Press Information

New Board Members Appointed to WSAVA Foundation

The Charitable Foundation of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) has appointed four new Board Members as it prepares to ramp up activity and increase the geographical spread of its initiatives. The WSAVA Foundation aims to improve the veterinary care of companion animals globally through science and education. Its new Board Members are:

- Dr Mark Johnston, Managing Director of Vetstream Ltd, Cambridge, UK. Following a career in equine veterinary medicine, Mark Johnston moved into veterinary publishing and is CEO of Vetstream, a global provider of digital resources to the veterinary profession and veterinary businesses. Vetstream is a Global Educational Partner and Communications Partner of the WSAVA and is closely involved with the WSAVA Foundation's AFSCAN project in Africa.

- Dr Umesh Karkare, Owner, The Happy Tails Veterinary Speciality, Mumbai, India. Umesh Karkare is a small animal practitioner and owner of the Happy Tails Veterinary Speciality. He is a founder member of the Federation of Asian Small Animal Veterinary Associations and of the Federation of Small Animal Practitioners’ Association in India. He sits on several WSAVA Committees and is an active supporter of continuing education (CE) for veterinarians in India.

- Dr Michael Topper, Philadelphia, USA. Mike Topper has recently retired from his role as Director, Pathology & Global Clinical Pathology Lead at Merck & Co. Prior to this, he served for 22 years in the US Army Veterinary Corps. He has a long and distinguished career in veterinary pathology and has served as a leader in many veterinary medical
organizations. He is the incoming President of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

- Dr Daphne Westgeest, veterinarian, Veenendaal, The Netherlands. Daphne Westgeest works in a mixed veterinary practice in the Netherlands and focuses on companion animals. She has been the WSAVA Assembly Member for the Netherlands Association of Companion Animal Medicine (NACAM) since 2013 and is responsible for marketing and communications at NACAM.

The WSAVA Foundation’s flagship project is the African Small Companion Animal Network (AFSCAN), which aims to enhance standards of veterinary care in Africa through the provision of online education and CE to veterinarians and through facilitating the creation of a sustainable network of small companion animal veterinary associations (SAVAs) in the participating countries. AFSCAN is also supporting rabies control projects in Africa in partnership with the charity Mission Rabies and facilitating the development of a culture of companion animal clinical research.

During 2017 and beyond, the WSAVA Foundation aims to continue with its fundraising activities at WSAVA World Congress and VMX – the new name for the NAVC Conference - and to launch a number of new projects around the world.

Commenting on the new appointments, Dr Gabriel Varga, President of the WSAVA Foundation and Regional Director, Africa, for Zoetis, said: “The success of the WSAVA Foundation and the AFSCAN project and the enthusiastic support we have received from both veterinarians in Africa and from sponsors shows just what is possible with a clear vision and collaboration across the veterinary sector. We are proud of what we have achieved so far but there is still a great deal of work to do.

“Our new Board Members will help us to move forward more quickly so that we can make progress towards the ambitious goals we have set ourselves to help to transform the veterinary care of companion animals around the world.”

The World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) is an umbrella organization representing almost 200,000 veterinarians globally through 101 member associations. The WSAVA Foundation was founded in 2009 with the aim of acquiring funds for activities that can be delivered by clinical and laboratory specialists for the benefit of veterinarians globally.

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