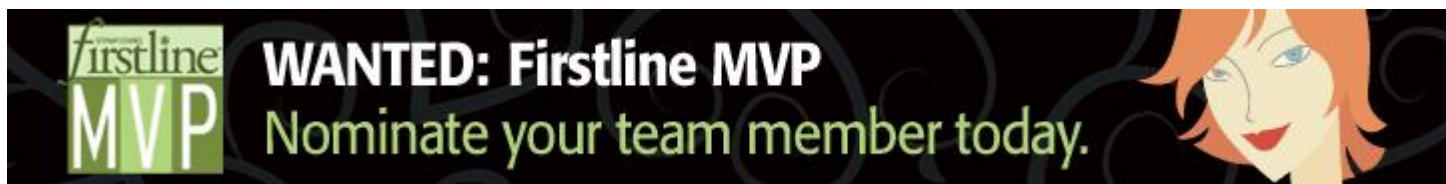




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Wednesday, Jul 26, 2006

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Ready, set, volunteer!

Aug 1, 2006
By: Paige Phillips, RVT
Firstline



Are you looking for a chance to help pets and people in need? Volunteering is a great way to help others and develop your own skills. Consider some of these ideas to reach out to the people and animals in your own community.

- Offer care for K9 police programs. The police use their K9 team to track lost persons or fleeing suspects, search for discarded or hidden evidence, detect illegal drugs, search buildings, and help protect officers. Contact your local department and offer to take care of K9s in the field and give them a clean bill of health. You can donate general, emergency, or specialty services



Paige Phillips, RVT, is the director of nursing at the Veterinary Specialty Hospital of the Carolinas in Cary, N.C.

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for your local K9 officer program.

- **Donate to charitable funds.** For example, our practice matches contributions for Ashley's Angel Fund, a nonprofit organization that provides financial assistance to dogs with life-threatening conditions. And the Zach Memorial, administered through Ashley's Angel Fund, provides financial assistance to the families of dogs with cancer.

- **Work with your local animal shelter.** Many shelters need educated ambassadors for adopt-a-thons, community events, and regular shifts. The benefits: You raise awareness about your practice and the shelter, enjoy opportunities for hands-on experience, improve quality of life for shelter animals, and increase the adoption rate for homeless pets.

- **Partner with local groups to create career opportunities for people with disabilities.** Could you use a dog walker or someone to help in the kennels? You can expand your pool of qualified employees to meet your workplace demands, strengthen relations with your community, and enhance your practice's reputation.

Helping in your community is a great way to give back to clients who support your hospital and meet people who share your interests. So choose your path and start volunteering.

Paige Phillips, RVT, is the director of nursing at the Veterinary Specialty Hospital of the Carolinas in Cary, N.C. Phillips is also the winner of the 2006 *Firstline* MVP award, sponsored by Virbac's C.E.T. University. Please send questions or comments to firstline@advanstar.com

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