



MICHIGAN HUMANE TO ADDRESS LACK OF ACCESSIBLE VETERINARY CARE IN HISTORICALLY EXCLUDED COMMUNITIES WITH SUPPORT FROM PETSMART CHARITIES

Latino communities make up the initial cohort for the trailblazing grant program

May 16, 2023— Detroit, MI – Michigan Humane has received a grant from [PetSmart Charities](#)[®] in the amount of \$120,000 to address challenges in accessing veterinary care in Southwest Detroit.

Rising costs combined with geographical and cultural barriers have left many communities out of the veterinary care system altogether. This grant program supports innovative and culturally relevant veterinary programs.

Early in 2023, PetSmart Charities, the top funder of animal welfare in the US, announced a \$100 million commitment toward improving access to veterinary care. One of these visionary new grant programs focuses on underserved populations. Over the next five years, the national nonprofit plans to make a significant impact in collaboration with local partners to reach these populations that previously had little or no access to veterinary care.

“We are truly honored to be a part of this initiative,” said Matt Pepper, president & CEO of Michigan Humane. “By taking the time to connect with pet owners and truly listening to what they have to say, we can make sure our services are inclusive, accessible and delivered in a way that makes the biggest impact for the pets and people in our community.”

While 70% of American homes feature pets, access to basic veterinary services has not kept pace. This is particularly felt in communities that have additional barriers beyond cost, including language barriers and a lack of veterinary clinics in the vicinity. While 62% of Latino households own pets, accessing resources to keep them healthy and in their homes can be challenging.

Instead of taking pre-planned solutions into selected communities, grantees will build relationships and assess specific needs first. This includes conducting focus groups and surveys to better understand the needs of the community, as well as intentional outreach efforts to residents and building robust partnerships with human service organizations already serving the community to meet pet owners where they are and build trusting relationships. This approach will help Michigan Humane design an informed and relevant delivery model to connect families in need in Southwest Detroit to accessible veterinary care and other services provided by Michigan Humane.

“Most people today consider pets family, yet 50 million pets in the U.S. struggle to access even basic preventative care such as spay/neuter procedures, vaccinations and annual exams,” said Kate Atema, director of community grants and initiatives at PetSmart Charities. “While this issue affects families in nearly every community, those who have been historically excluded from human social services are most

in need of pet services, too. We're proud to support this innovative approach that meets the unique needs identified by those living in the communities themselves."

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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 PetSmart Charities®

PetSmart Charities is committed to making the world a better place for pets and all who love them. Through its in-store adoption program in all PetSmart® stores across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, PetSmart Charities helps up to 400,000 pets connect with loving families each year. PetSmart Charities also provides grant funding to support organizations that advocate and care for the well-being of all pets and their families. Our grants and efforts connect pets with loving homes through adoption, improve access to affordable veterinary care and support families in times of crisis with access to food, shelter and disaster response. Each year, millions of generous supporters help pets in need by donating to PetSmart Charities directly at PetSmartCharities.org, while shopping at PetSmart.com, and by using the PIN pads at checkout registers inside PetSmart® stores. In turn, PetSmart Charities efficiently uses more than 90 cents of every dollar donated to fulfill its role as the leading funder of animal welfare in North America, granting more than \$500 million since its inception in 1994. Independent from PetSmart LLC, PetSmart Charities is a 501(c)(3) organization that has received the Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator for the past 18 years in a row – placing it among the top one percent of rated charities. To learn more visit www.petsmartcharities.org.

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Media Contact:

Michigan Humane

Lish Dorset, Director of Marketing & Communications

248.703.4752

Ldorset@michiganhumane.org