

Nomination for Volunteer Spirit Award: Dina Hsu

Few people have dedicated themselves to helping homeless dogs like Dina Hsu. Dina volunteers for numerous local organizations, helping those dogs who need a hand on their journey to find their forever home.

Dina's primary volunteer organization is Charlie's Angels Saving Animals (CASA transport) based out of Columbia, TN. This nonprofit, established in 2021, transports homeless animals throughout Tennessee to out-of-state rescues. Charlie's Angels is vital to helping stem the overpopulation of dogs in Tennessee and has saved thousands of dogs whose lives were in serious jeopardy. Charlie's Angels (aka CASA Transport) relies on volunteers who can drive dogs, walk dogs, clean crates, and help out during health certificate days. Dina Hsu does it all! In this year alone, Dina has logged well over 200 hours for this one organization. She helps in any way that is asked of her, and more.

Dina doesn't care how tedious, dirty, smelly, time consuming or back-breaking the task is. If it needs to get done, she does it! So when there is a pile of dirty dog crates that need to be cleaned, Dina is on it. She is out there with a hose and cleanser scrubbing away, literally crawling into dog crates to get them sanitized. So for the rest of us, miraculously, there are always clean crates! And when a van of dogs needs to be driven to Ohio or Indiana, up to 6 hours each way, Dina says, "I can do it!". You say there are 30 dogs that need potty breaks? Dina comes before work, and sometimes gets permission to leave work, to help the dogs out. I can say with certainty that when others know Dina is going to be involved, there is a sigh of relief from the crowd.

What's more amazing is Dina's pleasant attitude. Dina helps without complaining. She is reliable. She is always in a good mood! She is a joy for others to be around. And she never ever seeks the limelight. She is that quiet motor in the background that keeps everything humming along but you don't even notice her, you just know that somehow everything got done and is ready to roll. Dina does the tasks that aren't fun but are necessary, and she does it all without any fanfare. Indeed, Dina truly captures the ideals of Volunteer Spirit.

I would be remiss for not mentioning that Dina volunteers for other animal related organizations. She has been a regular volunteer at Williamson County Animal Center in Franklin for years. As part of their esteemed sunrise crew, she arrives at 6:30 in the morning, to walk dogs before heading off to her full time job. She has also volunteered with ARC (Animal Rescue Corps). Every organization is fortunate to have Dina on her team, and all the dogs and the humans are all grateful for her efforts.