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National DHIA awards its first vet scholarships

VERONA, Wis. (February 29, 2016) – The National Dairy Herd Information Association (DHIA) Scholarship Committee selected two college of veterinary medicine students as recipients of \$1,500 scholarships. A first for National DHIA, judges evaluated applicants on overall interest as a veterinarian planning to work in dairy, involvement in dairy medicine and extra-curricular activities, and interest in using dairy software and dairy records to aid in dairy management and in improving animal health. To be eligible for a National DHIA veterinary student scholarship, applicants must be a third- or fourth-year college of veterinary medicine student, enrolled at a college that is accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education.

This year's National DHIA veterinary student scholarship winners are Jennifer R. Rowntree, University of Wisconsin, and Ashley Swenson, University of Minnesota.

Raised on a small family dairy farm in northwestern Wisconsin, Rowntree spent considerable time with their herd veterinarian when conducting herd health checks and sick cow calls. These experiences created her desire to pursue a career involved in and serving the dairy industry as a veterinarian.

During the summer of 2012, Jennifer interned in Waipukurau, New Zealand, on a 2,600-cow grazing dairy. At Ashton Farm, her responsibilities included milking cows, treating sick cows, helping with dystocias, feeding calves, rotating pastures and entering health records and events into the herd's computer records system. Through a variety of experiences, she has realized the power of DHI data.

In July 2013, Jennifer served as the supplies coordinator for a Christian Veterinary Mission team trip to Ecuador. Their work in a remote, mountainous village involved testing cows for brucellosis, regular health and wellness checks for various species of animals, as well as performing vaccinations on small animals.

Swenson grew up on a 250-cow dairy farm – Forest-Lawn Holsteins – and has worked with dairy cattle her entire life. She plans to pursue the field of embryo transfer as a practitioner and practice owner, along with providing farm management consultation to maximize animal health

and welfare standards, and food product safety. Ultimately, she wants to be a majority owner in the family farm.

During the summer of 2013, Swenson interned at Midwest Embryo Transfer, Osceola, Wis., where she gained additional palpation skills in both donor and recipient animals, synchronization protocols and embryo (ET) equipment. She also learned about embryo grading and handling, embryo freezing and thawing, and labeling and record keeping required for stateside and international use. In 2014, she spent the summer working at Trans Ova Genetics, Sioux Center, Iowa. This internship taught her different ET techniques, as well as in vitro fertilization and cloning technologies.

Money generated from the annual National DHIA Scholarship Auction primarily funds the organization's scholarship program. Investments and donations also help build the fund. To make a donation to the fund, contact National DHIA Scholarship Coordinator JoDee Sattler at 414-587-5839 or jdsattler@dhia.org.

National DHIA, a trade association for the dairy records industry, serves the best interests of its members and the dairy industry by maintaining the integrity of dairy records and advancing dairy information systems.

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