

## **Wags & Tales Reading Program** **Volunteer Job Description**

### **School Reading Program**

In early 2003, the Broward County Public Schools approved a partnership agreement with the Humane Society of Broward County to facilitate the Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) Program, Wags & Tales.

Wags & Tales is a research based reading motivation program for kindergarten through fifth grade. Certified AAT dogs and their handlers visit students at selected schools to help strengthen reading skills.

This program enables children to read an age-appropriate short story of their choice to an AAT dog. The intent of the program is to make reading fun and boost the child's confidence in reading out loud. Children are selected by the reading specialists at participating schools.

### **Orientation & Training**

- Volunteers interested in this program must attend the general HSBC Volunteer Orientation.
- Volunteers must attend the AAT pre-requisite class.
- Volunteers and dogs must attend an AAT advanced obedience class.
- Volunteers and dogs will be evaluated for this program.
- Volunteers and dogs will attend a specialized training session for the Wags & Tales Reading program.

\*All orientations and training sessions are held at the Humane Society of Broward County.

### **Qualifications**

To participate in the Broward County Public Schools Wags & Tales Reading program, you will need to have flexible hours during the morning and early afternoon when school is normally in session.

The baseline criteria for dogs include, but are not limited to the following:

- Must be over one year old
- Must be spayed/neutered
- Must be current on all required vaccinations
- Must be non-aggressive in all situations
- Must be non-aggressive with other animals and humans
- Must enjoy being around children of all ages, genders and ethnic backgrounds
- Must be interested in people of all ages
- Must be well behaved and know all basic obedience commands
- Must be able to maintain a sit/down stay for long periods of time
- Must pass the Humane Society of Broward County's AAT Evaluation in order to be certified for the program

The baseline criteria for volunteers include, but are not limited to the following:

- Volunteers must be good with children with unlimited patience and tolerance
- Teaching skills are preferred but not required
- Good listening skills required
- Good oral and communication skills required
- Ability to travel to assigned location
- Ability to commit to program for a full year
- Ability to work at assigned school four times per month
- All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age or older to participate

If you are interested in this unique and fun program, please contact Marni Bellavia, Animal Assisted Therapy Manager at 954.266.6853 or email [mbellavia@hsbroward.com](mailto:mbellavia@hsbroward.com).