For much of the year our college has been preparing for the October 16-20 site visit from the Council on Education of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA-COE). The U.S. Department of Education recognizes the AVMA-COE as the accrediting body for veterinary colleges in the United States. Veterinary colleges in Canada, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand also have availed themselves of COE approval. Accreditation is very important to our university, as this is the process that provides us with an external assessment of the quality of our programs. Accreditation protects students by assuring that their tuition dollars are spent on high quality programs. Accreditation protects society by assuring that graduates of accredited programs are competent animal health care providers. And accreditation protects the veterinary profession by assuring the quality of preparation of persons that enter that profession.

Our site team was chaired by Dr. Douglas Aspros, a small animal clinician from New York, and included Dr. Tim Boosinger (dean of the CVM at Auburn University), Dr. Stan Rubin (hospital director, CVM at the University of Saskatchewan), Dr. Donald Simmons (AVMA staff), Ms. JoAnn Smith (public member), and Dr. H. Fred Troutt (food animal faculty, CVM at the University of Illinois). This dedicated group verified information in the College’s Self Study report by visiting physical facilities, off-campus clinical practice sites, and interviewing faculty committees, students, college and university administrators. While we will not receive the COE’s final vote on our continued status (Provisional Accreditation) until after their meeting in March, the site team left us with many positive observations. These included their sense that our students were mature, dedicated and articulate, and that they encounter more clinical cases and earlier clinical experience than students in other programs. The team applauded our cohesive administrative team, the quality and dedication of our faculty, and the richness of the non-practice third year sites in promoting public practice careers in our future graduates. I am grateful for all of the hard work by the people here at WesternU in making this important visit a success. I also appreciate the dedication of the site visit team in helping nurture the positive development of our college.

On November 13th, WesternU held its 24th annual black tie dinner dance, “A Tribute to Caring,” in support of the student scholarship endowment. This lovely event recognizes honorees for their accomplishments in support of health care, humanism and healing.

continued on page 3...
I graduated from Virginia Tech in 1993 with a BA in communications and served five years in the United States Marine Corps. In 1997, I finished an MBA from Boston University. I was working as a technician in a small animal practice in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia when I was called up for service in 2003. My interests in veterinary medicine are in small animals, horses and public health.

I was born and raised in Kansas City and most recently lived in the Ozarks of central Missouri. I received my BS in wildlife biology from Baker University, in a small town fifteen minutes south of KU (go Jayhawks!). I love to travel and hope to see New Zealand or Hawaii next. I plan to focus on wildlife and exotics with an emphasis on endangered species reproduction and reintroduction.

Considered half country, half city by many, I was born and educated in Las Vegas, but have spent a considerable amount of time at a cattle ranch in central Idaho. I received my Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Notre Dame last Spring. My passions include snowboarding, shoes, and being home in the mountains with my family and horses! I aspire to work with large animals in the future, but remain open-minded to other opportunities.

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I was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. I received my BS in Biology and BA in Italian at Arizona State University. My passion is small animal dentistry, but I also have a love for horses that I can not deny. I am very excited to be here at WesternU, fulfilling my life long dream of becoming a veterinarian. Viva l’Italia!

I was born in Argentina and moved to the United States at age twelve. I moved to California from Florida, where I was lucky to be exposed to many different species of animals including those originating in the old and new worlds. I am still keeping an open mind regarding specialization opportunities and I am open to the possibilities vet school has to offer, including working with new species and environments of all types.

My nickname is Kameo. I am originally from Long Beach, California. I received my B.S degree in zoology from UC Santa Barbara. I am interested in small animal medicine, however I am keeping my mind open to all other fields. I am excited to be here at WesternU, participating in the problem-based learning approach, and cannot wait to see where I will be in five years.
I was born and raised in chilly Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I received my BS in Biology at University of Pittsburgh in 2004. I have always loved animals and have wanted to be a veterinarian for as long as I can remember. During my undergrad, I had unique opportunities to work with Rhesus monkeys. I’m looking forward to pursuing a career in either small animal medicine or research.

I am originally from Northern Arizona. I received my BS in veterinary science from the University of Idaho in 2003. I’ve worked in a mixed animal practice and at the present time I am interested in equine medicine. I am lucky to have a loving, supportive family and husband who have helped me every step of the way. I also have two wonderful dogs, and two cats who always make me smile.

I went to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo as an animal science major, and I loved every minute of it! I also enjoyed working at Noah’s Ark Animal Hospital in Fullerton, California for the past four years during my summer and winter breaks. I hope to be a testimony of the success of WesternU’s innovative PBL approach to educating veterinary students and I eagerly anticipate the next four years.

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Upon receiving a BS in Psychology at the University of California, Irvine, I curiously noted that my desire to reach out to people encompassed a far greater domain to include those that cannot directly communicate their ailments. Consequently, I attended UCLA as a pre-vet student while working at small animal hospitals. Having been born and raised in Los Angeles, my exploration of life outside this niche commences fall of 2008!

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The Corporate Award for Excellence in Health Care was made to Banfield the Pet Hospital®, represented by founder and CEO Dr. Scott Campbell. Congratulations to Scott and his team at Banfield for their contributions to treating pets like family and making pet healthcare affordable. We are privileged to have a Banfield clinic as one of the three wellness clinics on campus that serve clinical skills education of our first and second year students. Other honorees this year included Mr. Montel Williams (Media Award for Advancement in Health and Humanism) for his advocacy for persons with multiple sclerosis, and the Los Angeles Times (Elie Wiesel Humanism in Healing Award) for its excellence in health care coverage. Many thanks to our friends and partners who supported “A Tribute to Caring” this year, including Banfield the Pet Hospital®, Mr. Brent Standridge and Fort Dodge Animal Health, Dr. and Mrs. Charles Hendrix, Mr. Michael Arms and the Helen Woodward Animal Center, Dr. Barry Watson and Hill’s Pet Nutrition, IDEXX Laboratories, Mars Inc., Mr. Neil Wilcocks and Dr. Tiffany Bierer at Masterfoods, Mr. Jim Cleary and MWI Veterinary Supply Company, PETsMART, Shor-Line Animal Care Equipment, VCA/Antech, Ms. Gretchen Wyler and Welch Allyn.

In closing, I would like to extend the best wishes of our students, staff and faculty to all of our friends and colleagues for a holiday of rest and rejuvenation and for a prosperous and peaceful new year. We are all thankful for your friendship.

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In the fall of 2004, we were lucky enough to recruit Ken Noriega, a graduate student in anatomy, to serve as an anatomy instructor in our multidisciplinary classroom. Ken is a ronin vertebrate paleontologist who wanders from place to place offering his services to various projects while searching for a lab where he will be left to his own devices. Others might more charitably call him a functional morphologist in need of a function. He has traveled to the Caribbean, in the name of science, to participate in studies of paleontological and archaeological sites in Southern Jamaica. Also, he has studied the biology and biogeography of the Cayman Islands with an eye toward recent mammal extinctions. His research interests swing wildly (some say violently) from the evolution of primate hand morphology to the study of Early Permian age pelycosaurian-grade synapsids. He has participated in the joint California State University-Field Museum of Chicago *Tyrannosaurus rex* initiative as well as the joint CSU-Carnegie Museum of Natural History excavation of Early Permian fossils at the Bromacker locality of central Germany. Considering that he began his graduate studies with the firm goal in mind of avoiding anything to do with birds and their ancestors, he has wisely chosen to shift focus to the ornithischian ceratopsian dinosaurs and turn his back on the saurischian dinosaurs associated with the *T. rex* initiative. As a result, he remains hopelessly entangled in the inevitable bureaucratic red tape required to organize, fund, and maintain a joint CSU-Louisiana State University-Royal Tyrrell Museum (Canada) project. This project aims to shed some light on ceratopsian locomotion by utilizing three-dimensional imaging techniques that are frequently used in the film and special effects industries. To this day, he continues to wander the countryside and the internet searching for fossils and scrounging for funding while pushing along his cart that bears the banner, “Son for hire, sword for hire, Sumida school, Noriega Ken.”

Dr. Maria Pia Testa joined the College of Veterinary Medicine as a senior scientist in Dr. Tom Phillips’ laboratory in November 2003. She was born and raised in Latina, Italy, a recently built city (by European standards) near Rome, to a Venetian mother and a southern father who still argue about their different accents and their differences in food. She earned her doctoral degree in agricultural sciences at the University of Napoli, Portici. The faculty of agricultural sciences and the faculty of veterinary medicine are close because of some shared facilities, but in Napoli there was a special advantage as “Aggies.” That faculty was located in the royal residence (like Versailles, but smaller) of the Spanish Bourbon dynasty. So classes and exams were taken among statues, frescoes, marble stairways on a campus with hills and gardens reaching the sea at the Gulf of Napoli. After completing her PhD, she went into scientific research on plant biochemistry (working on photosynthetic enzymes, NMR imaging and plant growth) and later to human molecular biology in cancer research at UCLA. She completed five years of postdoctoral training in neurodegenerative diseases and apoptosis at the Burnham Institute of La Jolla. There she worked on diseases such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and oxidative stress and cell death, focusing on protein modifications, signaling and interactions, caspase activation and their molecular basis. She joined Dr. Tom Phillips’ laboratory at the Vaccine Research Institute of San Diego for three years, working on an animal model for AIDS that he had created. They are now investigating the effect of FIV and apoptosis on the feline brain at the molecular and possibly therapeutic, levels. She has a 13-year old son Stefano, with whom she enjoys traveling, shopping, cooking, skiing and suntanning.
The Veterinary Business Management Association (VBMA) is a student-run organization founded by students at the University of Pennsylvania to help fill the void of business education in veterinary curricula.

Last year the UPenn VBMA went national and is now operational at 14 veterinary schools across the nation, including the 39-member chapter here at Western University of Health Sciences. Like all the clubs, the WesternU chapter is a student-driven association dedicated to increasing business knowledge for the advancement of the veterinary profession. To accomplish this goal, the WesternU Chapter is planning and holding lectures and workshops in personal finance, interviewing skills and in practice management. The VBMA also will work with the NCVEI benchmarking tools to help local veterinary practices access the national AVMA/AAHA database on veterinary pricing and management. They are looking forward to developing a strong and successful business organization that helps to produce competent veterinary practitioners. They are actively seeking local veterinarians with experience in practice management or in running a successful multi- or single doctor practice to share with them their knowledge and expertise. Please contact the VBMA officers if you interested at (909) 469-5628.

Introducing the Clinical Sites Advisory Board — a body representing all seven of the clinical site disciplines undertaken in the third year of the curriculum. Its function is:

“To provide information to the Associate Deans on issues related to the off-campus educational programs in the third year of the curriculum. The CSAB meets twice annually. Members are invited to join the Board for three-year terms.”

Clinical Sites Advisory Board

Left to right: Drs. Jeff Edwards (Clinical Pathology), Tom Carpenter (Small Animal), Garrett Devries (Food animal), Ted Fischer (Equine), Richard Ermel (Lab animal)
Not pictured: Dave Bruyette (Emergency medicine), Lea Greer (Zoo medicine)

Thank you, Board members, for offering to serve in this capacity as we ready ourselves and our students for their first step into their clinical rotations.
Calendar of Events

December 13 - 17, 2004
Final examination week

December 20 - 31, 2004
Holiday break

January 3, 2005
First day of class, spring semester

January 17, 2005
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

February 21, 2005
President’s Day

February 28 - March 4, 2005
Midterm examination week

March 5, 2005
Asian American Scholarship Dinner, Arcadia, CA

March 7 - 11, 2005
Spring break

March 16 - 18, 2005
CARES symposium

May 9 - 13, 2005
Final examination week

*Life is as dear to a mute creature as it is to man. Just as one wants happiness and fears pain, just as one wants to live and not die, so do other creatures.*

~ His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Help us bring happiness, relieve pain and breathe life into our fellow creatures.

Send us a gift today so that we may speak for the mute.
Call 909-469-5678
or email annualfund@westernu.edu