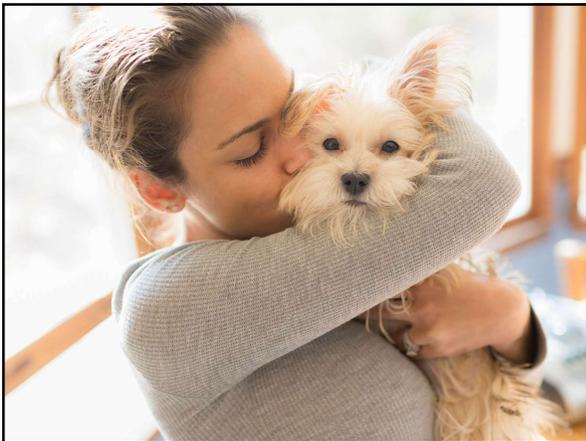


President/CEO
Society of Animal Welfare Administrators

OUR MISSION

SAWA is a professional network that develops and promotes industry best practices, cultivates collaboration, and brings out the best in animal welfare leaders.











Name That **Mentor**

- Who in your life has been a true coach to you?



Close Your Eyes...

Do you have a **mentor**?

- What did they do to boost your career and how has that experience changed you?



Let's talk a little bit about **our** industry

- Radical change that happens s..l..o....w.....l.....y
- Codified field
- Emotional intelligence
- Counter-intuitive
- Really not about animals



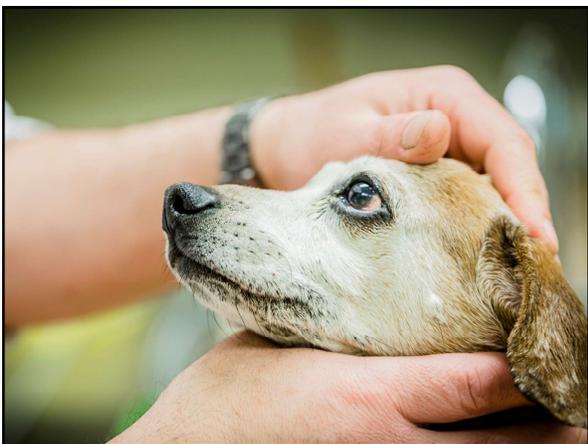




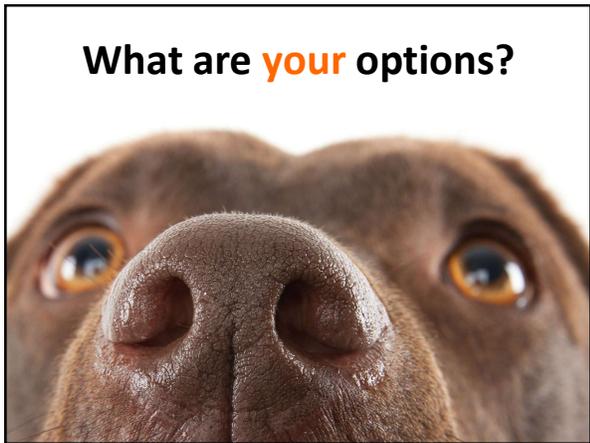












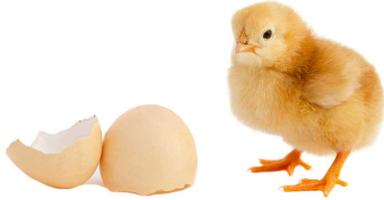
What are your options?

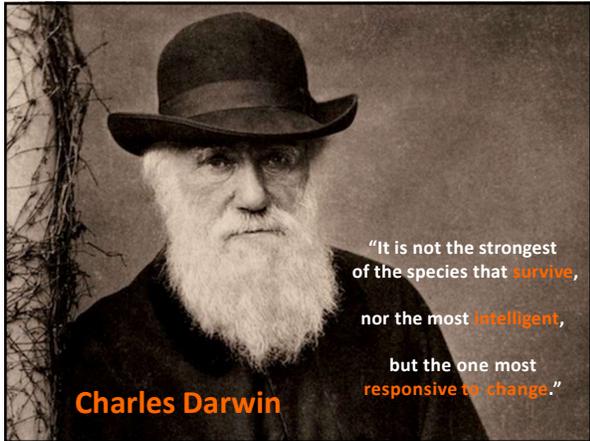
- Advocacy
- Community outreach
- Executive management
- Fundraising
- Humane law enforcement
- Marketing
- Operational management
- Veterinary medicine
- Other?



What are **your** options?

- Coming into the industry.... what you **bring**
- What you **take** from the industry





We Asked Our **Friends** To Share Their Stories



Jan Chipperfield, DVM

- Started in 1986 at age 23 as a shelter attendant because I needed a job and wanted to work with animals
- Has worked in the public and private sector
- Went to veterinary school in her late-30s
- Surprised by the emotional and physical fatigue, the ignorance of the public about the role of animal welfare
- Counter intuitive: continually amazed at the number of "experts" who have no idea what they are talking about and the level of animosity that emanates from them.
- Biggest challenge: the floods of 1993 (midwest) – I never worked so hard in my life
- Lessons learned: to love and hate my job and love and hate people
- Advice: get more sleep, exercise, take less of the job home and, it's not your fault
- Acquire: stress management, interpersonal skills, correct animal handling and behavior.
- Advice: Take your time, find your fit and, above all follow your passion. Don't expect to get rich but do expect to have too many pets.



Jan Chipperfield, DVM
Owner, Family Animal Hospital

Jennifer Brehler

- Started in 1997 at age 25
- Has worked at 4 animal care organizations after serving in the military
 - Stumbled upon an open position and needed employment
- Started as Animal Care & Adoption Counselor
- Has served as Executive Director, Interim President, and now Vice President at one of the largest humane societies in the nation
- Lessons: it's about helping people and especially people in need
- Favorite program: safety net programming so that people who need the help can get it
- Advice: get an education and learn everything you can



Vice President
San Diego Humane Society

Sharon Harvey

- Entered the field at age 45
- Worked at 2 organizations
- Surprised by how people working in the field don't get along
- Laughter is the best way to get through a hard day
- Biggest challenge: navigating an extremely challenging relationship with another animal welfare group
- Biggest surprise: hearing her team say, 'we're low on cats'
- Advice: networking with other professionals both in and out of animal welfare



President/CEO
Cleveland Animal Protective League

Scott Giacoppo

- Started in 1989 – age 23 as an animal caregiver
- Surprised by kennel stress and learned how important it was to move animals through the system quickly
- Lessons learned: after being in humane law enforcement, realized how I could get involved with advocacy, communications and management
- Lesson learned: those who are less fortunate really do love their animals and not everyone looks at animals the same way... and that's ok.
- Advice to yourself in first job: keep doing what you're doing!
- Was surprised to learn that the courts don't see animal cruelty as serious of a crime as I do.
- Learn everything you can get your hands on!
- I used to think: if you didn't love animals the way I do, or couldn't afford the best for them, then you didn't deserve them



Chief Community Animal Welfare Officer
Washington Humane Society & WARL

Monica Celizic

- Started in 1997 at age 39
- Has worked at 2 shelters
- Started as a volunteer to take meeting minute notes at Board meetings and then hired on to assist the President
- Biggest lesson is that you have to find your own work-life balance because it is possible to care 'too much'
- Biggest challenge: dealing with differing philosophies and bad public relations
- Surprised: relationships between groups are not always rosy!
- Learned: that pit bulls are not categorically bad dogs and that people who surrender their pets aren't bad people
- Best advice: keep your eye on the goal and don't be discouraged when you feel like you aren't making progress
- Acquire: ability to delegate, see the big picture, and read financial statements! Sit on cross-functional work teams so you understand all aspects of the business.



Vice President,
Strategic Initiatives & Administration
Atlanta Humane Society

Gary Weitzman, DVM, MPH, CAWA

- Started in 1989 at age 29 as a veterinarian and wanted to work with animals since age 6; had his own private practice
- Has worked/volunteered at 4 different animal shelters
- This job isn't about loving animals – it's about problem solving – all day long!
- Lessons learned: many people aren't able to care for their pets properly – you learn that in both vet practice and sheltering. I remember the first time someone came to me to euthanize their dog because they didn't want to treat him. Behavior assessments – have always looked at them with some skepticism now I feel vindicated that we don't know everything we think we do. Counter intuitive: how wrong it can be to believe in what you think you know. Animal people are not aligned.
- Biggest challenge: a volunteer revolt by 11 volunteers. Made me realize that you can't please everyone.
- Advice: It's a complicated world, don't judge and try to move the needle.
- At the time, they didn't offer a shelter medicine residency – I would have done it!
- Acquire: HR knowledge, diplomacy, and leadership skills that no one has enough of! Wisdom would have been good!



President and CEO
San Diego Humane Society

Julie Morris

- Started in 1978 at age 23 – 38 years in the field and she had only planned to stay one year!
- Was in Ph.D. program in Psychobiology but fell head over heels in love with sheltering
- 4 animal organizations
- Surprised by: judgmental staff and volunteers; mindset that public is bad; how hard it was to adopt an animal
- Started working in the shelter (cleaning, feeding, adoptions, etc.)
- Biggest challenge: learning that we were doing things wrong when it came to adoption – that we were turning people away
- Lessons Learned: public isn't the enemy and people need help. We were over protecting the animals instead of taking a risk. Only way to help animals is to help people!
- Wasn't prepared to handle: Board politics and fundraising
- Acquire: Communication and management skills and problem solving and patience!



Senior Vice President, ASPCA
Community Outreach

Industry Specific Road Blocks

- Board of Supervisors/City Council/Board of Directors
- Well-intended volunteers
- Burn Out
- Divergent Philosophies
- Social Media
- Financial Resources
- The “expert factor”



Words of Wisdom

- *Never stop talking and LISTENING.*
- *Hold an argument with yourself every day on the pros and cons of what you are doing*
- *Surround yourself with as many top people as you can*
- *Look for talent*
- *Don't be afraid to get rid of staff who are in the way of progress*
- *Don't be afraid of failure – it is called trial by error, not trial by success*



Words of Wisdom

- *This business is about people just as much as it is about animals.*
- *The passion of your workforce makes them your greatest asset and sometimes your "weakest link".*
- *Negative thinking impedes progress. "It rarely occurs to me that we can't accomplish what we set out to do."*
- *Good judgment comes from experience. Experience comes from bad judgment.*



Our Professional Association (SAWA)

- Society of Animal Welfare Administrators
 - More than 1,000 members all working in our field
 - Mentorship and benefit of learning from others
 - Best practices
 - Linked-In Discussion Groups
 - Social Media
 - Website filled with resources
 - Current open positions throughout the industry for when you're ready for the next step in your career path



