



Contact: Dr. Jolle Kirpensteijn  
+1 785-250-4881  
jolle\_kirpensteijn@hillspet.com

## **WSAVA, Hill's Announce 2016 'Next Generation' Veterinary Award Winner** *Recipient shows amazing leadership potential, say judges*

TOPEKA, Kan. (September 16, 2016) – Julie Stafford, a veterinarian in Alaska, USA, has been named by the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) and Hill's Pet Nutrition as the 2016 'Next Generation' Veterinary Award winner.

Dr. Stafford will be presented with the award at the 2016 WSAVA World Congress, Sept. 27-30 in Cartagena, Colombia. She will also give a lecture entitled 'Veterinary Wellness: Addressing burnout, depression and suicide in the veterinary profession.'



"Millennial vets like Julie, who are at the early stage of their careers, carry the future of the profession with them," said Dr. Jolle Kirpensteijn, Chief Professional Relations Officer at Hill's Pet Nutrition. "Through this award, we aim to inspire them to contribute to the betterment of companion animals, the veterinary profession and their communities around the world."

Dr. Stafford has shown leadership qualities and dedication to the veterinary field both as a student at Oregon State University and as a professional.

As a student, Dr. Stafford worked in a pro bono clinic in Nicaragua and was heavily involved in the Student American Veterinary Association (SAVMA) and the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA). Since graduating in 2013, she has participated in leadership programs with the Oregon Veterinary Medical Association (OVMA) and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). She spent a year working with the AVMA promoting wellness within the veterinary profession, and she is a strong proponent of mental wellness and self-care of veterinarians.

Dr. Stafford provided advice on medical care to the Grant County Chapter of New Hope for Eastern Oregon Animals, a charity that provides support for strays and feral animals, and she was instrumental in obtaining funding for relief efforts assisting displaced animals following a forest fire around Canyon City, Oregon, in 2015. She recently moved to Alaska, where she works with Iditarod sled dogs and aims to develop a more active veterinary community.

"Julie has already made a big impression on the veterinary world," said David Wadsworth, Chair of the WSAVA's Leadership and Nominations Committee. "Given what she has achieved, we are convinced that she will contribute a huge amount to the veterinary profession going forward, promoting One Health and animal welfare in particular, both of which she is passionate about. She is a perfect role model for young graduates."

As the winner of the 2016 'Next Generation' Veterinary Award, Dr. Stafford will receive a donation towards her voluntary work, an engraved plaque and a WSAVA certificate. She will also join the WSAVA's Global Outreach program before World Congress. Through Global Outreach, the WSAVA aims to share the knowledge and experience of its members in the region around the host city for Congress. This year it is supporting a non-governmental organization called Organizacion por el Respeto y Ciudadano de los Animales. ORCA is based on Tierra Bomba Isla, an island off the coast of Cartagena.



Dr. Julie Stafford received the 2016 'Next Generation' Veterinary Award from WSAVA and Hill's. She works at Wasilla Veterinary Clinic in Alaska, USA.

"I am honoured to receive this award and delighted that Hill's and the WSAVA are leading the profession in recognizing and encouraging leadership for the next generation of veterinarians," Dr. Stafford said. "I hope that other recent graduates entering the veterinary profession will see this award and decide to take a more active role in veterinary leadership on a local and global scale."

Hill's will fund Dr. Stafford's attendance at the 2016 WSAVA World Congress so that she can accept her award. "We congratulate Julie on what she has achieved so far and will watch her

career develop with great interest," Dr. Kirpensteijn said.

Candidates for the WSAVA/Hill's Next Generation Award can come from any country and must meet the following criteria:

- Graduated within the past 10 years
- Active in continuing education
- Have a strong record in community service
- Working to bridge the gap between their generation and others

The WSAVA's 94 member and affiliate associations represent more than 160,000 individual veterinarians from around the globe. They work together to advance the health and welfare of companion animals. Hill's is the WSAVA's most long-standing and significant industry partner.

Candidates for the 2017 Next Generation Award can nominate themselves by sending an email to [wsavasecretariat@gmail.com](mailto:wsavasecretariat@gmail.com) by Jan. 1, 2017. They should include a letter of intent, a CV and at least one reference letter. Further information can be found at [www.wsava.org](http://www.wsava.org).

### **About Hill's Pet Nutrition**

Founded more than 75 years ago with an unwavering commitment to pet nutrition, Hills' mission is to help enrich and lengthen the special relationships between people and their pets. The right nutrition combined with the devotion of veterinary professionals can transform the lives of pets; and healthier and happier pets can transform the lives of pet parents. Hill's is dedicated to pioneering research and groundbreaking nutrition for dogs and cats based on a scientific understanding of their specific needs. HILL'S® Prescription Diet® therapeutic pet foods, HILL'S® Science Diet® and HILL'S® Ideal Balance™ wellness pet foods are sold through veterinarians and pet specialty retailers worldwide. For more information about Hill's, our products and our nutritional philosophy, visit us at HillsPet.com, HillsVet.com or Facebook, keywords "Hill's Pet Nutrition."

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