

Pet Age

# WOMEN *of* INFLUENCE 2021



## DR. LAURA CATENA

Founder and President  
The ArmOR Animal Handling Gloves

### **Who or what inspired you to get into the pet industry?**

An injury while working emergency medicine was my inspiration to developing The ArmOR Hand Animal Handling Gloves. My injury was a bite wound to my left hand that resulted in emergency surgery and 7 months of painful physical therapy in order to regain the use of

my hand. Despite not knowing if I would be able to practice veterinary medicine again, I started working on ArmOR Hand prototypes. I envisioned a glove that would protect other animal caregivers from the pain and expense that I endured with my animal injury. Despite the pain and trauma of my injury, it inspired me to solve a serious problem in my field - the lack of necessary and functional personal protective equipment.

### **What issues do you think need more attention from the pet industry and why?**

An issue in the pet industry that I am very passionate about is ending the declawing of cats. This surgery is unnecessary and cruel, and it results in life-long complications for the cat. In the pet industry, I would like to see more focus on the importance of ending this surgery, educating pet owners why the surgery is inhumane, as well as providing alternatives. I believe that education is key. We can make this surgery illegal in the U.S., as it is in some other countries.

### **What are the most important attributes of a strong leader?**

I feel that sincere enthusiasm, empathy and self-awareness are essential to being a strong leader. When leaders are genuinely enthusiastic, others sense that contagious energy and passion. Empathy is a key quality that allows the ability to listen attentively and fully focus on another. Self-awareness is necessary because in knowing yourself, what your values are, your strengths and weaknesses, you are then able to better manage stresses and make better decisions.