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For immediate release:

PEDIGREE FOUNDATION “2025 RESCUE DOG OF THE YEAR” DEMONSTRATES HOW FOSTER PROGRAMS LEAD TO FOREVER HOMES

East Bay SPCA Innovates to Help Dogs Like Relic

[Oakland, CA] We’re celebrating Valentine’s Day with the ultimate love story of a deserving dog who found his forever family. Meet five-year-old Relic, a German Shepherd fostered and then adopted from East Bay SPCA in Oakland, California. Relic is the “2025 PEDIGREE Foundation Rescue Dog of the Year.” Relic’s story is one of strong shelter pet advocacy made possible through the annual PEDIGREE Foundation grant cycle.

When Relic arrived at East Bay SPCA, he showed signs of stress and reactivity. With the right systems already in place, the shelter staff was able to immediately activate a care plan for its newest inhabitant. They moved Relic to private quarters while working to find him a foster home, knowing he would thrive in a supportive home environment.

The foster family provided Relic with regular behavior support including private training, phone check-ins, and counseling – all run by East Bay SPCA’s in-house behavior and training staff. With this additional support - along with an in-home trainer the shelter recommended - Relic’s lovable self soon blossomed. A true foster to forever love story – Relic’s foster family adopted him as a permanent part of the family.

While Relic’s story has a happy ending, it also underscores the importance of fostering as a key intervention for shelter dogs. These programs prevent shelters from being overwhelmed with capacity issues, helping to reduce length of stay and helping more dogs find loving homes. Foster is also essential in preparing pups for adoption through in-home experience while improving their social, emotional and mental wellbeing outside of the shelter environment.

Success stories like this are why PEDIGREE Foundation offers grants to shelters on an annual

basis to help them build and sustain the systems and processes needed to help more dogs get adopted. “We are incredibly grateful for the \$15,000 grant provided by PEDIGREE Foundation. Thanks to this support, we were able to enhance our Behavior & Training Program, which ultimately helped Relic receive the specialized care that helped him get adopted,” says Allison Lindquist, East Bay SPCA President. Further, East Bay SPCA has conducted presentations as a resource for shelters nationwide to share best practices from this important work.

“East Bay SPCA’s work is a shining example of our grants in action,” said Deb Fair, Executive Director of PEDIGREE Foundation. “The expansion of their training and development program has long-lasting benefits to the shelter dogs that will come through their doors. We applaud them for taking the extra step in sharing this inspiring experience with the greater shelter community, as it will lead to more dogs finding their forever homes.”

To commemorate Relic being chosen as the 2025 Rescue Dog of the Year, PEDIGREE Foundation created a limited-edition lookalike plush dog, available for sale on the DOGS RULE.® store throughout the year. A portion of proceeds will help dogs find loving homes through shelter and rescue grants. You can shop the Relic plush here.

Support PEDIGREE Foundation and its mission to help dogs find loving homes by donating at <https://www.pedigreefoundation.org>.

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About East Bay SPCA

Established in 1874, East Bay Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (East Bay SPCA) is proud to be one of the nation's oldest shelters and a leading innovator in the Bay Area region. East Bay SPCA is More Than a Shelter, transforming the lives of cats and dogs by enriching the human-animal bond through accessible and respected expertise. Serving Alameda and Contra Costa counties and beyond, East Bay SPCA is a local 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, operating independently of any national affiliation. Learn more at eastbayspca.org.

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About PEDIGREE Foundation

We believe every dog deserves a loving, forever home. PEDIGREE Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization working to help end pet homelessness. Nearly 3.1 million dogs end up in shelters and rescues every year, and nearly half never find a home. The foundation

was established in 2008 by Mars Petcare, maker of PEDIGREE® food for dogs, to help increase dog adoption rates. We've awarded more than 6,300 grants and over \$14 million to U.S. shelters and rescues that help dogs in need. Since launching our Canadian grant program in 2022, we have provided \$345k CAD to local shelters and rescues in need across Canada, as well as \$20k CAD in Disaster Relief. At PEDIGREE Foundation, we're working toward a day when all dogs are safe, secure, cared for, fed well and loved. See how you can help at PedigreeFoundation.org.