

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 17, 2017

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CELEBRATING “OUTSIDE THE BOX” PROGRAMS THAT SAVE ANIMALS IN MICHIGAN

Bloomfield Hills, Michigan – Four Michigan animal welfare organizations are being recognized for thinking “outside the box” to save the lives of the animals in their care. Michigan Pet Fund Alliance and the Humane Society of Macomb Foundation created the *Outside the Box – Life-Saving Program/Project Award* to reward Michigan shelters and non-profit home-based rescue organizations for developing innovative life-saving programs.

“We proudly honor those who think outside the box to save animals,” said MPFA chairperson Deborah Schutt. “By celebrating new and creative ways to increase live release rates, we hope to encourage others to take these programs ‘out of the box’ to use within their own communities.”

Eleven organizations submitted applications for the award. MPFA and Macomb Foundation board members scored each entry for Creative, Effective, Transferable, and Life Saving. Each winner receives a plaque and \$1,000 cash award, and will present their program at MPFA’s *Getting to the Goal* conference in fall 2018. The four winners of the 2017 Outside the Box Award are:

Genesee County Animal Control: Volunteer Training Program

- The GCAC volunteer training program is designed to set up new volunteers for success and to offer ongoing training for the entire volunteer force. This program is for hands-on volunteers who are walking, socializing, and training dogs. It is a multi-tiered color-coded system of training checklists, classes, and experience.

Gratiot Animals in Need, aka G.A.I.N.: GAIN-Companions

- This pet retention and adoption outreach program was established to help pet owners and caretakers of colonies in an effort to reduce owner surrenders to animal control. One component of the program focuses on promoting adoption by residents in facilities for aging and disabled adults.

Humane Society of Livingston County: Packs & Pounces Enrichment Program

- Adoptive canine and feline population of the shelter are divided into groups of 3 or 4. Dog groupings are “packs”; cat groupings are “pounces”. One pack and pounce are assigned to a specific kennel attendant for the day. A daily checklist of quality time spent on each animal is maintained with the goal of keeping the animals’ lives as interesting and stimulating as possible.

Humane Society of West Michigan: Outpatient Heartworm Treatment

- HSWM utilizes outpatient heartworm treatment plans for adopted animals in order to reduce their time spent in the fast paced shelter environment. HSWM has treated over 100 cases of heartworm disease in 2017 and has been able to perfect protocols for providing quality treatment in a stress-free environment.

Details about the four winning programs and other entries can be found on the [MPFA website](#).

Based on 2016 shelter reports submitted to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, 60 out of 83 counties in Michigan are considered to be “no kill” with a 90% or better live release rate. In 2011 when MPFA started tracking the progress by county, only 10 counties were no kill.

ABOUT MICHIGAN PET FUND ALLIANCE

Michigan Pet Fund Alliance is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization that works with shelters, rescue organizations and animal advocates to achieve the goal that no healthy or treatable animal is euthanized due to lack of shelter space or permanent home. For more information, please visit www.michiganpetfund.org.

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