

PAHO/PAHEF Awards for Excellence in Inter-American Public Health



The 2013 Pedro N. Acha Award for Excellence in Veterinary Public Health Guidelines

Background

This award honors Dr. Pedro N. Acha, long-time chief of the Pan American Health Organization's (PAHO) veterinary public health program, and recognizes his outstanding contributions to health in the Americas. It is intended to stimulate excellence in students who are pursuing careers in veterinary medicine or animal sciences in the region of the Americas, especially in Latin America and/or the Caribbean.

This award is one of the awards in the Awards for Excellence in Inter-American Public Health Program, a joint partnership of PAHO and the Pan American Health and Education Foundation (PAHEF).

Qualifications

Deans or directors of schools of veterinary medicine and animal sciences in the Americas may nominate an undergraduate student who has prepared a research paper based on his or her undergraduate thesis within the veterinary public health field. The research paper should cover at least one of the following: zoonoses, food safety, animal health and production, development of biomedical models (animal research models or *in vitro* substitutes), food security and animal husbandry (zootechnics), and/or environmental health related to livestock production systems or other domesticated animals. The maximum number of nominations that will be accepted from any one school is three.

Both the research paper and the thesis must have been written within the previous three years of the nomination and a copy of the thesis must be included as part of the nomination package for the jury's reference. It is encouraged, but not mandatory, for the research paper to be formatted per the [guidelines of the *Pan American Journal of Public Health*](#).

The winning research paper will have the opportunity to be published in the [*Pan American Journal of Public Health*](#).

The nomination package must be submitted online by the dean or director of the nominee's veterinary medicine program. If the nominator is someone other than the student's dean or director, the nomination cannot be considered compliant.

Staff members, consultants, and interns in active service of PAHO, the World Health Organization (WHO), and other United Nations agencies; current official representatives to PAHO's governing bodies (e.g., ministers of health); sitting members of the PAHEF board of directors; PAHEF staff, consultants, advisors, and interns; and members of the Pedro N. Acha Award for Excellence in Veterinary Public Health jury are ineligible to receive the award.

Nomination and Selection Process

Nominations must be completed online (www.pahef.org/awards) and include:

- Letter of nomination (two-page limit) signed by the nominator
- A clearly readable copy of the nominated research paper based on his or her undergraduate thesis. It is encouraged, but not mandatory, for the research paper to be formatted per the [*guidelines of the Pan American Journal of Public Health*](#).
- A clearly readable copy of the nominee's thesis
- Impact statement (400-word limit)
- Nominee's curriculum vitae

The nomination may be submitted in English, Spanish, or Portuguese.

Form of the Award

The award consists of a cash prize, certificate of honor, and a symbolic representation of the award.

Funding of the Award

The Pedro N. Acha Award for Excellence in Veterinary Public Health will be administered by PAHEF, seeking voluntary contributions from time to time to augment a fund created in 1994 and generously supported annually by the Acha family.

Awards Jury

The awards jury will consist of five members, two members designated by the director of PAHO and three members selected by PAHEF's board of directors. Jurors are assigned one-, two-, and three-year terms in order to start the process of rotation and assure overlap of membership experience. The jurors will be eligible for re-appointment for an additional three years, after which the member must step down for one year before possible consideration of re-appointment. Jurors must be able to read English, Spanish, and Portuguese.

A representative of PAHEF will serve as a non-voting jury secretary. All jury members must complete a conflict-of-interest form to participate in the vetting process. The jury will elect its own chair annually; the chair leads jury deliberations and serves in this position throughout the year. The chair also writes a summary about the winning candidate that addresses why he or she

was selected. This paragraph is used as a basis for communications about the jury's selection to the PAHEF board of directors, to the PAHO Directing Council, and to other various stakeholders, including the media and visitors to PAHEF's website.

PAHEF will set the deadline for receipt of nominations each year, which will generally be in May. PAHEF staff will collate the nominations received, and make them available to the awards jury for its consideration. The jury will correspond via e-mail, conference call, and/or in-person meeting in Washington, etc., to discuss the nominations and recommend a winner to PAHEF's board of directors for final approval and acceptance. PAHEF, with the help and input of the PAHO/WHO representative's (PWR) office in the country of the awardee, is responsible for completing the appropriate due diligence on the candidate who is selected to receive the award. Given the timing of the award presentation and the semi-annual meeting schedule of the PAHEF board of directors, the board's executive committee may act to accept the award winner.

Award Promotion

PAHEF will distribute the call for nominations widely via e-mail to relevant organizations, scientific journals, ministries of health and ministries of agriculture from PAHO member countries, deans and directors of Latin American and Caribbean schools of veterinary medicine and animal sciences, the veterinary focal point in each PWR office in the region, leadership of national or international public health institutions, agencies, administrations, professional societies, professional colleagues, non-governmental organizations, civil societies, scientific societies, etc. These audiences are encouraged to distribute/post information about the call for nominations on their websites, list serves, newsletters, and other communications vehicles.