

# PARTNER HIGHLIGHT



## humane education coalition

by partner organizations - including human rights, social justice, environmental ethics, and animal protection. With collaboration at its core, the Coalition is dedicated to building a sense of community in the field of humane education and helping other organizations in the field succeed by promoting values like compassion, empathy, and respect.

Initiatives of the Coalition are carefully designed to complement existing efforts in the field rather than compete with other work being done. At the Coalition's core is a desire to avoid redundancy within the field. The very

tives that are unavailable elsewhere. While one take on the origin story of the Coalition is perhaps that it was born out of this search for efficiency— for a distinct, unduplicated role in the field—such a story would be incomplete without mention of the dedication of the Coalition's leadership. Megan credits the success of HEC to the fact that "the people involved are so passionate, experienced, and knowledgeable." It is out of these intentions that the Coalition has created a network to expand professional development opportunities, forge connections, generate funding, and build credibility for organizations within the humane education community.

By Lucy Knox  
Intern

Human Rights Educators USA

The Humane Education Coalition is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting collaboration and creative problem solving within the field of humane education. The Coalition takes a values-based, solutions-oriented, and passion-driven approach to providing services and resources to its 86 partners and affiliates who represent a diverse field of nonprofits in 22 countries. The field of humane education is grounded in a belief in cultivating compassion, empathy, and respect toward all living things. In working with their many partner organizations, the Coalition ultimately seeks to advance the field of humane education in unique and groundbreaking ways. With this goal in mind, their work takes many forms from producing a podcast to conducting policy research to supporting fledgling organizations in the field.

President and Founder of the Coalition, Megan Moon, visualizes the Coalition as a tree in which the values and practices of humane education make up the trunk which branches in the many directions represented

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first project of the Coalition was a comprehensive feasibility assessment of 175 organizations in 31 different countries, executed in an effort to further understand the landscape of work in humane education and identify the most formidable boundaries in place. This foundation, in a recognition of established work, indicates a commitment to the statement outlined in the Coalition's strategic plan that "a duplication of effort is not necessary at this time." By cultivating an intimate knowledge of what the field looks like, the Coalition is able to contribute resources and perspec-

The Coalition both recognizes existing work in humane education and pushes the field in new directions. Historically, the field of humane education was largely focused on animal protection. However, in recent years it has come to include a much broader range of fields, with particularly notable attention from higher education programs. Through their "holistic lens" and diverse list of projects, the Coalition is able to pull together various organizations under the expanding umbrella of humane education and really see the impact of this growth.

The Coalition's current projects reflect the full range of their partnerships, working within both the academic field and social movement components of humane education. One of the most long-range projects of the Coalition is the development of best practices and guiding principles that will help redefine and recognize work in the field.



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Additionally, the Coalition is developing standards for accreditation in an effort to raise the profile of those agencies in compliance with the best practices of humane education.

Research is another primary objective of the Coalition's work—currently in the works is an academic journal on humane education. The International Journal of Humane Education will be the first ever publication for exclusively peer-reviewed research in the field. The first issue is anticipated for publication in September 2019. The journal will later be accompanied by another publication—a more accessible trade magazine for humane educators. Additional research efforts by the Coalition include an ambitious and necessary joint policy assessment with the Univer-

sity of Denver investigating the state of humane education in schools across the country.

There is a Resource Toolkit available online with a valuable compilation of sources for educators. The Coalition also offers a limited number of annual grants available to help partner organizations achieve their goals in the field.

To recognize outstanding work, the Coalition bestows excellence awards upon exceptional agencies, including this year's recipient, Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers (HEART).

The Coalition also provides one on one consulting at no cost to partner organizations. It also hosts an annual virtual speaker series online for further

professional development opportunities; the Humane Summit is coming up this February.

Youthful, ambitious, and tenacious, the Coalition is right on track with the goals initially set up. Their work is taking the field in new and exciting directions while staying true to the organization's founding values. It is driven in no small part by Megan's sheer passion for humane education, as she reminds: "when have we ever seen social change without ambition?" Partnership and collaboration are integral to the Coalition's success—involvement can take many forms and is dependent on the interests of partner organizations.

To learn more about Humane Education Coalition, visit: [hecoalition.org/](http://hecoalition.org/).



**Megan Moon**

Megan Moon, President and Founder of the Coalition, has drawn on her past experience and her passion to hone in on the promise of greater collaboration within the field of Humane Education. She comes from an extensive background in related nonprofit work: for 13 years prior to starting the Coalition she worked at various organizations each related to a facet of Humane Education. Her previous work in environmental education, social justice education, animal protection, and nonprofit marketing gives Megan a unique foundation upon which to continue her work. It is this knowledge of various nonprofit sectors which grants her a "well-rounded understanding" of how the values and pedagogy of Humane Education are prioritized in different fields of work. It is largely this background which has enabled her to form an organization that is uniquely sensitive to the needs of Humane Education as a field and strives to be self-aware in its work and impact.

In her nonprofit work prior to founding the Coalition, Megan learned about many of the trends and challenges within the diverse field of Humane Education. She noticed a sense of isolation within many of the organizations with which she became familiar. There was a distinct lack of collaboration, an insularity and over-reliance on self—"autonomously recreating the wheel where that may not always be necessary or even beneficial," as she put it. While recognizing the enormous variety of work within the field of Humane Education, Megan ran with the idea that increased collaboration could be an opportunity to further the collective goals of the field. However, the Humane Education field was lacking an organization dedicated to this very goal. These observations, paired with Megan's fervent passion for the values promoted by Humane Education, ultimately drew her toward creating the Coalition. Together with other leaders in the field, she has been able to grow the organization in its first year and a half into a successful and ambitious network of change-makers.



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