



Steven Appelbaum Founder and President of Animal Behavior College

With 40 years of dog training and pet industry experience, Steven Appelbaum used his extensive knowledge and business acumen to create Animal Behavior College – the largest specialty school of its kind in North America. ABC offers courses in all 50 states and every Canadian province and the Alumni Group boasts the largest number of certified dog trainers in the United States.

Appelbaum always knew that dogs were his life's passion and knew someday he would devote his career to working with them. After enlisting in the United States Air Force in 1977, he worked as a security specialist and patrol dog handler and trainer before being honorably discharged a few years later. In 1981, Mr. Appelbaum enrolled in Animal Trainers Career Academy where he honed the skills acquired in the military to learn how to train dogs for motion pictures. After graduating at the top of his class, he formed his first company, Animal Behavior and Training Associates (ABTA) which provided dog training services.

Over the next 10 years, ABTA branched out to major pet stores, and in 1994, was named the exclusive provider of dog obedience classes for the entire chain of Petco® stores. By 1996, ABTA expanded into Canada through Petcetera stores. This expansion made ABTA an international success and the largest dog training company in North America.

Building ABTA required that Mr. Appelbaum and his staff locate and hire trainers from all over North America. However, he soon learned that 70% of the professional trainers he considered hiring failed ABTA's basic training exams. It was this revelation that influenced his decision to offer a structured education program for dog trainers.

In 1998, he created Animal Behavior College. ABC combines a home study curriculum with hands-on Externship training. Initially, the school only offered a dog trainer program. Today, ABC offers four core programs in dog obedience trainer training, cat training, pet grooming and veterinary assisting. ABC also offers a classroom program for students who want to attend a more traditional brick and mortar school. In addition, the school offers 5 relevant Short-term Programs on an array of subjects including, Pet Nutrition and Diet, Pet Sitting and Dog Walking, Training Shelter Dogs, Pet massage, and The Art of Selling and Teaching private lessons. At present time, ABC has graduated and certified more than 24,300 students in the U.S. and Canada combined.

Mr. Appelbaum is a lecturer and has been an expert consultant and witness in several dog bite cases. He is a former member of the Board of Directors of the International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP) and was also featured as one of the top 25 most influential people in the pet business by *Pet Product News* in 2005. He is instrumental in forging new strategic relationships between ABC and major pet product vendors, manufacturers, and pet organizations. He has written numerous published articles and columns for magazines including, *Pet Age*, *Pet Business*, *Pet Product News International*, *Real Simple® Magazine*, and *Purchase Family Magazine* and has appeared in several podcasts, radio, and TV interviews. Mr. Appelbaum is the author of the book *The ABC Practical Guide to Dog Training* and is the former editor of *Off Lead Magazine*.

A private pilot and avid jogger, Mr. Appelbaum and his wife Shelley reside in Pasadena, California and are "pet parents" to a Basset Hound named Truffles and a gigantic 105-pound Labrador retriever named Sam.