NEWS RELEASE
December 21, 2012

Animalearn Awards Courageous Student
Connecticut Resident Stands Up For Students and Animals

Jenkintown, PA - Animalearn is pleased to announce that the recipient of its 2012 Humane Student of the Year Award is Jasmine Caruk, a compassionate student from Connecticut. Jasmine was selected this year because of her efforts to pass dissection choice legislation, giving students from K-12 the legal right to opt out of dissections and instead choose humane alternatives.

Earlier this year, Jasmine, now a community college student, testified before the Connecticut Joint Committee on Education in favor of passing a student choice law, and while the bill passed in the House, it did not pass in the Senate.

Making the decision to stand up for animals used for dissection was a natural one for Jasmine, as she has been an animal activist for most of her young life. She follows in the footsteps of her mother Julia Caruk who is also passionate about making a difference for animals. In fact, Julia also took proactive steps to help pass the Connecticut bill by creating a Change.org petition, which garnered 250 signatures.

"After meeting Jasmine and reading the testimony that she provided to the Connecticut legislature, I knew that she was a clear choice as our 2012 Humane Student of the Year," said Nicole Green, Director of Animalearn.

Here is an excerpt of Jasmine’s testimony - As a former biology student, I was lucky enough to have the option to opt out of a cat dissection. Just the thought of cutting open an animal was no different than my beloved feline companions at home and was enough to make my stomach churn. Something about causing death to study life just didn’t seem right to me.

“In honor of Jasmine, I encourage all members of the Connecticut legislature to come together to pass a student choice law, and help students like her receive the science education they deserve without harming animals,” said Green. Currently 15 states (CA, FL, IL, LA, MA, MD, ME, NM, NJ, NY, OR, PA, RI, VA, and VT) give students the right to opt out of dissection and instead choose humane innovative alternatives.

As part of her Award, Jasmine will be entitled to select some high quality alternatives worth approximately $1,000 for her local school district, where they will be useful for many years to come.

Animalearn, the educational division of the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS), works with educators, students, and others to achieve quality humane science education without the harmful use of animals. Animalearn’s free loan program, The Science Bank, is the largest lending program in the U.S. and offers humane science products that enable educators to teach and students to learn anatomy, physiology, and psychology lessons without harming animals. For more information visit www.Animalearn.org.