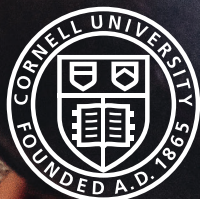




CORNELL FELINE
HEALTH CENTER

the power of connection

2019 ANNUAL REPORT





our mission

**TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
OF CATS EVERYWHERE THROUGH**

Research

Finding ways of preventing and curing diseases of cats
by supporting breakthrough feline health studies

Education

Educating veterinary professionals and cat owners about feline
health by providing timely medical information and by promoting
public understanding and awareness of feline issues

Outreach

Providing timely expert guidance and support when unforeseen
feline diseases or health crises emerge



A Message from the Directors

Dear Friends,

As we celebrate our 45th year of research, discovery and the promotion of the well-being of cats, we pause to take stock of the ways in which we strive to achieve this ever-evolving goal.

In last year’s annual report, we highlighted the impact of our research grants program. While this is certainly a vital component of our mission, it is only one of the many ways in which we seek to accomplish our goals. Educating veterinary professionals is another integral component of our operations, and we aim to provide this education in effective and innovative ways so that practicing veterinarians, veterinary students and veterinary technicians can stay up to date on both established best practices and innovations in feline medicine. We are also, of course, committed to providing the cat-loving public with reliable information and support regarding feline health issues.

All of our activities are consistent with the mission of land-grant institutions (of which Cornell University is an excellent example) and their charge to perform research and to educate the public in a manner that enhances their lives. These outreach efforts take various forms, from digital formats such as the health articles on our website and social media tips, to print materials, to the offering of educational symposia. Perhaps the aspect of our operations that makes us most unique, though, is our direct and personal connection with cat lovers and veterinary professionals, examples of which we highlight throughout this year’s annual report.

Of course, none of our activities would be possible without the support of friends like you. Together, we form a partnership whose mission is a perfect example of the true spirit of outreach, that of making the lives of cats and their owners happier, healthier and more meaningful. We cannot thank you enough for your continued dedication to our shared passion. As we look to the future of feline medicine and care, we realize that there are many challenges to overcome, but we are inspired by the prospect of a better future for cats both locally and around the world.

Warm regards,

Scott A. Coonrod, Ph.D.

Bruce G. Kornreich, D.V.M., Ph.D.,



The Power of Connection

Connecting cat owners with expert assistance

Our mission at the Cornell Feline Health Center is to improve the well-being of cats. While the basic and clinical research we fund at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine and the professional education opportunities we offer make great strides toward achieving this goal, it is our outreach efforts, and the manner in which we undertake them, that makes us unique among institutions focused on feline health.

An important aspect of our operations that sets us apart is the provision of accurate and reliable information to cat lovers and veterinary professionals through personal, one-on-one contact. There are several ways that we do this, and we routinely hear from those seeking this information that they are grateful and surprised by this aspect of our operations.

One way that we provide this personal support is via phone conversations either directly with our associate director or through the Camuti Consultation Service. Through this service, callers can, for a small fee, speak with one of our veterinary consultants about a variety of issues, including preventive health maintenance, internal medicine, cardiology, behavior, and oncology. While the purpose of this service is not to diagnose disease or to provide second opinions, we work hard to provide trustworthy information and support to cat owners, serving as an adjunct to the care provided by their veterinarian. The Camuti service is often the way that we make first contact with cat enthusiasts, and many go on to become life-long supporters of our mission.

Another way that cat enthusiasts can contact us is through e-mail. Last year, we responded to over 700 e-mails from cat owners, breeders and veterinary professionals from the United States and countries around the world on topics ranging from the benefits of different diets for kidney disease to the optimal way to treat feline hyperthyroidism,

and for updates on research focused on feline health. Our goal in providing this one-on-one communication is to provide reliable education and support to those that contact us, and to assure that they are able to access the best veterinary care that is available for their cats.

Our social media presence also allows us to provide information to our supporters when they have questions regarding the well-being of their cats. A great thing about this type of communication is that in answering the question of one follower, others can see and benefit from the answers to questions that they, too, may have.

Technology has certainly progressed since Dr. Fred Scott founded the Center in 1974, but the simple power of individual connection through these various avenues of communication helps us to continue our legacy of helping cat lovers make the world a better place for their beloved feline friends.



Our dedicated staff helps connect cat owners with the information and resources they need.



Low Stress is Best

Connecting cats and vets

It's an unfortunate fact that cats are brought to the veterinarian far less frequently than dogs are, and far less than is optimal for ideal health maintenance. While there are many reasons for this phenomenon, a major contributor is the reality that bringing a cat to see a veterinarian can be very stressful for the cat and, therefore, its owner.

The sources of this stress in cats are multifactorial, ranging from aversion to pet carriers and fear of travelling in cars to exposure to unfamiliar sights, odors and sounds at the veterinary office. In particular, having cats wait in a waiting room with barking dogs and/or be examined in a room that is full of the scent of dogs can be extremely upsetting to our feline friends.

In an effort to promote a more feline-friendly experience for cats visiting the Cornell Small Animal Community Practice (SACP), a unique primary care and health maintenance facility at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, we worked with SACP faculty and staff to establish a feline-only waiting room and feline-preferred examination room.

Made possible by a generous gift from Ms. June Lanciani, these spaces provide cats and their owners with a calmer, less intimidating veterinary experience. We anticipate that provision of these dedicated rooms (along with other feline-friendly measures that are being practiced by SACP faculty, staff and students) will minimize the stress associated with feline veterinary visits and prompt owners to bring their cats into SACP more regularly.

An important aspect of maintaining good health in cats includes seeing a veterinarian at least once a year for a wellness check-up (twice yearly for cats 10 years of age or older). By making cats and their owners more comfortable with the notion of visiting the veterinarian, it is our hope that this will translate into improved health maintenance and well-being for the cats that we are dedicated to loving and caring for.



Educating Tomorrow's Feline Practitioners

Connecting dedicated students with innovative education

Educating veterinary professionals is an integral part of our mission. Our renowned annual Fred Scott Symposium has become recognized as one of the foremost opportunities for veterinary professionals to keep up with scientific and clinical progress that affects the well-being of cats. Another way we connect with our professional DVM members is through monthly e-mail updates on advances in feline veterinary medicine.

We also take educating future generations of veterinary professionals to heart, and our connection to Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) provides us with a unique opportunity to interact with, learn from, and educate our driven, diverse and compassionate veterinary student body.

Among the impressive students here is a group that has a strong interest in feline veterinary practice called the Feline Club. Given their desire to learn about the latest developments in feline medicine and surgery and our mission of advancing feline veterinary education, we recently collaborated with the Feline Club to initiate a program in which we host CVM faculty for informal and instructive lectures in their areas of expertise at the College. All students and house staff (interns, residents) of the Cornell University Hospital for Animals are encouraged to attend, and dinner is provided.

Thus far, we have been fortunate to have Dr. John Loftus, associate professor, and Dr. Meredith Miller, lecturer and section co-chief, both in the Department of Clinical Sciences' section of small animal medicine, educate our students in this informal setting. Dr. Loftus provided an outstanding review of feline endoscopy (examination of the GI tract using a flexible camera) and Dr. Miller discussed hyperthyroidism, a common endocrine disease of cats, in an interactive, case-based format.

Attendees were treated to a true tour-de-force in the diagnosis and treatment of important feline diseases. We look forward to continuing and expanding this program in an effort to enlighten tomorrow's veterinarians today.

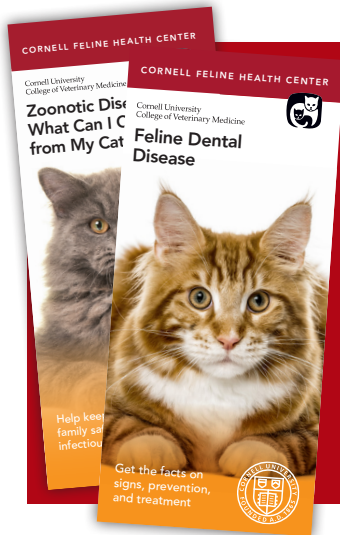
A New Addition to Our Informational Brochures

Connecting cat owners to the latest research and advice

For years, veterinarians and cat owners have relied on our series of informational brochures to help answer questions about a new diagnosis or behavior problem. Whether explaining the management of diseases such as hyperthyroidism, calicivirus, and cardiomyopathy, or providing instruction regarding how to trim a cat’s nails, administer insulin, or feed a cat appropriately, brochure topics have focused primarily on the cat.

Recently, though, we have been touched by stories of owners who have lost beloved feline friends and are understandably having a difficult time coming to terms with their loss. In spite of the joy, love and affection that cats bring to their owners, it is a sad fact that because the lifespan of cats is significantly shorter than that of humans, it is very common for those of us who take cats into our lives to have to deal with their passing.

Realizing the impact that the loss of a cherished cat can have on their loved ones, we have produced an educational brochure with a new focus: the owner who has recently lost a feline friend. In close collaboration with mental health professionals and veterinary specialists in end-of-life care, our new Grieving brochure provides cat lovers with a tool to understand the natural process that we all go through when we lose those that we love. It is our hope that this information will empower owners to heal and to seek out the help that they may need to arrive at a place of peace and tranquility in remembering their beloved and cherished feline friends.



Check out our website (under “Health Information”) for a complete list of our brochures and information about ordering online. Professional-level members enjoy a 25% discount on brochures and supporting-level members get access to PDFs of all our informational brochures through our members-only portal, so join us today!



Staff Highlight

Connecting with cat lovers and veterinary professionals

Bruce Kornreich, D.V.M., Ph.D., DACVIM



As the associate director of the Cornell Feline Health Center and a practicing cardiologist at the Cornell University Hospital for Animals, Bruce Kornreich has many responsibilities; but his favorite part of the job is connecting with other cat lovers to address their pet’s health problems.

“A big part of what we do at the Center is communicating with cat lovers and veterinary professionals directly, whether in person, through email, by phone or through the Camuti Consultation service,” says Kornreich. “I think that makes us unique.”

Throughout his career, Kornreich has been trained in both basic and clinical sciences, and he has acquired real-world experience that puts him in the perfect position to give owners the best advice based on the latest research. Apart from a short stint in private practice, he has been associated with the College of Veterinary Medicine since 1988; first as a veterinary student, then as the college’s first cardiology resident, as a researcher, a faculty member and now as an administrator.

“I love the fact that I can still stay clinically connected,” he says. “It’s really important that when people call to speak with me, they’re talking to a practicing veterinarian.”

During his time at the College, he has built relationships throughout its unique and diverse community. These relationships help him to find answers for cat owners, and also enable him to connect scientists and clinicians from different fields to further feline veterinary research. The Center distributes funds through a competitive grants program – more than \$600,000 in 2018 – that support research focused specifically on the unique health problems of cats.

“Cats are not small dogs, obviously,” says Kornreich. “They have unique behaviors and physiology that we have to consider. We’re here to help cat owners, and with their support we strive to achieve the goal of a better world for all cats.”



Research Highlights

Connecting discovery with healthy outcomes

Laura Goodman, Ph.D. Solving the mystery of certain heart diseases in cats

Many scientists have searched unsuccessfully for the cause of two types of heart disease in cats, endomyocarditis (EMC) and endomyocardial fibrosis (EMF). EMC is an inflammation of the innermost parts of the heart and appears to develop after an infection that causes pneumonia. In older cats, EMC is believed to progress to EMF, where extensive scarring prevents the heart from functioning effectively.

To discover the cause of these diseases, Dr. Laura Goodman is working with pathologist Dr. Katie Kelley and Dr. Jen Grenier, Director of the Transcriptional Regulation

and Expression Facility at the College. They have developed techniques to use preserved samples of heart and lung from the Cornell Veterinary Biobank and are applying deep sequencing technology to find all of the known and potentially unknown viruses and bacteria in both healthy and diseased tissues. Through advanced statistical analysis performed by Dr. Patrick Mitchell, they hope to identify candidate pathogens linked to cases of EMC and EMF, and to ultimately develop a diagnostic test. If veterinarians can detect the infection early on, cat owners could potentially begin treatment earlier and improve outcomes.

Martin Gilbert, MRCVS, BVMS, Ph.D. Tracking canine distemper virus infection in wild tigers

Tigers face multiple threats to their survival, and their numbers have declined by half in the last 20 years. One emerging threat to tigers and other wild cats is canine distemper virus. The virus is already impacting tigers in the Russian Far East, and its status in populations in South and Southeast Asia is unknown.

Detecting canine distemper virus in wild tigers will be critical to developing strategies to reduce its impact, but many countries with tigers lack adequate diagnostic capabilities and also restrict export of samples. To address this, Dr. Martin Gilbert is bringing the test to local laboratories. He

has been working with labs in Thailand and Indonesia to establish diagnostic protocols and to encourage local rehabilitation centers to collect samples from wild tigers. Next year he will be establishing relationships with institutions in India and Nepal, where he hopes to increase awareness of canine distemper in tigers and other wild carnivores, and to help further focus efforts to protect declining populations.



Gary Whittaker, Ph.D. Better testing reveals unrecognized symptoms of feline coronavirus

Feline coronavirus (FCoV) is a common infection that in most cats causes nothing worse than mild symptoms. Within some cats, however, the virus mutates into a new form that causes inflammation in different body parts, called feline infectious peritonitis (FIP), which has been difficult to diagnose and is often fatal.

Dr. Gary Whittaker has developed better testing methods for FCoV and FIP that can differentiate between the two forms of the virus. By testing a number of sick cats, his research team has discovered the viruses in unexpected places. Surprisingly, for example, they are finding the virus that

causes FIP in the respiratory tract. They are now going back to basics with both forms of the virus, to identify previously unrecognized symptoms and to see if FCoV can spread in secretions from the eyes and nose. If FCoV is transmitted this way, it may be responsible for some of the upper respiratory infections that plague cats in shelters. With better testing, infected cats can be identified and quarantined, and veterinarians may be able to diagnose FIP earlier on.



Hector Aguilar-Carreno, Ph.D. Investigating feline morbillivirus and its link to kidney disease in cats

In 2011, a new virus showed up in a group of stray cats in China. This virus was later identified as feline morbillivirus (FeMV), and since then, it has been identified in Japan, the United States and parts of Europe. Veterinarians soon noticed that FeMV appeared to be linked to a type of kidney disease called tubulointerstitial nephritis. The discovery raised the concern that a contagious virus could potentially spread chronic kidney disease to cats in many parts of the world.

Dr. Hector Aguilar-Carreno is investigating this new virus to understand how it functions. His lab has worked extensively

on related viruses, a family that includes the highly contagious measles virus. They are applying the tools they have developed to understand how FeMV enters kidney cells, copies itself and escapes. Aguilar-Carreno is already using the knowledge his group is gaining to design a vaccine to prevent the infection, and hopes that a better understanding of the virus will lead to new therapeutic approaches to prevent infectious chronic kidney disease.



Donor Highlight

A legacy for a very special cat named Mustang Sally

They say that the person doesn't pick the cat — the cat picks the person, and that was certainly the case with Mustang Sally.

Advisory Council member Linda Rossi and her husband, Cliff, had never been pet owners, but when they returned from a long trip in January 2002 to find a ball of black and white fluff on top of their 1966 Mustang convertible, that was it. "At that point we had a cat," said Linda Rossi. "Or, as we say, we became Mustang Sally's staff."

As Cliff's career in banking brought them from Washington D.C. to Los Angeles, Seattle, New York City and then back to D.C., Mustang Sally moved right along with them. She was the catalyst that turned them into cat lovers.

Then in late 2012, Mustang Sally's health was failing and Linda contacted Dr. Bruce Kornreich through the Camuti Consultation line. "He was incredible in his support during this difficult time," said Linda. Despite his help, though, Mustang Sally ultimately succumbed to renal failure. The loss was devastating.

Impressed by the dedication of Kornreich and the staff of the Feline Health Center (FHC), Linda decided to join the FHC Advisory Council in 2013. Along with years of marketing experience from her time at Hewlett-Packard, Linda brings a pet owner's perspective to Council discussions. "I think pet owners these days are very different from when I was growing up," said Linda. "We spend more and do more for our animals than ever before and so understanding what we are looking for and how that translates into furthering research and treatment for cats is something both Cliff and I are passionate about."

Linda and Cliff live on Maryland's Eastern Shore, where they enjoy kayaking, sailing and taking out their antique wooden speedboat into the Chesapeake Bay. Cliff teaches finance at the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith

School of Business and Linda volunteers at multiple local organizations and sits on the board of her local no-kill shelter, Baywater Animal Rescue.

After Mustang Sally, years passed before Linda and Cliff were ready to adopt again, but eventually two sisters came into their lives — Spooky and Scamper. "They keep each other company but also get each other into trouble," said Linda. "They are both very sweet cats and we were lucky to find them as a package deal, so to speak."

As their first cat, however, Mustang Sally will always have a special place in their hearts. When Linda and Cliff began their estate planning, they discovered that the FHC's mission aligned exactly with their interest in helping cats, so they decided to establish a special fund. "We carved out a part of our legacy gift to Cornell specifically in the name of Mustang Sally for feline research," said Linda. "We thought this would be a nice way to memorialize the legacy of the cat that actually got us thinking about all of this in the first place."



Donor Recognition

July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

Thank you to our donors at all levels over the past year. While space prevents us from listing all names, please know that your support is deeply appreciated.

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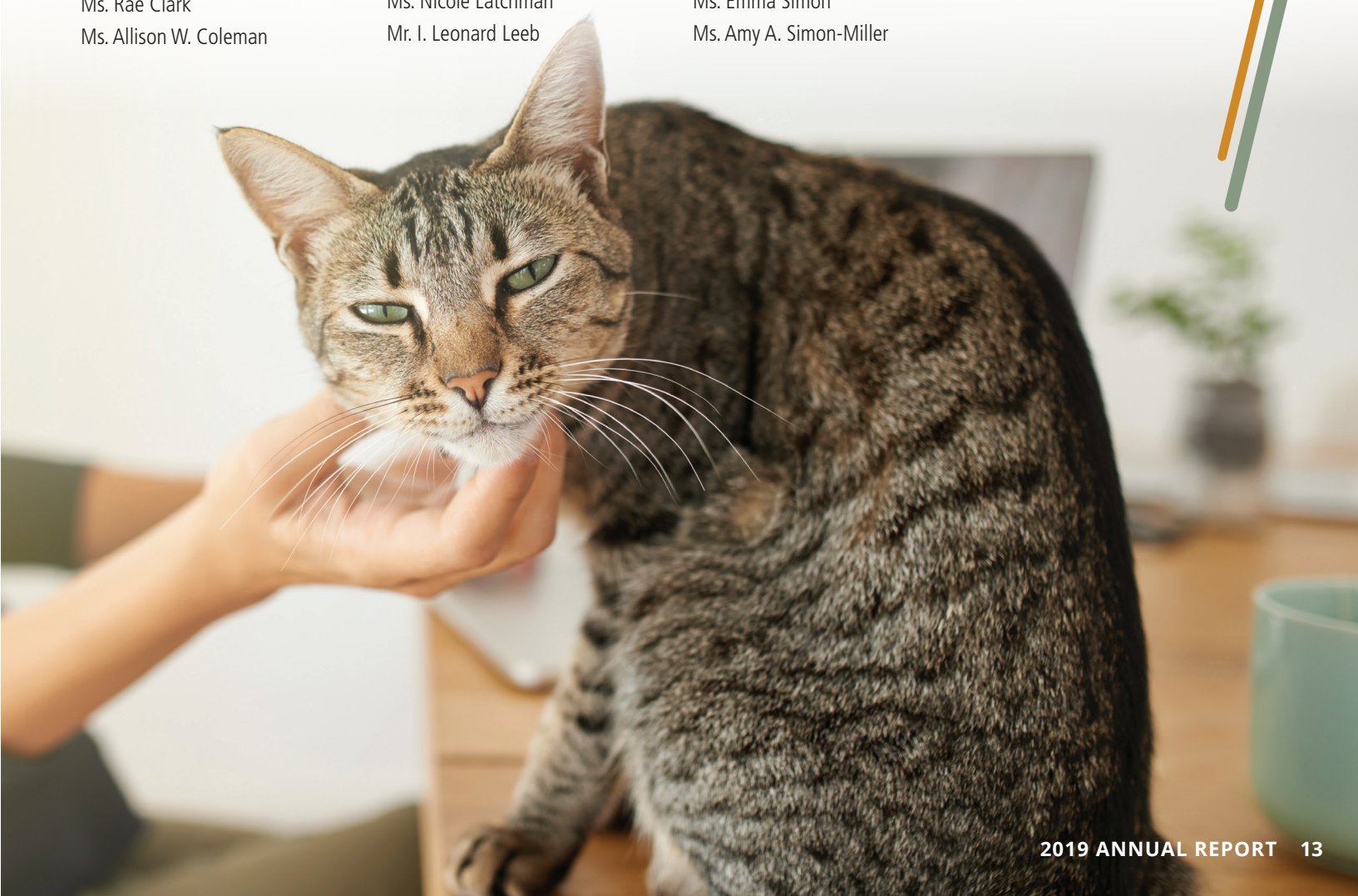
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Offering solace and extending the promise of a better future for cats

The Feline Health Center’s Clinic Memorial Giving Program offers veterinarians a special way to memorialize a client’s beloved pet.

Memorial gifts, whether from an individual or a veterinary clinic, provide vital support to realize FHC’s mission to enhance the lives of cats and the people who love them. To learn more about our Memorial Gift Programs, please contact our Office of Alumni Affairs & Development at: 607.253.3093 or petfriends@cornell.edu.

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Creekside Veterinary Clinic

Texas

Dr. Kathy Ann Carlson

Utah

Pet Stop Veterinary Clinic

Vermont

Otterside Animal Hospital

Virginia

Franklin Farm Veterinary Clinic
Godspeed Animal Care
Vienna Animal Hospital

Washington

Cats Exclusive Veterinary Center
Woodhaven Veterinary Clinic



When you make a gift in memory of your client’s deceased pet, your client will receive a letter informing them of your kind gesture in addition to a copy of our new Grieving brochure. Produced in collaboration with licensed social work and psychiatric professionals, this brochure discusses the grieving process, how it can manifest itself in peoples’ lives, and when to consider seeking assistance after the loss of a cherished pet.

Cayuga Society

Over 150 families have shared that they have included the Feline Health Center in their estate plans. Welcome to the Cayuga Society! This special kindness and generosity has resulted in over \$10 million of investments in cat-specific discovery.

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If you have planned to support feline discovery through your estate gift — welcome and thank you! Sharing how you wish to impact feline health is easy and helps the Center plan for future health studies. Please contact us for more information or to let us know of your gift plans via email at FHC@cornell.edu or by phone at 607.253.3093.

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Names in bold honor new members of the Cayuga Society.



Financials



EXPENSES TOTAL: \$1,177,179

- 52.6% Funding Research Grants
- 20.1% Education, Outreach and Programs
- 14.9% College and University Support and Services
- 5.9% Administration
- 6.5% Fundraising and Development



REVENUES TOTAL: \$899,364

- 25.5% Endowment Income
- 68.5% Gifts and Bequests
- 6.0% Education, Outreach and Services

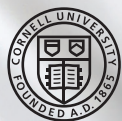




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