

Pawsitive Healing 2018 Workshop Featured Speakers



Michelle McCarthy, K9 Homeschooling

Michelle McCarthy is Owner and Director of Training for K9 Home Schooling, which provides force free/clicker training methods in southeast Michigan since 1999.

Michelle is a nationally recognized Certified Dog Behavior Consultant and Certified Therapy Animal Consultant with the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC).

Michelle developed and teaches a Therapy Dog Training Program in Southeast Michigan, Therapy Dog Prep School. This program is unlike any other class in that it is geared specifically towards the training needs of those pursuing Therapy Dog

Testing. Michelle's expertise in the field of Animal Assisted Therapy allows her to prepare canines and humans for evaluation and testing by national therapy dog organizations.

Michelle raises and trains Therapy Dogs who work in a variety of medical settings across the United States. She works with clinicians and educators to help them prepare their dogs for work in Animal Assisted Play Therapy, Animal Assisted Interventions and Animal Assisted Activities in a variety of settings.

In 2005 Michelle worked closely with the staff of Chelsea Community Hospital to develop a Therapy Dog Program officially launched in September 2005. For 13 years she has served as their Consultant for Testing and Screening of new Therapy Dog Teams. Michelle and her Registered Therapy Dogs Leo, Faye, Carmine, Bolt, Selah and Enzo regularly made visits to Chelsea Community Hospital where they visited patients on various units as well as participating in Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy sessions with patients.

Michelle lives in Chelsea, Michigan with her husband and Labrador Retrievers Hendrix and Dillon.



**Erika E. Erlandson, MD and Bolt,
Therapy Dog**

Erika Erlandson, MD is a Physiatrist who practices at the Children's Hospital of Michigan in Detroit, MI. A Physiatrist, also known as Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Physician, is a doctor who specializes in caring for people with impairments and disabilities with the aim of helping people achieve their greatest functional ability and quality of life.

This includes maximizing independence in mobility, activities of daily living, and communication. Erika works on an interprofessional team both in the inpatient and outpatient setting with patients and their families. One of the members of her team includes Bolt, her therapy dog.

Bolt started working as a Therapy Dog in 2014 at Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital in Lexington, KY on the Stroke Unit after he completed his training with Michelle. He became and integrated part of the rehabilitation team. He has helped many stroke survivors regain their independence as well as aided in the healing of children and teaching them new skills. When he is not working Bolt loves to play on the farm with Erika and the rest of his furry four legged family.



**Janice Collins Shamraj, CTRS, St. Joseph
Mercy Chelsea Hospital**

Employed at SJMC since 1989 as a Recreational Therapist, I currently work in the Therapy Services Department on the inpatient Rehabilitation and Head Pain Units. I provide group and individual programs that help patients develop social, physical, cognitive and emotional skills using recreation programs. I co-founded our Therapy Dog Program with Trainer, Michelle McCarthy in 2005. We currently have 14 volunteers with their 12 Registered Therapy Dogs visiting 4 Units in group based therapy, mostly assisted by Recreational Therapists. I'm proud to say, thanks to Michelle, we've had 33 Therapy Dog

Teams volunteer with us over the past 13 years. As a cat lover, I realize that dogs are

uniquely qualified to provide this special service to our patients who have moderate to severe medical challenges. The dogs provide "pure happiness" to our patients, (and to staff and visitors, too!)



Beth Albano, O.T., Rainbow Rehabilitation Center

Beth Albano has been working as an Occupational Therapist for the past 25 years. Beth has gained her experience in the OT field by working in acute care, pediatrics, school settings and setting up programs in China while living abroad. Beth is currently working at Rainbow Rehabilitation Center with traumatic brain injury and spinal cord injury patients.

Opus began his Therapy Dog Career in 2014 after completing training with Michelle McCarthy and K9 Home Schooling. He and Beth made visits to the Head Pain Unit at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Chelsea and a local school where Opus worked as a R.E.A.D. Therapy Dog. Opus is now working at Beth side at Rainbow Rehab and has opened up a whole new approach for treatment and motivation for patients.



Kit Fuller, MSW, Private Practice

Kit Fuller is a social worker with a private practice in Ann Arbor, where she and her dogs counsel kids, teens, and adults. She is a lifelong dog person and Michigander. Her current co-therapists are Pippa, 10, and Pippa's son Leo, 6. Pippa and Kit started taking classes with Michelle, and realized they could probably help more people by working together (with the added benefit of Kit getting to take her dog to work!). Both Pippa and

Leo have taken most of Michelle's classes. They went on to study at the International Institute for Animal Assisted Play Therapy Studies. This program teaches human and dog teams to work together with mutual trust and respect, and to help clients by modeling this relationship and inviting them to join in through play and sharing thoughts and feelings. At their practice, each client is greeted with a smile and lots of wags, putting most clients at ease much more quickly than Kit could accomplish as a mere human.

