



Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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2015 Salmon Award to honor VIN founder

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Paul Pion, DVM '83, received the Daniel Elmer Salmon Award for Distinguished Alumni Service at the fall 2015 New York State Veterinary Conference, held at the Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM). The award is presented

annually by the CVM Alumni Association to recognize and honor Cornell DVM graduates who have distinguished themselves in service to the profession, their communities, or the College.

Pion's career achievements have had far-reaching impacts on the profession, veterinary patients and those who care for them. One, a clinical discovery, literally cured a common deadly feline disease. While testing a new treatment to dissolve clots that can paralyze cats with heart disease, he stumbled upon the cause and cure of dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM), the most common heart disease in cats at the time. Pion discovered that DCM was due to dietary deficiency of the amino acid, taurine. The discovery was published in *Science*, and, once pet food companies added more taurine into their formulations, DCM was essentially eliminated.

His other notable achievement was the creation of an online network of veterinarians. The Veterinary Information Network (VIN) began as a hobby, with Pion and colleagues answering pet owners' questions on an AOL forum. Today it supports over 53,000 veterinarians, students, and vet support professionals with a wealth of information—such as continuing education and clinical resources, case discussions with colleagues, including hundreds of specialists, searchable databases, and career and personal advice.

In 2005, Pion took the VIN concept a step farther and created the VIN Foundation, with the primary goal of providing outreach and mentorship to veterinarians throughout their careers, including students considering vet school.


“We're really trying to find ways of educating the next generation of vets, and the people who are hiring them,” says Pion. “We should be making sure that we're leaving behind a profession that's as good as we found it.”

Dr. Paul Pion 2015 Recipient of the Daniel Elmer Salmon Award for Distinguished Alumni Service



[Click here](#) to read Dr. Pion's acceptance remarks upon receiving the Salmon Award.

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