

# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## CVM Pharmacy Staff

*“We are like a family here,  
and we all work together well.  
We fill in for each other  
and help each other out.”*



*From left, Carole McLaughlin, Leslie Pritchard, and Christi Watkins make up the MSU-CVM pharmacy staff.*

Many times when a human goes to see the doctor, the pharmacist does not even know about his illness until a prescription needs to be filled. At the MSU-CVM pharmacy, the staff is involved with individual cases from the beginning. They help in the detection of the animal's illness as well as in all phases of its treatment.

“We're in on the treatment from the time an animal comes in until it goes home,” said Christi Watkins, certified pharmacy technician.

On a daily basis, pharmacy staff members help students and doctors select the correct drugs for treatment of all kinds of illnesses. They also help students calculate drug dosages for the size and weight of the animal being treated.

“One of our most important jobs is compounding medication,” Watkins said. “We reformulate medications and determine the correct dosage. If a medication comes in a 500 milligram tablet and the animal only needs 15 milligrams, we have to devise a method of extracting and administering the smaller amount.”

Because MSU-CVM works with more than domesticated animal species, the pharmacy staff has handled some unusual cases. They have treated tigers from the Cedar Hills Animal Shelter in Columbus. To treat these exotic cats, the staff has had to figure sedation dosages and has researched appropriate medications for the animals.

Mondays and Fridays are the most stressful days for the pharmacy staff because all the medications have to be counted. On Mondays, the staff restocks the medications that were used during the weekend by on-call emergency staff physicians.

The pharmacy staff fills prescriptions for animals in the hospital and for those going home that will need additional treatment. They also handle refills for animals at home.

Another part of the job is to help researchers obtain medications for certain species or medications they will administer for trials.

The pharmacy staff is a valuable resource for practicing veterinarians across the state and nation. They help doctors find information about medications and help them find sources for the drugs they need.

The pharmacy is part of the Department of Clinical Sciences and is headed by Dr. Dinah Jordan, chief of pharmacy services. Jordan, an associate clinical professor, conducts research in drug and therapeutics information. She also teaches clinical pharmacy and veterinary pharmacy law.

“No two days are the same here in the pharmacy,” Jordan said. “Our staff is the ‘best in the world.’”

Jordan describes her staff of veteran employees as being very competent, well-qualified individuals who are loyal to the institution.

“We are like a family here, and we all work together well,” said Leslie Pritchard, another certified pharmacy technician. “We fill in for each other and help each other out.”

### *Meet the Pharmacy Staff*

- Carole McLaughlin is the only part-time pharmacy employee. She is the mother of 6-year-old Conner, who she spends part of her days with. Her husband, Dr. Ron McLaughlin, is the head of the CVM Department of Clinical Sciences. They are the proud owners of two dogs and a cat.
- Leslie Pritchard, a certified pharmacy technician, is a 14-year CVM veteran. She and her husband, Gregg, live in Mathiston with their 11-year-old son, Tanner. The family has a much-loved dog named Sadie.
- Certified pharmacy technician Christi Watkins has been with the pharmacy for 24 years. Watkins and her husband, Roy, also a CVM employee, live in Starkville. They have three grown children: Brandi and twins Kenny and Kayla.