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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**AAFP and Merck Animal Health Announce 2023 Academic Excellence
in Feline Healthcare Scholarship Recipients**

Three recipients chosen exemplify a dedication to improving feline healthcare

BRIDGEWATER, NJ; JUNE 28, 2023 – [The American Association of Feline Practitioners](#) (AAFP), the trusted leader in feline health and wellbeing for the veterinary community and cat caregivers, and Merck Animal Health announced the 2023 Academic Excellence in Feline Healthcare Scholarship Recipients.

Heather Bohl, a second-year student at Tufts University, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine; Sarah Henry, a second-year student at Texas A&M University School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences; and Tianjiao Li, a second-year student at the University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine, were each awarded a \$5,000 scholarship for their passion for feline medicine and a desire to elevate feline healthcare.

“These exceptional individuals have demonstrated unwavering passion, academic excellence, and a deep understanding of the unique needs cats,” stated Heather O’Steen, CAE, AAFP CEO. “Their commitment will help shape the future of feline healthcare, creating a world where cats receive the exceptional care they deserve. We congratulate these remarkable scholars and look forward to their contributions to feline healthcare.”



Distinguished by academic excellence and a strong commitment to feline wellbeing, Heather Bohl is a stand-out among veterinary students. Ms. Bohl's outstanding academic record, supported by a PhD in biochemistry, reflects success in classroom and research settings. As she approaches the end of the school year, Ms. Bohl's goal is to provide exceptional care and a reduced stress experience for feline patients. Ms. Bohl aspires to become board-certified in feline medicine and potentially specialize in cardiology to address the prevalence of feline hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. With a blend of research acumen and passion for feline health, Ms. Bohl aims to make a meaningful impact, potentially even as a faculty member, to improve the state of veterinary care for cats.



During her tenure as a technician prior to veterinary school, Sarah Henry witnessed what she felt was the inadequate treatment of cats, which left them fearful and subjected to stress-inducing environments. Motivated by these experiences, Ms. Henry has pursued feline medicine education, participating in Texas A&M's Cat Club, acquiring certifications in RECOVER CPR, and Fear Free Practices, and obtained a Cat Friendly Veterinarian Certificate through the AAEP. Ms. Henry's goal is to become a board-certified feline practitioner, advocating for improved feline healthcare and educating colleagues and clients about their unique needs. Ms. Henry is engaged in leadership positions within Texas A&M's Cat Club and the Committee for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accountability (CIDEA),

enhancing her communication and decision-making skills for future clinic leadership roles.



During her veterinary school experience, Tianjiao Li noticed a lack of emphasis on feline-specific medicine compared to dogs. As someone passionate about emergency medicine, Ms. Li actively sought opportunities to expand her knowledge and skills in feline care. Ms. Li incorporates feline cases in weekly case rounds, invites specialists to discuss relevant topics, and prioritizes feline patients during her intensive care unit work. Additionally, she engages in research projects, including the development of a feline dysbiosis index. Ms. Li plans to pursue further training in Emergency and Critical Care, focusing on the intersection of emergency medicine and feline internal medicine and cardiology. Through leadership roles in clubs and student organizations, Ms. Li aims to promote feline medicine awareness

support to the veterinary community.

Veterinary students passionate about improving feline healthcare can benefit from visiting the [AAFP Student Center](#). This resource is freely accessible to students and offers a range of valuable features, including a directory of externships, complimentary webinars, the exclusive student-only *Student Connection* newsletter, a comprehensive Toolkit featuring the latest feline resources from the AAFP, and much more.

The AAFP is dedicated to increasing feline education in schools and universities and is proud to launch official Student Chapters for the 2023-2024 academic year. Student Officers at a Feline Club or Chapter can [contact the AAFP](#) for more information.

The AAFP thanks Merck Animal Health for their generous support in making these scholarship opportunities possible.

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About the American Association of Feline Practitioners

[The American Association of Feline Practitioners \(AAFP\)](#) supports its members in improving the health and wellbeing of cats through high standards of practice, continuing education, and evidence-based medicine. As a trusted leader in the veterinary community, the AAFP has a long-standing reputation and track record for increasing the standard of care for cats through the development of practice guidelines, feline-specific education and resources, and [feline caregiver resources](#). Home to the Cat Friendly Practice® and Cat Friendly Certificate Programs, the AAFP encourages veterinary professionals of all levels to re-evaluate preconceived notions of practice strategies and advance the quality of feline medicine.