

## Group Honored for Working With Vick Dogs

**Best Friends Animal Society receives award for helping rehabilitate dogs used for fighting.**

Posted: July 29, 2009, 5 a.m. EDT

Best Friends Animal Society received the 2009 Asset Forfeiture National Award from the U.S. Justice Department on Wednesday, July 22, for its outstanding work with Michael Vick's fighting dogs. The award came just two days after Vick was released after serving a 23-month prison sentence for his role in running an illegal dogfighting operation.

Vick was convicted of federal dogfighting charges in August 2007. Of the 66 dogs (mostly pit bulls, nicknamed "Vicktory" dogs) who were seized from his property, nearly half were released to Best Friends' 3,700-acre sanctuary in Kanab, Utah. The dogs could have been euthanized without Best Friends' care and rehabilitation.

Over the past 19 months, the organization has seen improvement: One dog was recently adopted, and another has been placed in foster care. Best Friends has similar hopes for the remaining dogs.

"We are honored to receive this award," says Gregory Castle, interim chief executive officer for Best Friends Animal Society. "We applaud the tireless efforts of federal, state and local authorities to crack down on this horrible crime.

"But at the same time, we are saddened by the realization that so many of these puppies and dogs face great obstacles and challenges in the days ahead. It is our hope that across the country people will step forward ... and say, 'these dogs deserve a chance at life and here's what we can do to help.'"

For more on the Michael Vick dogfighting case, [click here](#).