Urban Resource Institute Opens New Purina Pet Haven in Harlem Domestic Violence Shelter

Ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Purina Pet Haven celebrates the third park opened as part of Urban Resource Institute and Purina's partnership to support victims of domestic violence and their pets

New York, NY – October 12, 2016 – Urban Resource Institute (URI) and Nestlé Purina PetCare today hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the Purina Pet Haven, a space where residents and their pets can play in safety, located onsite at URI's Urban Women's New Beginnings domestic violence shelter. The Purina Pet Haven is the third park of its kind at a URI shelter and 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 a shelter apartment with their pets. To date, URIPALS has helped 59 families with 83 pets, including 46 cats, 27 dogs, 8 turtles, a betta fish, and a bearded dragon, escape domestic violence.

The Purina Pet Haven will provide survivors of domestic violence and their families (including pets) with a safe and calming retreat where they can heal together while in shelter. Having a secure space onsite allows survivors to be outside with their pets without running the risk of encountering their abuser. The opening of the Purina Pet Haven marks the third Pet Haven built as part of URI and Purina's partnership, following the opening of the first Purina Pet Haven in Brooklyn in March 2014 and another in Harlem in October 2015. These three are the only pet parks in domestic violence shelters in New York City.

"At URI, we understand the importance of listening to the needs of our survivors, and Purina and URI developed the idea for the Purina Pet Havens in response to clients who wanted safe outdoor spaces where they could bring their pets," said Nathaniel Fields, President and CEO of URI. "Purina has been a tremendous partner in our efforts to support survivors of domestic violence and their pets, and we are grateful for their help in making this possible. We know that the lives of many survivors—human and pet alike—will be improved because of this amazing space."

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.

"We are proud to support Urban Resource Institute as they make more shelters pet friendly and encourage other shelters around the country to start their own PALS program," said Dr. Kurt Venator, Purina veterinarian. "Our shared goal is to bring some joy and comfort to domestic violence victims and their families by enabling them to live with their pets at URI shelters. It's heartwarming to see so many families and their pets together at URI and how their pets have helped in their time of healing."

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 social services that aid and empower New Yorkers in times of crisis. URI's programs help victims of domestic violence, the homeless, and other at-risk populations to live in safety and recover from trauma. With a rich 35-year history; 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 City's most vulnerable populations. Headquartered in Manhattan, URI is one of the largest providers of domestic violence services in New York City, serving over 1,600 clients annually. For more information, please visit www.urinyc.org.

About Nestlé Purina

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

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