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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Michigan Pet Alliance Announces Winners of 2021 Grants and Awards Program
Theme: Lessons Learned From COVID-19

October 16, 2021, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan – Michigan Pet Alliance (MPA) is proud to announce the recipients of its 2021 Grants and Awards program, which focused on lessons learned from COVID-19. Michigan animal shelters and rescue organizations were invited to demonstrate positive changes made to their operations as a result of the pandemic.

Awards of \$1,500 each were granted to Michele’s Rescue in Grand Rapids and to Ingham County Animal Control & Shelter (ICACS). Both grant awards were made possible thanks to the generosity of the Humane Society of Macomb Foundation.

Michele’s Rescue instituted a foster-to-adopt program, now allowing any potential adopter to become a foster care home first, providing them with a trial period to allow their new pet to adjust slowly to their new home. ICACS took advantage of the time it remained closed to the public during the pandemic to make operational changes that would enrich the lives of animals in the shelter by instituting the [Fear Free program](#). These changes reduced the length of stay for both cats and dogs and resulted in a much quieter, healthier environment for animals, volunteers and staff.

“We’re so grateful to be selected for this award,” said Julie Hill, community outreach manager at Ingham County Animal Control & Shelter. “Implementing Fear Free during COVID has helped significantly with animal enrichment. It’s rewarding to know our efforts are appreciated, not only by the animals in the shelter, but by the community as well.”

Upper Peninsula Animal Welfare Shelter (UPAWS) in Gwinn will receive the shelter assessment grant and Humane Animal Treatment Society (HATS) in Mt. Pleasant will receive the training grant. UPAWS will take what it learns from the assessment to prepare its 2022 strategic plan, while HATS will use the training grant to improve standards of care for dogs.

“We greatly appreciate the support from Michigan Pet Alliance, as their financial support for a shelter assessment will help our organization identify new ways to improve our daily operations,” said Bill Brutto, executive director at UPAWS. “The assessment will help us continue to meet the needs of each animal that comes through our doors, to rehabilitate each animal for better physical and mental health, and to help place our animals in their forever homes. With great community support from organizations like Michigan Pet Alliance, we have the opportunity to continue to impact our community and the animals that live in it.”

2021 Grants and Awards Program

The shelter assessment grant, a value of \$3,000, includes a site visit, interviews with key staff and a review of operational materials. A blueprint report of resources, sample documents, and recommended changes and improvements is provided to the shelter.

The training grant, a value of \$1,000, includes onsite staff and volunteer training, as well as various training modules that can be tailored to a shelter’s specific needs.

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There is no cost to apply for MPA grant awards. To be considered for the grant awards, shelters or rescues had to meet the following criteria:

- Animal shelters must be licensed with MDARD (Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development)
- Home-based 501(c)3 rescue organizations must be located in Michigan and registered with the Michigan Attorney General's Charitable Trust Section

Beginning in 2022, applicants must be members of Michigan Pet Alliance.

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 and follow @MichiganPetAlliance on Facebook.