

# Furventory

**The Athens Area Humane Society's Digital Inventory  
Tracking System**



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**MIST 5740S Spring 2025 Project Binder**

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# **Project Description & Business Case**

## **Project Background**

The Athens Humane Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping animals and supporting the local community. It relies heavily on donations of pet food and supplies to sustain its operations, including feeding animals in the shelter and providing pet food assistance to families in need through community programs. In 2023 alone, the organization distributed approximately 29,000 pounds of pet food, highlighting donors' generosity and the scale of resources they handle annually. While these donations are critical to their mission, the center struggles with tracking inventory, particularly distinguishing between donated and non-donated pet food and supplies. A primary concern is the inability to properly monitor expiration dates, which often results in avoidable waste and sunk costs. Additionally, the shelter faces challenges managing inflow and outflow processes and lacks real-time visibility into inventory levels, which complicates restocking and storage planning.

## **Description of the challenge or opportunity**

The Athens Humane Center faces several operational challenges in managing pet food and supply inventory. These issues impact day-to-day efficiency, increase waste, and place added strain on staff and volunteers.

### **1. Informal and Ineffective Tracking System**

- a. While a tracking system technically exists, it is an extremely disorganized Excel spreadsheet that is difficult to navigate and update. There is no formal and efficient process in place for consistently recording incoming and outgoing cat/dog food, making it hard to tell what's in stock, what has been distributed, and what's close to expiring.

### **2. Expiration Date Management**

- a. Currently, staff and volunteers manually track expiration dates by physically inspecting items to identify those nearing expiration. This process is time-consuming, inefficient, and error-prone, often resulting in preventable waste and lost value from donated items.

### **3. Storage Constraints**

- a. The shelter also struggles with limited storage space. During times throughout the year when donation volume is at its highest, overflow inventory is often stored in the garage. This is not ideal, not just because the garage is used for events and food drives, but also because it lacks proper organization, accessibility, or long-term preservation.

## **Overview of the desired impact (solution)**

Implementing a **digital inventory tracking system** is anticipated to improve operations at the Athens Humane Center greatly. This solution will address current inefficiencies and deliver meaningful benefits across several areas, such as:

**1. Real-Time visibility:**

- a. A centralized database will allow staff and volunteers to quickly see what items are in stock, their expiration dates, and how fast inventory is being used or distributed. This will improve decision-making and prevent overstock or shortages.

**2. Reduce waste**

- a. Accurate tracking of expiration dates will help reduce waste by ensuring that older items are distributed first. Since much of the center's supply comes from generous donors or pet food companies, minimizing waste honors their contributions and ensures those resources are used as intended. It also frees up staff and volunteers to focus on higher-impact tasks rather than manually sorting inventory.

**3. Improved efficiency**

- a. Implementing a digital system that replaces the current system will reduce errors and speed up the process it takes to taking in and handing out donations. Which will improve overall workflow and accuracy.

## **Project Scope**

### **What is in the project?**

**1. Creation and Implementation of a Digital Inventory Tracking System**

- a. We are creating and integrating a digital system that uses Excel as its database and a free barcode scanner mobile app to track donated pet food and supplies

**2. Development of Training Materials**

- a. Creating clear, easy-to-follow training resources and quick-start guides for staff and volunteers on how to use the new system. These resources include online training modules, downloadable PDF guides, and printed quick-start instructions. Will essentially be both online modules and paper

**3. Basic Reporting and Analytics**

- a. Set up simple features/algorithms on Excel that will track and monitor:
  - i. Inventory levels over time
  - ii. Expiration status alerts

**4. Improving Storage Capacity**

- a. Suggest and plan for the improvements to handle the overflow issue and storage limitations. This plan includes:
  - i. **Short-term Goal:**
    - 1. Purchase a shipping container that will be placed on the premises to immediately solve overflow storage for bulk items (large bags of dog and cat food) , and canned goods
  - ii. **Long-term Goal:**
    - 1. Purchasing nearby property, which will serve as off-site storage
    - 2. Expanding existing property to allow for additional storage, which could include sheds like the ones currently used, another shipping container, or even a small warehouse.

## **What is not in the project?**

### **1. Non-inventory-related processes**

- a. Ex: pet adoptions, fundraising, etc., will not be included.

### **2. Full Implementation and Ongoing Support**

- a. Our team will provide the design, documentation, and training resources, essentially the foundation necessary. Actual implementation and any sort of system maintenance will be the responsibility of the Athens Humane Center staff and volunteers.

### **3. Custom Software**

- a. This project will not include constructing any sort of custom application, software, or platform. Instead, it will utilize existing tools that are easy to incorporate and use

## **Measurable Organizational Impact**

To improve the Athens Humane Center's ability to track and properly manage donated and non-donated pet food and supplies inventory by implementing a simple, cost-effective inventory system that reduces waste from expired items and enhances real-time visibility of inventory — with the goal of achieving a 50% reduction in inventory inaccuracies and a 40% improvement in restocking efficiency within six months.

Tangible Benefits		
<u>Benefit</u>	<u>Value &amp; Probability</u>	<u>Assumptions Driving Value</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce Expired Items</li> </ul>	Estimated \$2000/yr (80% probability)	Improving how we track inventory prevents any products from expiring unnoticed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More Efficient Restocking</li> </ul>	Saves 10/hr of staff and volunteer time per month	Staff currently spends excessive time manually checking inventory.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimize Use of Storage Space</li> </ul>	Reduces issues with limited storage and overflow of products	Improving tracking allows the shelter to avoid excessive overflow, which eliminates the need to use the garage as backup storage space
Intangible Benefits		
<u>Benefit</u>	<u>Value &amp; Probability</u>	<u>Assumptions Driving Value</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved Volunteer Experience</li> </ul>	High (90%)	Volunteers will spend less time guessing inventory needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced Public Trust</li> </ul>	Medium-High (70%)	Greater transparency and efficiency will boost credibility with donors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced stress on staff</li> </ul>	High (80%)	Systematized tracking will lighten the daily workload and reduce any sort of operational confusion
Cost Categories		Amount
Internal Labor Hours		50 hours (planning, implementation, training)
External costs		\$0 (assuming no third-party purchases)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labor (consultants, contract labor)</li> </ul>		\$0 (using in-house team/student support, staff members, and Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equipment, hardware, or software</li> </ul>		\$3750 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$0 for Technology (apps/software)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$250 Optional Equipment (barcode scanner)</li> <li>• \$2500 Shipping Container</li> <li>• \$1000 Non-Certified Forklift</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other Costs</li> </ul>	\$50 (Printing training materials)
<b>Financial Return</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Break-even Point: Estimated to occur within 6–8 months if the project is correctly implemented</li> <li>• Expected ROI within 1-2 years</li> </ul>	

## Project Stakeholders

Question	All stakeholders that apply
1. Approves funding for this project?	Cheryl McCormick:(Chief Executive Officer of AAHS)
2. Approves functional requirements?	Athens Humane Center Board Members
3. Approves technical requirements?	Athens Humane Center Board Members
4. Approves design decisions?	Athens Humane Center Board Members
5. Approves changes to requirements?	Athens Humane Center
6. Approves changes affecting schedule?	Cheryl McCormick:(Chief Executive Officer of AAHS)
7. Approves changes affecting cost?	Athens Humane Center Board Members
8. Who will use the product or service produced by the project?	Athens Humane Center, staff, volunteers

9. Who will set the organizational goals that drive the necessity of this project?	Athens Humane Center
10. Will they have to change their systems or processes because of this project?	Athens Humane Center, staff, volunteers
11. Who will benefit from this project?	Athens Humane Center, money donors, pet company food donors
12. Who will perform the work on this project?	Volunteers, Staff Members
13. Who will help with the training of system use?	Steven Jackson (Volunteer & Community Engagement Manager)

### Stakeholder Alignment:

<b><u>Name: Cheryl McCormick</u></b>	<b><u>Title: Chief Executive Officer of AAHS</u></b>
1. What is their contribution to the project?	Provides crucial input. Ultimately responsible for approving and implementing the project
2. To whom do they report?	AAHS Chief Executive Officer (Cheryl McCormick)
3. What authority do they have over the project?	Moderate—influences and helps volunteers adopt and use the system but doesn't control final decisions
4. What is their goal for the project (what is their stake in the project), and how does it relate to their organization's goal or other personal goals? (What makes this a 'win' for them?)	Wants to see improved use of volunteer time and effort (since he oversees them). A streamlined system allows volunteers to dedicate themselves to meaningful tasks
5. Do they present a specific threat or opportunity?	She presents a great opportunity to work closely with her and provide feedback on the system
6. What perception do you want them to have about the project?	It's an inventory system that is cost-effective and efficient and will positively impact AAHS, also aligning with their goals.



<b><u>Name: Steven Jackson</u></b>	<b><u>Title: Volunteer &amp; Community Engagement Manager</u></b>
1. What is their contribution to the project?	Provided more on-ground insights,
2. To whom do they report?	AAHS Board of Directors
3. What authority do they have over the project?	High; she approves, delays or influences the adoption of the inventory system
4. What is their goal for the project (what is their stake in the project), and how does it relate to their organization's goal or other personal goals? (What makes this a 'win' for them?)	Wants to reduce waste, improve efficiency, and ensure donor resources are used wisely — aligning with AAHS's mission.
5. Do they present a specific threat or opportunity?	Opportunity—strong advocate for system implementation
6. What perception do you want them to have about the project?	The system will make volunteer work more efficient and reduce time wasting

### Communication Plan:

<b><u>Stakeholder</u></b>	<b><u>Information needs</u></b>	<b><u>Frequency</u></b>	<b><u>Medium</u></b>	<b><u>Response</u></b>
Athens Humane Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project status updates</li> <li>Progress on inventory tracking improvements</li> <li>challenges faced</li> </ul>	Weekly	Email	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge within 2 business days</li> <li>Provide feedback and decisions as needed</li> </ul>
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on how to use the inventory system</li> <li>Procedures for tracking donations, expiration dates, and real-time updates</li> </ul>	Bi-Weekly	Digital handbook or in-person sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend sessions and submit questions or feedback within 1 week</li> </ul>
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similar to staff</li> </ul>	Monthly	Email	Attend walkthrough of

	information needs, however will not be using system as often			system use and provide feedback through email
Donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact updates (amount of pet food distributed)</li> <li>Transparency improvements due to the new system</li> </ul>	Quarterly	Newsletter (email)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optional feedback by email or form</li> <li>Responses encouraged within two weeks</li> </ul>

## Responsibility Matrix

Activity	Project Manager	Executive Officer	Manager	Employees	Volunteers
Define system requirements	R	A	C	C	I
Select technology platform	R	A	C	I	I
Configure Excel-based inventory system with free barcode scanner app	R	C	C	I	I
Train staff and volunteers	R	I	C	C	C
Implement inventory tracking	R	I	C	C	C
Track and manage expiration dates	C	I	R	R	C
Monitor inventory inflow/outflow	C	I	R	R	C
Approve final system deployment	C	A	I	I	I

**R** = Responsible

**A** = Accountable

**C** = Consulted

**I** = Informed



# Project Administration/Implementation

## **Risk Plan, Issue Plan, Change Management Plan, and Logs**

1. **Risk Plan**: Each possible risk will be evaluated by its impact and likelihood and logged accordingly. This log will be reviewed and updated to ensure all risks are properly monitored and mitigated. [RiskAnalysisTemplate.xlsx](#) (link to risk analysis template).
2. **Issue Plan**: Each issue that arises will be assigned a unique ID, a priority, and a designated person responsible. Any sort of updates, status changes, or resolution status will be documented with dates. Templates used “Issues Log”.
3. **Change Management Plan**: All proposed changes to the project scope, schedule, or deliverables will be submitted using the “Change Request” form. Approved changes will be recorded in the “Change Log”, including a description of the change, cost (schedule) impact, and date of implementation.

## **Assumptions and Risks**

### **1. Assumptions Used:**

- a. The Athens Humane Center staff will adopt, integrate, and regularly use the inventory system.
- b. The system can be implemented with limited financial and hardware costs.
- c. Students have access to the needed resources (software tools, templates, and guidance).

### **2. Key Risks:**

- a. Import the complete Risk Analysis Template.

### **3. Dependencies:**

- a. Coordinate with the Athens Humane Center staff for training and feedback.
- b. All members of the Student Team must put in timely input and participate
- c. UGA technology support services are accessible in case of any technical issues that arise during the implementation phase.

### **4. Issues**

- a. No current issues at this moment. However, if any arise, they will be documented using the Issues Log Template.

## **Quality Assurance (How will you manage quality?)**

We will manage quality by clearly defining what a “successful” outcome looks like for each major deliverable. This is done by setting evaluation criteria and keeping each deliverable in line with the triple constraints: scope, time, and cost.

### **1. Quality will be assessed based on:**

- a. User Fit: How well the final system or tools meet user needs
- b. Ease of Use: Whether deliverables are easy to use, accurate, and require minimal technical support.
- c. Project Alignment: Whether the project stays within the defined scope, timeline, and budget

## 2. Quality Requirements for Major Deliverables

Deliverable	Quality Requirements
Inventory Tracking Tool (Excel database with mobile barcode scanner app)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accurately captures inventory data and expiration dates</li> <li>- Easy for staff/volunteers to use with little training</li> <li>- Includes simple instructions and can be serviced with minor technical support</li> </ul>
Training Guide/Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will allow staff/volunteers to properly use the inventory tracking tool</li> <li>- Straightforward language, with step-by-step visuals/screenshots</li> <li>- Tested by at least one non-project team member for usability</li> </ul>
Implementation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reviewed by the student team to ensure clarity and feasibility</li> <li>- Realistic timeline and task breakdown</li> <li>- Includes stakeholder responsibilities and alternative options</li> </ul>

## 3. How We Define “High Quality” (Using the Triple Constraint Model):

- a. Scope: The digital system must address the current inventory and tracking needs of the Athens Humane Center and should cover both donated and non-donated items.
- b. Time: All deliverables must be completed and submitted before the project deadline.
- c. Cost: Total external expenses must remain under the limited budget (under \$4000).

## 4. A deliverable is considered high quality if it:

- i. Satisfies stakeholder needs
- ii. It is easy to use with minimal to moderate integration efforts.
- iii. Fits within time and cost boundaries.

## 5. Team Agreement on Quality

- a. To ensure agreement and expectations, the team will:
  - i. Use peer review checklists during deliverable development
  - ii. Conduct stakeholder feedback meetings.
  - iii. Review deliverables against predefined requirements.

# Resources Required

## People

1. **Student Project Team**—Responsible for researching, designing, analyzing, and documenting the project binder for the Athens Humane Center. This binder includes everything related to the inventory tracking system.
2. **Athens Humane Center Staff & Volunteers**—Future users of the system who provided input on pain points, tested the inventory tool, and gave feedback. They are also responsible for implementing and maintaining the system.
3. **Instructor (Professor)**—Oversees academic alignment and grading
4. **Technology Advisory Contact (Aprio)** – Shared strategies and tools he used while managing inventory in a past role, which helped give us different perspectives on real-world inventory tracking challenges and guided parts of our solution design.
5. **Donors** – Community members and Companies whose donation patterns influence inventory volume, restocking frequency, and storage capacity

## Technology

1. **Microsoft Excel** – Serves as a database for the inventory tracking system and a tool used to build it.
2. **Google Forms/Sheets** (optional alternative) – can be used for collecting feedback if Excel is not preferred.
3. **Mobile Barcode Scanner App** – a free app on smartphones that can be used to scan and log inventory data, enhancing tracking efficiency.
4. **Physical Barcode Scanner:** enhances tracking efficiency, which improves tracking speed and accuracy
  - a. Example: ScanAvenger or any low-cost scanner from Amazon (~\$20–30)
5. **Zebra thermal printer and its software (long-term goal)**
  - a. Future use in generating inventory labels efficiently

## Facilities

1. **Athens Humane Center** – On-site storage areas for inventory (main storage shed and garage)

2. **Proposed Shipping Container (Optional/Future Consideration)**—A potential solution to solve the overflow issue
3. **UGA Workspaces** – Campus facilities used by the student team for collaboration and development

### Other Resources

1. **Training Materials/Module** – Printed quick-start guides for staff and volunteers (created by management)
2. **Project Templates** – Provided by MIST 5740S Professor (risk log, change request, issue log, etc.)

### Sources for Resources

1. **Excel & Google tools** – Free student access through UGA accounts
2. **Hardware estimates** – Based on Amazon and Office Depot pricing (March–April 2025)

## Project Budget Summary

This budget represents a realistic estimate based on reasonable assumptions, the use of free or low-cost tools, and minimal out-of-pocket expenses. Since this is an academic project, labor costs are only included for illustrative purposes and can serve as a guideline if it becomes a formal implementation.

Cost Type	Estimated Amount	Notes
<u>Labor hours</u>	0\$	Student labor not billed
<u>External costs</u>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labor (consultants, contract labor)</li> </ul>	\$0	(All work completed by student team)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology (Software/Apps)</li> </ul>	\$0	Microsoft Excel, Google Forms/Sheets, Mobile Barcode Scanner — all free through UGA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optional Equipment, hardware, or software</li> </ul>	\$250 (Optional)	Barcode scanner, tablet, Zebra thermal printer/software, if the Athens Humane Center chooses to implement



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training Material Printing/ Modules</li> </ul>	\$50	Quick-start guides and instructions for staff (estimated printing costs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shipping Container (Future Plan)</li> </ul>	\$2,000 – \$3,500	Secure external storage solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-Certified Forklift</li> </ul>	\$800 – \$1,200	Electric pallet jack for moving heavy pet food (no license required)



### Labor Hours

\$0  
Student labor not billed



### Technology

\$0  
Excel, Google Forms/Sheets, Mobile Barcode Scanner – all free via UGA



### (Optional) Equipment / Software

Barcode scanner, tablet, label printer (future add-on)



### Training Materials

\$50  
Printed guides and training for staff



### (Future) Shipping Container

\$2,000-\$3,500  
Secure external storage solution



### Non-Certified Forklift

\$800-\$1,200  
Electric pallet jack for moving pet food

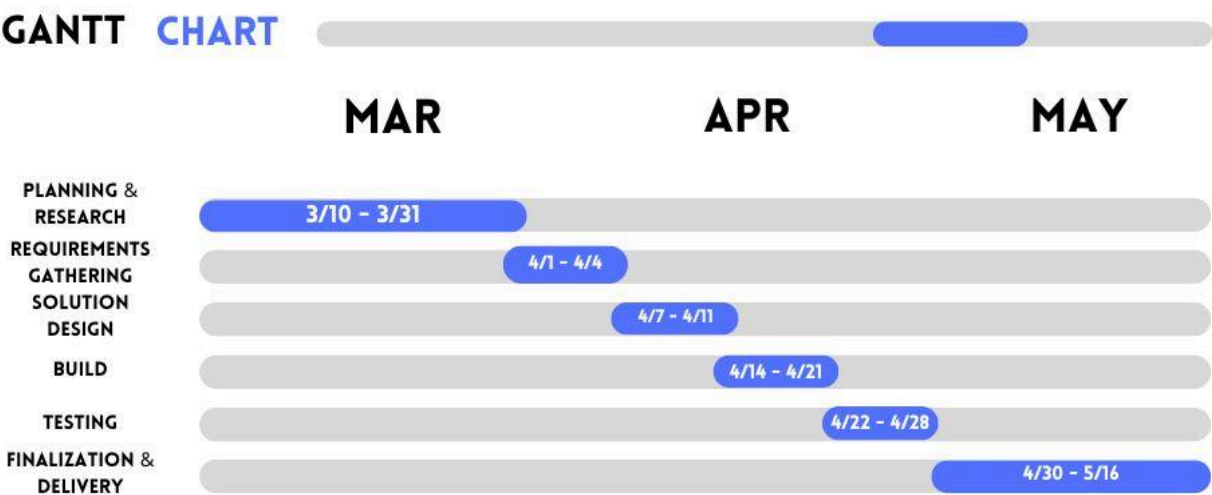


# Project Schedule Summary

## Project Start and End Dates

- 1. Start Date: March 10, 2025
- 2. End Date: May 16, 2025 (TBD—subject to change due to the majority of employees being volunteers, they will not be present over the summer.)

Phase	Start Date	End Date	Milestone/Deliverable
1. Project Planning & Research	March 10	March 31	Finalized scope, stakeholder list, and project goals
2. Process & Requirements Gathering	April 1	April 4	Interview with Athens Humane Center staff members to identify pain points
3. Solution Design	April 7	April 18	Drafted an inventory tracking system solution and outlined a necessary training guide
4. Build & Documentation	April 19	April 22	Created prototype system, user guide, and risk/issue logs
5. Testing & Feedback	April 23	April 28	Staff reviewed the system, and final changes were made
6. Finalization & Delivery	April 30	May 16	Final binder delivered and presented



# Individual Lessons Learned

## **Omar Meshaal**

I had no idea what to expect before taking this course. In the past, a few family friends in that field briefly explained what it's like. However, I questioned how something like project management would be taught in a class setting. But now, as the year approaches an end, it's safe to say that I am beyond thrilled I have taken this class. I learned a lot more than I anticipated.

There is so much information that I took away from this class, and it would be hard to choose one that stuck out the most or is most important. For me, I learned how crucial professionalism is in a project setting. Students usually handle group projects not as seriously or professionally as they should be. Whereas it was a project that they would complete on their own, or a group project in a real-world setting, they would approach it with plenty of professionalism.

I also learned that communication is vital and everyone communicates differently. This was a huge awakening for me because I always dove into group projects with the expectation that my fellow group members would think, understand, and accomplish work the same as I do. I was far from right. Not only do your fellow group members think differently, but it's important to know that your client, or whoever you are doing the project for, also interprets information differently. With that in mind, I learned that it's important to always ask for feedback, ask if information is communicated clearly, and set up a basis for communication.

Another piece of information I took away from Doctor Rusk's lectures was how crucial leadership is. There is so much more to leadership than just essentially leading a team. A good leader leads by example and takes initiative while still letting his followers provide their input. At times a good leader will even allow their followers to take the lead. A good leader is extremely important for projects, which I learned from our project this semester. Without a good leader, a project will very easily crumble. If there is no leader, team members will either not complete any work due to a lack of directions or constantly have issues with one another. I don't mind either being a leader or following however, at the beginning of our project, I noticed our group project lacked a leader or some sort of initiative. When I saw this occur, I knew I had to take on that role to get the team going and participating. I am glad I did that because It helped our project throughout the semester. We are all students and often tasked with loads of other school work, tests, extracurricular activities, etc. As a result, we often forget or lose track of the project timeline. Having a good leader will remind and stay on top of his fellow team members to ensure the project is properly submitted and completed.

I think this is one of the few classes at UGA that you can apply so much to your daily life and your future career. I am so grateful I was able to take this class, especially under Dr. Rusk who was always eager to help and teach the class.

### **Avanish Thota**

While working on the Athens Humane Society project, I learned a lot about the importance of communicating with your team members and the overall conceptual applications of project management. When we first started working on the project and discussed the inventory issues of AHS, we thought of various solutions to assist employees and volunteers with inventory management. We had to consider many factors when choosing a method for inventory management, such as cost, efficiency, and technology that is user-friendly. Looking at these various factors really helped understand the process of determining what to focus the project goal on and narrow the scope of the project.

During the course of this project, we had to communicate with each other on the information we had to gather and what parts of the project we should focus on. At the beginning of the project, we organized a Zoom meeting to talk through about the Athens Humane Society and better understand what problem we are trying to solve. I feel as though we handled being able to make it to meetings and communicating well with each other, considering how many of us have other projects and assignments to work on for other classes. This project helped show that effective communication helps create a strong solution for our client in an effective way. I believe that the hard work we put in resulted in a great project that we hope the client will be able to put into effect, and it couldn't have been possible without working together and making sure to stay on track with deadlines and be in line with the project schedule.

### **Connor Walker**

Working with the Athens Humane Society for this project taught me several key lessons about the importance of project management and teamwork when working through projects. We learned early on to define our team roles and allow each team member to contribute based on their strengths and weaknesses. I also learned about the importance of communication as we all had our own obligations and often had to meet without the presence of all group members.

Second, working on this project with my team taught me the importance of working through projects and setting deadlines. The work breakdown structure played an important role in managing our workload and allowing us to split the project up into manageable tasks. On the same note, we found it very helpful to make our milestones clear. Overall, pairing a project schedule with an effective description of each

deliverable allowed us to manage the timeline of our project and ensure quality at every milestone.

## **Zach Torres**

Working on this project with the Athens Humane Society taught me valuable lessons about project management and how imperative it is to define clear boundaries in both scope and responsibility. Early on, our team realized how easy it is for a project to grow beyond the original intent. There were so many valuable aspects of the organization we could have focused on supporting, but we learned to stay focused on our core objective: building a sustainable, cross-branch inventory tracking system.

Another major takeaway for me was how essential team collaboration is throughout the life of a project. Within our team, we had to navigate different working styles, distribute responsibilities, and communicate clearly to stay on track. This taught me a lot about delegation, time management, and how to use collaborative tools effectively.

Lastly, this project taught me the importance of documentation and planning. Tools like the work breakdown structure and stakeholder analysis helped us stay organized, anticipate risks, and track progress in a more structured way.

## **Jordan Peterkin**

I truly valued this opportunity to work with Athens Humane Society on this project, as it taught me the value of communication between teams, reducing the silo effect, and how important it is to be unified in one common goal. At the very beginning of our project, our team wanted to choose a subject that we were all passionate about, and Omar had the great opportunity to connect us with Athens Humane Society, an organization he's worked with in the past. Once we were able to choose the organization, we were grateful to have such great contacts within the organization that were instrumental in helping us achieve our goals. While we were in our groups and had designated roles, we made sure that we created efficient communication channels, so while we worked together on our solutions, we would be able to reference our ideas with other members of the group. Having such fluent and simple communication, we were able to streamline our work on the project while reducing the amount of delay we might've had if we were slow to respond to each other.

In addition to this, our communication skills and working in between roles was effective in reducing the silo effect that is usually found in group projects such as these. It was important for our group members to collaborate on deciding which solution we were going to move forward with, and the best ways to implement it. I am personally very proud of our group for moving through our project with such efficiency. Overall, I learned

so many great skills from this project, learned a variety of aspects of project management, and I feel ready to work on more projects in the future!

## **Jack Gust**

Whilst embarking on this project, both me and my group members learned important lessons and skills within project management, and overarching life lessons as well. Working together in order to help Athens Humane Society was not only an extremely gratifying experience, but also taught me the importance of clear and concise communication between team members and our stakeholders. With setting deadlines and understanding the scope of our project, these were all facilitated through clear communication in order to get through this project as efficiently as possible.

Through wanting to focus on communication, we also found it imperative to address team roles. A big idea behind having these roles established was the sooner we individually could figure out what it was that we were responsible for, the sooner we could address the silo effect and make sure that our project was not a victim of this phenomenon.

Lastly, the actual construction of the binder taught me the importance of staying detailed and organized. By documenting all of our project and having it put into documents where our thought process has been clearly outlined within the binder, we produced tangible evidence of our hard work, while also being able to show it to all stakeholders involved, which was extremely helpful for clear communication.