

Jennifer Corona  
December 4, 2023  
Bio 407  
Dr. Alarcon

### Reflection #3 Final Thoughts

Overall, I have learned many things about animal behavior during the course of this service learning project. I thought I knew enough about dogs to be able to work with all of them but I have observed the patience it takes to work with some shy dogs. All the dogs homed at CARL come from different backgrounds and have different stories. Some of them are very reactive and some are the friendliest they can be. I have learned a few tricks on how to approach a new dog, how to leash a new dog, and how to control them as we are passing other dogs. My experience has taught me to be more open to the ideas of others. Everyone I have met has tips on how to approach certain situations and I found myself being a little internally stubborn. After my encounter with Louie however I realized that I am not as well versed as I thought I was. I was in Louie's kennel and he became a little reactive towards me after I leashed him. Although I didn't panic and was able to control him after a few minutes. There was a moment when I saw what he was doing and froze for a second blanking out on how to control him. Before Sandy got involved, I was able to control him following some of her directions. After this incident I started talking to more people and asking more questions. I realize I am a lot shyer than I thought I was in the beginning.

This experience ties into my long-term goals since working with animals has always been something I would like to do. After finishing my degree, I may like to possibly pursue a career with animals. My goal is still very vague but working with the dogs at CARL made me realize how much I enjoy it. I may like to possibly work for the LA Zoo but I have to look into it a bit

further. Since starting with CARL, I have learned the proper technique to approach a dog. I used to be one of those people that approached dogs with a hand outstretched so they could sniff it but I realize how detrimental that could be. Now I approach a dog slowly and let them approach me first. I also saw this in practice when a fellow volunteer did this with Dodger as I was sitting with him in the yard. She approached him crouched low but very slowly until he looked at her and sniffed her leg first.

It has been great working with all the volunteers and the site itself. Everyone that works at CARL and volunteers are always expressing their gratitude when they see me and other volunteers. I have worked mostly with Sandy but everyone there is so friendly and most importantly loves dogs. It makes me very happy that my time there has helped CARL in even a small way. There were weekdays where I was one of the few people there to walk the dogs and people seemed genuinely happy to see me there. It is very gratifying to help this organization run even if it was only a small role I played. I definitely will continue to volunteer as much as my time allows, especially since this organization runs on mostly volunteers and their mission is one that I am wholeheartedly behind.

Through my time volunteering I have learned that Ventura County has a lot of dog lovers that help out at CARL quite often. Although I do not live in Ventura County or near CARL, I have noticed through their site how much community involvement there is. Like the pup walk and the thrift store. There are so many places that the volunteers can show up to and their help is always appreciated and welcomed. When I first did my orientation, they ran us through which section of CARL we wanted to volunteer in. Although I only worked with the dogs, in the future, I would like to see how else I can contribute.

In my community I would like to see some efforts like the ones displayed at CARL. I live in the San Fernando Valley in Van Nuys and when I look up animal rescues not many come up and none like CARL that I have seen. I would like to see more people gather and help out animals like it is done at CARL. I think people can come together to raise awareness, funds, and volunteers to try to aid the animal crisis in my community. As I move forward my plan is to look for my own local shelter and try to help. Although I love CARL and what they stand for they have many people that are constantly showing up for the animals housed there. I would like to bring the same efforts in my community. I think I will look for a place similar to CARL in my community and volunteer there. But I will also make an effort to make it to CARL as much as I can since I love the people and the many dogs that I met there.

I think the best way to get a community together is through outreach. This can include events, newsletters, advertisements, and in this modern age social media. The biggest attraction to people my age and younger I think right now is social media like Tik Tok. Beginning a major social media presence can have a huge impact on community involvement. I have seen many examples of how the community rallies together online to bring attention to certain issues. Moving forward I think I will try to get more involved in my own community and try to be a part of the solution.