



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media contact: Jamie Baxter | The Impetus Agency  
[jamie@theimpetusagency.com](mailto:jamie@theimpetusagency.com) | 775-322-4022

## **PetSmart Charities® Supporting Sponsor of Pet Partners Conference**

**Bellevue, WA, (June 28, 2017) - Pet Partners**, the nation's leading organization registering therapy animals for animal assisted interventions, is excited to announce [PetSmart Charities](#) as a supporting sponsor of the upcoming 2017 Pet Partners conference, *Professionalizing the Passion*, taking place September 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> in Bellevue, Washington.

"We are proud to support Pet Partners, now celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, at their first conference in over ten years," said David Haworth, DVM, Ph.D., president of PetSmart Charities, the leading funder of animal welfare in North America. "At PetSmart Charities, we are dedicated to supporting programs and thought leadership that bring people and pets together. With Pet Partners' work to increase awareness on all the ways companion animals enrich our lives, this makes for a great fit."

The Pet Partners conference will bring two full days of presentations on current research supporting the scientific benefits of the human animal bond and best practices. The conference will be an opportunity for all who are engaged in the practice of therapy animals- from volunteers to practitioners- to expand their knowledge and network. The Pet Partners Conference will be a celebration of 40 years of registering therapy animals and helping thousands benefit from the companionship of therapy animals.

"We are so excited to have the support of PetSmart Charities at the Pet Partners Conference," said Annie Peters, president and CEO of Pet Partners. "With their support, we will work to bring insight and inform the industry on the scientific-based evidence that animal partnership improves human health and well-being. There are even thousands of animals in shelters across the country, just waiting to serve in the role of dedicated therapy animal alongside a loyal handler."

Registration is now open for Pet Partners 2017 Conference, for more information please visit [PetPartners.org](#).

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### **About PetSmart Charities®**

*PetSmart Charities, Inc. is a nonprofit animal welfare organization with a mission to find lifelong, loving homes for all pets by supporting programs and thought leadership that bring people and pets together. In addition to finding homes for almost 500,000 shelter pets each year through its in-store adoption program in all PetSmart stores across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, PetSmart Charities provides funding to non-profits aligned with its mission through four key areas of grant support: Preventing Pet Homelessness; Helping Shelter Pets Thrive; Supporting the Bond Between People and Pets; and Emergency Relief and Disaster Support. Each year, millions of generous PetSmart shoppers help pets in need by donating to PetSmart Charities using the pin pads at checkout registers inside PetSmart stores. In turn, PetSmart Charities efficiently uses 90 cents of every dollar donated and has become the leading funder of animal welfare in North America, donating about \$300 million to date. PetSmart Charities, a 501(c)(3) organization, has received the Four Star Rating from Charity Navigator, an independent organization that reports on the effectiveness, accountability and transparency of nonprofits, for the past 14 years in a row -- placing it among the top one percent of charities rated by this organization. To learn more visit [www.petsmartcharities.org](http://www.petsmartcharities.org)*

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***About Pet Partners***

*Pet Partners is the national leader in demonstrating and promoting animal-assisted therapy, activities and education. Nearly forty years since the organization's inception, the science that proves these benefits has become indisputable. Today, Pet Partners is the nation's largest and most prestigious nonprofit registering handlers of multiple species as volunteer teams providing animal-assisted interventions. For more information about Pet Partners, visit [www.petpartners.org](http://www.petpartners.org)*