Palm Pointe Peticaid Program for Project Citizen Receives a Grant

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Palm Pointe graduates reconnect with Hillary Cruz, 7th grade Civics teacher at Palm Pointe Educational Research School @ Tradition, and Janet Winikoff, representing the Humane Society of Vero Beach and Indian River County, regarding the students' 2011/12 Project Citizen idea for a pet food stamps program. The students targeted low-income pet owners as the problem to focus on for their class project two years ago; claiming one of the most cited reasons for surrendering pets was due to the owners' inability to financially care for them. Students had the idea to create a Medicaid-type program (called Peticaid), that would subsidize food and veterinary care. Students reached out for community support and located Ms. Winikoff in the process. Their ideas served as Ms. Winikoff's inspiration to write a Peticaid grant that was recently approved, funded by the ASPCA in New York, awarding $9,000 to the Humane Society of Vero Beach and Indian River County to pilot the program. Students are hopeful that the program continues to expand and grow throughout the Treasure Coast and across the state.

Photo: Kalei Gribben, Kaylie MacGregor, Sophie Phillips, Alex Emmert, Marc Edwards, Hilary Cruz and Slider the dog.