



THE GOOD DOG FOUNDATION
dogs helping humans heal

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**Good Dog Foundation Annual Gala Raises Record \$300,000
For Therapy Dog Team Training And Research**

Groundbreaking Pilot Program Announced To Help Female Prisoners Reduce Recidivism

New York, NY – June 8th, 2016 – The Good Dog Foundation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) and globally recognized leader in therapy dog team training, placement and research, held its 5th annual gala on May 17th at Guastavino’s on Manhattan’s East Side. The event raised nearly \$300,000, a record for the organization. Dozens of canine guests celebrated with close to 300 humans, including luminaries from the entertainment world (Academy Award nominee Joan Allen; Broadway star Robert Sella, the evening’s emcee) as well as leaders from academia, the pet products industry, investment banking, fashion and finance. Planet Dog was honored for a decade of remarkable philanthropy to organizations (including Good Dog) that foster human-canine wellbeing and healing. Unleashed by Petco was the evening’s Signature Gala Host.

“It is an honor to recognize the phenomenal achievements and contributions made by Planet Dog, a company that has philanthropy in its DNA,” Rachel McPherson, founder and president of Good Dog, said. “This is a small company that is making a giant impact on the field of human canine therapy.” A video highlighting the progress of patients visited by Good Dog therapy dog teams at the Bendheim Cancer Center in Greenwich, Connecticut – an effort funded by Planet Dog – was screened.

Upon accepting the award, Alex Fisher, president and founder, Planet Dog, said, “To be recognized by the Good Dog Foundation is humbling. We are incredibly proud of what the Planet Dog community has achieved.” Mr. Fisher is a son of New York philanthropist and former Morgan Stanley chairman Richard B. Fisher and Emily H. Fisher. Fisher’s family legacy of philanthropic giving led him to found Planet Dog, a company dedicated to making a positive social impact.

New Partnership Announced: At the gala, it was announced that Good Dog is partnering with Pace University’s Department of Criminal Justice and the Metropolitan Correction Center (MCC), Federal Bureau of Prisons, to design and implement a novel parenting program for female inmates.

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Bruce Fagin, Vice President, The Good Dog Foundation, described a three-year pilot program to be led by Pace University's Dr. Kimberly Collica-Cox, Associate Professor, Criminal Justice and Security, and an expert in prisoner rehabilitation. Nearly two million people are incarcerated in our nation's prisons. Upon release, two-thirds will return within three years. Among them, females incarcerated for nonviolent crimes are more likely to reoffend than all other crime typologies. Reason: Seventy percent of incarcerated women have a minor child at home; they feel the pain of imprisonment most harshly, suffering from higher rates of depression, self-destructive behavior, and other mental illnesses than any other prisoners. Their children suffer from depression, social exclusion, anxiety, substance use, early criminality, antisocial behavior and physical ailments.

In response, Pace and Good Dog, working at MCC, will develop, implement and evaluate a first-of-its-kind program that weaves together a best practice prisoner-parenting curriculum with specially trained therapy dogs and their human handlers, who will be psychologists, clinical social workers and/or licensed professional therapists. The professional therapy dog teams will assist inmates in exploring emotional trauma, facilitate communication and trust between prisoners and parenting teachers, and create a framework for improved relationships between inmates and their children. The goals of the program include decreasing maladaptive behavior in prison, giving female inmates skills to be better parents once released from prison, and ultimately reducing recidivism.

Good Dog augments extensive volunteer field work with scientifically based research to examine and improve the efficacy of animal-assisted therapy (AAT). A recent study with Mount Sinai Beth Israel in New York, supported by Pfizer Foundation and Zoetis, was the first clinical trial to conclusively document improvements in emotional wellbeing and quality of life using animal-assisted therapy in adult cancer patients.¹

More information about The Good Dog Foundation is available at www.thegooddogfoundation.org.

The Good Dog Foundation

A nationally recognized leader in animal-assisted therapy, The Good Dog Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to ease human suffering and promote healing among children and adults experiencing trauma from disease, disability, disaster, aging and other stressful conditions. To achieve its mission, Good Dog trains and certifies hundreds of volunteer teams (dog and handler) annually. This past year, Good Dog fielded a corps of nearly 1,000 trained and certified volunteer therapy dog teams, carefully matching teams with 300-plus partner-facilities (hospitals, schools, nursing homes, etc.) in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts. The teams work free-of-charge to help hundreds of thousands of people annually. In collaboration with esteemed institutions such as Yale University and Mount Sinai Beth Israel, Good Dog participates in scientific research on the benefits of animal-assisted therapy. For more information visit: <http://thegooddogfoundation.org/>.

Dr. Kimberly Collica-Cox, Pace University

Dr. Kimberly Collica-Cox has a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice, her research focus is on incarcerated populations and prison-based programming, and she has close to 19 years of practitioner experience working in the NY State Prison System and the Westchester County Jail. She is also a certified PREA and ACA auditor. Dr. Collica-Cox served as a professional trainer since 1997, working with inmates, correctional staff and community-based service providers. She served as the lead trainer for HCVS (Hudson Valley Community Services) on issues regarding incarceration, reentry and HIV until HCVS lost state funding for their training program last year. Dr. Collica-Cox is experienced in the implementation and maintenance of prison-based peer programming. She has not only implemented and managed prison-based programming but has presented, as well as written articles, in this area. Her main area of expertise is working with female offenders.

Planet Dog

Since incorporating in 1997, Planet Dog has been known as the pet industry's leading socially responsible, values-based design house, bringing people and dogs together for fun and mutual support. Planet Dog is recognized for making the **best** dog products from the **best** materials for our **best** friends. In addition to award-winning design, innovation, and quality, Planet Dog leads corporate America by donating money to the Planet Dog Foundation (PDF), which provides cash grants to organizations that train, place, and support service dogs helping people in need. Since 2006, PDF has awarded more than \$1 million in cash grants and product donations to service dog programs, therapy dog programs, K-9 search and rescue programs, police, fire and military dogs, and other innovative canine service programs. For a full list of grant recipients, please visit www.planetdogfoundation.org. To see the entire Planet Dog product line, please visit www.planetdog.com.

Unleashed by Petco

[Unleashed by Petco](#) is a community oriented pet specialty retailer that focuses on natural nutrition and dog and cat supply essentials. The Unleashed by Petco brand offers more than 115 locations nationwide specializing in natural and organic pet food and treats including a large made-in-the-USA assortment. As part of the Petco family of brands, Unleashed works with and supports the [Petco Foundation](#), an independent nonprofit organization, which has invested more than \$150 million since it was created in 1999 to help promote and improve the welfare of companion animals. In conjunction with the Petco Foundation and its partners, Unleashed by Petco locations host regular in-store adoption events to help find homes for thousands of animals every year.

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¹ "Beneficial effects of animal-assisted visits on quality of life during multimodal radiation-chemotherapy regimens." Stewart B. Fleishman, MD et al. *The Journal of Community and Supportive Oncology*, Jan. 2015