Word From The Dean

We have completed the first quarter of the first year of the first class in our new College of Veterinary Medicine, and I am happy to report that the experience has exceeded all of our expectations. The 85 members of our Charter Class (the Class of 2007) are bright, interesting and accomplished people, who have entered our innovative curriculum with enthusiasm and dedication. My sense is that they are working collegially with our faculty (also bright, interesting and accomplished people) in all elements of the first year curriculum. The students have elected class officers, formed student clubs, and have completed procedures necessary to obtain a charter as a Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association (SCAVMA). That charter will be presented by Dr. Rosemary LoGuidice, Assistant Director of the Membership and Field Services Division of the AVMA, at a visit to the CVM in early November.

Our curricular structure throughout the four-year course of study consists of 8 weeks of content material (classes, rotations, etc.) followed by a week of examinations. As I write this message our students have completed the first 8 weeks (and the first 8 Problem-Based Learning [PBL] cases) and the first examination week. The first examination week started with a study day, followed by a multiple choice examination, a practical examination, a repeat multiple choice examination where students had the opportunity to improve their initial scores, and, finally, the IVPACT (Individualized Veterinary Problem Assessment and Comprehension Test) Examination, which measures individual performance of the skills associated with the PBL process. A big THANK YOU to PBL Course Director Dr. Steve Waldhal and Associate Dean for Research (and outcomes) Dr. Jamie Amend for their diligent work in assembling the multiple choice examination and in analyzing its effectiveness.

We have continued to add new faculty since the last issue of Outlook. Dr. John Tegzes (Veterinary Toxicology) and Dr. Joe Bertone (Equine Internal Medicine & Regulatory Medicine) started work in early August, coincident with the arrival of the students. Dr. Brian Aldridge (Large Animal Medicine & Immunology) and Dr. Beth Boynton (Small Animal Wellness) started in early September, and Dr. Josep (Pep) Rutllant (Anatomy, Embryology & Bovine Reproduction) started early in October.

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HEIDI AGNIC
I graduated from UCI with a BS in biological sciences with a specialization in neurobiology and have been involved in research in neuromorphology for 3 1/2 years. I've published three abstracts and will finish two papers for publication. I have a five-pound Pomeranian named "Sugar" who is my pride and joy. I'm interested in small animal surgery.

I came to Western University from UC Santa Barbara, where I attained degrees in art studio, art history, and biology. In my spare time, I can be found painting or photographing my crazy cats. My future plans include a specialty in either feline medicine or reproduction.

CHRISTINE ALVARADO
I was born in Danbury, Connecticut. My family moved to the Southern California area when I was two months old. I declared my desire to become a veterinarian at five years old. I received a bachelor's degree in animal science in March 2002 at Cal Poly Pomona. While at Cal Poly, I started working in research and hope to become board certified in laboratory animal medicine someday.

HEATHER AUBREY APPLEGATE
I grew up locally in Glendora, California where my wonderful family still resides. I attended the University of California San Diego and graduated with a degree in general biology in June 2001. I have dreamed of becoming a veterinarian since I was 11 and feel both blessed and honored to have the opportunity to turn that dream into a reality.

KEVIN ASHBRAN
I am a graduate of Cal Poly Pomona with my BS in Zoology. I am an outdoor enthusiast, especially interested in pursuing a career with wildlife and exotic animals.

PAULA AYCOCK
Originally from Palos Verdes Estates, I attended the University of Arizona where I received a BS and MS in agriculture, specializing in animal science pre-vet and ag-education. I returned to California, with my husband and three-month-old daughter, to fulfill my dream to become a mixed animal practitioner.

NICOLE BEAUMET
I am 23 years old. I graduated from Cal Poly Pomona in 2002. I am a Los Angeles native and now live in La Puente. I want to become a small animal practitioner.

SUZI BEYER
I was born, raised, and educated in Southern California. I graduated from Cal Poly Pomona in Spring of 2001. I have five years of veterinary technician experience and have interest in both small animal and equine medicine. I am a member of four horse breed associations, and actively compete within the state of California.

JENNIFER BOYLE
I am a graduate of Cal Poly Pomona with my BS in Zoology. I am an outdoor enthusiast, especially interested in pursuing a career with wildlife and exotic animals.
I am from Santa Monica, California but got my BS and Masters of Biomedical Sciences at Colorado State University. I would like to become an equine orthopedic specialist when I graduate.

Nicole Brockmeier

I'm originally from Salem, Ohio. I received a Bachelor of Science Degree from Ohio University. I've lived in California approximately eight years. I have worked as a vet technician for four years for Dr. John Unflat at Garden Park Pet Clinic in Garden Grove, California. I'm working toward becoming a small animal practitioner. My special interest is cardiology.

Wendi Browne

I was born and raised in Downey, California and have been blessed with loving parents and a wonderful husband. I received my BS in zoology at CSULB. There I participated in Biochemical Research for the National Science Foundation. For the past two years, I have worked on the rehabilitation and release of various marine mammals, and would love to go further into the exotic field.

Jennifer Burpo

I am a Southern California native. I am not sure what I want to do but I am happy to be in a program that really lets me explore the possibilities. My two pygmy goats and my cat are my emotional support through school.

Megan Calinsky

HILL'S WELLNESS CENTER OPENS

Tails were waggin' October 8 during an open house for the new Hill's Wellness Center. The entire university community, including pets, was invited to take a tour of the new facility, which features several exam rooms, a cat ward, an exercise area and a pharmacy. Hill's Science Diet pet food products will be available for sale. For many veterinary students, having the opportunity to begin working directly with dogs and cats doesn't start until their third or fourth year while on rotations. But for CVM students, that chance starts in year one. The center is located on property that once served as Park Hospital at the corner of Orange Grove and Park avenues. Dr. Richard E. Eby was one of the co-founders of the Park Hospital and served as one of COMP's founding members. Students will provide wellness services to the dogs and cats of Western University students, staff and faculty.

Word from the Dean from page 1

We are expecting veterinary parasitologist Dr. Malika Kachani to arrive from Rabat, Morocco, soon, pending resolution of some visa actions. Dr. Jane Shaw (companion animal epidemiology and wellness) will start January 5. And we have just embarked upon our next faculty search process, chaired by Drs. Jamie Amend and Carmen Fuentealba.

A HUGE GOOD JOB to Drs. Robert Mason and Beth Boynton for their leadership in opening the Hill's Wellness Center on October 8, 2003. This center, described elsewhere in this newsletter, is an important first step in our commitment to educate students in wellness early in the curriculum. It also reflects our strong partnership with Hill's Pet Nutrition. Dr. Karen Padgett, Director of the Veterinary Business Channel, and Ms. Hope Jaglowitz, Vice President, U.S. Marketing, joined us from Hill's Corporate Headquarters in Topeka, Kansas, for the opening. Dr. Barry Watson, Veterinary Affairs Manager, and Dr. KayAnn Stables, Consulting Veterinarian for Hill's, assisted with the opening.

And finally, we have received about 340 applications for admission to next year's class. Applications closed October 1, 2003, and will be processed by Student Affairs by Christmas. Our faculty Admissions and Scholastic Standing Committee will review complete applications in January and applicant interviews will occur in February.
Dr. Jason Anderson has arrived at the College of Veterinary Medicine via a long and winding road. A Michigan native, he initially enrolled in the University of Michigan as a theatre student. After his first year, Jason left the university and worked for the following five years with the environmental group Greenpeace, where he was a fundraiser, administrator, community outreach representative, and researcher on toxic waste related issues. Jason completed his BS at the University of Michigan in geological sciences, with a paleontology concentration. He moved to Montreal, where he defended his PhD thesis in the fall of 2000 in biology at McGill University as a student of Robert Carroll (who is himself a former student of famed comparative anatomist Al Romer). Before joining the faculty of the CVM, Jason was an NSERC Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Toronto at Mississauga, and is very proud to have earned his Canadian citizenship during this time. He is also proud of his partner of ten years, Cindy Baldassi, who has just completed law school and is currently working as a clerk of the Federal Court in Ottawa.

Jason’s research focuses primarily on three subjects. First, the question of the evolutionary origins of modern amphibians (frogs, salamanders and caecilians) is one of the more contentious areas of current research. Jason’s studies in this area examine the anatomy (especially cranial, dental and vertebral) and developmental patterns of two groups of extinct amphibians that are possibly ancestral to the modern species. Second, Jason has been examining fossils from rocks representing a time period critical to understanding the origins of limbed vertebrates and terrestriality. Third, Jason is interested in the theory of how we infer the interrelationships of species, and is actively engaged in debates surrounding the establishment of a new system of naming species using the pattern of ancestry rather than the Linnean system, which is a holdover from preevolutionary thinking. Field work has taken Jason to Nova Scotia, Greenland and most recently the Four Corners area of Utah with Western University professor Elizabeth Rega (COMP) and Cal State San Bernardino professor Stuart Sumida.

Jason has many side interests. He is learning to play Irish traditional and bluegrass music on the mandolin, which as a first serious instrument is sometimes frustrating but always fulfilling. He enjoys playing soccer and hockey and is hoping to take advantage of the fantastic rock climbing locations in Southern California. He is especially excited to have the opportunity to coach students of CVM in their anatomical studies and is amazed at how quickly and how deeply students are learning this subject.
Dr. Tom Phillips was raised in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and as a result is an avid Packers fan. His outside interests include AKC dog obedience trials, woodworking, church activities, cinema, reading, creative writing, and getting together with family and friends. He lives with his wife, Linda, sons, Nick (18 years-old) and Nathan (13 years-old), in Valley Center, California, where his four dogs (three Briards and a Whippet) romp in a fenced two acre lot. Dr. Phillips received his DVM degree at the University of Missouri-Columbia and practiced small animal practice for five years. After his practice experience, he returned to school and received an MS degree in immunology and PhD in virology both from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. After obtaining his PhD, Dr. Phillips went to The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI), La Jolla, CA, for postdoctoral training in Molecular Virology. Following his postdoctoral fellowship, Dr. Phillips remained at TSRI for an additional eight years, as a Principle Investigator. Upon leaving TSRI and just prior to coming to Western University of Health Sciences, Dr. Phillips co-founded the Vaccine Research Institute of San Diego (VRISD), serving as Chairman of the Board and Vice President for four years. Dr. Phillips supports his laboratory thus far by successfully competing for six NIH grants. His research interest primarily revolves around two areas of study, Feline Immunodeficiency Virus as a model for AIDS and molecularly modifying Hepatitis B core protein for development of new human and veterinary subunit vaccines. From his research efforts, Dr. Phillips has approximately 50 scientific publications.

Although Dr. Phillips has had a very interesting and productive research career, he greatly missed teaching and giving back to the veterinary community. Coming to Western University has allowed Dr. Phillips to fulfill a lifelong ambition: To touch the future of veterinary medicine through teaching.

Hill's Wellness Center from page 3
Students from the college will work with faculty and learn how to conduct wellness exams. When problems are found, pets and their owners will be referred to local veterinarians for treatment. Dr. Elizabeth Boynton, the college's wellness professor and director of the center, said she is eager to have the college's students begin working with their four-legged patients. "It starts the students right at the beginning of their education," said Boynton, who operated a similar program at University of Minnesota. "They can appreciate it and find value in it earlier in their education than at other universities where it may come later." Boynton said the wellness center will give students a real client interaction to follow over the years while they are on campus. "It's the heart and soul of veterinary medicine," she said. "This allows the students to get to know pets and their owners and contribute to a healthier and longer lifespan." VetMed student Cynthia Kinney, who was joined by her Labrador Riley, said she is enthusiastic about acquiring practical experience at the center. "It's the best part of our education," said Kinney. "It's just so enjoyable for us to be with the animals."

BANFIELD DEANS' SUMMIT
Dean Shirley Johnston attended an October 12-14 summit for deans of North American Colleges of Veterinary Medicine sponsored by Banfield the Pet Hospital. The summit, held in Portland, Oregon, conveyed information to the deans on the current market needs for pet care veterinarians, and asked them to brainstorm ways that these needs could be met in our current educational systems. Discussion also was initiated on the high cost of educating veterinarians, and ways to finance this education. Banfield the Pet Hospital is the largest corporate veterinary practice in the country, with nearly 350 hospitals and plans to expand to more than 1,000. Banfield doctors see 40,000 cases per week.
Calendar of Events

October 1:
Deadline for class of 2008 student applications for College of Veterinary Medicine

October 15:
Deadline for new faculty applications for College of Veterinary Medicine

October 25:
Western University’s 23rd Annual “A Tribute to Caring” Dinner,
Beverly Hills Hotel

November 15:
Start date for Professor Maliki Kachani (Parasitology)

November 27-28:
Thanksgiving Holiday

January 5, 2004:
Start date for Assistant Professor Jane Shaw (Companion Animal Epidemiology and Wellness)

February 15-19, 2004:
Western States Veterinary Conference, Las Vegas, NV