

YWCA NorthEastern NY Receives Grants to Provide Shelter for Pets in Domestic Violence Situations

Schenectady, NY, November 15, 2022 – YWCA NorthEastern NY received a \$60,000 RedRover and Purina Purple Leash Project grant to start a pet program at their Empowerment, Healing, and Wellness Center for survivors of domestic violence. These grants will enable YWCA NENY to provide safe shelter for survivors and their pets escaping abuse, rather than turning anyone away.

Many victims of domestic violence delay escaping dangerous environments out of concern for their beloved pets. In June of 2022, YWCA NENY moved into their new, permanent shelter allowing more space for survivors, their families, and now their pets as well. At their previous shelter, YWCA NENY did not have the capacity to shelter pets of victims of domestic violence, but with the help of two local agencies, the RedRover grant, and the Purple Lease Project grant, they are able to start a new program to provide safe shelter for victim's companion cats and dogs at intake.

"We have been working toward this opportunity for many years," says **Wendi Gapczynski, YWCA NENY's Director of Shelter, Advocacy, and Domestic Violence Education Services**. "Thanks to the RedRover and Purina Purple Leash Project grants, survivors no longer have to choose between remaining with an abuser or abandoning their pets. This program will assist with breaking the control that an abuser has over the survivor and their children."

The RedRover grant will cover outside boarding as needed, spaying and neutering, vaccinations and post-op care, select pet supplies, fencing for an outdoor dog play area, general wellness exams for cats and dogs, emergency vet care, and pet deposits for residents during their transition from shelter to apartments. Additionally, the Purina Purple Leash Project funding will help get the basic supplies needed to kick-start the program at YWCA's shelter.

At this time, YWCA NENY will only be able to accept cats and dogs but hopes to expand capabilities in the future. Their goal is to serve 30 pets per year through this new program.

YWCA NENY is asking for donations of pet supplies so that the YWCA Empowerment, Healing, and Wellness Center will be able to start accepting pets without delay. For more information on what donations are currently needed please reach out to Wendi Gapczynski at 518.374.3394 x 135 or wgapczynski@ywca-neny.org.

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YWCA NorthEastern NY has been supporting women, children, and families in Schenectady County for 134 years. YWCA NorthEastern NY is on a mission to eliminate racism, empower women and promote peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. For information on programs serving infants to seniors, please visit www.ywca-neny.org.

RedRover works to bring animals and their people from crisis to care. Since 1987 they've helped animals in crisis and have worked to protect and strengthen the bond between people and animals through emergency sheltering, disaster relief services, financial assistance, and education. For more information, please visit redrover.org.