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**Animal-Assisted Therapy Expert to Speak at 2014 Forum**

*Dr. Aubrey Fine to Emphasize How Animals Help Humans Heal*

COLUMBUS, Ohio (Jan. 16, 2014) - Dr. Aubrey Fine, an expert in the field of animal-assisted therapy (AAT), will be one of several prominent speakers at the Animals for Life Foundation (AFL) 2014 Forum on April 9 in Cincinnati. Fine’s presentation, “The Places We Have Been and Will Go: Conceptualizing Human-Animal Interaction in Homes and Therapy,” ties to one of the Forum’s overarching themes - how animals help humans heal.

As a licensed psychologist, Fine’s work focuses on treating children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disabilities and developmental disorders and improving parent-child relations through the power of human-animal interaction.

“I think the Forum is going to be a great venue to share with like-minded individuals and other individuals who are very interested in understanding the human-animal bond and demystifying why connections work in regards to animal-assisted therapy,” said Fine. “I have lots of aha moments to share, and my experiences will open people’s eyes to alternative options when it comes to the many uses of therapy animals.”

Originally from Montreal, Canada, Fine is no stranger to Ohio. He earned his graduate degree from the University of Cincinnati in 1982. Currently, Fine is a professor at California State Polytechnic University and has received numerous awards for his excellence in and dedication to teaching, leadership, animals and community engagement.

When presenting at events like the Forum, Fine draws on his experiences to inspire and inform others, having given motivational and educational presentations around the world.

“Wherever you go, you can learn from meeting new connections and talking with people that have similar interests and recognize the human-animal bond has diverse purposes,” said Fine. “Our relationship with animals has changed during the last 50 years from what people saw as property to companionship and friendship to another member of the family, so the human-animal bond has become more widely accepted.”

Fine, also a notable author on AAT subject matter, will be releasing a new book, *Our Faithful Companions: The Importance We All See in Companion Animals*, just prior to the Forum in late March. Fine has also authored the most widely accepted book on the subject, *The Handbook on Animal-Assisted Therapy*, which is now in its third edition, and writes a monthly column for *Dog Fancy Magazine*.

“Forum participants will learn a lot from Dr. Fine and will hopefully gain a better understanding of animal-assisted therapy and its endless possibilities,” said David White, AFL’s executive director. “We’re really excited to have him as a part of the program this year since he is such a strong proponent of the human-animal bond.”

Fine will be joined at the Forum by *New York Times* best-selling author Jon Katz, human-animal interaction expert Dr. Sandra Barker and Karen Rosa of the American Humane Association’s Los Angeles-based Film & TV Unit. A panel of speakers will also discuss human-animal interactions on livestock farms. In addition, two of AFL’s 2013 grant recipients, Bittersweet Farms and Read to Roo, will share their human-animal bond stories with attendees.

The 2014 Forum will be held at the Radisson Cincinnati North and the all-day program will include continental breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. Attendees can save 25 percent by registering before March 19 at [aflforum2014.eventbrite.com](http://www.aflforum2014.eventbrite.com). The deadline to register is April 2.

Additionally, the Radisson Cincinnati North is offering a special conference rate of $99 per room for the evening of April 8. To make your reservation, contact the Radisson at 513-771-2080 or visit [www.radisson.com/animalsforlife](http://www.radisson.com/animalsforlife). Reservations must be made with the hotel by March 9 to receive this special group rate for the Forum.

The Animals for Life Foundation is a non-profit organization that celebrates the human-animal bond and the many ways animals bring quality to human life. It was established in 2009 and has granted more than $140,000 to programs that aim to improve the human-animal bond, including a therapy dog program for children with autism, a local foods event and a career program for students interested in animal professions. For more information on the Foundation, go to [www.aflfoundation.org](http://www.aflfoundation.org/) or [www.facebook.com/animalsforlifefoundation](http://www.facebook.com/animalsforlifefoundation).

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