



First Coast No More Homeless Pets Marks 1,000th Student Surgery Milestone

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JACKSONVILLE, FL (August 12, 2025) – First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP) just reached a major milestone in its student veterinary training program – 1,000 student-performed spay and neuter surgeries since October 28, 2024.

The program, led by Director of Professional Development Dr. Brian DiGangi, is designed with dedicated clinic time for teaching hands-on skills to promising veterinary students. Under Dr. DiGangi's close supervision, students gain invaluable high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter (HQHVSN) experience from multiple mentors — complementing their veterinary school education and preparing them to meet real-world demands.

The milestone procedure — a spay on a Labrador named Daisy — was performed July 31, 2025, by extern Michelle Duncan, who also set a new two-week externship record of 108 surgeries, breaking the previous record of 92 set by University of Florida student Jen Wachowiak in May.

"This program is about more than numbers," said Jennifer Barker, CEO of FCNMHP. "We're shaping skilled veterinarians while making a real difference for pets and the people who love them."

With veterinary shortages and rising clinic costs limiting access to care, especially in underserved areas, FCNMHP's training program is building a national pipeline of well-prepared professionals while directly serving animals in need. Every student surgery — guided by Dr. DiGangi and the FCNMHP medical team — not only advances the student's skillset but also helps reduce pet overpopulation and prevent unnecessary euthanasia.

About First Coast No More Homeless Pets: First Coast No More Homeless Pets (FCNMHP) makes veterinary care affordable and accessible to all, saving lives by keeping pets in homes and out of shelters. In 2024, FCNMHP delivered \$521,058 in charitable care, performed 21,212 spay/neuter surgeries, distributed over 122,000 pounds of free pet food, and supported 17 rescue organizations across 15 counties in NE Florida and SE Georgia. Learn more at www.fcnmhp.org.

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