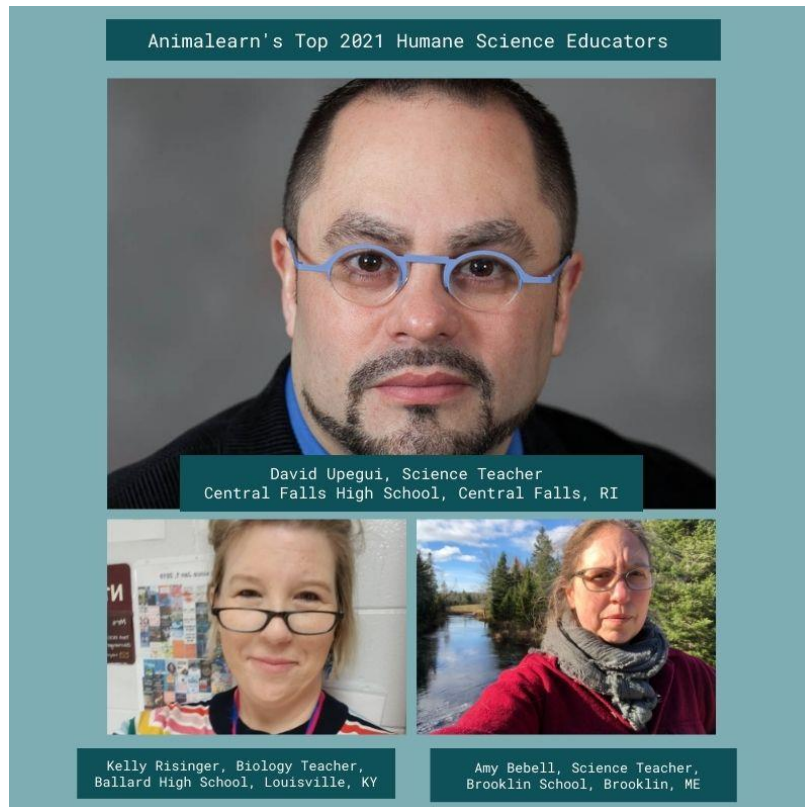**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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2021 Humane Educators Awarded for Compassion in Science

Jenkintown, PA (January 2022)— After a second year of teaching during challenging times, Animalearn selected David Upegui of Central Falls, Rhode Island as its 2021 Humane Educator of the Year. Animalearn additionally selected two honorable mentions to award— Kelly Risinger of Louisville, Kentucky and Amy Bebell of Brooklin, Maine.

"It has been a very difficult year for teachers who endured many obstacles in what continued to be a Covid-driven world. That is why Animalearn wanted to identify compassionate science educators who went above and beyond to be humane role models to their students," said Animalearn Director Nicole Green.

Upegui, a science teacher at Central Falls High School, was chosen as Animalearn's Humane Educator of the Year for his commitment to teaching science in a humane way.

"We have the capacity, and therefore the responsibility, to teach our students about the natural world (their inheritance) in sustainable ways since our students will be responsible for solving the problems we

will leave behind. Students must not only learn the science, but also ways of behaving for the successful survival of our shared Earth. We must find ways to teach both content and responsibility," stated Upegui.

Risinger and Bebell, Animalearn's 2021 Humane Educator honorable mentions, embody similar ethics and values to Upegui.

Kelly Risinger is a biology teacher at Ballard High School who is interested in teaching science with virtual methods of dissection and learning. "As a biology teacher I promote humane treatment to all living creatures. I strive to be inclusive and respectful to student religion and cultures," said Risinger.

Amy Bebell is a 3rd-8th grade science teacher at The Brooklin School, whose primary objective as a teacher is to guide students toward becoming responsible stewards of the planet. On receiving her award, Amy stated "I've been using humane methods to teach my middle and elementary students about human body systems and ecology for decades. This honor will give my classes greater access to learning materials to further deepen their understanding of life sciences."

"I am excited to see a wave of science educators doing their part to teach sustainability and compassion to future generations," said Bailee Henderson, Associate Director of Animalearn.

A statement from Upegui best sums up the nature of this award: "We now have the technology and ability to teach about the natural world in ways that are not destructive and wasteful. Hence, we must provide students the opportunities to learn in a humane way that is not only good for them, but good for all of us as a society."

As part of his award, Animalearn will donate $1500 worth of virtual reality dissection resources for Upegui. Risinger and Bebell will receive humane science education resources valued at $750 each.

Animalearn, a division of the American Anti -Vivisection Society, works with educators, students, policy makers 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 Animalearn.org.

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