

Animal Companions of Las Cruces Founder, Dr. Dawn Duncan, Named Volunteer of the Year

Saturday, Oct 7, 2023 — Dr. Dawn Duncan, Founder and Chair of the non-profit Animal Companions of Las Cruces (ACofLC), was honored with the Gerald H. Deabel Legacy Volunteer of the Year Award for 2023. The prestigious award was presented by the Deabel Foundation at their annual Spirit of Giving Gala held at the Convention Center.

It was a huge surprise for Dawn, who attended the gala as a volunteer casino dealer. “I’m shocked”, said Dawn in her acceptance speech.

Dawn founded the non-profit in January of 2022, quickly assembling a 6-member Board of Directors and by the end of the month, had obtained the fiscal sponsorship of the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico for 501c3 status. Traveling to veterinary school job fairs and conventions nationwide, Dawn has been immensely successful in outreach to veterinary students in conjunction with ACofLC’s efforts to recruit more veterinarians to our region so that our local animal clinics can expand their operating hours. Eventually, ACofLC will be able to achieve their core mission of staffing a 24/7/365 emergency veterinary hospital that will serve Las Cruces and neighboring communities. Dawn’s tireless work and her selfless devotion to the welfare of our fur babies and to the community are a perfect example of the spirit of the Deabel Volunteer Award.

Please visit them at www.AnimalCompanionsofLasCruces.org to learn about Dr. Duncan’s many other accomplishments, such as:

- Setting up a student loan scholarship program, which currently contains \$60,000
- Supporting a televet video call line for after-hours pet care
- Providing education to pet parents to help avoid emergencies
- Advocating for limits on non-compete clauses in veterinary medicine to minimize loss of scarce veterinary resources in New Mexico

“We’ve accomplished much, but we still have quite a way to go to make our core mission a reality and we’re counting on the continued support of our generous pet-loving community. Together, we can and will establish 24/7 emergency pet care in our region, eliminating the need to travel 1 hour to El Paso for pet emergencies that occur after business hours”, said Dr. Duncan.

A video of the award presentation can be seen at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsyG8FZpWKY>

