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Robin R Ganzert

American Humane Association, USA

A new medical research model: Advancing human and animal health humanely

A new medical model is predicated on a meaningful commitment by both medical and veterinary researchers to work cooperatively together to address disease and disorders in humans and animals – evaluating genetic and environmental risk factors, sensitive diagnostic indicators and novel therapies. While this approach is unique in some respects, the pursuit of such a medical model requires humane, ethical principles to ensure success. American Humane Association's Animal Welfare Research Institute has identified multiple diseases and disorders that afflict both animals and children, to include cancer, diabetes, respiratory syncytial virus, asthma, food borne illnesses, obesity, neurological disorders and tuberculosis. We have sought innovative collaborations whereby genetic, nutritional and environmental factors might be identified. However, leveraging of expertise of scientists working with companion animals, farm animals and wildlife is essential to optimize the health and welfare of both animals and humans. Society stands on the precipice of change, as the ability to sequence and study the genomes of humans and animals is dramatically altering how scientists and doctors study and treat disease and disorders. Medical breakthroughs stemming from a deeper understanding of our genomic blueprint – and the blueprints of other species – have created a watershed moment for genomic medicine. Advances in the ability to identify and functionally interpret changes in the genetic blueprint of humans and their animal companions have already begun to radically change the practice of medicine for all species.

Biography

Robin R Ganzert is the President and CEO of American Humane Association, the oldest national humane organization in the United States. A frequent media commentator, she has appeared in the New York Times, Today Show, CNN, BBC, NPR, USA Today, and Fox and Friends. She is the author of the new book *Animal Stars*, and has published opinion pieces on FoxNews.com, The Hill, and trade publications. Her recent research was presented in the Annual Review of Animal Biosciences.

robing@americanhumane.org

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