



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **PAWS NY, ANIMAL HAVEN, AND SEARCH AND CARE RECEIVE THREE-YEAR \$400,000 GRANT FROM PETSMART CHARITIES® TO HELP KEEP PETS AND PEOPLE TOGETHER**

**September 28, 2021—New York, NY—**[PetSmart Charities](#) has awarded a three-year, \$400,000 grant to three New York City-based organizations as part of their Preserving Families Initiative. The grant will support a new partnership between Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS) NY, Animal Haven, and Search and Care. The funding promises to impact the most vulnerable pet guardians at risk of losing their animals due to hospitalizations and other crises.

While most people see their pets as integral family members, few services exist to help pet guardians facing extraordinary crises. As a result, these individuals often have no option but to surrender their beloved animals to local shelters. With this grant, these three organizations will launch and implement the “Preserving Families in Times of Crisis” project, an innovative collaboration that aims to preserve the bond between pets and their people by offering emergency support, as well as engaging healthcare institutions and community-based programs to join them in this work.

“Pets have a profound impact on a family — and for the elderly, can often be their only source of companionship,” said Aimee Gilbreath, president at PetSmart Charities. “New York City is home to 1.7 million older adults, and we estimate about 170,000 of them have pets and need some support. A warm greeting from a beloved pet after a hospital stay can build emotional well-being — *and* stimulate the healing process. The innovative collaboration among these stellar organizations is exactly the kind of work we’re proud to support.”

PAWS NY, Animal Haven, and Search and Care each have extensive experience combining animal welfare and human welfare. The organizations champion the value of human service agencies proactively engaging clients in emergency planning for the entire family, including pets. The new project’s outreach to a network of New York City agencies will highlight not just

the benefit of asking about pets and documenting them, but the cost saving that can also occur by helping pet guardians plan for these emergencies.

Overall, Preserving Families in Times of Crisis will support older adults and other vulnerable populations by helping them prepare for emergencies with their pets and providing emergency and foster care for pets while their guardians recover and are ultimately reunited.

"Thank you to PetSmart Charities for supporting this innovative collaboration between PAWS NY, Animal Haven, and Search and Care," said Rachel Herman, the Founder and Executive Director of PAWS NY. "Through the dual lens of human services and animal welfare, we will develop and implement a first-of-its-kind program that aims to preserve families in times of crisis. Together, we will do everything we can to maintain the beneficial relationships shared between New Yorkers and their animal companions. We are excited for this amazing opportunity!"

"We are excited to be part of this partnership because we get calls all the time from social workers looking for help for their clients' animals," said Tiffany Lacey, Animal Haven's Executive Director. "This three-year grant is a true opportunity from PetSmart Charities to develop solutions that will lift barriers experienced by the most vulnerable and help pets and their guardians before a crisis like an unexpected hospitalization. While our goal here is pet retention, we also hope that the services we offer will allow these pets and their people not just to remain together but to thrive."

"Search and Care helps older people and their pets age in place together, and our collaboration with these two New York City organizations is both exciting and challenging," said Robin Strashun, Outreach, PET and Medical Escort Coordinator. "Together we are encouraging social service, homecare, and healthcare organizations to incorporate vital pet-related information during intakes so that both owners and companion animals have every opportunity to remain together. New Yorkers are devoted to their pets and, with the help of PetSmart Charities, we are united in raising awareness about the importance of advance planning for companion animals as they are an integral part of the family."

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### **About Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS) NY**

The mission of Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS) NY is to help New York City's most vulnerable residents remain with their pets by delivering critical programs and services through a community of partners and volunteers. Our programs help keep pets in their homes while protecting and promoting the human-animal bond that is so physically and psychologically valuable to our clients. Thus, our motto: helping people by helping pets. To learn more, visit [www.pawsny.org](http://www.pawsny.org).

### **About Animal Haven**

Animal Haven is a nonprofit organization that finds homes for abandoned cats and dogs throughout the Tri-State area and provides behavior intervention when needed to improve chances of adoption. Founded in 1967, the organization runs an animal shelter in Manhattan

and provides programs, including the Community Engagement Program, that provides support and services to pets and their people in crisis. To learn more, visit [www.animalhaven.org](http://www.animalhaven.org).

### **About Search and Care**

Founded in 1972 as a church outreach program, Search and Care's mission is to seek out vulnerable older New Yorkers who need help managing life's daily activities or accessing essential services. Having served over 20,000 clients, community stakeholders continue to refer older adults in need (age 60+) to the agency for in-home, fee-free Care Management and complementary services such as bill paying ("Money Matters"), telephonic/virtual mental health support ("Talkin' It Out"), medical escorting, PET (Pets + Elders Together), and a groups component that fosters virtual communities. Staff members, and a multigenerational volunteer team, try to meet the varied needs of a multicultural and diverse client base regardless of race, gender, religion, creed, sexual orientation, or economic capabilities. To learn more visit [www.searchandcare.org](http://www.searchandcare.org).

### **About PetSmart Charities®**

[PetSmart Charities, Inc.](http://PetSmartCharities, Inc.) 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 nearly 600,000 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 emergency relief. Each year, millions of generous supporters help pets in need by donating to PetSmart Charities directly at [PetSmartCharities.org](http://PetSmartCharities.org), while shopping at [PetSmart.com](http://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 \$475 million since its inception in 1994. Independent from PetSmart Inc., PetSmart Charities is a 501(c)(3) organization that has received the Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator for the past 17 years in a row – placing it among the top one percent of rated charities. To learn more visit [www.petsmartcharities.org](http://www.petsmartcharities.org).

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