



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –

Media contact:
Emily Mannel
emily@epicprgroup.com
703-299-3404

APDT Makes Dog Training a Class Act

Association of Pet Dog Trainers launches New Training Certification Program

GREENVILLE, S.C. – JUNE 24 2011 – A new program to provide basic training and obedience skills for dog owners was launched today by The Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT). The program, aptly named Canine Life and Social Skills (C.L.A.S.S.), uses positive reinforcement techniques to teach proper behavior and manners, enabling pet owners to take their dogs to public places such as outdoor patios, hotels and retail stores that allow pets.

C.L.A.S.S. will teach pet owners the value of practical training skills, such as how to introduce a dog to strangers and teach basic behaviors. To begin the program, pet owners sign up at APDT's website, which provides resources to locate a locally certified dog trainer. The dog and the owner then attend a 6-8 week program. At the end of the C.L.A.S.S. the dog is evaluated by a professional dog trainer and can achieve a certification of B.A., M.A., or Ph.D., depending on the level of assessment they go through with their dog.

"This program educates pet owners and gives them the tools they need to not only provide good canine manners, but include the dog in more types of activities," said APDT Executive Director Mychelle Blake. Without the proper training, these leisure activities can be stressful for both dog and owner. A well-trained dog is a happier dog." Recent research has found that using aggressive training methods can increase the potential for development of aggressive or fearful behavior in dogs. The C.L.A.S.S program focuses on using positive reinforcement when training to create a harmonious relationship between dog and owner.

The C.L.A.S.S curriculum is based on using fun games and exercises to test and develop real life skills and manners for dogs. Trainers are invited to submit their own games and exercises to the curriculum on the C.L.A.S.S website. "It's not just dogs that benefit from the program," said APDT board member Cathy Bruce. "The C.L.A.S.S games make the program an enjoyable experience for instructors as well. The exercises are submitted by APDT members, so we're very involved in the process."

C.L.A.S.S. Evaluators are Full and Professional Level APDT members. Evaluators administer C.L.A.S.S. assessments and score performances of teams, and provide feedback to teams on how to improve their training skills. In order to become an Evaluator for the program, a Full or Professional level APDT member must pass a series of online tests on their training knowledge and on the rules of the program, train a minimum number of hours per year to qualify, and receive regular training on program updates.

Pet owners can register their dogs for the program on the C.L.A.S.S website. Trainers can sign up to be an instructor or an evaluator on the website as well. The cost of the program for students is less than ten dollars. For more information on C.L.A.S.S, or to sign up a student, visit www.mydoghasclass.com.

[About the Association of Pet Dog Trainers](#)



The APDT is a professional educational organization of trainers who are committed to becoming better trainers through using positive, dog friendly methods based on sound scientific principles. With over 5,000 members worldwide, the APDT provides professional dog trainers with a respected and concerted voice. The APDT promotes caring relationships between dogs and people and works to increase public awareness of dog-friendly training techniques. For more information, visit the web site at www.apdt.com.

###