

ANIMAL CARE PROVIDER TOP WINNER

KIM HAMMOND, D.V.M.
FALLS ROAD ANIMAL HOSPITAL

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

When Kim J. Hammond opened the Falls Road Animal Hospital in 1981, he didn't plan to keep it open around the clock. Hammond had just graduated from the Tuskegee University School of Veterinary Medicine and finished an internship at the New Haven Central Hospital for

Veterinary Medicine.

With the help of his father, Herbert D. Hammond, he opened the hospital, with himself as the only veterinarian. His first patient was a puppy with a broken leg that had been discovered limping beside the Jones Falls Expressway. Hammond treated the injury and then realized he couldn't leave the animal alone for the night.

I literally put a cot down and I

just parked myself there, he recalls.

I just couldn't go home. I couldn't leave a sick animal in a cage and go home.

From that moment on, the Falls Road Animal Hospital has never closed. Today it has 12 full-time veterinarians and three part-time veterinarians.

The animal hospital offers a low-cost spaying and neutering service and



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has treated more than 150,000 animals, Hammond says. He charges as little as \$30 for the procedure and will allow the animal to stay overnight at the hospital for no additional cost.

Hammond has helped animals far beyond Baltimore, including sloths in Costa Rica and the animals in the Niamey Zoo in Niger. He also co-wrote and introduced a federal puppy mill bill in 1992 to curtail the practice of mass commercial breeding of puppies and kittens.

In addition, Hammond is a director of the Mountain Gorilla Veterinary Project in Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which trains African veterinarians to help endangered mountain gorillas.

Hammond is also concerned with the human communities that live around the gorillas. He contributes to a mentoring program at several orphanages in the Rwandan mountains, in which tour guides teach the orphans how to become part of the burgeoning local eco-tourism industry.

The debonair veterinarian Hammond treats some of Hollywood’s most pampered pets and has consulted on films such as *All the Pretty Horses*, *The Accidental Tourist* and

Pirates of the Caribbean reportedly began traveling to Africa after he chatted up a woman on a trans-Atlantic flight who turned out to be a Peace Corps desk officer. Hammond asked if she could get him a job in Africa and she did, at the Niger zoo.

Back home in Baltimore, Hammond is the editor and host of a weekly pet segment on WBAL, Channel 11.

Karen Nitkin

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