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Michigan Humane Receives \$500,000 from The Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation

*Gift will help support educational opportunities aimed at reducing
the national veterinary staffing shortage*

(DETROIT, MI, MARCH 7, 2023) - Michigan Humane received \$500,000 from The Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation to support its Humane Communities' Thriving Workforce and Economy initiative, focusing on the organization's veterinary education programs. As the nation continues to grapple with a veterinary staffing shortage, it is estimated that the profession will be down 14,500 veterinarians by 2030, leaving 75 million animals without care.

"Too many of Michigan's animals lack access to quality veterinary care," said Michigan Humane President and CEO Matt Pepper. "Together with The Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation, we will inspire the next generation of veterinary professionals, and insure equitable access to medical care to the pets in our communities."

The gift will help make possible on-site career pathway experiences at Michigan Humane facilities, off-site Career Day events, and veterinary engagements for more than 8,000 students. In addition, the funds will provide internships, apprenticeships, and first-hand exposure to veterinary careers for over 150 students.

Thanks to education supporters' funding, Michigan Humane enrolled six staff members into their licensed veterinary technician scholarship program with Penn Foster College this past year and aims to add eight more candidates in the fall of 2023.

"Youth and young adults living in under-resourced communities often face additional barriers to educational and career development," said Chief Executive Officer of The Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation Virginia Romano. "The Foundation supports programs, like the Humane Communities' Thriving Workforce and Economy initiative, to provide exposure and access to educational and career pathways, as well as mentorship and employment opportunities."

As part of their Humane Communities vision, Michigan Humane is committed to introducing Detroit's youth to veterinary career pathways. Since 2018, the organization has partnered with Detroit Public Schools Community District to encourage students at Detroit International Academy for Young Women and Crockett Midtown High School of Science and Medicine to explore veterinary careers.

"The field of veterinary medicine lacks diversity both currently and in all relevant career forecast models," said Dr. Nikolai Vitti, Superintendent of DPSCD. "The direct partnership with Michigan Humane, as well as the post-secondary connections that Michigan Humane provides with Michigan State University, Wayne State University, and Oakland University, will benefit the underrepresented populations of students within our district and support our students in actively selecting careers in veterinary medicine."

In addition to The Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation donation, Robert Ritchie, The Rachael Ray Foundation, Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan, Ralph L. and Winifred E. Polk

Foundation, Madell L. and Madeline H. Berman Foundation, Flagstar Foundation, and Bank of America have all shown their support with gifts to Michigan Humane to recognize the organization's commitment to solving the veterinarian shortage.

About Michigan Humane

Michigan Humane, founded in 1877, is the oldest and largest nonprofit animal welfare organization in the state. Michigan Humane is dedicated to helping the animals of southeastern Michigan, whether in our shelters, our veterinary clinics, or out in the community. Michigan Humane operates seven facilities dedicated to caring for animals and their families throughout metro Detroit; adoption partnerships with Premier Pet Supply, Petco, and PetSmart; and a Cruelty Investigation Department and a Statewide Animal Response Team. Learn more at michiganhumane.org.

About The Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation

The Vera and Joseph Dresner Foundation is dedicated to transforming lives in profoundly positive ways through grants focused on health, youth and family, and animal welfare. The Foundation believes in working with organizations in its focus areas to create opportunity, have community impact, and promote wellbeing. For more information, visit dresnerfoundation.org.

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