Clinical Preceptor of the Year Award

Each year, the College’s third year class is asked to nominate the Clinical Preceptor who has had the greatest impact on their veterinary medical education in the past year. By majority vote, the class decides who will receive the “Clinical Preceptor of the Year” award. In 2007, this award was presented to Dr. Richard Moreland, who teaches the Diagnostic Laboratory & Pathology course at Antech Diagnostics. For 2008, as you will read in this issue, Dr. William Grant II, owner of Community Veterinary Hospital and current president of the California Veterinary Medical Association, was selected to receive this award. Dr. Grant teaches the Small Animal Mixed Practice course.

However, as I travel from preceptor to preceptor for site visits and meetings, I find that each one would receive my vote—each one is outstanding. I am continually impressed by the enthusiasm with which I am greeted, and with the time and commitment that the Clinical Preceptors devote to teaching our students.

Our students, in turn, are equally enthusiastic about the enhanced learning experiences they have with the Clinical Preceptors, who are encouraged to use a variety of teaching techniques, including: observation, monitored participation, video and audio recordings, web-based communications with faculty, assigned readings, individual and group rounds, and presentations by students, faculty, and others.

With half the Clinical Preceptors yet to visit, I am certain that our students’ learning experiences are second to none compared to other veterinary colleges and, in many cases, far surpass the experiences I had in my own veterinary education (and my experiences were pretty darn good!)

Therefore, this is a special thank you to our Clinical Preceptor partners, chosen not only for their standard of excellence in clinical practice, but also for their excellent teaching skills and commitment to student clinical education on a daily basis. Thank you.

On another note, I would like to announce the recent promotion of Dr. Teresa Morishita to Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Please look for the feature article on Dr. Morishita’s career and her plans for the College in the next issue of Outlook.

Phillip Nelson, DVM, PhD
Congratulations to Professor Malika Kachani, DVM, PhD, on her appointment as a permanent consultant for the prestigious Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Dr. Kachani is moderator for the FAO-Veterinary Public Health network for francophone North and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Assistant Professor Hrvoje Smolakla, DVM, PhD, represented the College at the XXVII European Association of Veterinary Anatomists (EAVA) Congress in Budapest, Hungary, held July 23-26. Dr. Smolakla gave an oral presentation “Histological Assessment of Unique Vasculature in Northern Elephant Seal,” a collaboration with Dr. Wael Khamas.

Congratulations to Clinical Field Liaison/Assistant Professor Paul Gordon-Ross, MS, DVM, for co-organizing and leading a forensic DNA fingerprinting lab during the High School Copernicus Outreach Program on July 7-11. Funding for the outreach program was provided by a U.S. Department of Education Grant awarded to the University of California-Riverside, Graduate School of Education. Dr. Gordon-Ross also presented: Paul Gordon-Ross and David McCabe. Student centered learning in education. Kaleidoscope of Learning Conference, UC Riverside, May 3, 2008.

Congratulations to Associate Professor Peggy Schmidt, DVM, MS, DACVP, on her appointment as Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Public Health Practice major for the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota on August 20, 2008. Dr. Schmidt serves as the liaison between WesternU and the University of Minnesota Veterinary Public Health Program.

Appreciation and a round of applause to Michael Blackwell, DVM, MPH, Vice Chair of The Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production, for making time to visit campus and speak to CVM students on animal welfare issues. Dr. Blackwell, currently President and CEO of The Blackwell Group, L.L.C., a venture capital firm that focuses on healthcare products and services, is the former Dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine at University of Tennessee; assistant surgeon general (Ret.), U.S. Public Health Service; and former chief of staff, Office of the U.S. Surgeon General.

Appreciation to Assistant Professor Helen Engelke, BVSc, MPVM, MRCVS, and Susan Mackintosh, DO (COMP) for hosting a table representing WesternU at the Nancy McCracken Science, Service Learning and Arts Expo, sponsored by the Pomona Unified School District, June 4, 2008.

Congratulations to Assistant Professor Kristopher Irizarry, PhD, on his Aug 27 presentation, “Decoding Dog DNA: Finding Physiology & Pathology in the Canine Genome.” The seminar, sponsored by the College of Veterinary Medicine Research Advisory Committee and the Society of Phi Zeta, Alpha Epsilon Chapter, was the first seminar in the 2008 CVM Research Seminar Series.

Congratulations to Associate Professor Maria Fahie, DVM, MS, DACVS, for successfully pursuing a $159,170 Ethicon Educational Grant - titled “A Proposal to Enhance Suturing Skills in Third Year Veterinary Students - As a result of Dr. Fahie’s efforts, Ethicon will provide requested suture material for the support of the CVM 7035 Surgery/Anesthesia Course at no cost to the College.

Professor Ellen Collisson, PhD, was invited to serve as a panelist on the Animal Protection & Biosecurity Panel convened by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service. Dr. Collisson provided in-depth written evaluations of proposals and helped identify the most meritorious proposals for funding out of the 54 proposals submitted. The panel met May 13-15 in Washington, D.C. The services of Dr. Collisson were extremely valuable in upholding the highest standards of scientific excellence required for a competitive peer review.

Congratulations to Assistant Professor Kristopher Irizarry, PhD, and John David, DVM ’09, on the acceptance of their paper for publication: David J, Irizarry K. “Using the PubMatrix literature mining resource to accelerate student-centered learning in a veterinary PBL curriculum” Journal of Veterinary Medical Education, in press.

Appreciation and a round of applause to Associate Professor Peggy Schmidt, DVM, MS, DACVP, for her presentation: Evidence-Based Medicine: Development, Implementation, & Validation of Teaching & Assessment Tools on Sept. 24. This seminar, sponsored by the College of Veterinary Medicine Research Advisory Committee and the Society of Phi Zeta, Alpha Epsilon Chapter, was the second in the 2008 CVM Research Seminar Series.


Associate Dean Robert Mason, DVM, MS, was invited to meet members and present an overview of the College’s mission, curriculum, and students by the Los Encinos Kennel Club in Sherman Oaks, CA, on Sept. 10. The Los Encinos Kennel Club is one of the top AKC Clubs in Southern California.
AVMA Immediate Past President Delivers White Coat Ceremony Keynote

The College of Veterinary Medicine welcomed Gregory S. Hammer, DVM, Immediate Past President of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), as keynote speaker for the 2008-2009 White Coat Ceremony held August 9, 2008, in Claremont, California at the Bridges Hall of Music.

Dr. Hammer, a small animal/equine practitioner, and owner/partner of the Brenford Animal Hospital in Dover, Delaware, has enjoyed a veterinary career spanning more than 33 years. He assumed the presidency of the AVMA on July 17, 2007, and in his address to delegates Dr. Hammer noted that the veterinary profession is facing significant challenges in the years ahead.

- The challenge of becoming a leading resource for sound, science-based guidance on animal welfare.
- The challenge of becoming a more diverse profession, mirroring the public we serve while remaining unified, and keeping our collective voice strong for veterinary medicine on the national scene.

- The challenge of preserving the veterinarians’ position as one of our nation’s most trusted professions.

“No other challenge, however, is as significant as the crisis we face in addressing shortages in the veterinary workforce,” Dr. Hammer said. “The situation is critical in public health practice, including areas that ensure food safety, fight bioterrorism, and oversee environmental health and regulatory medicine. This is in addition to significant shortfalls in rural and food supply veterinarians. Together these threaten our country’s ability to protect our nation’s wholesome food supply from the farm to fork.”

AVMA Immediate Past President 2008-2009

Dr. Gregory Hammer is a small animal and equine practitioner in Dover, Delaware, who has worked as a veterinarian for more than 33 years. His goals for leadership at the AVMA are to focus on animal welfare, which he feels is the most important issue facing the association, along with improving the AVMA communications, legislative impact, relationship with the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, and professional unity.

For more than 30 years, Dr. Hammer has been part owner and partner at a small animal/equine practice, the Brenford Animal Hospital in Dover, Delaware. He received his Bachelor of Science degree in 1971 and in 1973 he received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Kansas State University where he was inducted into the Phi Eta Sigma, Alpha Zeta, and Phi Zeta honor societies. Dr. Hammer received the Kansas State University School of Veterinary Medicine’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 2001.

Dr. Hammer held the rank of captain in the U.S. Air Force as a veterinary medical officer from January 1974 to January 1976, and received the Meritorious Service Medal for his outstanding service. At Dover Air Force Base, where he was stationed, Dr. Hammer had the opportunity to practice public health and food safety. Then, in 1994, he was named honorary commander of the 436th Military Airlift Wing Medical Group.

Dr. Hammer also has been an active member of the Delaware Veterinary Medical Association (DVMA) since 1975 and has served on its Executive Board since 1986. He has contributed to the DVMA in the areas of legislation, securing educational opportunities for Delaware veterinary students, convention activities, public relations, and reorganization of the DVMA. In 1997, the DVMA honored him with the Delaware Veterinarian of the Year award. He also is a member of the District of Columbia, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia Medical Associations. In 2008, Dr. Hammer was honored by the Virginia Veterinary Medical Association with that state’s Veterinarian of the Year Award.

Active for many years in Dover community and civic affairs, Dr. Hammer has been a member of the Dover Rotary Club since 1983 and has served on their Board of Directors since 1991. A member of the Bayhealth Medical Center Board since 1993, he has been a member of their Executive Board since 1994. From 1984 until 1997 he was a member of the Kent General Hospital Foundation, serving as chairman from 1993 to 1997 and served on the American Veterinary Cooperative Board of Directors from 1993 to 1995.

Dr. Gregory Hammer and his wife, Karen, a high school counselor, have two children, Scott and Jill.

Demographics Class of 2012

Applications
Total Received: 755
Out of State: 468
California: 287
Female: 620
Male: 135
Interviews: 310
Offers: 185 (24.5%)

Class of 2012
Total Accepted: 104
Female: 84
Male: 20
White, Non-Hispanic: 51%
Asian Pacific Islander: 14%
Hispanic: 7%
American Indian/Alaskan Native: 3%
Black Non-Hispanic: 1%
Race/Ethnicity Unknown: 17%
GRADS IN THE FIELD

“Grads in The Field” is a regular column in Outlook. CVM alumni are encouraged to email Renee Cook (rcook@westernu.edu) sharing experiences from their first years as veterinarians.

I am now a doctor. That realization didn’t really hit me until I started my first day at my first job as a veterinarian. I had been searching in numerous locations for the right clinic for me and found it in San Jose, California. I knew from early on in vet school that I wanted to be a small animal general practitioner and I finally made it. I am now a month in and am feeling comfortable with the cases that I am seeing. My fourth year was a great opportunity to see a large amount of very diverse cases, and I am seeing many of those same types of cases now. I am also very comfortable in speaking to clients and showing them that I understand what they are going through with their sick pet. I have the communication aspect of the curriculum at WesternU to thank for that. I have also found that I do not get frustrated or panic when a difficult case comes in or if there is an arterial bleeder during a cryptorchid neuter. Again, I have the curriculum at WesternU to thank.

I never thought I would be treating the array of species that I have already treated. Of course, the majority are dogs and cats, but I have also had rat, guinea pig, hamster, and rabbit patients. Although I had very little experience dealing with and treating a sick rabbit, I knew where to go for answers, and I did not hesitate to ask for the advice of my colleagues. Again, WesternU.

I am glad I chose this career path and I am glad I chose to attend WesternU. There is no doubt in my mind that I have been prepared to practice high quality medicine and that all of WesternU’s graduates are, and will continue to be, excellent veterinarians.

Jonathon Williams, DVM
Class of 2008

I am a postdoctoral fellow in laboratory animal medicine at the University of Michigan in my second year of a three year program. I absolutely loved my clinical year. This year we do rotations (IACUC, rodent health surveillance, facility design, animal facility management, fiscal and administration), a ton of information to take in. I am also taking molecular biology and start transitioning to research this year (15% now, 50% after 6 months, and 90% in my third year.) My research focus will be in venous thrombosis. If all goes well in the research world (need to be a first author), I will be eligible to take the examination to become board certified in laboratory animal medicine in July 2010 (if I am really lucky), more like 2011. It is nice to have a fellow WesternU alumnus, Tara Cotroneo, here beginning her clinical year.

Christine M. Alvarado, DVM
Resident, Unit for Laboratory Animal Medicine Postdoctoral Fellow
University of Michigan Medical School
Charter Class of 2007

My name is Lyndsey Shiraki (formerly Lyndsey Najima) and I am a 2007 charter class graduate from WesternU. Currently I am practicing small animal medicine and surgery in Garden Grove, CA. Our clinic sees a variety of surgical cases from spays and neuters to splenectomies, gastrointestinal foreign bodies and pyometras to name a few. The clinical skills labs in the first two years of school and clinical experiences in my third and fourth years of school really helped me improve my technical skills which are so important to execute these procedures. Working under pressure and with distractions, being able to tie sutures accurately and quickly, steady hands and gentle tissue handling; these are all things we worked on at WesternU. Each day I implement skills and knowledge gained from the professors and clinical preceptors and continue to learn from my patients and experiences. Practicing veterinary medicine has been challenging and rewarding, and truly a blessing in my life.

Lyndsey Shiraki, DVM
Charter Class of 2007
Dr. Robert Mason has resigned his position at WesternU effective the end of December 2008, to pursue other interests. Bob was a founding faculty member of the CVM, joining the College in 1999 with responsibility for recruiting practices to a new, distributive mode of clinical education. Bob completed the DVM at the University of Minnesota in 1975, an internship at the Animal Medical Center in New York in 1976, and a Master of Science in Health Professions Education at WesternU in 2005.

Dr. Mason accomplished many things in his time at WesternU, including the launching of the semiannual CARES Symposium, that began in 2003, as Veterinary Medical Board-approved education of veterinarians applying for temporary licensure in the state. He led efforts to implement team-building exercises (funded by Hill’s Pet Nutrition) into the new College’s first year student orientation. He initiated the student orientation program and the Practice Management Course at the CVM. He has served as editor of the CVM Outlook, and as the College’s main ambassador to external constituents in public relations and fundraising.

But his greatest contribution to the College, and one that was essential to its success in accreditation, was Dr. Mason’s recruitment of and collaboration with veterinary practices (and other institutions such as the Los Angeles Zoo, Antech Laboratories, laboratory animal programs at City of Hope, UCLA and Scripps, La Jolla) providing 3rd and 4th year clinical educational experiences to our veterinary students. This involved thousands of visits, thousands of communications, and repeated training of veterinarians, their staff members, on-campus faculty and WesternU students on the expectations and outcomes measures of these clinical experiences. Perhaps the best objective measure of his success was published in Fuentealba C, Mason RV, Johnston SD: Community-based clinical veterinary education at Western University of Health Sciences. J Vet Med Educa 35(1):34-42, 2008. In this paper, written by former Associate Dean Carmen Fuentealba, data were published from over 1,000 student responses to each of 23 questions rating clinical preceptors and personnel. On a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale, every mean response about the positive nature of preceptor performance in orienting students, overseeing patient care, teaching clinical skills, providing feedback, and serving as a role model exceeded 4.2. And 14 of the 23 exceeded 4.5. These very high evaluation scores are almost unheard of in student evaluations of clinical preceptors anywhere in veterinary education. The College owes a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Mason for identifying its clinical preceptors, training them, trouble shooting conflicts within practices, and shepherding students effectively through their clinical learning experiences. Thank you. Farewell, and best wishes in your future endeavors.
A substantial aspect of the College’s third and fourth clinical years involves the collaboration of more than 300 veterinary colleagues in field practices, facilities, and organizations throughout California, the nation, and internationally. This unique, innovative partnership with Clinical Preceptors is one of the founding principles of the College: “Excellence in clinical education through the building of strategic partnerships.”

“We are very proud and honored to be affiliated with a group of individuals in our profession who have taken to this task with great resolve and commitment, and who recognize their place in helping to shape the next generation of those who follow in our footsteps,” said Dr. Robert Mason, Associate Dean for Clinical and External Relations.

Each year, the College’s graduating class votes on the Preceptor Award recipient. The Class of 2008 nominated Dr. William Grant II, owner of Community Veterinary Hospital in Garden Grove, CA, by majority vote. Their comments included: “Dr. Grant challenged our ability to work through disease mechanisms and come up with good rule-out lists.

He encouraged case discussion and held rounds at the end of the day specifically for students...” “He was confident, knowledgeable and eager to help us.” Numerous students commented that Community Veterinary Hospital was by far the best of their small animal rotations thanks to Dr. Grant.

Dr. Grant grew up in a veterinary family—his father is a veterinarian—and he graduated from Kansas State University twenty years ago. Dr. Grant is the 2008-2009 president of the California Veterinary Medical Association.

Congratulations, and thank you, Dr. Grant.
Jennifer Barton

I was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada and graduated from University of Nevada, Reno with a BS in biology. My passion is dancing and I have danced my entire life. I could not be more excited for the field of veterinary medicine and what lies ahead!

Margaret Basurto

Raised in Healdsburg, California, I graduated from California State University, Chico in 2006 with a BS in animal science and a minor in chemistry. I just completed my MS in animal science this summer at California State University, Fresno. My current interest is mixed animal medicine.

Danielle Bergan

I grew up in Mountain View, California, and graduated in 2007 from University of California, Davis (UCD) with a BS in animal biology. I started working at a small farm in high school. During college and the past year, I have been working at UCD’s veterinary hospital in the large animal unit.

Stephanie Brown

I was born in Ohio and moved to Arizona 18 years ago. I received a BS in agribusiness from Arizona State University, and MS in pathobiology from University of Arizona. I was a veterinary technician for ten years, spent a year at a diagnostic laboratory, and am interested in small animal medicine.

Aleli Camacho

Raised in Tijuana, Mexico, I moved to the United States after finishing high school and graduated from California State University, San Diego with a BS in biology. I have a great passion for exotic animals, especially birds and reptiles. My current interest is exotic animals or small animal surgery.

Rebecka Celinder

I was born in Sweden, and recently graduated from University of California, Davis with a BS in animal science. My interests include playing tennis, reading books, watching movies, and I’m a huge San Jose Sharks fan. Currently, my plan is to become a small animal and equine veterinarian.

Connie Chang

I graduated from University of Virginia in 2008 with a BS in biology. I moved from Northern Virginia with my pet rabbit and am looking forward to life on the West Coast. I am so excited to fulfill my dream of becoming a small animal veterinarian.

Kristin Conover

I grew up in Sebastopol, California and graduated from California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo with a BS in animal science. Although I am interested in all aspects of the veterinary profession, my heart lies in equine medicine. I am so excited to fulfill my dream of becoming a veterinarian.

Meaghan O. Corbett

I was born and raised in Northampton, Massachusetts, and have a BA in finance from University of Massachusetts, Amherst. My interest is in mixed animal medicine.

Kristina Deady

I’m a California native, presently residing in Claremont, California. I received my BS in biological sciences from University of Southern California. Currently, my interest is in pathology. I love college football (go Trojans) and hanging with my soul mate, Paul. To Mom, Dad, Kevin, and Paul—thanks for the support!
I grew up in Port Leyden, New York, where the Holsteins outnumber the humans. I have a BA in anthropology from The State University of New York, Potsdam and a BS in biology from Colorado State University. My husband and I plan to return to New York’s Hudson Valley where I hope to be a mixed-animal practitioner.

I grew up in Yorktown, Virginia and graduated in May 2008 with a BS in biology and a minor in animal science from Virginia Tech. Go HOKIES!!! I traveled here with my wonderful dog, Guster, and I’m extremely excited to fulfill my dream of becoming a veterinarian at WesternU.

I’m from Queens, New York and graduated from Cornell University in 2006 with a BS in animal science. Most of my experience is from the small animal clinic where I’ve worked since graduation, and from the Ornithology Department and Wildlife Health Center at The Bronx Zoo.

This is a phenomenal career change that I couldn’t have made without my husband’s support. I am a Los Angeles native with a BS in biology from California State University, Dominguez Hills. Small animals (dogs especially) are my inspiration and experience, though I’m looking forward to exploring the different specialties that veterinary medicine has to offer.

I was raised in Marsh Creek, Pennsylvania and graduated from Johnson College with an associate degree in veterinary technology (2004) and from Lock Haven University with a BS in biochemistry (2008). I have been working as a licensed veterinary technician, and am interested in large animal medicine.

I grew up in Palos Verdes, California and graduated in 2008 from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo with a BS in animal science. I am currently interested in equine and food animal care, public health, and traveling overseas to educate others through Veterinarians Without Borders.

Raised in Cardiff by the Sea, California, I grew up admiring the equine species and competing in national show jumping competitions. I have a BS in animal science from Washington State University and MS in agriculture with a specialization in equine reproduction from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

I grew up in Fremont, California and graduated from University of California, San Diego in 2007 with a BS in biochemistry and cell biology. My experience is mostly in research and with exotic animals. I am so excited to start this program and fulfill my dreams of becoming a veterinarian!

I was born in Massachusetts and raised in Palos Verdes, California. I received my BS (2006) and MS (2008) in biological sciences from California Polytechnic State University, Pomona. My interest is animal pathology, however I’m open to all areas of veterinary medicine. I am very excited to be starting WesternU!
The College of Veterinary Medicine presented the inaugural annual CVM Summer Student Technology and Research Symposium (STARS) on July 28. Fifteen CVM students who competed successfully for WesternU Student Summer Research Grants presented their projects. The day-long event was scheduled around four sessions: Environment: From Oceans to Deserts; Sequence: From Genes to Genomes; Virus: From Antibodies to Epidemiology; and Medicine: From Pathology to Pharmacology. Three special awards were presented.

Jessica Jennings, DVM ’10, received the “Most Progress” award for the results of her research on “A comparison between dry cow management in Southern California and New Zealand and its impact on hypomagnesemia.” The costs associated with clinical hypomagnesemia (low magnesium) in the New Zealand dairy industry equal approximately NZ$28 billion annually. The aim of this research was to identify possible causes for the hypomagnesemia observed in animals in the northern region of New Zealand. A statistically significant decrease in magnesium levels was observed in 2008. The following were identified as likely causal factors: early termination of magnesium supplementation, changes in fertilizer use, or seasonal drought.

Kimberly Bridges, DVM ’11, received the “Most Professional” award for the high degree of professionalism demonstrated in conducting her project, “Molecular evaluation of canine and feline parvoviruses in Southern California.” The ability of the parvovirus to cross species and then genetically mutate to form other viral variants will decrease vaccine efficacy and cause an increase in the number of parvovirus cases seen each year. The purpose of this study was to perform genetic analysis of fecal samples to determine the genetic make-up of the canine parvovirus found within the Southern California shelter sample, and to determine if the parvovirus strain(s) found were consistent with known strains or indicative of a new viral variation.

Tamera Chan, DVM ’11, was recognized for the “Most Challenging” study, “Assessing Presence of REV Specific IgY in the Attwater/Greater Prairie Hybrids to Evaluation DNA Vaccine Efficacy.” The objective of this study was to determine if prairie chickens are capable of making antibodies (IgY) against the gag proteins of the reticuloendotheliosis virus (REV), which is known to cause lymphomas in these birds.

Congratulations and a round of applause to all CVM students who participated in the STARS Symposium. Thanks also to the following faculty organizers for launching this excellent new annual research event: Associate Dean of Research Tom Phillips, Assistant Professor Yvonne Drechsler, and Assistant Professor Kristopher Irizarry.

Congratulations also to Elizabeth Ingram, DVM ’09, for her recent first author publication. Ms. Ingram worked on the project in summer of 2006 after successfully competing for the Summer Research Fellowship in the Department of Comparative Medicine at Stanford University. Ingram EA, Toyoda I, Wen X, Buckmaster PS. Prolonged infusion of inhibitors of calcineurin or L-type calcium channels does not block mossy fiber sprouting in a model of temporal lobe epilepsy. Epilepsia. 2008 Jul 1.
CVM Pathology Group Joins AFIP Wednesday Slide Conference Program

Within the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP), one of the world’s leading institutes for the study of pathology, the Department of Veterinary Pathology coordinates training, education and research efforts for veterinary pathology. The Department offers consultation services for the diagnosis of pathological veterinary specimens and long distance instruction by several means, including the “Wednesday Slide Conference.”

The Wednesday Slide Conference, established 56 years ago, coordinates the acquisition, sharing and study of different pathology cases submitted by a selected group of academic institutions, diagnostic laboratories and pharmaceutical companies. Participating institutions are chosen on a competitive basis, with only 129 participating throughout the world.

In August, the College of Veterinary Medicine at WesternU became the newest member of this prestigious academic conference.

The College’s participation in this program gives additional stature to the pathology group and to the College at large, and allows us to continue acquiring excellent teaching materials for our institution. The shared pathology cases will contribute to faculty professional development and enhance the experiences of both students and faculty. The material also will support teaching and research in other important fields for the College including infectious diseases, parasitology, microbiology, and oncology.

To be accepted to this program is a sign of distinction, recognition and progress. We consider it an honor to be invited to participate in the Wednesday Slide Program, since the AFIP has been the gold standard for teaching, training and service in the field of veterinary pathology for more than 50 years. It is a unique opportunity that we proudly embrace.
Jose “Txema” Peralta DVM, MSc, PhD, joined the College of Veterinary Medicine in March of 2007. He was born in beautiful Spain, and obtained his veterinary degree at the University of Zaragoza. After briefly working in small and large animal practices, Txema decided to teach and returned to graduate school. He was awarded a fellowship by the Spanish Department of Agriculture which permitted him to attend Cornell University, where he received a PhD in animal science.

Txema remained at Cornell for an additional 10 years with the Animal Resources Department. This gave him an opportunity to expand on his interest in animal welfare. While at Cornell, he taught courses on ethics and animal welfare in the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences and at the Veterinary College.

At WesternU, Txema is primarily involved as a co-director of the Veterinary Issues course and as a PBL Facilitator. He is currently Chair of the Student Affairs Committee and a member of the Reverence for Life Committee at the College. At the University level, he serves on the University Awards Committee and is a member of the Administrative Student Affairs Council.

Txema’s primary interest remains animal welfare, especially that of farm animals, and he has been invited to contribute to OIE, USDA, CCAC, and EU guidelines for the care and welfare of both research and farm animals. He looks forward to, at some point, having the time to get his research program on animal welfare going at full speed.

Txema has been a Consultant with the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International for the past ten years, and a member of the Scientific Committee of Humane Farm Animal Care since 2004. He was recently invited to serve as a Founding Member of the Organizing Committee of the American College of Animal Welfare.

Outside of work, Txema enjoys spending time with his wife, Dr. Ana Alcaraz, and their daughter, Amaya, who at seven years of age manages to keep him on his toes. They enjoy swimming in the pool, visits to local parks and going on walks with Cuca, their spoiled Pomonian dog, a stray they adopted a few months ago when she was brought to the school after being hit by a car in a nearby street.

Ana Alcaraz, DVM, PhD, Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists, joined the CVM in the spring of 2007. She was born in Mexico City, Mexico, and obtained her DVM from the College of Veterinary Medicine at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM).

Shortly after graduation, Dr. Alcaraz realized that her interests resided in pathology rather than in clinical practice. She pursued her pathology training when she was accepted for a residency in anatomic pathology at the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University under the skilled direction of Dr. John M. King. After successfully completing her residency training, Dr. Alcaraz entered the Cornell graduate program to pursue a PhD in pathology, and subsequently accepted a faculty position in the Anatomic Pathology Section of the Department of Biomedical Sciences at the Cornell University CVM, where she happily stayed for eight years. During her tenure at Cornell, she strengthened the Pathology Residency Program, which she personally directed for the last three years. She also developed strong research collaborations that produced several publications.

Dr. Alcaraz has been invited to participate in national and international courses to teach the pathology of different species, from mouse to moose. It was while at Cornell that she developed a unique set of teaching skills, based in the philosophy of student centered learning, where she engages the students with challenging questions, making discussions informative and interesting. Her philosophy of teaching is a combination of hard work, enthusiasm and commitment. To achieve that level of excellence, she believes in the continuous training of the instructor through experience and practice, to keep knowledge up to date. Her role as a teacher and mentor to veterinary students and residents was recognized by the 2005 AVMA Student Teaching Award- Basic Sciences.
MORE THAN 100 DISTINGUISHED DONORS, GUESTS, COMMUNITY OFFICIALS, and Western University of Health Sciences dignitaries joined the College of Veterinary Medicine on August 8 for a VIP dinner celebrating the grand opening of the new Banfield Veterinary Clinical Center (BVCC). The two-story, 32,000 sq. ft. BVCC is the first new building to be constructed on the Western U campus, and the first building constructed entirely from donated funds.

The showpiece of the new building is the 8,000 sq. ft. Banfield, The Pet Hospital Wellness Center, a full-service pet veterinary teaching hospital complete with examination rooms, treatment room, pharmacy, imaging, clinical laboratory, surgery suites, isolation facilities and intensive-care monitoring areas.

The grand opening marked the culmination of five years of planning and fundraising that began under the leadership of the College’s Founding Dean, Dr. Shirley Johnston in 2003. Dr. Scott Campbell, Chairman of the Board of Directors and former CEO of Banfield, The Pet Hospital, said that, although Banfield has more than 700 veterinary hospitals around the country, the one at Western U is the only one of its kind in the nation.

In addition to Banfield, The Pet Hospital and other corporate donors, funding was provided by the Leonard X. Bosack & Bette M. Kruger Foundation, which contributed to the construction and equipping of a clinical skills laboratory, the “Thing” laboratory; and the estate of actress and animal advocate, Gretchen Wyler, for whom the media room is named. Dr. and Mrs. Scott Campbell provided a personal gift to name the second floor classroom for Drs. Shirley and Gary Johnston. Veterinary radiologist, Dr. Gary Johnston, is a founding faculty member at the College. Faculty, staff, and friends of the College have purchased the opportunity to name chairs in the Shirley & Gary Johnston Classroom in support of the College and the University Growth Fund. (See page 15 for more information about this opportunity.)

The Banfield gift included five pieces of sculpture (a female veterinarian and four dogs), The Caring Doctor, by Portland, Oregon, artist James Gion. These pieces have been installed in Ethan Allen Park directly west of the BVCC.
Lessons in Joyful Living from Tilly
By Dawn Rusalov

From the time I adopted her at the age of 1½ years old, my dog Tilly with her simple canine ways was clueing me in on some valuable lessons for life. Top of the list: give it your all, regardless of what “it” is. When she chased a squirrel, it didn’t stop Tilly if the wily varmint scurried up a tree. Tilly just clawed her way up the trunk as far as gravity and her fairly short legs would permit her to go. When it came to chow time, Tilly wasn’t picky. She enjoyed her food whole-heartedly. Yes, she could lose a few pounds. But you would never know it if you watched her fly over a fence in pursuit of a cat. Tilly could sleep in with the best of them when it was time to chill. She knew taking it easy on occasion was just as important as working hard. And she was always willing to play, even as she got older and my children would disturb her nap by dressing her up in feather boas and bracelets. In January, at nearly 14 years-old, Tilly became my children’s first lesson in death. It was hard on us all. But there was comfort in remembering the way she had lived—the way she had changed our lives. So it seemed fitting that she could have valuable lessons with her death, not only for our family, but for others, too. That is why we chose to donate Tilly’s body to the WAVE program. She would want to help other dogs live their long, healthy lives with abandon.

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 (WAVE Program is modeled after the Human Willed Body Program at WesternU). More than 500 deceased animals 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 Miller 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 the Outlook.
For the first time in its history, the College of Veterinary Medicine is “naming” chairs in the auditorium of its new building in support of the College and the University Growth Fund.

You are invited to join President Philip Pumerantz, Dean Phillip Nelson, Founding Dean Shirley Johnston and many CVM faculty and alumni, and purchase a seat in the 130 chair auditorium that will memorialize your support of the college.

This offer is being extended to everyone who has helped our new college succeed. Friends of the college may make a naming gift in honor of a loved one or loved pet.

Naming plaques can accommodate three lines of text, at 35 characters (including spaces) per line. Chairs may be purchased for $1,000 or $500 each, and paid by cash, check, credit card, or partial payments over the course of a year. Please contact Susan Terrazas at (909) 706-3476 or sterrazas@westernu.edu to reserve your chair.

Remember the College of Veterinary Medicine as we will remember you.
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. Instruction and clinical opportunities are provided in a wide variety of domestic species, including food animal, equine, and companion animals. 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.