Marine Mammal Rehabilitation

CVM student shares her summer volunteer experience

Helping Hurricane Katrina’s Pet Victims

Open House at CVM

CVM News

WAVE Program
AS THE HOLIDAYS APPROACH, I am very grateful for the continued success of our growing college. Students in our Charter Class are now in the third year of the curriculum, and will have completed the first semester by December 16th. During the week of November 27th through December 3rd, we hosted a short return site visit by members of the AVMA Council on Education, so that members could observe our third year students learning in incredible practice sites in Southern California. Team members included Chair Dr. Douglas Aspros, Dr. Laurie Jaeger, Dr. Shannon McGee, Dr. Fred Troutt, and Dr. Frank Walker. We appreciate their time and diligence in visiting practice sites including dairy practices in Turlock, Los Banos and Visalia; equine practices in Chino, Murrietta and El Cajon; laboratory animal rotations at City of Hope and UCLA; and small animal practices from Brentwood to Fontana.

On November 12th, WesternU enjoyed the best ever “A Tribute to Caring” gala dinner dance, held every year in support of student scholarships. This is an elegant event held at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Honorees this year included Las Vegas illusionists and conservationists Siegfried and Roy (Humanism in Healing Award), KPCC Air Personality Larry Mantle (Media Award for Advancement in Health and Humanism), and Kaiser Permanente (Corporate Award for Excellence in Health Care). Previous awardees and friends of the College (executives and team members from Banfield™ The Pet Hospital and KalKan™) also were present and were recognized.

We have received a whopping 609 applications for the 100 seats in the Class of 2010 (up from 441 applications last year). Big congratulations to the Admissions and Scholastic Standing Committee, and CVM Admissions directors Marie Anderson and Karen Hutton-Lopez on all of their good work to continue recruitment of applicants. Applications are now under review, and interviews will be conducted in February.

On September 10th, my husband of 38 years, veterinary radiologist Dr. Gary Johnston, brought home a scruffy, dirty, homeless, tired little white cat that he had rescued from a local boatyard where she was being stalked by a Rottweiler. She was spayed at our Banfield Wellness Center in the shelter/surgery rotation by Ms. Karen Eiler (Class of 2007). Gary’s intention was to keep her through the weekend and then find her a home. Well, you guessed it; she ended up becoming one of the family. We named her Pearl (after Hester Prynne’s illegitimate daughter in the Scarlet Letter, since she clearly comes from illegitimate circumstances) and have delighted in her slow recovery from a hard life. These days she scampers all over the house (I am pretty sure she is possessed) terrorizing the dogs, walking all over my computer keyboard when I am trying to use it, and knocking over at least one glass of water a day.

THANK YOU to everyone who continues to support our new college through hard work, strategic partnerships, advice, mentoring of prospective veterinary students, and much-needed gifts. We continue to be a work in progress, a Work of Heart. Fond regards from the heart of our home, and from the College of Veterinary Medicine at WesternU. Sincere best wishes that your lives will be filled with unexpected joys of the season.

“I love cats because I love my home, and after a while they become its visible soul.”
- Jean Cocteau

Shirley D. Johnston, DVM, PhD
Farewell and good luck to **Drs. Brian** and **Russhawn Aldridge** who left the CVM on September 30 to take a position (Brian) at the Royal Veterinary College, University of London.

Farewell and good luck to **Dr. Jason Anderson**, Assistant Professor of Anatomy, who left the CVM on October 28 to take a position in the new College of Veterinary Medicine and Department of Zoology at the University of Calgary. Jason will be able to work with a core nucleus of paleontologists in Canada, and once again live with wife, Cindy, who is an attorney pursuing post-graduate studies in Canada.


**Dr. Peggy Barr** spoke on “What’s new in feline vaccines and vaccinology.” At the Nestle Purina Seminar, Palm Desert CA, September 14, 2005.


Good job to **Dr. Beth Boynton** and WesternU CVM Students for helping provide veterinary care to a record 146 cats at the September 11 Catnippers clinic.


**Dr. Malika Kachani** presented a paper entitled “Combating a Hidden Threat: Finding Ways of Reducing the Burden of Cystic Echinococcosis in Poor Communities” on September 20-21 to the World Health Organization’s Meeting on Zoonotic Diseases in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting addressed neglected zoonotic diseases and focused on the role of their control in poverty alleviation in livestock-keeping communities. Dr. Kachani was the only veterinarian present from an American university, and her project was viewed as a model for interdisciplinary collaboration and integrated control of zoonotic diseases.

Congratulations also to **Dr. Malika Kachani** for speaking on “Benefits of the Physician-Veterinarian Collaboration in the Control of Zoonoses: the Hydatid Disease Control Program in Morocco” at the World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology Conference, Christchurch, NZ, October 2005.

Good job to **Mr. Dennis Loveless, DVM ’08** and **Ms. Megan Dispenza, DVM ’08** for presenting a paper at the 3rd International Conference of Evidence-Based Health Care Teachers & Developers, Building Bridges Between Research and Teaching Taormina (Italy), November 26, 2005 entitled “Establishing Best Evidence Practices in Veterinary Medicine.”

Good job to **Dr. Robert Mason**, who spoke on the College of Veterinary Medicine at WesternU to the Orange Empire Dog Club in Bloomington on Tuesday, October 11.

Welcome to **Dr. Heather Nevill**, Associate Professor in Small Animal Medicine & Surgery, with special responsibility for the Veterinary Ambulatory Community Services (VACS) Vehicle. Dr. Nevill’s instructional responsibilities will be mainly in the Clinical Skills and Shelter Medicine courses, and she will assist us in completing foundation grant projects that support the VACS vehicle. Heather is a graduate of Louisiana State University (BS in Zoology) and Cornell University (DVM). She has been an associate veterinarian in general small animal practice and critical care in Alaska and California and has worked at the International Bird Rescue Research Center in San Pedro for the last year.

Kudos to **Dr. Heather Nevill** & DVM 2008 students **Daisy Burns** (organizer), **Kameo Casey**, **Hiroko Hata**, **Sarah Lee**, **Mandy Mason**, **Dana Miller**, **Carolyn Olech** (organizer), **Lucia Pham**, **Christina Quel**, **Sarah Sacco**, **Danielle Shaffer**, **Meg Sislak**, **Crystal Sousa**, and **Laura Tucker**, who participated in the Hurricane Katrina animal rescue effort through New Leash on Life (Rescue for Refugees) at the Van Nuys Airport on October 7 (see photo page 9). Over 40 evacuated dogs and cats were processed (examined, vaccinated, heartworm tested) in less than 3 hours with the help of 2 additional veterinarians and other volunteers. This was only a small number of the animals that still need rescuing, but our incredible WesternU folks enjoyed having the chance to make a difference for these homeless pets.

Welcome to **Ms. Mary Paine**, Administrative Assistant to the Associate Dean of Clinical Rotations and External Relations, who joined the CVM on October 17. Mary has been training and showing horses for the last two years in Saddle Seat equitation and won two blue ribbons at last month’s Los Angeles County Fair.
I SPEND MOST OF MY TIME at the marine mammal rehabilitation facility close to Point Fermin in San Pedro. Coooled by the pleasant ocean breeze, surrounded by the Pacific below and the blue sky above, my days are filled with the cries of seagulls and the loud calls and barks from California Sea Lions.

I am a DVM student, famous Charter Class of 2007 (the groundbreakers). I would like to share with you my experience at the Marine Mammal Care Center at Fort MacArthur (MMCC/FM). Nestled between a famous WWII fort, a small Roman Catholic Church named Mary Star of the Sea (where the mass is said in Latin), and the Oiled Bird Rescue Center, is the small rehabilitation center that is run by a handful of very dedicated marine mammal enthusiasts. Most of its day-to-day operations are in the hands of a number of volunteers who care for the animals day and night, and on weekends and holidays.

Veterinary students from WesternU are there as well. For two years now, our own marine mammal veterinary student enthusiasts, led by Dr. Brian Aldridge and Dr. Suzana Tkalcic, have worked to organize the collaboration with the MMCC/FM. They met a number of times with Center Director Jackie Jaakola, and the onsite veterinarian Dr. Jennifer Collins set up the learning environment for our students interested in marine mammals. They also organized a student club to provide experience at that site that fulfills the mutual interests of the center, students, and the college.

Between our demanding curriculum, everlasting struggle with time management, and famous LA commute, we were able to accomplish our goals. We formed the Western University Veterinary “Seal Team,” went through the orientation, participated in “Day of the Seal” in April, and last summer really “rolled up our sleeves” and put our enthusiasm to work. Students in our group have volunteered numerous hours caring for sick and injured, big-eyed, sweet looking, loud, noise-making, fish-smelling, round and slick marine mammals.

Hiroko Hata, DVM ’08 and Petra Johnsson, DVM ’09 spent much of the summer admitting the sick and injured, stabilizing the animals, and assisted in providing medical treatment during the rehabilitation of the rescued animals. Both Hiroko and Petra had the opportunity to work with California Sea Lions, Elephant Seals, and a few Harbor Seals. Because of their hard work and dedication they and other volunteers were rewarded by seeing many of these animals recover and return to the cold waters of the Pacific Ocean.

Unfortunately, not all of the animals survived. Dr. Tkalcic and I set up a necropsy lab at the center and performed necropsies on a majority of the animals that passed away in order to better understand the pathology and how to help future stranded animals. Sometimes, the doors of our building were wide open and groups of visitors, parents and kids would stop by to take a peek into the room from the safe distance. The kids, mostly boys, were amazed by the gross scenes of animal projections. I remembered when I was in their shoes. I have realized since how much we can learn from these dead animals, and how important pathology is in the big picture of veterinary medicine.

In the process, I just grew above the cutting, blood, feces, guts filled with fish-smelling ingesta, and a bad smell overall. I even started to enjoy the work, since each carcass was a new experience, and should I say, a new learning issue. I have discovered that even without a stethoscope, a needle, and ultrasound, I am doing something good for the animals and helping my own veterinary learning process just by using my visual sense and a few cutting tools. I organized the necropsy ward, learned how to do a necropsy, how to collect the samples, how to write a meaningful description and how to put a diagnosis on the observed lesions.

I also helped Dr. Tkalcic take pictures and put together a marine mammal necropsy manual for the center so that future students can continue to assist in necropsies and in the whole process of discovering better ways to treat and manage these sick and injured ocean critters left helpless and at the mercy of the rough cliffs, cold waters, and a handful of dedicated volunteers ready to help them survive. Overall, my summer experience was a great one.
The College of Veterinary Medicine’s First Annual Open House

More than 200 people attended on Saturday, September 24, 2005 including parents, friends, prospective students, faculty, current students and, of course, some of their best canine and feline friends, as well as a personable parrot and several reptiles.

Tour groups admired the Veterinary Ambulatory Community Service (VACS) vehicle.

Guest lecturer with pal Emily Angell DVM, ’08

Student clubs increased their coffers with the lure of luscious desserts. Yum.

“Great party! Where’s the food?”

“Reptiles rule!”

Recruiting retriever (rare breed) and future veterinarian.

Pomona police dog in action.
Elizabeth Armstrong

I graduated from Flagler College in St. Augustine, Florida with a double major in English and communications (journalism/PR). I am looking forward to pursuing the rest of my degree and am planning on practicing as a small animal veterinarian (with a focus on felines and possibly avians) after graduation.

Heather Bunting

I was born and raised in Houston, Texas. I obtained a BS in animal science from Texas A&M University - College Station, in 2003; I then went on and began a master of science in equine orthopedics before getting accepted to WesternU. My interests are in small animal medicine, and I would like to specialize following veterinary school however my choice of specialty tends to change weekly.

Vicky (Kai-Hsin) Chan

I am fortunate to be a member of the DVM class of 2009. I grew up locally, graduated from California Polytechnic University of Pomona, and have worked as a registered veterinary technician for the last 14 years in day practices locally and abroad. I enjoy biking, camping, softball, and spending time with my husband and dogs and cats.

Trudy Golub

I was born in Taiwan, but grew up in California. I am a cultural melting pot. I grew up in different cultures, societies, and environments that taught me to be very adapting. Badminton, snowboarding, wakeboarding, running, and all other types of sports interest me (a visual learner I suppose). My family, including my 11-year-old apricot poodle “Baby,” is supporting me through veterinary school.

Melanie Goodstein

I am from Santa Clarita, California. I did my undergraduate work at St. Andrew's Presbyterian College in North Carolina, where I also competed on the intercollegiate dressage team. I have bad the opportunity to intern at an equine hospital, the Virginia Zoo and at a research laboratory here in California, but at this point, I have no idea what field of veterinary medicine I intend to pursue.

Lisa Luna

I am a native of Southern California. I attended California Polytechnic State University, Pomona and received my bachelor of science degree in animal science. I have experience in equine and small animal practices as well as in aquatic research laboratories. I plan to continue my education and receive my PhD in theriogenology.

Alexis McMurray

I was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and grew up in Tucson, Arizona. I attended the University of Arizona where I obtained dual degrees in microbiology and veterinary science. I went on to take graduate classes in pharntox/pathobiology before applying to veterinary school. I am interested in small animal and equine surgery. I enjoy volleyball, tennis, and other sports.

Briana Mirchel

I’m from Long Island, New York where I graduated from SUNY Stony Brook with a BS in biology and anthropology. I completed a little over one semester at St. George’s University in Grenada when Hurricane Ivan helped influence me to change my decision and start over here at WesternU (where I’m ecstatic to be!).
Manpreet Mundh

I am from Northern California where all the best sports teams come from. Let’s go ’9ers, Giants, GS Warriors and As. My roommate Ryan Smith is obsessed with the Sacramento Kings. Born and raised in San Jose. Most of my interests are in small animal medicine and radiology.

Sarah Ortega

I grew up in sunny San Diego where I did my undergrad at San Diego State University. I married my junior high school sweetheart, Dan, two years ago. We love to surf, snowboard, eat exotic foods and look for treasures at garage sales together. I am fascinated with pathology, and live animals scare me.

Amanda Page

I received my BS in animal science at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. The “learn by doing philosophy” at Cal Poly allowed me to gain clinical experiences with a variety of animal species. I have a special interest in feline medicine, especially dermatology and nutrition, but can’t wait to explore any facet of veterinary medicine that is presented.

Margarita Pinto

I was born and raised in Southern California. I went to Davis for my undergrad education where I met my gorgeous husband, Christian. We are now adjusting to life in Pomona with our dog (neurotic rat terrier), 3 cats (lazy, lazier, and laziest), 2 chinchillas, 1 bearded dragon, and fish. My goal is to graduate from veterinary school. We’ll see after that…maybe pay back some loans?

Erin (Taina) Power

Most recently from Santa Cruz, I graduated with a degree in anthropology from UC Berkeley in 1996. Since then I have worked in various small, exotic and large animal settings. I am interested in wildlife medicine and I hope to someday have a mixed mobile practice, perhaps in my native Puerto Rico.

Jennifer Probert

I am from Clifton Park, New York. I have a BS in veterinary technology from Quinnipiac University and a second BS in equine science from Colorado State University. I am very excited to be here now at WesternU’s College of Veterinary Medicine.

Alex Rahm

I was born and raised in Southern California. I received a BS in biological science from Biola University and an MA in philosophy of religion and ethics, also from Biola. I am interested in zoo medicine and/or small animal medicine with a special interest in radiology.

Richard Reeves

I grew up in La Verne and now live in Claremont. I graduated from Utah State University with a degree in bioveterinary science. I am a reptile enthusiast and also enjoy scuba diving in my spare time. I am married, my wife’s name is Nickie, and we have a one-year-old little girl named Sadie.

Samuel Rivera

I am the second of 5 children. I was born in Durango, Mexico, and raised in Riverside California. I received my BS in animal science from UC Davis in June 2004. My interests are in small animal medicine/surgery, some exotics and some large animals. I enjoy sports, movies, pop music in Spanish and English and relaxing.

Angela Roberts

I am SO excited to be a part of WesternU’s DVM 2009 class! I have lived in Dallas, Texas for the last five years. I have worked as a vet technician for 4 1/2 years mostly at an emergency animal clinic and my spirit giggles when I’m around animals. I love, love, love them!

Rachael Sachar

I did my undergraduate education at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and received a BS in animal science, June 2005. I have worked for numerous veterinary hospitals as a technician, receptionist, and/or manager. Prior to 1999 I worked in the film and television industry.

I am happily married to Richard Sachar. My family resides in Santa Clarita, California.

Jordan Scherk

I was born and raised in New York. I completed my undergraduate studies at the University of Florida, majoring in animal biology. I love all sports and relaxing with my friends.
Wael A. Khamas, BVM&S, MS, PhD grew up in Baghdad, Iraq and attended the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Baghdad where he spent four years as a teaching assistant in the department of anatomy and histology.

Wael was granted a scholarship in 1978 from the Ministry of Higher Education to pursue his MS and PhD degrees in veterinary anatomy.

He joined Iowa State University and completed his programs in 1983.

He returned to Baghdad and taught gross anatomy to undergraduate students. He also taught several courses to graduate students in anatomy, surgery and theriogenology. He supervised graduate students in anatomy and related clinical science disciplines to study the effect of formalin on different systems and also worked on camel anatomy.

He worked in administration as associate dean for more than two years, but unfortunately the duties took him away from his students. He greatly enjoyed being with the students and learned from them continuously.

Wael left Iraq for Jordan in 1994 to join the newly established Faculty of Veterinary Medicine as a professor of anatomy and histology. He taught there for nine years, was engaged in administration and acted as the head of the department of basic medical sciences for four years. He taught students in the Faculty of Science histology, microtechnique and embryology and students in basic histochemistry.

Wael was granted a Fulbright Scholarship from the Department of State which was for Iraqi expatriates. He joined Purdue University to learn new teaching technologies and also worked on preparation of chicken anatomy, histology and goat anatomy atlases.

He presented a paper on Iraqi Veterinary Education to the staff and students of the College of Veterinary Medicine at WesternU, and during that time was introduced to PBL and the program. He was amazed by the progress and the planning involved in the program.

Wael moved to Pomona in the beginning of August, 2005, after being hired by WesternU and is very happy he did. He finds the work very challenging, with highly competitive and motivated students, and enjoys interacting with them. He is helping in both gross and microscopic anatomy.

Wael’s research interest is on the camel and llama anatomy as well as the effect of pollutants on the genital systems of laboratory animals.
Pet Wellness Centers Are Seeing Patients Tuesdays And Thursdays

Students, staff, and faculty (not open to the general public):
The Wellness Programs in the College of Veterinary Medicine at Western University of Health Sciences allow the pet owner the opportunity to aid in the education of veterinary students while at the same time assuring that their family pet receives the best in preventive medical care. Students and professional veterinary staff together assess the general health, including nutritional status, of all patients in the program and make recommendations to the pet’s owner. Students are educated on how to perform thorough histories and physical examinations as well as have an opportunity to develop their non-invasive diagnostic skills on all patients enrolled in the program.

This program is designed to give owners information on early warning signs of disease and to lengthen the lives of their pets through wellness intervention. It is limited to pets that are currently thought to be in good health.

You may sign up on-line at WesternU’s home page (Pet Wellness Programs) or stop by the CVM front desk for an enrollment form. We look forward to seeing you and meeting your pets.
The Willed Body Program for Veterinary Medicine, WAVE

The College of Veterinary Medicine’s Reverence for Life Commitment promises that animals will not be harmed in our teaching programs. A key element of this commitment is the WAVE (Willed deceased Animals for Veterinary Education) Program, which reaches out to animal owners to ask that they consider donating their beloved pets’ remains to anatomy and clinical skills education at the College (The WAVE Program is modeled after the Human Willed Body Program at WesternU). Over 500 deceased animals—like “Max”—have been donated to the College in the last two years. These special animals are providing a greater quality of education to future generations of veterinarians.

All donations to WAVE must be deceased due to age, serious illness or injury. An animal that has no owner to approve the donation of its remains will not be accepted. When you know that the death of your beloved pet might be imminent, and you live within 40 miles of the College, please ask your veterinarian about donating to WAVE. Your veterinarian may contact Ms. Tami Jones at (909) 469-5597 to make all arrangements.

Always in Our Hearts: Stories from the WAVE Program appears as a regular feature in each issue of Outlook.

“MAX”
By Sandra Rose, CVM Advisory Council Member

I am so happy to be able to give my little dog, Max, a peaceful death.

She slept in my bed and rode in my car. During my workday, she even relaxed in a box under my desk.

When she got to be 15-years-old and could not see or hear very well, I began to worry about her safety.

When I watched her drift off to sleep for the last time, I felt at peace with myself and with her. This to me is the perfect ending to a life well lived.

I knew that her spirit had gone to another place. I wanted her to be able to help the compassionate veterinary students at Western University of Health Sciences become caring veterinary professionals.

I know that when they use her physical body, Max’s spirit will be watching over them as they learn from her.
CVM Calendar

Dec. 12-16 ................................................................. Exam Week
Dec. 19-30 ................................................................. WesternU Holiday Break
Jan. 2, ’06 ................................................................. First Day of Spring Semester
Feb. 19-23 ................................................................. Western Veterinary Conference, Las Vegas, NV
Feb. 27-Mar. 3 ................................................................. Exam Week
Mar. 6-10 ................................................................. Spring Break
Mar. 22-24 ................................................................. CARES Symposium
May 8-12 ................................................................. Exam Week
Jul. 15-19 ................................................................. 143rd Annual AVMA Convention, Honolulu, HI
Jul. 17-29 ................................................................. 2006 International Veterinary Student Congress, Pomona & Davis, CA
MISSION STATEMENT:

*The College of Veterinary Medicine is committed to*

serving society and animals through the preparation of
students for the practice of veterinary medicine, veterinary
public health and/or veterinary research in an educational program
of self-directed learning, reverence for life and clinical education through strategic
partnerships. The college sustains a vibrant diverse faculty by encouraging advancement
through personal and professional development and research. This creates an environment of
competent, caring, ethical professionals, where cooperative learning, public service, and scholarship can flourish.