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**The National Association of Professional Pet Sitters Announces the 2012  
Business of the Year Award Recipient and First Runner Up**  
*Virginia Professional Pet Sitter, Isabel Alvarez, takes top honors*

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J. – The National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (NAPPS) is pleased to announce the 2012 Business of the Year Award recipient: professional pet sitter Isabel Alvarez of Alexandria, Virginia, and Owner of The Wag Pack, LLC.

Lori Mendelsohn Thomas, of Kenosha, Wisconsin, Owner of Wisconsin Pet Care, LLC, has been chosen as the runner up for the 2012 Business of the Year.

The NAPPS Business of the Year Award is presented to a member who has demonstrated outstanding business practices and vision in maintaining and growing his/her business. The rigorous application process includes a comprehensive evaluation of the member's commitment to the profession, management philosophy, community involvement and client satisfaction.

“My staff shares my passion for pets and this has been our recipe for success,” said Alvarez. “I grew my business not by focusing on volume, but rather by delivering personalized service. I am inspired when I see positive things happening in my community and I enjoy contributing to that good by offering peace of mind to our clients, providing loving care to their pets and working with local organizations to help animals in need.”

A professional pet sitter and NAPPS member since 2008, Alvarez was nominated due to her strong business growth, marketing expertise and commitment to the pet sitting profession. Alvarez began her career in the hospitality industry, and her family's entrepreneurial spirit inspired her to found The Wag Pack. As an animal advocate, Alvarez has spoken at many events promoting animal rights and protection. Since 2008, her passion for pets has grown The Wag Pack from a team of one to eleven pet sitters and dog walkers. She is a passionate NAPPS-certified member and continues to serve her profession through voluntary efforts with nonprofit organizations.

“I would like to congratulate Isabel on receiving this prestigious Award,” said John D'Ariano, President of NAPPS. “The success of her business demonstrates her passion and dedication to the profession making her the best choice for the NAPPS 2012 Business of the Year Award.”

NAPPS is also recognizing the 2012 Business of the Year runner up, Lori Mendelsohn Thomas. Prior to starting her business, Thomas was a fashion designer, traveling frequently and employing many pet sitting services. After spending long days in the office worrying about her pets, Thomas founded Wisconsin Pet Care in 2008. With a strong dedication to her business, Thomas strives to always exceed her customer's needs and expectations. She has been a member of NAPPS for two years and continues to promote pet care through her business, community outreach, and nonprofit organizations.

“We’re ecstatic to be first runner up for Business of the Year,” said Thomas. “I love what I do everyday and this recognition is truly an honor.”

Alvarez and Thomas will be acknowledged at the 2012 NAPPS Annual Conference and Small Business Forum, January 27-29, 2012 in Las Vegas. Included in the Award package for Alvarez will be complimentary registration, lodging and transportation to the 2012 Annual Conference.

“The Business of the Year Award is an exciting opportunity to highlight pet sitting professionals nationwide,” said John D’Ariano. “Isabel and Lori have demonstrated success in their business practices and we are honored to have them as members of NAPPS.”

**About NAPPS:** NAPPS is the only national nonprofit trade association dedicated to serving the needs of professional pet sitters. The Association aims to help the pet owning public, those interested in pet sitting, and professionals engaged in the in-home pet care industry by fulfilling its vision statement, serving as "the most respected authority in professional pet sitting." It does so by providing the tools and support to foster the success of its members. Additionally, pet parents can benefit from NAPPS' free resources including a disaster preparedness guide, tips on how to select a pet sitter, and a nationwide referral service,. To find a pet sitter in your area, check out NAPPS' nationwide "Pet Sitter Locator" at [www.petsitters.org](http://www.petsitters.org). For more information on NAPPS, please follow [@TheNAPPS](https://twitter.com/TheNAPPS) on Twitter or join us on Facebook at [facebook.com/TheNAPPS](https://facebook.com/TheNAPPS).

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