Pet-Related Organizations Received more than $31 Million in Support from Purina in 2016

Donations touched shelter pets, survivors of domestic violence, and St. Louis Children's Hospital patients who can now be comforted by their pet during treatment

ST. LOUIS, March 2, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Purina today announced that in 2016 the company donated $31.2 million worth of pet food, pet supplies and monetary contributions to pet-related charities and other community organizations across the country, including its hometown of St. Louis. The donations reached more than 650 organizations throughout 2016.

During the past three years, Purina has donated nearly $90 million to pet-related charities and community organizations across the United States. Purina's contributions help fulfill its vision to enrich the lives of pets and their owners by building stronger communities.

"Whether it's helping children reunite with their pets in hospitals, keeping victims of domestic violence and their pets together during times of crisis, or bringing food to pets displaced by natural disasters, we at Purina are dedicated to bettering the lives of pets and the people who love them in communities across the country," said Kasey Bergh, director, Purina Community Affairs.

One of the company's more innovative initiatives included collaborating with St. Louis Children's Hospital to create the Purina Family Pet Center, a comfortable, safe and welcoming environment where patients and their families can reunite with their family pet during the treatment process.

Two patients who have benefited from the center, Elias and Kristen, had not seen their dogs in more than two months due to hospitalization. This past December, they had the chance to be reunited for quality time together after their dogs made the two-hour journey from their hometown of Salem, MO.

"The treatment process is even more challenging when you're far away from home and separated from family, including four-legged members," said Julie Strebe, mother of Elias and Kristen. "Pets bring so much joy to our lives, and having the chance for my children to be comforted by their dogs at the Purina Family Pet Center was a true blessing!"

The Purina Family Pet Center opened its doors on May 18, 2016 and is the fourth family pet center at a pediatric hospital in the world.

Sharing the belief that pets and people are better together, Purina and St. Louis Children's Hospital aim to bring joy and overall emotional well-being to children and their families through the therapeutic impact of personal pet interaction. To date, the center has welcomed 16 patients and 20 dogs.

In addition to helping St. Louis Children's Hospital, Purina's donations were given to a variety of pet-welfare organizations in 2016. Purina donated $100,000 to the Friends of the Animal Shelter (FOTAS) in St. Joseph, MO., to help build a "catio," a meet-and-greet area at the shelter where cats and adopters can get to know each other in a home-like environment. The donation also helped kick-start the FOTAS capital campaign, which was developed to build an entirely new shelter to house its pets.

Purina also used its resources to respond quickly to those in need during a number of unexpected disasters. One in particular was the flooding in Louisiana in August, and with the help of Rescue Bank, Purina distributed 42,000 pounds of food and 17,500 pounds of cat litter to rescue and shelter organizations in Baton Rouge.

In 2016, Purina continued to support Urban Resource Institute (URI), a leading non-profit organization which operates six domestic violence shelters in the New York City area and provides comprehensive social services that aid New Yorkers in times of crisis. URI and Purina worked together last year to open the third Purina Pet Haven, a space at a URI domestic violence shelter where residents and their pets can play in safety.

In November 2013, URI started its innovative PALS (People and Animals Living Safely) program. URIPALS is New York City's first initiative, and one of the few in the country, to allow victims of domestic violence to enter shelters with their pets. To support the URIPALS program the past three years, Purina donates pet food and pet supplies to help victims as they move into a URI shelter, as well as funds to build Purina Pet Havens. Purina and URI are also supporting the Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act on Capitol Hill to encourage allowing pets in more domestic violence shelters.

About Nestlé Purina PetCare

Nestlé Purina PetCare promotes responsible pet care, community involvement and the positive bond between people and their pets. A premier 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: CONTACT: Bill Etling, Nestlé Purina , 314.982.4825 , william.etling@purina.nestle.com, Allison Stahl, Burson-Marsteller, 312.596.3416, allison.stahl@bm.com

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