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WSAVA and Hill's launch search for 2016 'Next Generation' Veterinary Award

2015 Awardee stresses importance of voluntary work by young veterinarians

TOPEKA, Kan. (November 3 ,2015) – The World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) and Hill's Pet Nutrition have launched the search for the 2016 Next Generation Award winner. The Award recognises a recently-qualified veterinarian who has contributed significantly to the betterment of companion animals, the veterinary profession and society at large. Now in its second year, the Next Generation Award will be presented at the WSAVA annual World Congress on September 27-30 in Cartagena, Colombia.

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 96 member and affiliate associations represent more than 158,000 individual veterinarians from around the globe. They work together to advance the health and welfare of companion animals.

The first recipient of the WSAVA/Hill's Next Generation Award in 2015 was Dr. Pantakarn Onnak, from Chonburi, Thailand. Dr. Onnak carries out a great deal of voluntary work, including running a program to neuter stray dogs and cats abandoned in Buddhist temples in Thailand, and educating young people about preventative health in companion animals and the importance of neutering.

"I have worked as a volunteer for ten years and do it because I want to make people and animals' lives better," Dr. Onnak said. "I was honoured to receive the Next Generation Award at the 2015 WSAVA World Congress in Bangkok, and it has inspired me to continue my work helping communities and animals in Thailand.

"I believe the Next Generation Award is important to our profession because it can be difficult to encourage younger vets to volunteer, as they have so many other challenges in their lives when they first qualify. If we lead by example, we are able to promote the role of the veterinarian within our community, and we may inspire our colleagues to get involved."

Hill's funded Dr. Onnak's attendance to the 2015 WSAVA World Conference so she could accept her award. She also received a donation towards her voluntary work, an engraved plaque and a WSAVA certificate.

Dr. Jolle Kirpensteijn, Chief Professional Relations Officer at Hill's Pet Nutrition, said, "We believe it is particularly important to engage with Millennial Veterinarians - those in the early stage of their professional careers, as well as future vets still in training. They are the future of our profession and, through making this unique award and the message it gives, we aim to inspire them to contribute to the betterment of companion animals, the veterinary profession and their communities around the world."

Dr. Siraya Chunekamrai, Honorary Secretary of the WSAVA, said, "The WSAVA Awards are our way of celebrating outstanding work by our global colleagues as they continue to advance the care of companion animals. We are grateful to Hill's for its continuing support of the WSAVA and look forward to reviewing this year's entries for the Next Generation Award."

Candidates can nominate themselves by sending an email to wsavasecretariat@gmail.com by Jan. 1, 2016. They should include a letter of intent, a CV and at least one reference letter. Further information can be found at www.wsava.org.

About Hill's Pet Nutrition

Hill's Pet Nutrition, Inc. manufactures Hill's® Prescription Diet® brand pet foods, therapeutic pet foods available only through veterinarians, Hill's® Science Diet® and the new Hill's® Ideal Balance™ brand pet foods sold through veterinarians and finer pet specialty stores. Founded more than 60 years ago with a unique commitment to pet nutrition and well-being, Hill's is committed to its mission to help enrich and lengthen the special relationships between people and their pets. Hill's produces high-quality, great-tasting pet foods owners can trust and give to their canine and feline companions as part of a veterinary health care team recommendation. For more information about Hill's Pet Nutrition, Inc., and Hill's Evidence-Based Clinical Nutrition™ visit HillsPet.com, or visit us on Facebook, keywords "Hill's Pet Nutrition."

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