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Contact: Laura Ducceschi

Phone: (215) 887-0816

Email: lducceschi@animalearn.org



2010 Humane Student & Educator Awarded at National Animal Conference in DC

Animalearn is pleased to announce the 2010 recipients of its annual Humane Student and Humane Educator of the Year Awards. On Friday, July 23, 2010, Animalearn honors Humane Student Mitch Goldsmith and Humane Educator Julie Shaeffer for their accomplishments on behalf of animals used in education. The awards will be presented at the Taking Action for Animals Conference Welcome Reception at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC.

Humane Student honoree, Mitch Goldsmith, is a Michigan State University (MSU) student and President of Students Promoting Animal Rights (SPAR). As President of SPAR, Mitch led a campus-wide effort to end the MSU College of Veterinary Medicine's (CVM) terminal surgical training labs, in which dogs were used in invasive procedures and then killed following the end of the exercises. Sparked by Animalearn's "Dying to Learn" report, Mitch engaged in dialogue with students, faculty, and administrators, arranging for Animalearn to make a presentation on campus about the report and alternatives. The Award recognizes Mitch's perseverance and informed advocacy, which led to a stunning success. Ultimately, the MSU CVM announced that starting with the fall 2010 semester, the school will no longer teach students surgical skills in this way.

"Mitch is a perfect example of what an empowered student can do," said AAVS Education Director Laura Ducceschi. "He put his convictions into action, sought out quality resources, constructively approached university officials, and made a difference for both MSU students and animals."

Animalearn's Humane Educator honoree is Julie Shaeffer, a biology teacher at Boulder High School in Boulder, Colorado. Julie demonstrated faithfulness to her ideals and persistence in her efforts to incorporate non-animal dissection alternatives and cruelty-free science into her classroom, despite facing opposition from school administrators and fellow faculty. Additionally, she developed a specialized biology curriculum that integrates alternatives borrowed from Animalearn's The Science Bank, a humane science lending library.

"Not only did Julie demonstrate to students, faculty, and administrators that cruelty-free science is an effective alternative to animal dissection, but she also created a sound biology curriculum that integrates alternatives and helps students achieve excellence in science education," said Ducceschi. "Through Julie's tireless efforts, Animalearn can offer this curriculum to other biology educators to inspire them to make humane science a priority in their classroom."

Animalearn, the educational division of the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS), works with educators, students and others to achieve quality humane science education without harmful use of animals. Visit www.Animalearn.org or call (800)729-2287.