



# Campaign Speech

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## **Aiding Animals Campaign Speech**

NORMAN, Oklahoma - Good afternoon, thank you for joining me today. My name is Madison Snow, and I am the founder of Aiding Animals, a local student-led volunteer program starting at the University of Oklahoma in the spring of 2022. When I came to OU, I was lacking passion. Passion for something that drove me to do something more than for myself, passion to help others, and passion to try something new and out of my comfort zone. Freshman year, I decided to join a sorority on campus, Alpha Chi Omega, and I started to get a taste of what it felt like to be involved here. I began working closely with Alpha Chi's philanthropy and quickly realized how fulfilled it made me and the people I was working alongside.

Besides looking to join the Greek community, I also came into college as a pre-veterinary medicine major, but soon realized my talents and drive lay elsewhere. Although my major changed, my love and desire for helping animals did not. In my hometown of Plano, TX I was highly involved in volunteering for Operation Kindness, a

non-profit organization focusing on helping at animal shelters. This involved walking the animals, feeding them, cleaning kennels, and lending a hand to those who worked their full time. When I decided to branch out of my comfort zone and try something new on campus apart from Greek life, my mind immediately went to helping the stray animals of Norman. I did some digging and came to find out that there is no current club focused solely on volunteering with the animal shelters here in the Norman /Oklahoma City area. I began to reflect on the memories I shared with some of my closest friends while helping at the animal shelter in Plano and decided to implement that same idea right here in our college town.

This is when Aiding Animals started to come to fruition. I wanted my peers, administrators, and the people in the Norman community to get the opportunity to become educated and give back to the animals that roam our streets on an everyday basis. Additionally, I noticed there was an opportunity to help college students work closely with similar pets to those they may have had to leave at home. It's not the most practical situation to have a large or demanding pet in a dorm or small apartment, so I wanted Aiding Animals to be an outlet for those who need it.

On average, there are roughly 6.3 million companion animals in shelters around the US, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (or ASPCA's) website. Through this new program, I aim to get the number of animals in Norman shelters down by 25% by the end of the 2022 calendar year. The goal is to obtain 15-20 constant student members who are passionate about this initiative. Additionally, approximately 920,000 shelter animals are euthanized per year. By

sending a group to the local shelters, we are agreeing to fight towards achieving the goals we have set out for ourselves.

One of the ways we as a community can help the shelter without even stepping foot inside is to raise awareness. There is this stigma that surrounds shelter animals, leading people to buy purebred animals from breeders instead. Through Aiding Animals' efforts, we hope to increase the number of adopted animals locally. Through fundraising events and initiatives to raise money locally, we can also help give supplies and necessities to shelters around our community. The biggest worldwide changes start in our own communities.

As many of us know, volunteering is one of the best ways to get involved on campus. Surrounding yourself with new peers, all working towards one goal, has a way of uniting people. I wanted to create this club as a campus-based entity to foster a place people could go to do just this. Outside of Greek life, outside of existing clubs, this is intended to be a new pool of people from different backgrounds who all bring something to the table. Through service, hours logged, and hands-on experience, one of this club's main priorities is increasing campus involvement.

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