



SPCA of Southwest Michigan News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KALAMAZOO, Mich., October 11, 2011 – SPCA of Southwest Michigan, the region’s largest non-profit animal rescue, today announced that Jennifer Burke has joined the organization as Executive Director, effective October 29, 2011.

Ms. Burke earned a BBA from the University of Miami and has developed significant experience in both nonprofit management and community leadership for the cause animal welfare. She has been a board member for Kansas City Dog Advocates and The Buster Foundation. She has provided animal welfare support to Mid America Bully Breed Rescue and Spay Neuter Kansas City. She has volunteered, provided foster homes for needy animals, fundraised and coordinated large events relating to important animal welfare issues surrounding the No More Homeless Pets mission. She is an advocate for responsible canine ordinance and legislation at the city and state levels.



Jennifer Burke
Executive Director

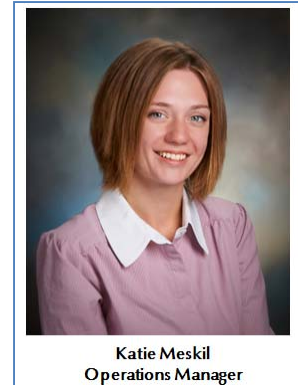
Ms. Burke’s career path has followed the nonprofit sector for seven years and she has been an integral part of network development for small business and nonprofit program development. During her nonprofit management career, she has provided business consulting services to individuals living with disabilities and has also worked with The Salvation Army to provide support to local men and women living with addiction.

“Jennifer Burke has a strong track record of success and the Board of Directors is thrilled that she will bring her many talents to this leadership role at SPCA of Southwest Michigan,” said Michael Kounelis, Board President. “The strained economy creates a difficult operating environment for any type of regional or local nonprofit organization such as ours that relies solely on private contributions to finance its services, and doesn’t receive any government or national agency funding.” However, we are confident that Ms. Burke will not only continue the good and compassionate work done by the SPCA of Southwest Michigan, but will expand its reach throughout our region and enhance its capacity to continue meeting these compelling needs of the community for many years to come,” he continued.

Ms. Burke states, “I am honored to take on the position of Executive Director and passionate about achieving the mission and goals of the SPCA of Southwest Michigan. I am excited by this opportunity to further make a positive difference in the plight of abandoned and homeless pets. I am

committed to continuous improvement and sustainability so that the community can benefit from these compassionate animal rescue services well into the future.”

SPCA of Southwest Michigan also announced the promotion of Katie Meskil to the position of Operations Manager for the organization’s Pet Rescue and Adoption Center. Ms. Meskil began her career with SPCA of Southwest Michigan in 2006 as a member of the kennel staff and over the years progressed into roles of increasing responsibility and leadership. Her key accountabilities in this new role include management of animal care and medical services, staff supervision, and animal intake. “We are fortunate to have Katie Meskil as a leader in the organization. She has a strong passion for animal rescue and demonstrates it daily through her dedication to her work with our rescued pets and volunteers,” said Michael Kounelis.



Ms. Meskil, a long-time area resident, said “I am proud to be a part of an organization that does so much for abandoned animals in our area and maintains such high standards. Despite the challenging economy, SPCA of Southwest Michigan has continued to fill the important need of a compassionate alternative for the growing number of homeless animals, and I am very excited about the opportunities ahead to further the organization’s contributions to our community.” In addition to her work for SPCA, Ms. Meskil is an advocate for trap/neuter/release projects for feral cats, and provides assistance to people and animals affected by hoarding situations.

About SPCA of Southwest Michigan

The SPCA of Southwest Michigan (SPCA) is a volunteer-led non-profit committed to the rescue, rehabilitation, and responsible adoption of homeless pets. The SPCA provides its rescued animals with veterinary care, vaccinations, micro-chips and spay/neuter surgery, as well as socialization and rehabilitation within its foster home system and at its state-of-the-art Rescue and Adoption Center.

To date, the SPCA of Southwest Michigan has rescued and adopted out more than 10,000 dogs, puppies, cats and kittens since its inception in 2002. As the region’s largest animal rescue, this no-kill organization focuses on rescuing abandoned and forgotten pets that might otherwise perish in pound facilities. The SPCA of Southwest Michigan is an authorized destination shelter for PetSmart Charities ‘Rescue Waggin’ program.

The SPCA of Southwest Michigan is a registered, independent 501(c)(3) non-profit animal welfare organization that operates solely on private donations. The Pet Rescue and Adoption Center is located at

6955 West KL Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009. Phone (269) 344-1474. For more information, please visit our website <http://www.spcaswmich.org>.

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