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Contact: Meghan R. Golden

352.244.3731 | mgolden@navc.com

NAVC Conference Names 2013 Veterinary Technician Speaker of the Year

ORLANDO, FL—Kara Burns, MS, MEd, LVT, VTS (Nutrition), is passionate about two things: veterinary technicians and veterinary nutrition. Combining those passions is what earned her the title of Veterinary Technician Speaker of the Year for the North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) Conference 2013. "Nutrition is the cornerstone of patient care," says Ms. Burns. "I love to educate technicians about their role in keeping pets healthy through nutrition, and I want to help them become their best in practice and in their professional life."

Ms. Burns presented the majority of her nutrition talks in the Technician Track, but she also hosted a Masterclass on the topic. In addition, she presented the "Top Three Tips to Being a Great Technician" and "Becoming a Veterinary Technician Specialist." "To be chosen for this award is an unbelievable honor," says Ms. Burns. "I am humbled to be selected by the attendees, especially given how many incredible speakers were presenting at the NAVC Conference!"

Originally from New England and now living in Kansas, Ms. Burns is the Founder and President of the Academy of Veterinary Nutrition Technicians, the tenth recognized specialty for technicians. In addition to serving as the Veterinary Technician Specialist for Hill's Pet Nutrition, Ms. Burns works as an independent nutritional consultant. She has been lecturing on nutrition and personal/professional development around the world for a number of years and on the Veterinary Information Network (VIN)/Veterinary Support Personnel Network (VSPN) and VetMedTeam.

Rather than bask in the glow of her newest accolade, Ms. Burns praises the technicians who manage the conference program. "Each technician program manager has done a tremendous job growing the program," she says. "I truly feel there is something for every Veterinary Technician at the NAVC Conference—whether you are a new graduate, a seasoned technician who wants to brush up on skills or ready to pursue specialty certification."

She has noticed a distinct evolution in the demeanor of technicians at the conference in recent years. "Attendees at all levels come with a thirst for knowledge," she says. "What technicians are doing in the profession today is amazing, and they bring their passion to the NAVC Conference."

Ms. Burns has received numerous honors and awards throughout her career. She's been featured on the cover of both *Veterinary Technician* and *The NAVTA Journal*. She has been granted Honorary Veterinary Technician Specialist status in both Internal Medicine (in 2011) and Dentistry (in 2012). She was named the 2010 NAVTA Veterinary Technician of the Year, the 2011 Dr. Franklin Loew Lecturer, the National Association of Professional Women "Woman of the Year" for 2010–2011 and the Cambridge [Massachusetts] Who's Who in Professionals V.I.P. for 2010–2011.

Ms. Burns is a member of many national, international and state associations and holds positions on many boards and journals in the profession. She has authored numerous articles, textbooks and chapters on the topics of nutrition, leadership and technician utilization.

When asked what's on tap for next year's conference, Ms. Burns says enthusiastically, "More veterinary nutrition!"

A complete list of the 2013 Speakers of the Year can be found at NAVCom/navc-conference/program/speakers-of-the-year-2013.

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Founded in 1982 and headquartered in Gainesville, Florida, the North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) is a nonprofit organization that provides world-class professional development for the global veterinary healthcare community. The organization's largest educational initiative, the annual NAVC Conference, hosts 16,000 attendees and 350 speakers from more than 70 countries each year. Other educational offerings include the NAVC Institute, NAVC Expeditions and *Clinician's Brief*, the official journal of the NAVC. The NAVC's international conference partners include the Latin American Veterinary Conference (LAVC), the Southern European Veterinary Conference (SEVC) and the Asian Pacific Veterinary Conference (APVC). Visit NAVC.com for more information.