

Rescued is my favorite breed

By: Emily Boujema

You're too young for this; you're too young for that. Sometimes trying to help out animals can be difficult when you're younger. But that never stopped me growing up.

From birth, up until being eleven years old, my family only had one dog. Nonetheless, I became a dog lover and wanted to be around dogs all the time. I wanted to volunteer at the animal shelter so I could play with the animals, but our shelter did not accept adolescent volunteers for liability reasons. So I tried to volunteer at the veterinarian hospital, but once again, no volunteers were accepted for liability reasons and I was too young for a job. So I had to find alternative ways to help the animals I was so fascinated with.

For my fifth grade birthday party, I asked all my friends to bring dog food or toys or blankets to my party instead of gifts so that I could donate to our shelter. And soon after our beloved family dog passed away, my parents



Birthday party donations



My rescue dogs

decided to get me my own furry friend. My first dog came from a rescue organization three hours away from my home, and we drove the distance to get her. Soon after, we had a second dog from our local shelter. Just recently, we adopted a furless bulldog from a rescue organization that saved her from being a puppy mill dog. Our house seems to have turned into a lovable zoo filled with wagging tails and

plenty of slobber.

I started taking a 4H Veterinarian Science class so I could learn more about the health of animals and through 4H I also started showing my rescue dogs in dog shows for kids. My shelter Basset Hound took home third place in the state for Hounds, and my rescue Golden Retriever mix scored high in obedience.

When I was finally sixteen, I received a job at the veterinarian hospital as a kennel technician. After caring for the dogs and cats there, I got a different job when I was seventeen at a dog boarding facility. Although I had a great time being around dogs all the time, I felt as if I was not really benefiting dogs just by working with them. I needed to do more. So in the second half of my junior year, I decided to go through with a bigger project.

I wanted to raise a good amount of money for either the shelter or a rescue organization, but I wasn't sure how I was going to do that all on my own, and raise an adequate amount of money to make a difference. After discussing this with my parents, we came up with the idea of designing and selling my own t-shirt which not only raised money for rescue dogs, but promoted them as well. I designed a shirt with a dog composed of words that represented many different breeds, and the caption read, "Rescued is my favorite breed."



My shirt design:
Rescued is My Favorite
Breed

After doing the math, I realized I could bulk order the shirts and make back the money after a certain amount by selling them for ten dollars. After regaining the money put into the project, I could sell the shirts for one-hundred percent profit for the animals. I sold them to my friends, family friends, teachers, friends of friends, relatives, and anyone I could think of. When

I ran out of people I knew, I had to go bigger. I made flyers and hung them at the shelter and the veterinarian office, as well as local businesses downtown. Eventually I made a deal with a local rescue organization, the Bastrop Animal Rescue or BAR. I would donate my profits to their rescue, and they would allow me to use their booth at downtown festivals and events to sell and promote my shirts.

I sat at their booth and they hung my shirt at other events they attended and soon, I was finishing the last of my shirts. When I got close to the end of my shirts, I presented the Bastrop Animal Rescue with a \$250 check to help them pay for recent vet bills that were hindering the non-profit organization. I still had to sell the last handful of shirts I had left, and I later gave that money to the Bastrop Animal Rescue as well.



Donating 100% of profits to Bastrop Animal Rescue

Once I finished, I also gave my shirt design and order form to the rescue organization because they wanted to continue selling my shirt in the future for their cause.

Although I was only able to aid one rescue organization out of millions of rescues and shelters, but I believe it is just the start to something greater. Furthermore, the message of the shirt hopefully helps people realize that rescuing a dog is greater than searching for a specific breed. My rescue dogs consist of both mutts and purebreds, smart and lovable, but mostly companions and family. Adopting can not only find the perfect pet, but save a life as well. I hope to continue to spread this message.

My love for animals does not stop here. As I am about to head into college, I choose to attend Southwestern University in Georgetown because it is one of the only colleges in the entire nation that offers an Animal Behavior major. I cannot wait to go to college and learn about what I love and hopefully this education will further help me benefit animals.