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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Animal Welfare Association Celebrates “National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week” by Updating on its “Building a Place Where Happiness Begins” Expansion**

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Voorhees, NJ – Animal Welfare Association (AWA) celebrates “National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week” by inviting members of the South Jersey community to join them in their “Building a Place Where Happiness Begins” \$2.5 million expansion effort, which aims to demolish the 50+ year-old shelter facility and rebuild a truly modern day shelter in its place. This shelter will be capable of helping 1,000 more pets a year, and touching the lives of countless more people.

At the time of press, AWA has raised more than \$1.6 million from nearly 200 members of the community who rallied together for pets and the people who love them. AWA is fundraising through the remainder of 2019 and throughout 2020, and is excited to hopefully open doors on the new, life-saving building thanks to additional support from the community. Individuals and foundation/corporation representatives are invited to discuss transformational gifts with Executive Director Maya Richmond at any time.

Executive Director Maya Richmond says, “‘National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week’ is a perfect time to invite animal lovers to appreciate South Jersey’s oldest and largest animal shelter by making a gift toward ‘Building a Place Where Happiness Begins.’ Together, we will be able to ensure AWA continues to be so much more than a shelter. Our programs’ impact extends far beyond the walls of our building.”

Just one of AWA’s programs is Pet Therapy, where certified dogs and cats are brought to hospice facilities, senior centers, and classrooms, to raise awareness of the human animal bond, and provide companionship to the elderly and young alike. Last year, this program reached 4,000 individuals.

**Animal Welfare Association**, a private, non-profit, 501(c) 3 animal welfare organization, serves the people and animals of southern New Jersey. AWA is dedicated to eliminating animal suffering, promoting the importance of the human-animal bond, and improving the role of animals in the well-being of people. Through a variety of programs including adoptions, veterinary services, pet therapy, and humane education, in 2018 over 22,000 pets were served through AWA programming. AWA is South Jersey’s leader in progressive companion animal care.

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A rendering of the new building AWA hopes can be built with community support.