



## FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

### DIVISION OF ANIMAL CONTROL

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# News Release

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## Frederick County Shelter Chosen for The Jackson Galaxy Project's Life-Saving *Cat Pawsitive* Program

*Innovative Training Program to Increase Cat Adoptions*

FREDERICK, MD – The [Frederick County Animal Control & Pet Adoption Center](#) has been selected by [The Jackson Galaxy Project](#) (JGP), a Signature Program of [GreaterGood.org](#), to participate in the 2020 class of *Cat Pawsitive*, a life-saving initiative that introduces positive-reinforcement training to cats in shelters and rescues. Supported by the Petco Foundation, this innovative training program for cats aims to increase feline adoption rates and maintain cat “mojo.”

Jackson Galaxy (star of the television show *My Cat from Hell* on Animal Planet, and founder of JGP) developed *Cat Pawsitive* with a team of feline behavior experts. Highlights of the program include:

- Maintaining cat “adoptability” and feline social skills by enriching cats’ day-to-day lives
- Increasing adoptions
- Decreasing length of stay
- Engaging and empowering volunteers and staff
- Showing potential adopters that cats are cool and can even be trained!

“As a shelter worker in the early 90s, I found myself frustrated by the lack of resources and know-how afforded to the cats in my care. Unsocialized cats, traumatized cats, and adoptable cats whose spirits were dwindling from lack of stimulation were all being euthanized. Dogs, however, were being saved thanks in part to burgeoning enrichment programs geared towards physical exercise, confidence-building and the bond created with the humans participating in these programs,” said Galaxy. “With the help of a dog trainer, I adapted these clicker-based programs to cats and the results were immediate and, at least in my eyes, profound. My overwhelming desire at the time was to bring the liberating effects of this approach to as many other shelters and rescues as I could, and in just four years we have already helped well over 1,200 cats in 174 shelters find their forever homes, with hundreds more receiving enriching training every day.”

The *Cat Pawsitive* program is designed to keep adoptable cats mentally and physically active in a shelter or rescue environment. The focus is on fun, positive reinforcement-based training sessions that go beyond playtime-as-usual to help cats maintain their mojo *and* connect more

(more)

quickly with potential adopters. From teaching high fives and head bumps to “sit” and “come when called,” caregivers at *Cat Pawsitive* participating organizations engage with cats in a brand new way to really help cats to “click” with adopters.

“We are excited to introduce *Cat Pawsitive* to our shelter cats and their potential adopters. This is a win-win for everybody,” said Director Linda Shea. “Until now, our shelter enrichment programs have really focused on dogs. *Cat Pawsitive* provides a great opportunity to enrich the lives of our feline population while they are in our care.”

Since 2016, more than 1,200 cats have been adopted during *Cat Pawsitive* semesters, with hundreds of more cats benefitting from being in the program and continuing their training on the road to adoption. To date, a total of 174 animal welfare organizations have participated in *Cat Pawsitive* programs and conducted over 20,000 training sessions, with over 1,100 staff members and volunteers taking part in the training of thousands of cats.

Galaxy will be sharing highlights of the program on The Jackson Galaxy Project [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) pages.

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#### **About Frederick County Animal Control & Pet Adoption Center**

Frederick County Animal Control & Pet Adoption Center is the only animal shelter in Frederick County, Maryland. Our mission is three fold. We work to prevent cruelty, abuse and neglect of animals in the county by enforcing all state, county and city ordinances. We shelter homeless animals and place them in safe and loving home environments. We also educate the public on all animal issues to foster a more aware and caring community.

#### **About The Jackson Galaxy Project**

The Jackson Galaxy Project is a Signature Program of GreaterGood.org, a public 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Founded in 2014 by leading animal advocate and cat wellness consultant, Jackson Galaxy, host and executive producer of [Animal Planet](#)'s long running hit show “[My Cat From Hell](#)” and New York Times best-selling author, The Jackson Galaxy Project seeks to improve the lives of animals at risk and help the people who care for them through innovative programs that educate, inspire and empower staff, rescuers and adopters to continually raise the bar for animals at risk and reduce the number of animals that end up in shelters. For more information, visit [TheJacksonGalaxyProject.org](#).

#### **About GreaterGood.org**

[GreaterGood.org](#) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that works to improve the health and well-being of people, pets, and the planet. Over the last 12 years, GreaterGood.org has given over \$250 million in cash and in-kind grants to over 3,000 charitable partners worldwide. To learn more, visit [GreaterGood.org](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).

#### **About the Petco Foundation**

At the Petco Foundation, we believe that every animal deserves to live its best life. Since 1999, we've invested more than \$260 million in lifesaving animal welfare work to make that happen. With our more than 4,000 animal welfare partners, we inspire and empower communities to make a difference by investing in adoption and medical care programs, spay and neuter services, pet cancer research, service and therapy animals, and numerous other lifesaving initiatives. Through our Think Adoption First program, we partner with Petco stores and animal welfare organizations across the country to increase pet adoptions. So far, we've helped more than 6 million pets find their new loving families, and we're just getting started. Visit [petcofoundation.org](#) to learn more about how you can get involved.