
PRESS RELEASE

First WSAVA Michael J. Day Scholar Announced

Selected project to examine canine tick-borne diseases in Nepal

A Nepalese veterinary student and immediate past President of the International Veterinary Students' Association Nepal (IVSA Nepal), Somnath Aryal, has been announced as the inaugural recipient of the WSAVA Michael J. Day Scholarship. Mr Aryal's project to study the prevalence of canine tick-borne diseases in the dog population of Nepal was selected from more than 30 submissions. He will receive a grant of US\$15,000 to support his research, which aims to improve the diagnosis and treatment of canine tick-borne diseases in the country.

The WSAVA Michael J. Day Scholarship provides financial assistance to enable the selected Scholar to carry out research into an aspect of small companion animal infectious disease, clinical vaccinology or immunology. It was created to recognize Emeritus Professor Michael Day's contribution to vaccinology and immunology in companion animals in his role as Chair of the WSAVA's Vaccination Guidelines Group (VGG) from 2009 until March 2020. The Scholarship is generously supported by [MSD Animal Health](#).

Commenting on the award of the Scholarship, Dr Richard Squires, Chair of the VGG, said: "We were delighted to receive so many high-quality submissions in this first year of the Scholarship. It made selecting our inaugural Scholar very difficult but our expert panel was particularly impressed by Somnath Aryal's project and felt that supporting it would enable the WSAVA to play an important role in enabling an excellent, well-conceived, pertinent research project in a country which would really benefit from this funding."

It is expected that clinically applicable results from the study will become available from this

project towards the end of 2023.

Somnath Aryal, who is studying at the Agriculture and Forestry University in Chitwan, Nepal, added: "I am really thankful to WSAVA and MSD Animal Health for this huge opportunity. It is an honor and a huge responsibility to be selected as the inaugural recipient of the WSAVA Michael J. Day Scholarship. I would also like to thank my advisor Associate Professor Dr. Rebanta Kumar Bhattraï for his guidance and support in this project.

"Most cases of canine tick-borne infections in Nepalese veterinary clinics are misdiagnosed because of a lack of epidemiological information and adequate diagnostic tools. This study will investigate the prevalence of the major tick-borne diseases in stray and pet dogs in Nepal in order to fill this gap. It will be one of the first attempts to survey the canine tick-borne disease at the species level and data from the project will then help to increase the diagnostic and treatment facility for canine tick-borne disease in the veterinary clinics of Nepal."

Full details and guidance on the Scholarship application process for 2023, together with eligibility criteria, will be available on the WSAVA website in due course.

The [WSAVA](#) represents more than 200,000 veterinarians worldwide through its 115 member associations and works to enhance standards of clinical care for companion animals. Its core activities include the development of WSAVA Global Guidelines in key areas of veterinary practice, including pain management, nutrition and vaccination, together with lobbying on important issues affecting companion animal care worldwide.

The WSAVA Vaccination Guidelines Group is a team of experts from around the world focused on providing evidence-based scientific advice to the global veterinary profession on optimum vaccination practice for dogs and cats. Its work is generously supported by MSD Animal Health.

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