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**ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY EARNS HIGHEST RANKING
FROM CHARITY NAVIGATOR**

KENNEBUNK, MAINE, JUNE 1, 2016 – The Animal Welfare Society today announced that the non-profit has earned a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, America’s largest independent charity evaluator.

This is AWS’ fourth consecutive year receiving the highest grade for sound fiscal management practices and commitment to accountability and transparency.

Since 2002, using objective, data-driven analysis, Charity Navigator has awarded only the most fiscally responsible organizations a 4-star rating. In 2011, Charity Navigator added 17 metrics, focused on governance and ethical practices as well as measures of openness, to its ratings methodology. These “Accountability & Transparency” metrics, which account for 50 percent of a charity’s overall rating, reveal which charities have “best practices” that minimize the chance of unethical activities and whether they freely share basic information about their organization with their donors and other stakeholders.

“The Animal Welfare Society’s coveted 4-star rating puts it in a very select group of high-performing charities,” according to Michael Thatcher, President & CEO of Charity Navigator. “Out of the thousands of nonprofits Charity Navigator evaluates, only one out of four earns 4 stars -- a rating that demands rigor, responsibility and commitment to openness. AWS’ supporters should feel much more confident that their hard-earned dollars are being used efficiently and responsibly when it acquires such a high rating.”

“We work every day to use our donations wisely and in ways that will best achieve our mission,” said Kerrie Leclair, AWS’ Director of Development. “As one of only 18 non-profits in the state of Maine and the only animal-related non-profit with this rating, this shows our supporters that we are very serious about our work and responsibility of using their generosity in the best way possible.”

About Charity Navigator

Charity Navigator, www.charitynavigator.org, is the largest charity evaluator in America

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and its website attracts more visitors than all other charity rating groups combined. The organization helps guide intelligent giving by evaluating the Financial Health and Accountability & Transparency of more than 8,000 charities. Charity Navigator accepts no advertising or donations from the organizations it evaluates, ensuring unbiased evaluations, nor does it charge the public for this trusted data.

About Animal Welfare Society

The Animal Welfare Society, a non-profit organization, exists to provide humane shelter and care to companion animals temporarily in need of housing, to assist in disaster response and to further the cause of responsible animal adoption and ownership through education and public awareness. The society actively promotes kindness, the elimination of cruelty and neglect to all animals, and the lifelong commitment of people to their pets. More than 3,500 animals are cared for at the facility each year, while thousands more use the many public services that AWS offers; such as low-cost spay/neuter, youth education and canine obedience classes.

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