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**NAVC Gives Awards \$10,000 to Texas A&M Veterinary Emergency Response Team for Smokehouse Creek Fire Response**

*Texas A&M VET Receives NAVC Gives Award for Treating and Saving Hundreds of Animals During the State's Largest Fire*

**ORLANDO, FL – April 17, 2024** – The North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) today announced Texas A&M's Veterinary Emergency Team (VET) as a 2024 [NAVC Gives](#) award recipient for its admirable response to the historic Smokehouse Creek fire in the Texas Panhandle and continued dedication to veterinary education. The NAVC Gives award includes a \$10,000 contribution in recognition of this herculean work.

"The Smokehouse Creek fire caused unimaginable injury and pain to farm and companion animals across the Panhandle," said NAVC CEO Gene O'Neill. "Texas A&M VET sprang into action during a historic moment, providing critical services for affected animals and support for the community. Their work and commitment capture the spirit and intent of NAVC Gives to recognize those who are making a profound difference in the lives of veterinary professionals and animals."

On Feb. 26, 2024, the Smokehouse Creek fire set ablaze in the northeastern Texas Panhandle, going on to burn more than 1 million acres of land and become the largest fire in the state's history. Just two days after the fire began, the Texas A&M VET was on the ground to help. A team of 36 Texas A&M faculty, staff and veterinary students deployed across five counties in the region, providing veterinary care to hundreds of animals. Over 10 days, the team checked 672 cattle and performed exams on 271 animals including cattle, horses, goats, dogs, cats and more. They also provided an invaluable educational experience for veterinary students during a lengthy emergency deployment.



The Texas A&M VET wraps a search and rescue dog's paws to protect them from surfaces charred by the Smokehouse Creek fire

"Thanks to the generosity of organizations like NAVC Gives, the Texas A&M VET is able to respond quickly and assist the animals and people impacted when disaster strikes," said Dr. Deb Zoran, VET director. "Our donors also empower us to train the next generation of veterinarians — who are more likely to serve a community affected by a disaster than generations before them — in both disaster preparedness and response. The VET is incredibly thankful for NAVC Gives' support, which has empowered us in our service and teaching missions."

Texas A&M VET is a group of faculty, staff and students that responds to natural and human-made disasters by offering veterinary care for search and rescue teams and resident animals. Additionally, this team offers unique education experiences for veterinary students in the field of emergency response and management. It was officially formed in 2010, at the request of the Texas Animal Health Commission and the Texas Division of Emergency Management, with the goal of being prepared for future disasters.

Created in 2023, NAVC Gives is a board-directed award program that has been initially funded by a \$1 million commitment from the NAVC. Through this program, the NAVC will recognize and support individuals, groups and organizations around the world that have made a significant difference in the lives of veterinary professionals and animals. Unlike most award programs that

have a set timetable for accepting nominations, NAVC Gives will recognize accomplishments and notable achievements throughout the year based on the merit and impact of the application. Multiple awards may be given out each year and applications may be submitted throughout the year.

NAVC Gives builds upon the NAVC's long-standing commitment to philanthropic pursuits, which amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to members of the international veterinary community through scholarship programs such as the Dr. Earl H. Rippie Veterinary Nurse Leadership Scholarships, the Michael J. Day AFSCAN Scholarship, the Colin F. Burrows International Scholar Program, free education subscriptions and conference registration and other charitable donations. Learn more about NAVC Gives and submit nominations at <https://navc.com/gives/>.

### **About the NAVC**

The North American Veterinary Community (NAVC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting and advancing veterinary professionals worldwide. As the world's leading provider of veterinary continuing education, the NAVC delivers essential training, tools and resources for veterinary professionals to stay abreast of advances in animal medicine and provide the best care for animals everywhere. Through its commitment to innovation and excellence, the NAVC has developed a diverse portfolio of products and services, including: educational events, headlined by VMX (Veterinary Meeting & Expo), the world's largest, most comprehensive continuing education conference and launchpad for new products and innovations within the veterinary industry; VetFolio.com, a robust digital platform for virtual learning and engagement; NAVC Media, the veterinary industry's largest and award-winning portfolio of trade publications; and Embrace, an advocacy arm which unites the veterinary community and pet lovers. The NAVC was founded in 1982 and is headquartered in Orlando, FL. Since 2017, the NAVC has been recognized annually as one of the Top Workplaces by the Orlando Sentinel. To learn more about the NAVC's products and brands, visit <https://navc.com/>. To see our schedule of upcoming events, visit <https://navc.com/calendar/>.

### **About Texas A&M's Veterinary Emergency Team (VET)**

The Texas A&M VET is part of the Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences. Formed in 2010 at the request of the Texas Animal Health Commission and the Texas Division of Emergency Management, the VET has become the most-sophisticated and most-deployed veterinary medical emergency team in the U.S.

The Texas A&M VET plays an important role in educating future Aggie veterinarians who are more likely to serve in a community affected by a disaster than generations before them. The team's world-class, first-of-its-kind, two-week clinical rotation supports hands-on learning opportunities for 150 veterinary students annually, assists Texas counties in developing disaster preparedness plans that include animals, and has successfully helped more than 80 students graduate with the American Veterinary Medical Association's Veterinary First Responder Certificate. To learn more about Texas A&M's VET, visit <https://vetmed.tamu.edu/vet/>

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