

CCPDT COMMUNITY UPDATE: **NEWS YOU CAN USE**



Certification Council for
Professional Dog Trainers

Executive Director's Message

Dear CCPDT Certificants,

Throughout 2023, CCPDT and its volunteer board members followed a plan focused on three key goals: strengthening certificants' professional capabilities, enhancing the CCPDT's reputation and relationships, and educating consumers about certificants' qualifications and the benefits of hiring professional certified dog trainers and behavior consultants. We took a more proactive approach to consumer education by creating opportunities to

reach a new and wider audience. We worked together to strengthen and enforce our organizational positions and policies to benefit dog trainers and their clients, and we prioritized creating new tools for certificants to connect with consumers.

Our organization is led by professionals who bring deep levels of knowledge, skills, and experience in a variety of dog training areas of study. We are dedicated to doing our best to guide our profession, respond to your needs, and make decisions that positively impact dogs and their owners. Now and always, we thank you for all you do to further the reputation of our profession.

Bradley Phifer, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KSA



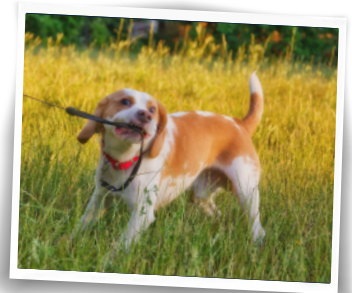
Executive Director



Marketing Communications

One of the CCPDT's strategic goals is to execute communications programs that support certificants' work and pave the way for dog owners to hire CCPDT-certified trainers and behavior consultants. The Marketing Communications Committee achieved this in several ways, including taking advantage of National Train Your Dog Month in January.

1/3
of homeowners
say neighborhood
dogs need
better training



Source: CCPDT/Wakefield Research Dog Ownership in America Survey

We created a series of social media graphics that were available to certificants to post on their social media channels to promote their businesses. The graphics included statistics from a consumer survey conducted by an independent research firm on behalf of our organization. Bradley Phifer, Executive Director, also participated in a series of **radio interviews** designed to educate the public about our profession.



Sure, your puppy's biting tendencies might seem cute for now. But as your puppy grows up, those playful nips can grow, too—into more forceful and even painful **bites**. It's important for pet parents to learn how to stop puppy biting from the get-go, to help curb nipping and nibbling on you and other people in your circle, as well as [chewing on objects around the house](#).

We talked to Dr. Carley Faughn, Ph.D., CAAB, an animal behaviorist at [Best Friends Animal Society](#) in Knaub, Utah; and Bradley Phifer, CBCC-KA, owner of [Bradley Phifer Dog Training](#) in Indianapolis, Indiana, and executive director for the [Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers](#), for advice on how to stop a puppy from biting.

The CCPDT contributed to several news articles about dog training throughout the year. Outlets and publications that featured our commentary include Business INSIDER, PetLifeRadio, NBC Radio, NBC-TV in Los Angeles, BeChewy.com, Reader's Digest, and a host of local radio stations across the country. The call-to-action for readers and listeners is to visit the CCPDT website to find a local trainer who meets their needs.

Certificant Relations

The CCPDT has 6,200 certified dog training professionals worldwide, and it's important for the organization to stay in touch with its certificant and be in tune with their needs. We introduced scholarships, addressed compliance reports, and updated the technology of the Trainer Directory to make it user-friendly for consumers by allowing trainers to add details to their listings.

During the year, we granted one-time, one-year **recertification extensions** to 29 dog trainers who requested support due to unusual or extraordinary circumstances they were facing. Five **scholarships** were awarded to candidates who met the exam eligibility requirements but faced a financial burden that prevented them from sitting for a certification exam.

The Certification Compliance Committee completed **investigations** in 20 cases where allegations of misconduct were made against a CCPDT candidate or certificant.

Digital Communications

CCPDT took several meaningful steps to improve outreach and engagement through our websites and social media channels.

The highlight of our efforts was the launch of **FetchtheAnswer.com**, a consumer-facing website that showcases guidance and tips from professional dog trainers and links to the CCPDT Trainer Directory. Fetch the Answer hosts training tip sheets written by CCPDT certifiants, promotes the benefits of hiring a certified trainer, and warns of the potential pitfalls of hiring an unqualified trainer.

CCPDT contracted with an experienced social media manager to better communicate the message of CCPDT through Facebook and Instagram. We've seen a 33% increase in engagement with consumers and the dog training community through more frequent, professional, and responsive posts.



Policies & Positions

The top of CCPDT's priority list over the last year was strengthening the organization's Remote Training Collar position statement and the Dog Training and Behavior Interventions Practice Policy. Because we represent the dog training community, our voice in the aversives conversation is important. However, even among certificants, there are extremely diverse viewpoints and beliefs about what tools and techniques are considered to be aversive.

To evolve our position, the CCPDT convened an expert panel of dog trainers, behavior consultants, and veterinary behaviorists to draft a policy and position statement that would best serve our community. Together, we reviewed the available research, discussed the issues of concern, and reviewed an opinion survey of dog trainers we fielded on the use of aversive training tools. The survey illustrated the complexity and nuances of the issues, validated the existence of a range of opinion, and gave the expert panel a more solid foundation for discussions. The updated policy and position statements are in their final review stage and will be published later this year.

Industry Advocacy

This past year brought significant progress for the **Alliance for Professionalism in Dog Training**, the organization co-founded by the CCPDT and APDT to advocate for dog trainer licensure nationwide in the U.S. There was legislative activity in three states, California, Illinois, and New Jersey, where we hope the first statewide licensure legislation ever will be passed later this year (2023).



— The Alliance for —
Professionalism in Dog Training

The Alliance connects with legislatures nationwide who are likely to pass local laws to protect dogs and their owners from the work of unqualified trainers. Alliance leaders participate in television interviews when local reports emerge of misconduct by a trainer – which is usually the reason legislation is under consideration. The Alliance's advocacy team also connects with state representatives to offer the assistance of the Alliance's model legislation that was reviewed and improved by the dog training community. Local professional certified dog trainers are also invited by the Alliance to participate in the legislative process in the states in which they live and work by voicing their support in-person, by email, or by Zoom to the state legislatures. This allows the state representatives to hear directly from their constituents, perhaps the most important part of passing the legislation.

You can follow the work of the Alliance on its **website**, on **Facebook**, and **YouTube**.

Moving Forward

Looking ahead to 2024, the CCPDT's focus will remain on serving professional certified dog trainers and the dog training profession with purpose and passion. Leadership will prioritize strengthening certificants' professional capabilities, enhancing the CCPDT's reputation and relationships, and educating consumers about certificants' qualifications and the benefits of hiring a professional certified dog trainer. Throughout the year, we will continue to let dog trainers know the many ways they can take advantage of CCPDT benefits and contribute to CCPDT education and marketing activities, such as writing for FetchtheAnswer.com and getting involved in professional advocacy efforts. If you have suggestions for ways we can better support you, please email bphifer@ccpdt.org.



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