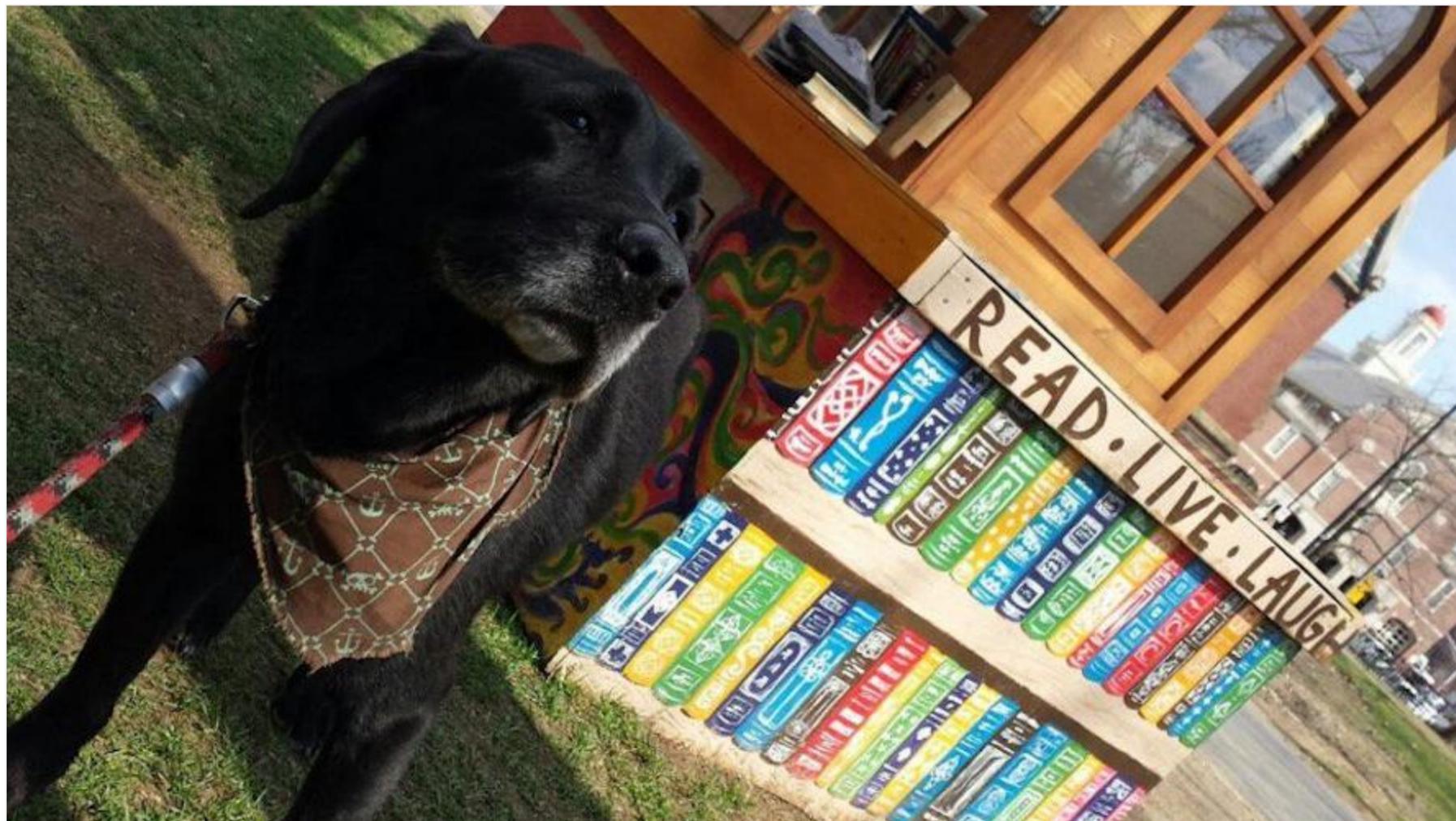


[STORIES](#) / [PROFILES](#)

This Startup Is Helping Victims of Abuse Keep Their Pets

[✉ Email](#)[f Facebook](#)[in LinkedIn](#)[t Twitter](#)

PetsEmpower.org CEO and founder Jordan Ross's dog, Jazz, who helped inspire the startup. Photo Credit: PetsEmpower.org

By Courtney Gabrielson

August 18, 2017, 05:07pm EDT

Here are a few statistics for you:

1. According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, only three percent of domestic violence shelters in the U.S allow pets.
2. Nearly 50 percent of domestic abuse victims who stay in violent situations because they worry about their pets, the Animal Legal Defense Fund states.
3. The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence reports that 71 percent of women with pets said that their abuser threatened or outright hurt their pets as a form of revenge or control, while 32 percent stated that their children had wounded or killed their pets.*

For Jordan Ross, CEO and founder of both Providence- and Boston-based [PetsEmpower.org](#), those stats were infinitely less academic and a whole lot more real.

Not long after graduating from Cornell University, Ross and his dear black Labrador Retriever, Jazz, left a situation of abuse in his family home.

Afterwards, "I was homeless in the streets of Boston," he said. "I couldn't really even work because I had this dog. I was bouncing around a little bit."

It wasn't until he found a social worker that he was able to begin the process of getting a job and a place to live, and a loving place to foster Jazz as he reestablished himself.

Ross knew his situation wasn't unique; in fact, he told me, around 3 million people in the U.S. are abused, but have pets that hinder their ability to get help, for fear of separation.

PetsEmpower.org aims to give those in difficult positions peace of mind when considering moving forward.

"By providing this service, we're allowing them to exit these situations," Ross said. "[It] gives them time and space for self-care and [puts their pets in a safe place]; not put in shelters where they could be put down."

Those in abusive relationships — or anyone facing the loss of a pet-friendly environment due to extreme circumstances, such as veterans, seniors, addicts, or victims of natural disasters — can go PetsEmpower.org and click the "[I need help](#)" button on the homepage. Users will be able to fill out a short intake form that the PetsEmpower.org team will review and use to connect the user with vet care and a foster for their pets. From there, the users' pet is taken to a "short-term, volunteer foster home" while the user does what he or she needs to do to recover until pets and owners can be reunited. The only real requirement is that domestic violence cases need an advocate. Otherwise, getting help is as simple as taking five minutes to send in some information, and it's completely free.

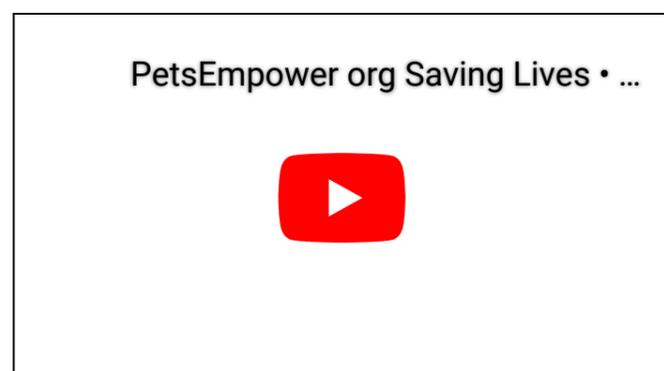
The site is the product of two years of development, with an official launch in January of this year. Ross said the company has the aforementioned Providence and Boston offices, and is currently courting more [volunteers](#), investors, and partnership with major pet companies so as to have an eventual global presence. "We'd be really grateful to companies who are willing to collaborate with us, in an operational role, on social media, marketing," Ross said. "We've partnered with a lot of educational organizations, [like] Harvard Business School, MIT, Roger Williams law clinics, Mass Challenge, Social Enterprise Greenhouse."

For Ross, this forward push is all about helping people and their pets, starting in the local community, and currently, PetsEmpower.org is serving 15 sponsors. "It provides peace of mind and comfort; they're really happy about this service." To say the least. If you read testimonials of folks who have used and been helped by PetsEmpower.org, you best find a quiet spot or otherwise you'll be crying in public.

For now, Ross's focus is on continuing to scale the company as inquiries grow. "Each day I see more interest," he said. "The numbers are staggering."

However, "there seems to be a disconnect between the need and the actual numbers that are being fostered," Ross said. "And we're looking to serve that need. What we're working on now is how to we reach people in need in the most effective way [and help them get] access healthcare services."

In the meantime, even the burgeoning success of PetsEmpower.org is a win for Ross. "[I'm] really grateful for the response so far," he said. "For me, it's so satisfying to help these people in need and be an accessible, quick resource. I was struggling for seven months to find resources; together with other people, to save pets and human lives, is really edifying."



**Stats provided by [PetsEmpower.org](#)*

Keep Digging



Boston Speaks Up with KingFish CEO Cam Brown

[Profiles](#)



He's taking a big-company background to build a startup's supply chain

[Profiles](#)



Techstars Boston grad Lunasonde allows a view far beneath the Earth

[Profiles](#)



Boston Speaks Up with ZoomInfo's Guy Hudson

[Profiles](#)



Boston Speaks Up with Moment Founder & CEO Aisha Chottani

[Profiles](#)

Spotlight

[More](#)



BostInno's 2022 Inno on Fire

[See More >](#)



The 22 Startups to Watch in Boston in 2022

[See More >](#)

Upcoming Events

[More](#)

NOV Power 50

16

TBJ

NOV The 2022 Fire Awards

30

TBJ

Want to stay ahead of who & what is next? Sent daily, the Beat is your definitive look at Boston's innovation economy, offering news, analysis & more on the people, companies & ideas driving your city forward. Follow the Beat.

Share the Beat

Sign Up

Back to Top ▲

BOSTINNO

[User Agreement](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)
[Your California Privacy Rights](#) | [Ad Choices](#)

© 2022 American City Business Journals. All rights reserved. Use of and/or registration on any portion of this site constitutes acceptance of our User Agreement (updated as of 1/1/21) and Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement (updated as of 1/1/21). The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of American City Business Journals.