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Avow awarded $2,600 grant from Golisano Foundation Bailey and Friends

Grant to fund purchase of robotic pets for children in palliative care program

NAPLES, FLA. (Aug. 15, 2023) – Avow has been awarded a $2,600 grant from the Golisano Foundation's Bailey and Friends trust to purchase lifelike robotic pets for children receiving palliative care due for life-threatening or life-limiting illnesses through the Partners in Care: Together for Kids (PIC: TFK) program.

"We commend (Avow's) efforts in providing exceptional, compassionate care through creative support solutions like robotic pets, to comfort and increase a child's quality of life as they face tremendous challenges," says Ann Costello, director of the Golisano Foundation.

The robotic cats and dogs will serve as companions to children who are unable to care for a live animal due to their medical conditions. Children who are in Avow's PIC: TFK program receive services such as pain and symptom management, expressive therapies, therapeutic counseling for child and family, bereavement support and more. Now, with the help of Golisano Foundation's Bailey and Friends, they also have access to the benefits of animal companionship.

"We are currently providing care and support to 25 PIC: TFK children and their families," says Dawn Kolderman, senior clinical director at Avow. "This is the highest number of children we have served. The virtual pets will be a wonderful addition to the family and a lifelong companion for the kids. Avow is excited to offer this new option for children in the PIC: TFK program and thankful to the Golisano

Foundation's Bailey and Friends trust for their assistance in funding such a life-changing and uplifting project."

To be eligible for the PIC: TFK, children must meet Medicaid and Florida Healthy Kids financial requirements, be age 21 or younger, and be diagnosed with a life-limiting condition. Avow's program currently provides palliative care to children with cerebral palsy, congenital cardiac disease, brittle bone disease and other complex medical conditions. Patients and their families experience tremendous struggles, as there are constant variabilities in the child's health. In many cases, patients and their families are in a continuous state of crisis. Most have suffered from grief and loss even while their family members are still living. Avow's PIC: TFK program improves quality of life for patients and their families through steadfast support.

About Avow

Avow was founded in 1983 as Collier County's original, nonprofit hospice. Today, Avow's nonprofit companies provide palliative care consultations for adults facing chronic or serious illness, hospice care, and bereavement support services for children and adults. To learn more about the scope of services provided by Avow, call 239-261-4404 or visit avowcares.org.

About Bailey and Friends

Bailey and Friends is dedicated to supporting animal welfare in Western New York and Southwest Florida with a focus on dogs and cats. It works with shelters, rescue groups, veterinary clinics, and other lifesaving programs to promote wellness, ensure safety and keep pets and families together. It is a trust component of the Golisano Foundation, one of the largest private foundations in the U.S. dedicated to making the world a better place for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Golisano Foundation was established in 1985 by Tom Golisano—entrepreneur, philanthropist, civic leader, and founder of Paychex, Inc. Learn more at golisanofoundation.org/Bailey-Friends/About.aspx.

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