



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contact: Jamie Baxter

The Impetus Agency

775-322-4022

jamie@theimpetusagency.com

Pet Partners of Illinois Receives Community Change Grant from America Walks to Encourage Individuals to Walk with Pets

Bellevue, Wash. (Jan. 21, 2020) – Pet Partners is proud to announce that its Illinois chapter, Pet Partners of Illinois, was just selected to receive one of 19 Community Change Grants awarded by America Walks for use in 2020. The program, now in its fifth year and supported by organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control, Lyft and the National Center on Health, provides funds that support grassroots efforts aimed at creating safe, accessible, and enjoyable places to walk and move.

“At a time when pedestrian fatalities are at an all-time high and communities continue to try and find ways to be healthy, these grants provide support to those doing the hard, inspiring work at the local level,” said Executive Director of America Walks Kate Kraft. “We are excited to work with these communities and use their efforts and stories to encourage other walking champions.”

Pet Partners of Illinois was selected from over 400 applications for projects that demonstrate the passion, creativity, and commitment of local walking supporters. With the assistance of America Walks, the chapter will host four, indoor walking events in Chicago to motivate people to walk with pets. The indoor walking venues make it possible to avoid inclement weather and promote pedestrian safety.

“Research has shown that people who walk with an animal are more likely to meet physical activity recommendations,” said Pet Partners of Illinois Executive Director Elle Ullum. “These walking events will give attendees an opportunity to be physically active alongside non-judgmental therapy animals, showing them just how much fun it is to walk in the presence of an animal.”

Leading up to the walking events, Pet Partners of Illinois will visit facilities such as nursing homes and community centers to invite individuals to attend its Walk With Me events. These visits will include a presentation on the benefits of walking with animals, winter weather walking tips, as well as a group indoor walk with therapy animals, so attendees can experience the benefits of walking alongside a therapy animal first-hand. The chapter will also offer resources on how to be active, with or without a pet.

To learn more about Pet Partners of Illinois’ upcoming walking events, please visit

<https://petpartners.org/illinois/about-us/> or contact Jamie Baxter at jamie@theimpetusagency.com. For more on American Walks’ Community Change Grants program, visit

<https://americawalks.org/community-change-grants/>.

Pet Partners is the national leader in demonstrating and promoting the health and wellness benefits of animal-assisted interventions. Since the organization's inception in 1977, the science proving these benefits has become indisputable. With more than 13,000 registered teams making more than 3 million visits annually, Pet Partners serves as the nation's most prestigious nonprofit registering handlers of multiple species as volunteer teams. Pet Partners teams visit with patients in recovery, people with intellectual disabilities, seniors living with Alzheimer's, students, veterans with PTSD, and those approaching end of life, improving human health and wellbeing through the human-animal bond. With the recent release of its Standards of Practice for Animal-Assisted Interventions and international expansion, Pet Partners is globally recognized as the industry gold standard. For more information on Pet Partners, visit www.petpartners.org.

America Walks is a national non-profit organization dedicated to providing communities and advocates the resources to advance safe, accessible, and enjoyable places to walk and be physically active for all. The organization provides its diverse network of over 30,000 advocates and hundreds of local, state, and national organizations, with the tools, resources, and experts needed to build capacity, gain experiences, and successfully promote walking and walkability. Learn more at www.americawalks.org

-###-