

SAVA AWARDS

2024 AWARDS



SAVA Commendation - 2024

In recognition of sustained and selfless services to indigent animal owners.

DR KATHERYN KOTZE



Prof Gareth Bath, Ms Claudia Cloete (receiving the Commendation on behalf of Dr Katheryn Kotze) and Dr Ziyanda Majokweni

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Since graduation in 2014, Katheryn Kotze has been involved in promoting and improving animal welfare. Initially with the Wetnose Animal Rescue Centre, in 2018 she established the Rooikoppies Veterinary Clinic and in June 2023 the Rooikoppies CVC, intending to improve animal welfare and provide outreach work.

She recognised that the unplanned breeding of dogs and cats in disadvantaged communities played a key role in perpetuating the poor conditions of companion animals in these areas.

Working with seven animal welfare organizations, she has provided an excellent, appropriate veterinary service to indigent communities in her area, especially the provision of high-standard pet sterilisations in these communities.

The number of animals sterilized per year has risen from around 3500 to over 11,000 – a very laudable and valuable service to animal welfare and the owners of these animals. The total number of sterilisations done by the team under her supervision over the period from 2018 to 2023 amounts to over 36,000. Katheryn Kotze has been an inspiring example of selfless service and therefore receives a Commendation from the South African Veterinary Association.

Young Veterinarian of the Year - 2024

Awarded to one veterinarian registered with the SAVC per year, younger than 35 years of age or who has not been registered for longer than 10 years and who has made a significant contribution to veterinary science in his / her work sphere.

DR ROWAN LEEMING



Dr Rowan Leeming with Dr Johan Oosthuysen from V-Tech, Prof Gareth Bath and Dr Ziyanda Majokweni

Following graduation in 2015, Rowan Leeming found his hopes fulfilled when he succeeded in his application to serve his Compulsory Community Service year at Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, centred at Hluhluwe.

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Guided by his mentors Dave Cooper and others, he was immediately exposed to rhino capture and translocation and was involved in more than 30 such operations within the first 2 months.

Rowan gladly and fully accepted the challenges and opportunities presented and by July 2016 he was entrusted with the darting of rhinos from a helicopter.

By the end of the year, he had darted over 110 rhinos from helicopters. His supervisors were clearly impressed by his progress and skills, so at the end of his CCS year, they found funding to continue his services on a contract basis.

This was repeated until 2022 when he was permanently employed by EKW, where in 2024 he was promoted to Chief Veterinarian. Poaching of rhinos was becoming an increasing problem and Rowan became involved in forensic postmortems to assist with prosecutions, as well as extensive de-horning of both black and white rhino populations in affected Parks.

In 8 years, Rowan Leeming has become proficient in immobilizing and translocating many iconic species, including 1300 rhinos, 350 wild dogs, 70 elephants and 150 lions.

This has facilitated the strategic transfer of wildlife to and from several wildlife reserves within South Africa and other countries in Africa.

His recognition as an expert so early in his veterinary career makes Rowan a very fitting recipient of the SAVA's Young Veterinarian of the Year Award.

Honorary Associate Life Membership - 2024

Any person who is not a veterinarian and who has rendered outstanding service to veterinary science, or the veterinary profession may be awarded Honorary Associate Life Membership. Honorary Associate Life Membership will not be granted to more than three people in one year.

MS ELIZE NICHOLAS



Ms Elize Nicholas with Dr Ziyanda Majokweni and Prof Gareth Bath.

Complex organisations like the South African Veterinary Association require considerable skills, leadership and teamwork to function effectively. The many contributions made by Elize Nicholas over 25 years have had a major impact on the smooth and efficient functioning of the SAVA. She quickly learnt how to manage the multiple aspects of its numerous constituent parts, and she is credited with a major achievement in overcoming the difficulties inherent in the changes that were required in the organisation, building and transferring to the new VetHouse. For this, Elize was awarded a SAVA Citation in 2009.

Organising and ensuring the smooth running of meetings for the Board of Directors, Federal Executive Council, AGMs, 4 Committees and all the other SA activities takes tact, firmness, teamwork and excellent interpersonal and communication skills – qualities that Elize as SAVA Secretary has in abundance. Altogether these duties comprise a multiplicity (more than 172) of tasks to be carried out annually, each one time-consuming and requiring meticulous attention to detail. Her reliability has been impeccable, and she is regularly entrusted with confidential matters, particularly in the Ethics and Mediation Committee.



Keeping the interests and values of the SAVA and its membership uppermost in mind has earned Elize the highest regard and respect of a series of Presidents, Board Directors, Federal Councillors and Committees, as well as member veterinarians and a succession of VetHouse employees.

Above and beyond the call of duty, Elize Nicholas shows a real interest in the well-being of all SAVA members, keeping in touch with former officeholders and other veterinarians.

The SAVA is deeply indebted to Elize Nicholas for 25 years of superior, dedicated service to our profession and the Association, and she fully deserves recognition in the form of Honorary Associate Life Membership of the SAVA.



The full impact of his research is revealed firstly in his studies focused on the use of the impala as a research model for African antelope. In a series of 5 research articles, he and co-workers have provided a scientific basis for the safe capture, immobilisation and captive care of impalas. This includes the comparison of anaesthetic and immobilisation drug combinations indicating preferred options. By identifying the physiological effects of the drugs used in capture and anaesthesia, Dr Zeiler's research has made important contributions to the identification and lowering of associated risks. Good boma management has been identified, and together these research articles have helped to establish the usefulness of the impala as a research model for African antelope.

The second series of 4 articles deals with problems associated with blood loss and inappropriate fluid therapy in cats during surgery, leading to preventable deaths. By measuring clinical bio-markers including haemograms and acid-base measurements, the team under his leadership has provided comprehensive knowledge of the effects of rapid fluid replacement and has provided a novel clinical tool, in the form of a scoring system, for acute haemorrhage in cats under anaesthesia. These findings will enable improved decisions and appropriate treatment of cats suffering from acute haemorrhage under anaesthesia.

These targeted and well-designed studies published in peer-reviewed journals are clear evidence of excellence in veterinary research and Dr Gareth Zeiler is therefore the 2024 recipient of the Research Award of the SAVA.



Research Award – 2024

Awarded to one or more veterinarians for a body of research related to Veterinary Science, and published in scientific journals, that has made an important contribution to a particular field of study. Recipients of this award may be eligible for nomination for new original research. Submission to the Awards Committee may be made by candidates themselves.

DR GARETH ZEILER



A consistent output of high-quality research has been a feature of Dr Zeiler's veterinary career. Of 52 articles in peer-reviewed journals, in which he was either a senior or co-author, 42 dealt with various aspects of anaesthesia or immobilisation in a wide variety of domestic and wild animals.

He has become internationally acknowledged for his expertise in anaesthesia and immobilisation, and he has edited a book on the subject as well as contributed to 13 of the chapters.



Dr Magda Germishuyse receiving the Research Award on behalf of Dr Gareth Zeiler from Dr Johan Oosthuyse (V-Tech). Dr Ziyanda Majokweni and Prof Gareth Bath looks on