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## **Human Animal Bond Research Initiative (HABRI) Announces Groundbreaking Research Grants**

**Washington D.C. (May 1, 2014)** – The Human Animal Bond Research Initiative (HABRI) Foundation today announced funding for its first five research grants, totaling a quarter-million dollars. Designed to study the human health benefits of the human-animal bond, these grants will fund high-quality research in areas including animal-assisted social skills training for children with autism; canines and childhood cancer; long-term effects of pet dogs on families with children with autism; role of dog walking in heart health; and equine therapy for trauma survivors.

“HABRI is making a major investment in new, groundbreaking research that will advance our knowledge of the human-animal bond,” said HABRI Executive Director Steven Feldman. “The caliber of each of these research studies is outstanding and the results will build the body of scientific evidence that demonstrates the benefits of animals to human health.”

**Providing \$250K in grants, HABRI is pleased to award the following recipients and their planned research projects:**

- **Erica C. Rogers, PhD (Green Chimneys Children’s Services):** *Animal-Assisted Social Skills Training for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*
- **Dr. Kevin Morris, PhD (American Humane Association):** *The Canines and Childhood Cancer Study: Examining Behaviors and Stress in Therapy Dogs*
- **Professor Daniel Mills, BVCs, PhD (University of Lincoln, UK):** *Long Term Effects of Pet Dogs on Families with Children with Autism*
- **Elizabeth A. Richards (Indiana University-Purdue):** *The Role of Dog Walking in Heart Health Promotion*
- **Daniel L. Stroud, PhD (Oregon State University):** *Researching Equine-Facilitated Group Psychotherapy (EFGP) for Trauma Survivors: Horses and Humans in Therapeutic Relationships*

Proposals were evaluated on study design, capabilities of investigators, adequacy of facilities, cost-effective yet realistic budget, and potential for impact on the way the disease areas of interest are diagnosed, treated or otherwise understood by an independent Scientific Advisory Board comprised of experts in the field.

Application review and oversight of HABRI research awards were managed by the Morris Animal Foundation, a nonprofit organization that invests in science that advances knowledge and improves health for companion animals, horses and wildlife.

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*Founded by The American Pet Products Association (APPA), Petco Animal Supplies Inc., and Zoetis (formerly the animal health business of Pfizer), the HABRI Foundation is a rallying point for a broad coalition of companies, organizations, entities and individuals whose mission is to achieve formal, widespread scientific recognition that validates and supports the positive roles of pets and animals in the health of families and communities, leading to informed decisions and improved outcomes in human health. For more information on the HABRI Foundation, visit [www.habri.org](http://www.habri.org).*