

Urban Resource Institute and Nestlé Purina Unveil the Purina Pet Haven, Manhattan's First-Ever Dog Park in a Domestic Violence Shelter

Dog park ribbon-cutting celebrates the growth of URIPALS—URI's initiative to shelter people and pets together—and URI's partnership with Purina

New York, NY – October 13, 2015 – [Urban Resource Institute](#) (URI) and Nestlé Purina PetCare (Purina) today hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate Manhattan's first-ever dog park in a domestic violence shelter. The new dog park is located at Urban Women's Retreat (UWR), a emergency shelter that is part of the URIPALS (People and Animals Living Safely) program. URIPALS is the only program in New York City and one of the few nationally that allows survivors of domestic violence to live in shelter with their pets. To date, URIPALS has helped 43 families with 63 pets, including 38 cats, 18 dogs, and a range of smaller animals, such as reptiles and fish, escape domestic violence.

Sponsored by Purina, which funded the design and construction of the dog park, the Purina Pet Haven will provide survivors of domestic violence and their families (including pets) with a safe and calming retreat in which to heal together while in shelter. The opening of the new dog park builds upon Purina's previous support of the URIPALS program. In the spring of 2014, Purina also sponsored the creation of the Purina Play Haven at URI's Safe Haven shelter in Brooklyn, the first-ever dog park at a domestic violence shelter in New York City. Since its opening, the park at Safe Haven has served as a vital component in the healing process for a number of families and their pets.

"Through the URIPALS program we have witnessed first-hand how important it is for survivors to have their beloved pets by their side while they heal," said Nathaniel Fields, President and CEO of URI. "From early on in the URIPALS program, Purina has been committed to supporting survivors of domestic violence and their pets. We know that the new dog park will play an integral part in helping our clients heal, and for that we are extremely grateful to Purina."

URI and Purina's collaboration in support of URIPALS brings together one of New York City's largest domestic violence service providers and a leader in the pet care industry around the closely linked issues of animal abuse and domestic violence. United by the belief that people and pets are better together, URI and Purina are helping reduce barriers to safety for families with pets in domestic violence situations and hope to continue raising awareness about the impact of abuse on the whole family—including pets.

"For most pet owners, the bond with their pet is incredibly strong, and for people in abusive relationships their pet can be an important source of comfort," said Dr. Kurt Venator, Purina veterinarian. "Purina is very proud to support the Urban Resource Institute in its efforts to keep families and their pets together during this time of healing."

As part of its support for the URIPALS program, Purina is also donating Purina ONE brand dog food, Purina Cat Chow brand cat food, along with other dog treats and cat litter. In addition, Purina is working with URI to provide supplies for welcome kits for families bringing pets to Urban Women's Retreat, including pet travel carriers, safety gates, pet beds, pet feeding and watering bowls, cat scratching posts, leashes and

pet toys.

At the ribbon-cutting, Manhattan Deputy Borough President Aldrin Bonilla and New York State Assembly member Linda Rosenthal will both issue proclamations celebrating the URIPALS program and its impact on survivors of domestic violence and their pets in New York City.

To learn more about URIPALS and for tips on keeping the entire family safe in domestic violence situations, please visit www.urinyc.org.

About Urban Resource Institute

Urban Resource Institute (URI) is a leading non-profit organization that provides comprehensive, holistic, and supportive human services programs that help individuals and families in the New York metropolitan area overcome obstacles and better their lives. With a rich 35-year legacy of social service research and expertise, deep community relationships, and a flexible, innovative approach to program development and service delivery, URI is uniquely equipped to provide solutions to the challenges affecting New York's most vulnerable populations. URI's hands-on programs for victims of domestic violence, the developmentally disabled, and people struggling with addiction and substance abuse are specifically tailored to meet the needs of the individual, while community outreach initiatives build wider visibility and support for the issues that have an impact on our clients' quality of life and New York's urban communities. For more information, please visit www.urinyc.org.

About Nestlé Purina

Nestlé Purina PetCare Company is a global leader in the pet care industry. Nestlé Purina PetCare promotes responsible pet care, community involvement and the positive bond between people and their pets. A premiere global manufacturer of pet products, Nestlé Purina PetCare is part of Swiss-based Nestlé S.A., a global leader in nutrition, health and wellness.

For further information: Urban Resource Institute: Kevin Maloney, 212-784-5716, kmaloney@groupgordon.com

Additional assets available online:  [Photos \(1\)](#)