

Feline Health Researcher Wins Morris Lifetime Achievement Award

Tony Buffington recognized for research on urinary tract disease.

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Tony Buffington will receive the Morris Lifetime Achievement Award in January. Hill's Pet Nutrition announced Monday that C.A. Tony Buffington, DVM, Ph.D., Dipl. ACVN, will receive the 2009 Mark L. Morris Sr. Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to feline health.

The award is presented annually at the opening ceremony of the North American Veterinary Conference, which takes place Jan. 17-21 in Orlando, Fla.

Buffington, a professor at Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, is being recognized specifically for his work in helping understand the causes of urinary tract disease in cats and in identifying the role played by the environment in the health of indoor cats.

"As a researcher, Dr. Buffington's work on feline urinary tract disease and the impact of environmental factors on feline health and well-being has positively enriched the lives of thousands of cats around the globe," said Mary Beth Leininger, DVM, Hill's director of professional affairs. "His translational research has even affected human health as he identified similarities between feline urologic syndrome and interstitial cystitis in women."

Among his achievements, Buffington identified the role of acid-based balance in foods and its relationship to the formation of feline urinary stones, work that resulted in broad reformulation of commercial diets.

Buffington also launched the Indoor Cat Initiative. The initiative's goal is to educate pet owners and veterinary clinicians that enrichment of an indoor cat's immediate surroundings plays as important a role to health and wellbeing as proper diet and health care.

Hill's, based in Topeka, Kan., will donate \$20,000 to the Morris Animal Foundation in Buffington's name.