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Press Information

NAVC International Scholar Program Relaunched in Partnership with the WSAVA

Pioneering initiative aims to develop tomorrow's veterinary leaders

An informal scholarship program run by the [North American Veterinary Community](#) (NAVC) which gave veterinarians from developing countries the opportunity to attend its annual Conference has been formalized and relaunched in partnership with the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA).

The NAVC Scholar Program was originally set up in 1996 as the Eastern European Scholarship Fund to support new veterinary associations emerging in Eastern Europe following the fall of the Iron Curtain. It was later extended to offer up and coming veterinarians from Cuba, Eastern Europe, Asia, South America and the Middle East the opportunity to attend the NAVC Conference, which takes place in January each year in Florida, USA.

Many past scholars have gone on to become leaders of the profession in their home countries. They include the very first Scholar, Dr Gabriel Varga from Slovakia, who later helped to set up the first small animal veterinary association in the former Czechoslovakia and who is now President of the WSAVA's charitable Foundation. Dr Siraya Chunekamrai, a Past President of the Veterinary Practitioners' Association of Thailand and Honorary Secretary of the WSAVA, was another early recipient of a Scholarship. More recently, in 2014, Dr Vladlen Ushakov, now President of the Ukrainian Small Animal Veterinary Association (USAVA) was a beneficiary of the Scholar Program.

In 2014, NAVC invited the WSAVA to participate in the selection process for the Scholar Program and remodelled it to offer three Scholarships, one from each of the three WSAVA regions (Europe, Africa and Middle East, Asia and Oceania and the Americas). In 2015, it offered an additional Scholarship to a veterinarian from Africa nominated by the board of the [African Small Companion Animal Network](#) (AFSCAN), a project being run by the WSAVA Foundation, to raise standards of veterinary care in Africa.

Going forward, the Program will be known as **The Colin F. Burrows International Scholar Program** in recognition of the huge contribution to global continuing education (CE) made by Professor Colin Burrows. Professor Burrows, current WSAVA President, was Chair of the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine's Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences until his retirement in 2011. He was also Program Coordinator and Executive Director of the NAVC for many years and is currently editor of the Global edition of *Clinician's Brief*.

Commenting on the launch of The Colin F. Burrows International Scholar Program, NAVC CEO Thomas M. Bohn, said: "We see the formalization of our new Scholar Program in partnership with the WSAVA as a great step forward. The NAVC Conference provides a fantastic opportunity for international scholars to learn from the best in the world while the WSAVA has a unique level of connectivity with the profession globally. Working together, we can identify the most deserving scholars and equip them with knowledge and skills to help drive the profession forward in their own country or region.

"Colin's understanding of and contribution to CE is immeasurable and he is liked and respected around the world. We are honored that our new Program bears his name."

Speaking at this year's NAVC, the chosen AFSCAN Scholar, Country Ambassador Berna Nakanwagi BVM MSc, Executive Committee member of the Uganda Veterinary Association and Executive Secretary of the Uganda Small Animal Practitioners' Association, said: "During my time at NAVC, I acquired a great deal of knowledge, particularly about organizing CE events,



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which I am sharing with my colleagues and will use to initiate small animal CE for all of our veterinarians."

Dr Siraya Chunekamrai, an NAVC Scholar in 2008, owns two practices in Thailand and is Honorary Secretary of the WSAVA. She added: "The NAVC Scholarship Program is one of the very good and useful experiences I have had in veterinary education. As a representative from Thailand, it was helpful to benefit from the CE on offer and to learn how to provide it. As the Program develops and becomes a joint effort between NAVC and the WSAVA, the chosen recipients will truly reflect the global veterinary community that we are all part of. They will learn a great deal and we will also learn from their experience and world perspective."

Further details of the Program and application process can be found on at www.wsava.org. In addition, country representatives from the WSAVA's 91 member associations will shortly receive the nomination criteria and will be encouraged to nominate a worthy candidate.

The World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) is an umbrella organization representing 145,000 veterinarians globally through 91 member associations.

Held each January in Orlando, Florida, the NAVC Conference receives almost 16,000 attendees from over 70 countries. More than 350 lecturers speak at the event, which features an average of 25 different daily lecture tracks and also hosts the largest meeting of exotics practitioners in the world. For more information on the NAVC, visit www.navc.com.

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