

**Media Release**

Contact: Reed Coleman
Outreach/Communication
1945 NW Pettygrove, Portland, OR 97209
Direct: 503.535.3380
Cell: 971.404.5501
rcoleman@dovelewis.org

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DoveLewis Helps Therapy Animal Handlers Put Their Best Feet Forward

The 7th Annual DoveLewis NW Regional Animal Assisted Therapy Conference will address public policy and perception when it comes to the way human-animal therapy teams are accepted, rejected, or otherwise scrutinized in our society. This workshop aims to examine expectations, stress, behavior, arousal and why we feel our animals let us down or better yet, why *we* let *them* down in high-pressure environments.

Dr. Candace Croney, assistant professor of animal behavior and bioethics in the department of Animal Sciences at Oregon State University and Judy Flanery, a certified dog trainer for more than 14 years, will discuss behaviors - and the fixes - for a variety of circumstances in which therapy teams find themselves.

Issues to be addressed with include pulling on the leash, rushing other dogs or people, the potential for developing leash aggression, handling crowds, rough handling by children, disabled persons or seniors, direct eye-to-eye contact and other species distractibility.

WHAT: The DoveLewis NW Regional Animal Assisted Therapy Conference

WHEN: Sunday, April 6, 2008 ; 9am to 4pm

WHERE: Oaks Park Pavilion, 7805 SE Oaks Park Way, Portland

**TICKETS: \$40-DLAATE volunteer, DoveLewis volunteer, or student
\$50-General Admission**

More information about this conference is available on our [website](#).

The DoveLewis Animal Assisted Therapy and Education (DLAATE) program places human-animal teams in a variety of settings, from hospitals and dentists offices to schools and libraries. Research has shown that animals help humans by acting as social bridges, reducing blood pressure, directing thoughts outward, and serving as strong motivators for accomplishing difficult tasks. An animal assisted therapy team might take a walk with an adolescent struggling with difficult issues. Another team might motivate a patient recovering from a stroke to reach farther, or calm a child during a dental procedure. By offering friendship and warm touch, animals help alleviate loneliness, lower blood pressure and reduce stress. Their presence brings a sense of normalcy to institutional settings.

DoveLewis is Portland's 24-Hour Emergency and ICU Animal Hospital, offering advanced veterinary care in a state-of-the-art facility in Northwest Portland. DoveLewis also shares several 100% donor-funded programs with the community including one of America's largest volunteer-based animal blood banks, an award-winning animal assisted therapy program, a nationally recognized pet loss support program offering five free group therapy sessions each month, 24-hour stabilizing care for lost, stray and wild animals and financial assistance for low income families and owners of abused pets.