



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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*Animal Shelters Have Saved 750,000 Cats  
More than 1,000 North American shelters unite in Million Cat Challenge*

Davis, Calif. – In 2014, a coalition of animal shelters, shelter veterinarians, and animal welfare leaders announced a bold goal: To save the lives of 1 million North American shelter cats within five years. Today, less than three years later, the more than 1,100 shelters in the Million Cat Challenge are three-quarters of the way to that goal.

“Shelters across North America have truly risen to the challenge,” said Challenge co-founder Dr. Kate Hurley of the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program. “They’ve proven that the creativity and determination to save a million more lives is right here in our midst – from the southern tip of Florida to the northern reaches of Canada. They’ve made it work in shelters of every imaginable shape and size.”

Maddie’s Fund®, a family foundation headquartered in California, made the Challenge possible with their generous financial support. “We are delighted at the progress the Million Cat Challenge is making,” said Mary Ippoliti-Smith, Maddie’s Fund Executive Leadership Team. “Hitting this milestone this quickly is a clear signal that a lifesaving mind shift has occurred within not only the animal welfare field, but also with the North American public.”

Since its inception, the Challenge has evolved from a vision for North America’s cats to become an established program endorsed by nearly all major animal welfare organizations in the U.S. and Canada. In addition to Maddie’s Fund, the roster of organizations includes the ASPCA, the Humane Society of the United States, Best Friends Animal Society, the National Animal Care and Control Association, the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, the Petco Foundation, PetSmart Charities, Alley Cat Allies, the Association of Shelter Veterinarians, and the Winn Feline Health Foundation.

The Million Cat Challenge is based on five key initiatives that help shelters of every size and in every community reduce the number of cats who enter shelters, and increase the number who find lifesaving outcomes.

In celebration of 750,000 feline lives saved, participating shelters, supporters, and animal lovers everywhere are invited to join the Challenge on its Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/MillionCatChallenge](http://www.facebook.com/MillionCatChallenge) on Wednesday, March 15, at 3 PM Eastern Time.

"This is one of those moments in animal welfare when things change completely," said the Challenge's other co-founder, Dr. Julie Levy of the Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida. "Now that we all know this can be done, there's no turning back. Saving cats' lives is here to stay."

### **About the Million Cat Challenge**

*The Million Cat Challenge is a shelter-based campaign to save the lives of one million cats in North America over the next five years. The core strategy of the campaign will focus on five key initiatives that offer every shelter, in every community, practical choices to reduce euthanasia and increase live outcomes for shelter cats. Drs. Levy and Hurley are available for interviews. For more information, visit [www.millioncatchallenge.org](http://www.millioncatchallenge.org).*

### **About Maddie's Fund**

*[Maddie's Fund](http://www.maddiesfund.org)<sup>®</sup> is a family foundation created in 1994 by [Workday](http://www.workday.com)<sup>®</sup> co-founder Dave Duffield and his wife, Cheryl, who have endowed the Foundation with more than \$300 million. Since then, the Foundation has awarded more than \$187.8 million in grants toward increased community lifesaving, shelter medicine education, and pet adoptions across the U.S. The Duffields named Maddie's Fund after their Miniature Schnauzer Maddie, who always made them laugh and gave them much joy. Maddie was with Dave and Cheryl from 1987 - 1997 and continues to inspire them today.*

*Maddie's Fund is the fulfillment of a [promise](http://www.maddiesfund.org) to an inspirational dog, investing its resources to create a no-kill nation where every dog and cat is guaranteed a healthy home or habitat. #ThanksToMaddie. For more information, visit [www.maddiesfund.org](http://www.maddiesfund.org).*