



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Deborah Schutt, chair, (313) 731-2244  
[deborah@michiganpet.org](mailto:deborah@michiganpet.org)

**Local Resident Jennifer Clarkson Earns Best Friend to Dogs Award**  
*Michigan Pet Alliance Honors Animal Welfare Organizations, Shelters, Volunteers*

**September 6, 2022, Bloomfield, Michigan** – Today, Michigan Pet Alliance (MPA) proudly announces that Jennifer Clarkson, Bloomfield, Michigan, is the recipient of the Best Friend to Dogs Award.

“This annual award honors a nominated individual (or organization) who goes above and beyond to save, to provide care, to find homes or to advocate for Michigan’s homeless dogs,” said Joe Dobesh, MPA CEO. “In this award category, Jen was a standout nomination because she, and the organization she runs, go the extra mile to prevent dogs from becoming homeless and to ensure they have quality care.”

Clarkson has been a best friend to dogs since she was a kid, but has spent the last 10-plus years professionally giving her time to help dogs in need. In 2012, she became the co-founder and executive director of DogAide, a nonprofit community outreach organization that provides resources to dog owners in Detroit, including dog food, daily care items, education on proper pet care and assistance with free spay/neuter.

“Education and advocacy are pillars of our mission, to speak with one voice to improve lifesaving and standards of care for our state’s pets,” said Deborah Schutt, MPA chairperson. “Jen is one of our members who exemplifies these qualities in support of our mission.”

In 2015, Clarkson joined the shelter reform committee to assist the city of Detroit in reforming its animal care and control operations with the goal of increasing the shelter’s live release rate. After months of work, the city followed the committee’s recommendations and the save rate for Detroit Animal Control skyrocketed from a mere 4% in 2015 to 68% in 2017.

In 2016, Clarkson became the co-founder of Project Grace, a partnership between DogAide and Bark Nation that focuses on spaying or neutering owned dogs in Detroit. Recently, Clarkson has devoted her energy and insight to launch a program called Thomas’ Heart, DogAide’s newest program to treat and prevent heartworm.

Jen, her husband Chris, their two sons and two dogs reside in Bloomfield, Michigan.

**2022 award categories and recipients:**

**Karen Brocklehurst Volunteer of the Year**

Anne Grzywacz, Ph.D., CPDT-KA, CBCC-KA, St. Clair Shores

**Elected Official’s Friend of Homeless Animals Award**

Representative Tommy Brann, Kent County

**Community Outreach Program: \$3,000 grant**

Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance, Douglas

**Best Friend to Dogs Award**

Jennifer Clarkson, Bloomfield Hills

**Fundraising Program: \$2,000 grant**

Paws for Life Rescue, Troy

**Best Friend to Cats Award**

Cheryl Phillips, Northville

Michigan Pet Alliance, 2210 Lancaster Road, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302  
501(c)3 nonprofit organization, EIN: 20-0399162  
(313) 731-2244, [info@michiganpet.org](mailto:info@michiganpet.org)



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**On-Site Cat Training Grants: \$1,000 value to each**

Little Traverse Bay Humane Society, Harbor Springs  
Upper Peninsula Animal Welfare Shelter, Gwinn

Grant awards are made possible thanks to the generosity of the Humane Society of Macomb Foundation. For more information on the 2022 awards program, nominations and recipients, visit [www.michiganpet.org](http://www.michiganpet.org).

**Best Friend to Dogs Award**

Every year, this award is bestowed up a person or organization that has gone above and beyond to save, care for, home or advocate for Michigan's homeless dogs.

**Michigan Pet Alliance**

Michigan's only professional trade association of animal welfare organizations, the mission of Michigan Pet Alliance is to work in collaboration and to speak with a single voice to eliminate abuse and neglect of Michigan's companion animals and to save all healthy and treatable homeless companion animals through training, technical assistance, education and advocacy. For more information, please visit [MichiganPet.org](http://MichiganPet.org) and follow @MichiganPetAlliance on Facebook.

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