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BAKER INSTITUTE *for* ANIMAL HEALTH

Dedicated to the study of veterinary infectious diseases, immunology, genetics, and reproduction.



For more information, contact:

Starr Todd
Marketing Coordinator

Phone: (607) 256-5652
emt222@cornell.edu

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Dr. Keith Richter and his pit bull, Mr. Piggy.

Advisory Council member Keith Richter gives back to veterinary science

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When Advisory Council member Keith Richter, CALS '78, DVM '81, arrived at Cornell as an undergraduate student in 1974, he had never even seen a cow. This self-described city boy from Long Island soon warmed to the relatively rural life in Ithaca and developed an enduring connection with his alma mater that continues today. Richter was the founder, owner and CEO of [two veterinary specialty hospitals in the San Diego area](#), a [veterinary reference laboratory](#), and a specialty hospital in Hong Kong. More recently these were merged with three other large veterinary specialty hospitals to form a national organization called [Ethos Veterinary Health](#). He lives in the San Diego, California area.

The Baker Institute was a part of Richter's career from the beginning.

"Back when I started the hospital in 1990, I almost immediately got involved in the [Clinic Memorial Giving Program](#)," says Richter. Veterinarians are often called upon to assist when a beloved pet dies, which can be a devastating experience for the client. By making a gift in memory of a client's lost pet to our Clinic Memorial Giving Program, veterinary clinics can help provide some consolation and hope for a better future for animal health to those in need of comfort.

"We are clinical scientists here at the hospital, but we don't really have a connection to the basic science," says Richter. By participating in the Clinic Memorial Giving Program and contributing his expertise on the Advisory Council, he is lending a hand to basic research in animal science, a cause he firmly believes in.

"Through my connection to Baker, I'm supporting basic science," and sustaining the curiosity-driven discovery that has made veterinary medicine successful, Richter says.

Richter's clients Robert and Mary Jane Engman were particularly touched by his donation to the Institute following the death of their beloved dog, Mr. Emerson in 1997, and have since become supporters of the Institute. As the Engmans became more involved with the Institute and its leadership, so too did Richter, and when former director Colin Parrish invited him to join the Advisory Council in 2013, Richter gladly accepted.

"Cornell has a big place in my heart. My closet is full of Big Red t-shirts," he says.