**NEWS RELEASE**
**For Immediate Release**

## UNDERDOG PET RESCUE AND VET SERVICES RECEIVES $1 MILLION GRANT FROM PETSMART CHARITIES TO EXPAND ACCESS TO VETERINARY CARE

*Funding Will Help Dane County Pet Families Access the Affordable Veterinary Care They Need*

**MADISON (November 12, 2026)** — Underdog Pet Rescue and Vet Services has received a three-year, $1 million grant from PetSmart Charities, including $450,000 in the first year, to help more local pet families access affordable veterinary care.

A recent PetSmart Charities-Gallup State of Pet Care Study revealed 52 percent of pet parents skipped or declined veterinary care, largely due to financial concerns. A follow-up PetSmart Charities-Gallup study of veterinarians found that 94 percent report their clients' financial constraints sometimes limit their ability to provide recommended care. This funding will support hiring additional staff and increasing efficiencies so more pets can receive care. Through this grant, Underdog Pet Rescue and Vet Services expects to increase spay/neuter surgeries, offer vaccine clinics, and add exam rooms to be able to serve more families and their pets.

"This grant will help us provide more high-quality, affordable veterinary care for our community," said Lauren Brinkman, Executive Director of Underdog Pet Rescue and Vet Services. "Pets make families complete, and we want to support families accessing needed care."

50 million pets across the U.S. lack access to the veterinary care they need. In 2023, PetSmart Charities responded to that reality with a commitment of more than $100 million over five years to dismantle the financial, geographical and logistical barriers standing between pets and the care they deserve. Through its Accelerator grant and coaching program, PetSmart Charities supports nonprofit and low-cost veterinary providers working to expand services and reach more families in need.

"Pets are family, and access to veterinary care is critical in ensuring they stay healthy and remain in their loving homes," said Aimee Gilbreath, president of PetSmart Charities. "When care is declined or skipped due to finances, small medical issues can become serious and far more expensive. We're proud to partner with Underdog Pet Rescue and Vet Services to help create practical, sustainable goals that meet the needs of their community."

Lulu was seen at Underdog Pet Rescue and Vet Services in March of 2026 when she suffered a serious injury to her right rear leg. Lulu's leg needed to be amputated, but her family's finances had been depleted by her previous care. Lulu underwent amputation of her right rear leg at Underdog on March 31, 2026.

Today, Lulu has fully adapted to life on three legs. Her owner adds, "Lulu is not just a pet to us—she is family and my service dog. Seeing the life she has today makes it impossible to overstate what Underdog's compassion meant to our family. We will always be grateful that when we were running out of options, they said yes. Underdog supported us through the surgery, recovery, rehabilitation, and follow-up care. Today she is a happy, active tripod who walks, plays, runs, jumps onto our bed, and

continues to work as my service dog by alerting me to vertigo and retrieving dropped items. Underdog did not just perform her surgery—they helped give Lulu her life back."



**About Underdog Pet Rescue and Vet Services**

Underdog Pet Rescue and Vet Services is an all-breed companion animal rescue and veterinary clinic based in Madison, Wisconsin. Its mission is to find permanent homes for animals in need, and to enrich lives by strengthening the connection between animals and people through community services and outreach. They offer affordable veterinary services in Madison to support all who need services in their community.

Find out more at http://www.underdogpetrescue.org.
Follow Underdog Pet Rescue and Vet Services at facebook.com/underdogpetrescue
Follow Underdog Pet Rescue and Vet Services on Instagram: @underdogpets

**About PetSmart Charities**

PetSmart Charities is committed to making the world a better place for pets and all who love them. Through its in-store adoption program in all PetSmart® stores across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, PetSmart Charities has helped more than 11 million pets find loving homes. PetSmart Charities also provides grant funding to support organizations that advocate and care for the well-being of all pets and their families. Its efforts connect pets with loving homes, improve access to affordable veterinary care, and support families in times of crises with access to food, shelter, and disaster response. Each year, millions of generous supporters help pets in need by donating to PetSmart Charities directly at PetSmartCharities.org, while shopping at PetSmart.com, and by using the PIN pads at checkout registers inside PetSmart® stores. PetSmart Charities efficiently uses more than 90 cents of every dollar donated to fulfill its mission, granting more than $600 million since its inception in 1994. The organization is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has received a Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator each year consecutively since 2003 — placing it among the top one percent of rated charities.

To learn more or make a donation, visit PetSmartCharities.org.

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