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**HUMANE SOCIETY/GRACE MARKETPLACE PARTNERSHIP AWARDED
\$50,000 GRANT FROM PETSMART CHARITIES**

SEPTEMBER 14, 2020 - The Humane Society of North Central Florida and GRACE Marketplace are pleased to announce their partnership has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from PetSmart Charities to help build permanent, on-site kennels for the pets of GRACE residents and to provide veterinary care and spay/neuter services for the pets of people experiencing homelessness. GRACE plans to break ground on the kennels in the coming weeks. The Humane Society of North Central Florida will continue to provide spay/neuter surgeries, veterinary care, and transportation to our spay/neuter clinic for the pets of people experiencing homelessness and receiving services at GRACE.

PetSmart Charities fully funded the partnership's collaborative grant proposal to increase the capacity for emergency shelter services for pets of people experiencing homelessness by creating a pet-friendly, low-barrier homeless shelter in North Central Florida on the GRACE campus. This program will be implemented over twelve months and all results will be reported back to PetSmart Charities. Both the Humane Society of North Central Florida and GRACE Marketplace hope this collaborative effort will serve as a model for homeless services and animal welfare organizations to work together nationwide.

"Every program and policy at GRACE is designed to eliminate the barriers that make it hard for people to get the help they need," GRACE Executive Director Jon DeCarmine said. "This partnership eliminates another critical barrier by creating a safe place for people without housing and their pets to go to get help in a time of crisis."

The humane society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping healthy and treatable dogs and cats in Alachua County, Florida. For over 40 years, the organization has worked to achieve its goal of becoming a community where no healthy or treatable animal is euthanized due to lack of space.

GRACE works to end homelessness by providing safe shelter, effective services, and permanent housing solutions for people without any of the typical barriers that keep people from getting help.

“This grant will drastically improve our community’s ability to care for pets and the people who love them who are experiencing homelessness. We are so pleased to be able to expand our partnership with GRACE Marketplace as they build permanent kennel facilities on their campus and animal welfare groups like the humane society step in to provide wrap-around veterinary care for those pets,” said the Humane Society’s executive director, Heather Thomas. “This is truly a ground-breaking intersection between animal welfare and social services.”

For more information about the Humane Society of North Central Florida or Grace Marketplace, please visit: <https://www.humanesocietyncfl.org/> or <https://www.gracemarketplace.org/>. For more information about PetSmart Charities and their impact on pets and the people who love them nationwide, please visit: <https://petsmartcharities.org/>.

About the Humane Society of North Central Florida

The Humane Society of North Central Florida was created in 2018 when the leadership of the Alachua County Humane Society, Gainesville Pet Rescue, and Helping Hands Pet Rescue decided to permanently join forces. By becoming the Humane Society of North Central Florida, our organizations were able to effectively streamline services for pets and pet owners, eliminate any duplication of services, maximize our community’s resources, and improve the life-saving abilities of the entire region.

Our founding organizations have been dedicated to serving pets in Alachua County for more than 40 years. The Humane Society of North Central Florida is a limited intake, no-kill animal rescue shelter. The animals in our facility are transferred from open-intake and/or managed admission municipal shelters across North Central Florida. The Humane Society of North Central Florida is an independent, local 501(c)(3) organization. As such, we do not receive funding from federal agencies, nor are we affiliated with any other state or national organizations such as the Humane Society of the United States or the ASPCA.

About GRACE Marketplace

GRACE Marketplace works to end homelessness by providing safe shelter, effective services, and permanent housing solutions for people without any of the typical barriers that keep people from getting help.