

## 2016 Recipients of the IETS Distinguished Service Award



### Naida M. Loskutoff

The 2016 IETS Distinguished Service Award has been awarded posthumously to Naida Loskutoff in honor of her long-term support and significant contributions to the IETS.

Loskutoff made some important decisions early in her academic career that helped forge her path in research and application of embryo technologies in wildlife species. Unknown to her at the time, her early mentors included two innovative researchers who would later become recipients of the IETS Pioneer Award. With a BS degree in zoology from the California State Polytechnic University, Loskutoff continued on to obtain her MS and PhD degrees from the Department of Veterinary Physiology and Pharmacology, Texas A&M University. It was during her graduate studies that she began focusing on in vitro embryo production and manipulation techniques. Her PhD advisor, Duane Kramer (2006 IETS Pioneer Award), became a long-time mentor whom she fondly referred to throughout her career. She followed her PhD with a postdoctoral fellowship at the Animal Biotechnology Embryo Laboratory, University of Guelph, under the supervision of Keith Betteridge (2003 IETS Pioneer Award) where she produced the world's first identical quadruplet

bulls from a single four-cell embryo.

In 1992 Loskutoff began her professional career at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, Nebraska, where she became Director of Reproductive Sciences. During her time in this position, she not only mentored numerous young students and scientists within the United States and around the world, but she was instrumental in promoting the application of reproductive technologies in nondomestic and endangered species. Her novel research resulted in significant accomplishments, including a patented sperm disinfection protocol and the first gorilla birth from IVF-ET. Most importantly, she focused on developing methods that were transportable, allowing her to explore new species in their home environments, and as a result, spent much of her time bringing wildlife reproductive science to Africa.

Loskutoff was a member of IETS for more than 30 years, having joined the society in 1982. During that time, she was a consistent attendee at the annual conferences, as well as an active contributor to the society with participation in the HASAC committee (2000–2015), Foundation (1993–1999), and Board of Governors, specifically in the roles of vice president (2006), president (2007), and immediate past president (2008). For the 2001 annual conference in Omaha, Nebraska, Loskutoff was the chair of the Local Organizing Committee. In that same year, she had the vision to establish the Committee for Companion Animals, Non-Domestic and Endangered Species (CANDES). As chair of CANDES for more than 10 years, she initiated discussions on topics that were not even being considered at the time for nondomestic and endangered species, including biosecurity, regulatory requirements for import and export, and legalities of ownership. She put significant effort into getting CANDES established and supported several symposiums over the years, both in Omaha and during subsequent IETS annual conferences.

In her many roles within IETS, Loskutoff dedicated her time with pleasure and was a strong advocate of the importance of IETS as a society and resource for veterinarians, reproductive biologists, technologists, and students. Her noteworthy accomplishments in wildlife reproductive science and within IETS make her a worthy recipient of the Distinguished Service Award.