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CVMA Celebrates Assistance Dogs During International Assistance Dog Week *Chicago Veterinary Medical Association salutes service and emotional support dogs*

International Assistance Dog Week (IADW), which was established in 2009, is celebrated annually beginning the first Sunday in August. It was founded to highlight the importance of assistance dogs and the essential roles they play in the lives of the humans they serve, in addition to recognizing the people who raise and train these animals to perform their unique and heroic responsibilities.

This year's IADW will run from Sunday, August 4th - Saturday, August 10th and the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association is pleased to recognize and celebrate the work of assistance dogs and their handlers.

The term "Assistance Dog" describes two specific types of helping animals: service dogs and emotional support dogs. Service dogs, while not considered pets, are highly trained animals who assist their handlers with specialized tasks based on the individual's needs or disability. Dogs can be trained to perform specific tasks like turning on a light, opening a cabinet or alerting their owner that it's time to take their medication. By virtue of their extensive training, service dogs have access to public places, including transportation networks, so they can support their handlers in navigating errands, appointments, and daily life.

Conversely, emotional support dogs are pets that typically do not have special training, but they can provide helpful assistance and relief in coping with and navigating highly emotional situations like panic attacks, depression, and anxiety.

"Both service dogs and emotional support dogs offer significant benefits for the people they serve," explained Dr. Marina Jaworsky, CVMA Board President. "CVMA is pleased to recognize all of the amazing animals that play an essential part in people's everyday lives in addition to all of the humans who are responsible for the development and care of these fantastic, furry heroes that we love and trust."

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About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association: Chicago Veterinary Medical Association is a professional network with a longstanding tradition that connects more than 1,000 veterinarians with comprehensive resources that support their continued development as champions of animal health while encouraging the fostering of the human-animal bond.

About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Foundation: The CVMF, established in 2009, is a 501[©]3 charity that works with Chicagoland veterinarians to provide financial assistance to pet families in need by helping with the costs of their pet's urgent, unexpected medical and surgical bills. The Foundation's work plays a vital role in strengthening the human-animal bond by helping sick and suffering pets get well again.