EARNING RESPECT BY EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS
As autumn arrives with all of its changes, welcome changes continue also at the College of Veterinary Medicine. Repair of the building envelope and replacement of the roof of our main facility, the Wise Center, will be completed soon. Bids for the renovation of the necropsy laboratory were opened in November, with construction anticipated to begin in early 2012.

In late summer, the associate deans and I made our annual report to the MSU provost and vice presidents on the state of the College and our goals for the future. Several of the points we covered include these:

RESEARCH. CVM research expenditures from extramural sources have increased by 48 percent over the last 5 years (from $4.6 million to $6.8 million). The faculty’s goal in our new strategic plan is to achieve $15 million in annual extramural research expenditures by 2016. This goal really isn’t about money, but rather about building sound programs in discovery to enable our College to address those real societal needs for which it is uniquely equipped. One critical program tied closely to research activity is graduate education, and our graduate student enrollment has increased from 58 in 2006 to 102 at present.

APPLICANTS TO DVM PROGRAM. Qualified applicants for admission into the professional program increased from 385 in 2006 (Class of 2010) to 959 in 2010 (Class of 2015)—a 250 percent increase! Thanks to all who mentor and send those excellent students our way.

BS IN VETERINARY MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY. We began the 4-year BS in Veterinary Medical Technology last year, the final 2 years of which are taught in the CVM. This year’s entering class has 24 students. We anticipate that when the program is at full capacity, we will have 25 to 30 students enrolled per class.

DVM-PHD PROGRAM. There is a critical need to educate tomorrow’s veterinary scientists and veterinary medical faculty. In light of this fact, the College began a combined DVM-PhD program in 2008. Entry into this program is highly competitive, and we now have eight students enrolled and in various stages of completion. The real impact of this program will be observable 10 or more years from now as these graduates join faculties in teaching and research roles.

EMPLOYMENT OF GRADUATES. We are required to report to AVMA’s Council on Education the employment within the veterinary profession of our graduates 12 months post-graduation. That is, if a graduate is employed but doing something other than veterinary medicine, statistically they are reported as not employed. For the past three reporting cycles, we have had 204 graduates, and less than 1 percent (only two graduates) were not employed as veterinarians 1 year following graduation.

AN AREA TO IMPROVE. One area in which we need to be doing much better is providing scholarship support for tomorrow’s veterinarians. Last year, our total amount of scholarships awarded was only $67,650. This is at a time when our average debt incurred during the MSU-CVM DVM program was $118,715 for the Class of 2011. While this is less than the national average of $131,877 per graduate, it is still a sobering statistic. Consider that with 76 graduates in 2011, the collective debt that will need to be repaid for this year’s MSU-CVM graduating class alone is just over $9 million.

The Class of 1981, the CVM’s inaugural class, recognized that support for scholarships is a critical need and honored our founding dean, Dr. James G. Miller, by endowing a scholarship in his name, the James G. Miller and the First Class (1981) Endowed Scholarship. Endowed scholarships are extremely powerful. Think about it: for as long as there is an MSU-CVM, a student or students each year will benefit from this gift. Put another way, 25 and even 50 years from now, a veterinarian practicing in your community, or an MSU-CVM graduate working to develop a novel disease treatment or prevention, may have been able to complete his or her veterinary education because of the foresight and generosity of the Class of 1981. Scholarships are a high priority for the CVM. If you have questions, please contact me, or give our development office a call at (662) 325-5938.

One of the guiding principles under which our College operates is that we will live up to our responsibilities to our students and graduates. The evidence indicates that, in several areas, we are doing this quite well. In the important area of providing scholarships, however, we need to improve. For the next several years, we will be emphasizing this responsibility to the entire CVM family.

Dr. Kent H. Hoblet
Dean & Professor | CVM Office of the Dean | (662) 325-1131
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FRONT COVER: Dr. Andrea Varela-Stokes (right) and graduate student Gail Moraru use “tick drags” to collect specimens for their tick-borne disease surveys.

BACK COVER: Champ gets to know Jack Hanna, who was the special guest for CVM’s Pegasus Gala in October.
Parchman Memories II

The band of horses maintained at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman provided an opportunity for our clinical students to gain experience performing routine veterinary procedures under real farm conditions. The trip to the unit in the Mississippi Delta also provided an opportunity to introduce students to the evolution, ecology, and modern agricultural enterprises of this literal “bread basket” of our state and region.

We spent time parked on field turn rows and visiting cotton gins and grain elevators to observe various crops and their cultivation, harvesting, and processing procedures. I was surprised to learn over the years that this assignment was the first venture into the Delta for several native Mississippi students.

There was a fairly high turnover at Parchman of personnel (both free and inmate) and animals over the decades that we worked there, but some of them made lasting impressions.

We utilized the group of horses at Parchman to allow our students to hone their skills in aging by dentition and stomach tube passage in the equine while performing routine vaccinations and regulatory testing. We maintained herd health records on the horses in our files at CVM and set up similar records on-site, which were generally maintained by inmate clerks.

One example of inside vs. free world time reference occurred as we were aging a horse. A new, rather officious inmate clerk had rotated into the K-9 unit since our last visit, and he was referring to his local records as we examined and treated the horses presented. I aged an animal at 15 years, at which the clerk piped up, “No, he’s only 7.” The gentleman holding the halter, also an inmate, replied, “Doc’s right. I’ve been here for 11 years and he was a fully grown horse when I came.”

In all state institutions, inventory of state-owned property is taken very seriously. State auditors decreed that all prison-owned animals must have some form of permanent identification. We advised and trained the caretakers on tattooing the Parchman dogs. An individual ID legible from a “safer” distance was requested for the horses.

Thus, in a region noted for its scarcity of windbreaks, on a biting cold March morning, two clinicians and a small group of students, utilizing the bucking chutes of the prison rodeo arena, freeze-branded 42 horses. A clinician and a student handled sedation and record-keeping, while others of the team clipped the long winter hair and wiped the target area with alcohol, and a third pair handled the chilling and timed application of the copper freeze-branding irons. After their procurement, new additions to the band were provided this form of ID on our next visit to Parchman.

One memorable equine charge was Noose. He was a tall, stout buckskin gelding with a large scar on his neck. The inmates related that this scar led to his moniker because he had been injured as a colt upon becoming entangled in a rope (I cannot verify this). The staff of the K-9 unit valued this horse’s “sure-footedness, heart, and grit,” which he had exhibited on tough tracking and search assignments by never hesitating to charge ahead wherever he was directed, no matter what obstacles of terrain might be encountered. Noose also had a propensity to charge through veterinarians and any proximate assistants, so we were glad when paste dewormers were developed and we did not have to pass a tube on him. What we gained on Noose with the paste was lost on our treating one of his mates for internal parasites.

“Most barns have cats, and the horse barns at Parchman were no exception. Because the cats were not state property, we did not treat them. Inmates adopted and cared for some of them, and I feel sure that humans and animals alike benefited...

It was not uncommon for them to consult with us concerning their cats’ perceived health problems.”

Natchez was a lanky, angular, strawberry roan walking horse cross gelding that I could barely see over. His phobia was hypodermic needles. He tolerated stomach tubing fairly well if you completed the task first, before the needles showed up. This was fortunate because to him the syringe of paste dewormer was another needle! Natchez was not bad to strike, bite, or kick, but he was adept at leaving when he sensed a needle in the vicinity.

If you ever watched the 1996 movie *The Chamber*, based on Mississippi author John Grisham’s book, you saw Natchez in a bit part. He is the horse a guard is riding to and fro between the death penalty protesters and the Parchman prison entrance. When my wife and I watched this movie on television for the first time, I exclaimed, “There’s ole Natchez!” (paraphrasing a bit here for this family-rated venue.)

Most barns have cats, and the horse barns at Parchman were no exception. Because the cats were not state property, we did...
Cardiologist Dr. John Allen Crow grew up on land adjacent to the College of Veterinary Medicine, and after a successful decade in a clinical practice, he returned to Starkville to pursue his lifelong goal of medical research.

“I never intended to practice medicine,” Crow said. “I always planned to be a researcher and was in a medical scientist training program.”

Crow received a bachelor’s degree in biochemistry from Mississippi State University. He earned his medical degree and a doctorate in biochemistry from Vanderbilt, and he completed his residency at Vanderbilt. He pursued a cardiology fellowship at Duke University when he realized he had an interest in clinical work.

Crow’s work as a cardiologist in Tupelo led him back to research as he saw patterns in the health of his patients. He became more interested in the physiological and biological characteristics that indicate vulnerability to such diseases as diabetes and atherosclerotic coronary disease, the single largest killer of men and women in the United States.

“Some people like to focus on one thing, but I like the variety in research,” Crow said.

Crow works in the Center for Environmental Health Sciences in CVM’s Department of Basic Sciences under the direction of Dr. Jan Chambers.

Crow and Chambers work together on many projects, both in the laboratory and in the field. One current effort is to provide research and evaluation support to projects funded by the Delta Health Alliance. This non-profit consortium seeks to solve serious health disparities in the Mississippi Delta through research and educational outreach. Chambers’ research team supports individual projects with organization and analysis of data sets, and Crow is a valuable asset for the study design of clinical projects.

“Having Allen helps us see these challenges from a human health perspective,” Chambers said. “His background in human physiology is helpful and keeps us grounded. His clinical experiences bring the real world to our academic setting.”

Chambers said the goal of their work is to document outcomes to show how the funded projects improve health.

“Recording the evidence of what works and learning what doesn’t work will make the efforts of the people in the Delta more visible,” Chambers said. “We can bring objectivity to the study design and offer input in advance, based on the evidence of what is shown to be effective and by asking new questions.”

While these scientists are objective about the research being conducted, they have a heart for the impact of their work and the opportunities to improve the health of Mississippians.

“We’re part of a land-grant university, and service is a big part of what we do,” Chambers said. “There is a relationship and commitment to these communities, and we want to do some good.”

As Crow said simply: “I’m a doctor. I want to make a difference.”

By Keri Lewis

not treat them. Inmates adopted and cared for some of them, and I feel sure that humans and animals alike benefited. They built a small “cat house” for one of their favorites, and stenciled the cat’s “inmate number” over the door. It was not uncommon for them to consult with us concerning their cats’ perceived health problems.

On my last trip to Parchman, just a couple of months short of 23 years since my first visit, as we were cleaning up and preparing to leave, such a consult occurred. An inmate approached our group with a question about a cat. He described a classic hairball problem, whereupon one of the students shifted into full clinical mode and explained the causation very well.

The bump came when she got to treatment options: “You can go to Walmart and get some hairball remedy, which the cat may eat out of the tube, or you can put it on his feet and let him lick it off.” The inmate’s reply was, “We can’t go to Walmart.” Of course the student was mortified, but she quickly recovered and said, “You could also put Vaseline on his feet and let him lick it off,” to which the inmate replied, “We can do that.”

Veterinarians have to be able to think on their feet, be flexible, and keep the proper perspective to care for their animal charges and to serve their owners.

Until we meet again to share reflections and recollections from the tractor seat, please remember, if you are not hurting, you probably are not doing enough.

Thank you.

A. Wayne Groce, DVM
Professor Emeritus | groce@cvm.msstate.edu
In 1981, MSU-CVM conferred Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degrees on its first class of 25 new graduates. Thirty years and more than 1,300 graduates later, the College welcomed the first class back to enjoy the Pegasus Gala.

The events were held over the October 14–15 weekend and included a VIP dinner, tailgating, tours, and performances by special guest Jack Hanna.

Jack Hanna is director emeritus of the Columbus (Ohio) Zoo and Aquarium and host of the nationally syndicated Jack Hanna’s Into the Wild and the just-launched Jack Hanna’s Wild Countdown. He entertained Starkville-area schoolchildren with a show featuring exotic animals in the CVM auditorium. The event was made possible through the support of Nutramax Labs Inc. That evening, Hanna also hosted a show for the guests at the Gala dinner held at MSU’s Hunter Henry Center.

A very special event provided guests with a glimpse of plans for a courtyard garden honoring the first graduating class. Following the unveiling, attendees enjoyed food and fellowship at a tailgate party before MSU’s football game against the University of South Carolina.

“We are so proud of our founding faculty and first graduating class,” Dean Kent Hoblet said. “They led the way for all those who came after them, and we were pleased to see them back here on campus.”

Donations will be accepted for the Class of 1981 courtyard garden. For more information, contact Keith Gaskin at (662) 325-3815 or kgaskin@foundation.msstate.edu.

PHOTOS: 1. MSU President Mark Keenum (left) and CVM Dean Kent Hoblet talk with Jack Hanna. 2. Guests and patrons of CVM visit at the reception for the Class of 1981. 3. Members of the Class of 1981 present Dr. James G. Miller with a certificate commemorating the establishment of the James G. Miller and First Class (1981) Endowed Scholarship. 4. This bed sheet banner was lovingly preserved from the time of their graduation until the recent Pegasus Gala. 5. Hanna presents a rather large, cold-blooded friend to children in attendance at the Gala banquet. 6. Ms. Julie Burt, who coordinated the Pegasus Gala, presents Hanna with a genuine MSU cowbell. 7. The Class of 1981, their families, and other guests were treated to a special animal show by Hanna at the Gala Banquet held in the Hunter Henry Center.
Veterinary and graduate students presented their research findings at the 2011 CVM Research Day. The annual event highlights and promotes research conducted by CVM students.

“Posters and presentations of ongoing research projects provide a congenial forum for gaining experience presenting and defending research, introducing oneself and one’s research to a wide audience, promoting CVM research on the MSU campus, and perhaps earning an award,” said CVM professor emeritus Dr. John Harkness, who organized Research Day.

Winners in the graduate student oral presentation category and their research topics follow:

- **First place**, **Paul Eden**, Involvement of organochlorine pesticide body burden and inflammatory markers with development of type 2 diabetes mellitus.
- **Second place**, **Claire Fellman**, Effects of cyclosporine and dexamethasone on canine T-cell expression of IL-2 and IFN-γ as measured by flow cytometry and quantitative RT-PCR.
- **Third place**, **Gail Moraru**, Host and vector competence for *Rickettsia parkeri* infection.

Winners in the graduate student poster presentation category and their research topics follow:

- **First place**, **Ronald Pringle**, Reactivation of phosphorylated acetylcholinesterase and neural protection in the central nervous system using pyridinium oximes.
- **Second place**, **Evangel Kummari**, Region specific dopamine deficits result from the combination of the Nurri1-null heterozygous genotype and aging.

First-place graduate student oral and poster presenters each receive a $500 travel award from the CVM Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

Winners in the graduate student oral presentation category and their research topics follow:

- **First place**, **Ashley Adams**, Effect of repeated developmental low dose exposure to chlorpyrifos on anandamide hydrolysis in the juvenile rat brain.
- **Michael Orencole**, Motor cortex white matter asymmetry in the cat as determined by diffusion tensor imaging.

Winners in the graduate student oral presentation category and their research topics follow:

- **First place**, **Rachel Smith**, Comparison of virulence factors between animal and human *Staphylococcus aureus* isolates.
- **Ashlee Oliver**, Creation and characterization of *Listeria monocytogenes* mutants.
- **Lauren Phillips**, Genetic modification of the *Edwardsiella ictaluri dhaK, araA*, and *tyrA* genes for live vaccine development.

Ryan Bear and Rachel Smith were chosen to give their presentations at the 2012 winter MVMA meeting.

The keynote speaker for Research Day was Dr. Luis L. Rodriguez, research leader with the Foreign Animal Disease Research Unit, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service, Plum Island Animal Disease Center. Rodriguez discussed veterinarians’ role in controlling and eradicating foot-and-mouth disease.

Rodriguez earned his DVM in 1979 from the National University of Costa Rica and his doctorate in animal virology in 1985 from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He taught veterinary virology and researched tropical veterinary viral diseases from 1986 to 1995 at the National University of Costa Rica’s School of Veterinary Medicine.

For the next 2 years, he worked at the Special Pathogens Branch, Division of Viral and Rickettsial Diseases of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. There, Rodriguez’ research focused on hemorrhagic fever viruses such as Ebola, Crimean-Congo, and Hantaviruses.

In 1997, he joined USDA-ARS, where his current research focuses on studying foot-and-mouth disease virus-host interactions, specifically in the early and persistent phases of FMDV infection. He also carries out research on the molecular epidemiology, pathogenesis, and insect-transmission of vesicular stomatitis virus in cattle.

By Keryn Page

PHOTO: Research Day speaker Dr. Luis L. Rodriguez discusses the role of veterinarians in controlling and eradicating foot-and-mouth disease.
Ross Active in Disease Research

Dr. Matt Ross, an associate professor of toxicology, has a passion for research that has led to his work involving pesticide and lipid metabolism in the Center for Environmental Health Sciences and the Department of Basic Sciences.

“We are studying enzymes that can both detoxify pesticides and metabolize endogenous lipid molecules that are important in inflammation and oxidative stress,” Ross said. “We look at how pesticides may interfere with the metabolism of cholesterol, which occurs in specialized cells called macrophages. When this process is dysregulated, atherosclerotic heart disease often results.”

In the Center for Environmental Health Sciences, Ross focuses on how environmental pollutants may lead to chronic disease.

“We’re all exposed to pesticides in varying amounts, so we’re looking at how environmental factors may contribute to human disease,” Ross said.

Ross is also looking at how pesticides can interfere with the endocannabinoid system in cells. Exploiting the beneficial effects of the endocannabinoid system has become a popular area of disease research in both academia and industry.

“We’re looking at molecular mechanisms to better understand disease processes, which will hopefully provide a clearer picture as to how environmental factors contribute to this process and perhaps lead to the development of beneficial drugs,” Ross said.

His work also includes studying the way people differ in their ability to detoxify a pesticide in their body following exposure.

“We’re looking at the underlying reasons for these differences, and we may be able to identify susceptible populations.” Ross said. “Some groups of people are more inefficient at metabolizing pollutants when exposed to them and, therefore, may be at greater risk following exposure.”

Dr. Stephen Pruett, Basic Sciences department head, said Dean Kent Hoblet recently named Ross Group Leader for Lipidomics. This recognized his expertise in a new field of study that characterizes changes in the lipids in cells or body fluids, which can provide important health information.

“Matt is one of our most productive faculty members in terms of peer-reviewed publications and highly competitive grant funding from the National Institutes of Health,” Pruett said. “He is also a person with whom everyone likes to work.”

Ross was born in New Zealand to New Zealander parents, but moved when he was 5 to the San Francisco Bay Area and then to Southern California. He earned an undergraduate degree in chemistry at the University of California at Berkeley, then went to work for a pesticide chemistry lab in Richmond, California.

He went back to school to earn a PhD in toxicology from the University of California at Irvine, then completed post-doctoral work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, earning a fellowship from the National Institutes of Environmental Health. Ross came to MSU-CVM as an assistant professor in January 2004.

Ross and his wife, Shirley, who also works in Basic Sciences, have two sons and two daughters ranging in age from 15 to 5. When he is not working, he enjoys coaching his daughters’ soccer teams and vacationing in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

By Bonnie Coblentz
Conducting research in a lab may not sound like the most traditional way to spend the summer, but for MSU veterinary students, the experience has proven invaluable.

This summer was the 11th year that MSU-CVM has provided the Summer Research Experience program, which gives many students their first exposure to research. Samantha Vitale of the Class of 2014 was one of 20 students who participated.

“I began a project looking at the expression of dopamine, which plays a role in both Parkinson’s disease and schizophrenia,” Vitale said. “I appreciated getting exposure to procedures and lab materials that I had read about, but had never actually seen before.”

Dr. Mark Lawrence, co-director of the program, said many veterinary students start their education without much idea about what research is.

“There’s so much information they have to learn: multiple species, physiology, diseases. They don’t necessarily have time to dive into where all of this information comes from.”

What students find out, he said, is that all of their learning comes from research studies.

From their first week in the program, students are matched with a faculty mentor based on mutual research interests. A series of educational experiences follows over the course of the 12 weeks, including workshops on the ins and outs of research, career development, meetings with research leaders, visits to veterinary research facilities, field work, and, of course, much time in the laboratory.

Students receive funding for their research through grants from the National Center for Research Resources in the National Institutes of Health, Merial Veterinary Scholars Program, and through funds provided by CVM. Their experience culminates in the Merial NIH Veterinary Scholars Symposium (this year hosted by the University of Florida) and the CVM’s own Annual Research Day.

Although students come into the program fresh from their first year as veterinary students, and with little or no background in research, they often become engaged in the process.

“I have always had an interest in neuroscience, and this summer enhanced my understanding and furthered my interest in the field.” Vitale said.

She isn’t alone in her experience; faculty mentor Dr. Andrea Varela-Stokes, who has mentored students in the program since 2007, said that the program is uniquely able to pique student interest in research.

“They get excited when they see results from their research—when they learn why the questions we’re asking are important, how to troubleshoot on their own, how important it is to be meticulous in the lab and with your records, and how, ultimately, research is a means for understanding human and animal disease,” she said.

This connection between animal and human health is vital, Lawrence said, and veterinary researchers are an important part of the biomedical research that helps translate discoveries in the lab into clinical treatments.

Dr. Jeffrey Eells, who also co-directs the program, noted that only a limited number of veterinary colleges have a summer research program.

“Programs like ours can have a real impact on the pool of potential research scientist clinicians, which is currently very small,” he said.

Faculty mentor Dr. Andrew Mackin agreed, calling the program a stepping stone capable of leading veterinary students, who are “some of the smartest and most driven individuals in the state,” into research careers.

The College intends to continue to build the program by increasing collaboration with other veterinary schools such as Tuskegee University, and improving connections with students after they have participated in the program.

For students who have gone through the 12-week experience, the future looks bright.

“Many veterinary students have never set foot in a lab, yet we benefit daily from the products designed and the concepts discovered as a result of research efforts,” Vitale said. “I hope to pursue a career in clinical neurology, and the Summer Research Experience helped solidify that goal.”

For more information on the CVM’s Summer Research Experience, visit www.cvm.msstate.edu/research/sre/index.html.

By Brandi Van Ormer
Following is a list of students who participated in the 2011 Summer Research Experience, their mentors, and their research topics:

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<th>RESEARCH TOPIC</th>
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<td>Ashlee Oliver</td>
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<td>Michael Orencole</td>
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<td>computational biology</td>
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<td>Samantha Vitale</td>
<td>Dr. Jeffrey Eells</td>
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Linda Crowley is the business coordinator in the Dean’s Office, a role she has held for 14 years. Her career at MSU spans 26 years. She credits her long stint at CVM to enjoying what she does and loving those she works with and for. Linda is a Maben native and has two sons and two grandchildren. She enjoys her church, swimming, being in her yard, and supporting her grandchildren at sporting events.

Alyssa Hebert is a laboratory specialist in the Multidisciplinary Laboratory, a position she has held for 4 years. Alyssa says that although every day in her role brings something new and different, the students are consistently the part of her job she likes the best. Alyssa’s son started kindergarten this year, and he is expecting a baby brother or sister in January.

Erle Chenney, a research associate for Dr. Jan Chambers, has worked at the College of Veterinary Medicine for 21 years, doing “everything from chicken to catfish to toxicology.” He says the time here has passed quickly due to the variety his role provides, and the different people and learning opportunities he encounters. Starkville native Erle and his wife, Melissa, have a daughter, Betsy, who is a senior at Mississippi State. In his spare time, he enjoys reading, relaxing, and sports. He and his family are avid tailgaters and Mississippi State football fans.
Research, teaching, and diagnostic efforts in the field of parasitology are important for all of the clients served by the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. Andrea Varela-Stokes is an assistant professor in Basic Sciences, teaching veterinary parasitology and helminthology, and researching tick-borne diseases. She said there are many applications for parasitology in research and service.

“We interact with the clinics and diagnostic labs on a regular basis,” she said. “Working with different departments on campus is a great way to share research interests and ideas.”

Varela-Stokes and CVM professor Dr. Linda Pote diagnose parasites that are submitted to the veterinary college for identification. Their cases are very diverse, and Varela-Stokes has had cases from identifying tapeworms in nutria to uncommon flukes in dogs.

Using her research lab and routine molecular techniques, she also diagnosed several cases of a tick-borne protozoan from a veterinary student’s dogs. This resulted in a scientific presentation at a national meeting.

“We were able to identify a hepatozoon species that has only recently been found in the United States,” she said. “These dogs became infected and sick by ingesting ticks with the protozoan.”

Dr. Kelli Jones, assistant clinical professor with MSU’s Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory in Pearl, said she relies on the parasitology group to help with cases.

A recent example involved an outbreak of black flies, which carry a protozoan similar to the one that causes malaria. Backyard bird owners began to flood the laboratory with calls about sick and dead
birds in areas with heavy concentrations of black flies.

“We wanted to determine if the flies were causing the clinical problems or if the symptoms were coming from leucocytozoon, a parasitic blood protozoa that uses black flies as their definitive host and birds as their intermediate host,” Jones said. “Co-infections complicate the diagnostic process.”

For assistance, Jones turned to Varela-Stokes, who used molecular techniques to help identify which parasites were present. Jones said that leucocytozoon was more of a concern for non-commercial flocks including backyard quail, chickens, and turkeys because they were readily exposed to black flies in their environment.

“Most turkeys have no symptoms, but chickens and quail can become anemic if infected,” she said. “It helps to determine the reservoir for the parasites in order to be able to plan for prevention.”

Dr. Steve Pruett, head of the Basic Sciences department, said the study of parasitology is essential in animal medicine, and the research can have significant benefits to humans as well.

“Veterinary students need informed people teaching them about parasites that are found in this part of the world,” Pruett said. “While it may not be a major factor in human medicine in the United States, parasites have an impact on most of our animal populations, including food animals.”

For example, Pruett said MSU research into parasites that impact catfish determined that a parasite, for which the life cycle was first described by Pote, has three hosts: American white pelicans, ram’s horn snails, and catfish. Researchers proposed that by controlling the snails, producers could reduce or eliminate economic losses caused by this parasite.

“Research by Dr. Pote and others provided a significant benefit to the catfish industry,” he said. “Students need the experiences our faculty can provide to help them diagnose issues impacting many different species.”
Throughout my educational journey in high school and college, many of my teachers and professors loved to lecture on the important life of Aristotle and his contributions to society. They praised him as the Greek philosopher who made important contributions by systemizing deductive logic and writing on physical subjects. They reminded us that as a student of Plato and a teacher of Alexander the Great, his writings covered many subjects, including physics, metaphysics, poetry, theater, music, rhetoric, linguistics, politics, government, ethics, biology, and zoology.

I must admit, it was hard to stay awake in class sometimes while reflecting on his monumental achievements. And even though at the time I couldn’t imagine how studying Aristotle would help me in my future career, two things did stick with me.

The first is that Aristotle’s philosophy had a long-lasting influence on the development of all Western philosophical theories. The second is that this man who lived from 384–322 BC espoused a truth during his time that resonates in my job today in the 21st century:

“To give money away is an easy matter and in any man’s power. But to decide to whom to give it, and how (much), and when, and for what purpose and how, is neither in every man’s power nor an easy matter.”

In my opinion, in those two sentences, Aristotle defined the essence of philanthropy and the need for major gift fundraisers to be passionate about what we do and understand how our work impacts the lives of the donors, as well as those who benefit from their generosity.

I recently worked with two donors whom you will read about on this page. These two people embody the true philanthropic spirit, and they remind me how blessed I am to work in this field.

Keith Gaskin
CVM Senior Director of Development
Generous grants are helping MSU veterinary students and the animals they serve now and in the future. Since January 1, the College of Veterinary Medicine has received more than a quarter of a million dollars in grants to support student instruction in shelter animal spay/neuter procedures.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has provided a $100,000 grant for a spay/neuter clinical elective for senior veterinary students. This unique educational opportunity enables students to become proficient in all aspects of spay/neuter procedures. Students gain basic surgical experience that will accelerate their productivity as new graduates.

PetSmart Charities has given $156,000 toward the Humane Ethics and Animal Welfare program. The goal of this gift is to produce students with extensive experience in spay/neuter procedures, especially those involving kittens.

Dr. Phil Bushby, the Marcia Lane Endowed Professor of Humane Ethics and Animal Welfare, oversees the grants in the Clinical Sciences department. The College uses its mobile veterinary care unit to make scheduled visits to shelters, where veterinary faculty and students monitor animal health and provide spay/neuter assistance.

"In many veterinary colleges, students will graduate with the experience of only one or two spays. These gifts create many opportunities for the surgical experience, especially pediatric spay/neuter procedures," Bushby said. “The MSU shelter medicine program has performed more than 23,000 spay/neuter surgeries since 2007, and nearly all were by junior and senior veterinary students.”

Contributions to CVM’s Humane Ethics and Animal Welfare Support Fund have enhanced the College’s ability to assist in finding solutions to animal overpopulation problems. CVM works with 15 animal shelters to provide quality spay/neuter services for the animals in these facilities and to promote their rehabilitation and placement in loving homes.

Bushby said the grants help students gain an understanding of the pet overpopulation problem and the challenges that animal shelters face in caring for the homeless dogs and cats.

“Between 3 million and 4 million dogs and cats are euthanized in shelters every year in the United States,” he said. “The major way to reduce that number is to reduce the number of puppies and kittens born each year, and currently the best way to do that is spay/neuter.”

Bushby and Dr. Kimberly Woodruff, a shelter medicine resident, usually supervise one junior and two seniors on each trip. They are on the road 4 days each week and perform about 30 surgeries a day.

Fourth-year student Ericka Davis of Austin, Texas, said the spay/neuter elective has been one of her best veterinary training experiences, giving her a better understanding of the pet overpopulation problem and providing her with essential skills to be a productive member of a veterinary healthcare delivery team.

“During the elective, I was able to better understand the issues that shelters currently face and the harsh reality of the high euthanasia rate. Additionally, I have become fully confident with surgical principles and general tissue handling,” Davis said. “We are so fortunate to have this program at MSU.”

This program is funded by individual donors, corporations, and grants. To learn more about how to help fund this program, contact Keith Gaskin in the CVM Development Office at (662) 325-3815 or kgaskin@foundation.msstate.edu.

By Linda Breazeale

PHOTO: Dr. Phil Bushby spends quality time with one of his shelter medicine patients.

Support MSU-CVM

There are a number of ways to support the CVM’s efforts. You may want to consider making an annual gift or creating an endowment.

**ANNUAL GIFTS** are crucial to the CVM because they provide ongoing support for the College, individual departments, research programs, academic programs, and student support services. Your annual contributions provide critical assistance and ensure that we maintain quality programs and a high level of excellence. Your gift can be designated to support any of the CVM’s needs and can be used immediately to make a difference.

**ENDOWMENTS** to the CVM help to provide a resource for generations to come. Your contribution is held in perpetuity, the principal is invested, and only the income from the investment is spent, allowing your legacy to continue for years to come. Endowments may be named for the donor or in honor of another person of the donor’s choosing.

For more information on annual and endowed funds and how to become involved in efforts at the CVM, please contact the Office of Development staff.

**KEITH GASKIN** | Senior Director of Development  
(662) 325-3815 | kgaskin@foundation.msstate.edu

**MELISSA MONTGOMERY** | Advancement Coordinator  
(662) 325-3815 | mmontgomery@foundation.msstate.edu

**CHASTITY MINCY** | Office Associate  
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Exceptional service at the College of Veterinary Medicine will be recognized through a new award in honor of Professor Emeritus E. Wynn Jones. Given for the first time to Jones himself at the College of Veterinary Medicine’s 2011 graduation and awards ceremony in April, the award acknowledges Jones’ persistence and innovation. These qualities have been instrumental in the development not only of the CVM, but also in building the programs and facilities of veterinary education across the United States.

Jones’ long career exemplifies outstanding service: his tireless efforts to ensure quality education for veterinary professionals spans several decades and more than two continents. Beginning his career at the Royal Veterinary College of London, Jones went on to earn a PhD from Cornell University, eventually joining the faculty of two new veterinary schools: the Bristol School of Veterinary Science, and later, Oklahoma State University.

His achievements include creating the first large animal inhalation anesthetic machine, co-authoring the original text on veterinary anesthesia, pioneering quality assurance protocols for research programs, and advising new veterinary schools and consulting with their architectural teams.

Since 1975, he has had an active role at the MSU-CVM, serving as vice-dean for graduate education and research and interim dean of the College.

“Dr. Wynn Jones has and continues to set the standard for rendering exceptional service to our College,” Dean Kent Hoblet said. “The MSU College of Veterinary Medicine will continue to rise to even greater achievements as others follow in the footsteps of Dr. Jones.”

By Brandi Van Ormer

Dr. Wes Baumgartner joined the Pathobiology and Population Medicine faculty as an assistant professor of veterinary pathology October 17. Baumgartner previously worked as a histopathologist at the Louisiana Aquatic Diagnostic Laboratory. He performed gross and microscopic examinations, handled farm visits and clinical casework, and provided consultations for Louisiana State University aquaculture facility personnel.

He delivered general pathology lectures for the American Soybean Board Fish Disease Short Course for Chinese Diplomats at LSU’s School of Veterinary Medicine in 2009 and 2010. He also gave gross and microscopic descriptive practice examinations for pathology residents taking the American College of Veterinary Pathologists exam, and led regular microscopic pathology rounds for aquatic diagnostics rotation students and pathology residents.

Baumgartner earned a bachelor’s degree in animal sciences in 1988 and a DVM with high honors in 2002, both from the University of Illinois, Urbana. He completed a veterinary anatomic pathology combined residency/PhD program in pathobiology at LSU in 2011.

He is a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists (anatomic).

Dr. Ryan Butler became a clinical instructor March 1 in the Clinical Sciences department. He recently completed a residency in small animal surgery at MSU-CVM. Butler’s teaching experience includes several small animal medicine and surgery courses, a small animal critical care laboratory, and a lecture on congenital cardiac defects.

Butler earned a bachelor’s degree summa cum laude in biochemistry and molecular biology in 2004, a DVM degree (Giles Scholar) in 2007, and a master’s degree in veterinary science in 2011, all from MSU.

He is a member of the Veterinary Orthopedic Society.

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ALL COLLEGE DAY

MSU-CVM’s 2011 All College Day took place October 5, with Dr. Stuart Denman and his Board of Veterinary Medicine crew preparing the noon meal. An afternoon awards ceremony recognized the support and services of staff, faculty, and supporters of the College.

Dr. David Newell and Dr. Stuart Denman prepare the noon meal.

Members of the American Pre-Veterinarian Medical Association present a check in recognition of the CVM’s assistance with the APVMA symposium held earlier this year at the College.

Beverly Coleman, administrative assistant in the Dean’s Office, serves Dr. Greg Bohach, MSU vice president for Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine, during the All College Day picnic.

Dr. David Newell and Dr. Stuart Denman prepare the noon meal.

Dr. Bohach presents the Vice President’s Pegasus Award to Representative Greg Ward.

Dr. Mark Lawrence presents the Pfizer Award for Veterinary Research Excellence to Dr. Andrea Varela-Stokes.

Chip Morgan of Delta Council received the President’s Pegasus Award.

Dr. Stephen Pruett presents the Dean’s Pegasus Award for Research/Creative Achievement to Dr. Andrea Varela-Stokes.

Dr. Ron McLaughlin presents the Dean’s Pegasus Award for Teaching to Dr. Robert Linford.

Dr. Richard Hopper presents the Dean’s Pegasus Award for Service to Dr. James Brett.

Dean Hoblet presents a 2011 Staff Award to Terri Snead.

Dean Hoblet presents the Dean’s Pegasus Award to Dr. Lee Tyner.

Dean Hoblet presents the Dean’s Pegasus Award to Dr. Robert Linford.

Dean Hoblet presents a 2011 Staff Award to Michael Bassett.

Dean Hoblet presents a 2011 Staff Award to Gail Bishop.

Dr. Bohach presents the Vice President’s Pegasus Award to Representative Greg Ward.

Dean Hoblet presents the Dean’s Pegasus Award to Dr. Lee Tyner.
External Grants

Anthony Rocconi (PI), Sarah N. Sampson, Steven H. Elder (co-PIs). American Quarter Horse Foundation. Arthrodesis of the Proximal Interphalangeal Joint in the Horse: A Biochemical Comparison of 5.5mm Cortical Screw Augmented 4.5mm Narrow LC-DCP and 5.0mm LCP Constructs. $5,443. The proximal interphalangeal joint is a common site where degenerative joint disease occurs in performance horses. Surgical arthrodesis is a procedure that can relieve pain, potentially restoring performance and quality of life for the horse. In this study, different arthrodesis methods to treat degenerative joint disease of the proximal interphalangeal joint will be evaluated.

Mark L. Lawrence (PI), Frank W. Austin, Attila Karsi (co-PIs). USDA ARS. Quantification of High-risk and Low-risk Listeria monocytogenes Serotypes on Catfish Fillets. $49,900. Listeria monocytogenes strains vary in their ability to cause disease. This study will determine the risk of various strains of Listeria monocytogenes that may be isolated from prepared catfish fillets. This will be useful in estimating risks and advising producers and processors if any remedial action may be warranted.

Chinling Wang (PI). USDA ARS. Characterization of Survival and Attachment of Listeria monocytogenes on Ready-to-Eat Products. $49,000. Listeria monocytogenes is an important foodborne pathogen. Because it can survive refrigeration, L. monocytogenes can be acquired by eating contaminated prepared food products (for example, cold cuts and cheese). This project will examine how L. monocytogenes adheres to the surfaces of common foods.

Stephen B. Pruett (PI). University of Mississippi. Blueprint Mississippi 2011. $12,000. Blueprint Mississippi is a combined effort of the IHL Board and the Mississippi Economic Council to identify new solutions to persistent problems in Mississippi. Several groups have been designated to do background research and recommend approaches to effectively address some of these long-standing problems.

Dr. Pruett is a member of the Health subcommittee, and this project will fund his work to provide recommendations in this area.

Linda M. Pote (PI). Lester Khoo, Matt Griffin (co-PIs). USDA ARS. Prevention of Potential Food Safety and Food Quality Problems Associated with Larval Nematodes in Commercial Catfish Meal. $49,000. Parasitic worms such as nematodes can infect Mississippi catfish, which can affect the quality of fillets. This project will determine the extent that larval nematodes impact fillet quality in Mississippi farmed catfish and investigate methods to control nematodes to prevent these damaging effects.

Patricia S. Gaunt (PI). Schering Plough Animal Health Corporation. Flavobacterium columnare. Avirulent Live Culture: Efficacy in Ornamental Koi. $8,928. See description above; this study will evaluate the safety of this vaccine in ornamental koi.

Patricia S. Gaunt (PI). Schering Plough Animal Health Corporation. Flavobacterium columnare. Avirulent Live Culture: Efficacy in Ornamental Swordtail. $8,928. See description above; this study will evaluate the safety of this vaccine in ornamental fish.

Patricia S. Gaunt (PI). Schering Plough Animal Health Corporation. Flavobacterium columnare. Avirulent Live Culture: Efficacy in Ornamental Koi. $8,928. See description above; this study will evaluate the safety of this vaccine in ornamental koi.

Internal Grants


Larry A. Hanson (PI), Lora Petrie-Hanson (co-PI). MSU CVM ORGS. Evaluation of Innate and Acquired Immunity of Fish to Betanodavirus Using the Zebrafish Model (Year 2). $4,704.

Camilo Bulla (PI), Kari V. Lunsford (co-PI). MSU CVM ORGS. Evaluation of Leukocyte Contamination in Canine Platelet Protein and RNA Samples. $9,882.

Peter Ryan (PI), David L. Christiansen, Richard Hopper, Jean M. Feugang (co-PIs). MSU CVM ORGS. Proteomic Analysis of Cervico-Vaginal Secretions as a Diagnostic Approach for Evaluation of Fetal and Pregnancy Well-being in the “At Risk Mare.” $10,000.

Keun Seok Seo (PI). MSU CVM ORGS. Development of a Novel Vaccine Approach Against Staphylococcus aureus Infection. $10,000.

Andrea S. Varela-Stokes (PI). MSU CVM ORGS. Characterization of Rickettsial Coinfection in Amblyommata maculatum. $9,100.

Larry A. Hanson (PI), Lora Petrie-Hanson (co-PI). MSU CVM ORGS. Stimulating Toll-like Receptors 7 and 8 in Larval Zebrafish May Impact Immune System Development. $10,000.

Kari V. Lunsford (PI), Jill S. Manion (co-PI). MSU CVM ORGS. Pharmacokinetics of Inhaled Heparin in the Dog. $8,119.

Lora Petrie-Hanson (PI). MSU CVM ORGS. Optimization of Procedures to Be Used in Production and Characterization of Monoclonal Antibodies to Surface Markers of Zebrafish Leukocytes. $10,000.
CVM students and faculty members are expanding their leadership experiences as they learn, volunteer, and teach around the world. Jessica Platz, a fourth-year student from Long Beach, Mississippi caught the travel bug early in her educational career and has spent much of her time at CVM motivating other students to seek out interesting experiences abroad.

“I had an interest in travel and learning more about disease issues in other countries,” said Platz, who is working toward a DVM and master’s degree with a focus on veterinary public health. “With the help of my adviser, I found an opportunity in Brazil through the Global Health Alliance. I got to spend an entire summer there researching Chagas disease.”

Chagas disease is spread by insects and affects both humans and animals. In Brazil, Platz learned more about the disease and how the region is responding to it.

“The disease is now found in Texas, and there have been a few cases in Mississippi, Tennessee, and Louisiana,” Platz said. “Understanding its spread can help us determine ways to mitigate its impact here in the United States.”

Her master’s work focuses on creating a detection model that monitors for the disease. Platz also helped start a group on campus to encourage other students to take advantage of study-abroad opportunities. With help from Dr. S.W. Jack, a professor in the Department of Pathobiology and Population Medicine, Platz started the College’s International Veterinary Student Association, or IVSA, chapter.

“The group offers support to those who want to study and volunteer abroad,” she said. “We’ve gotten great support from CVM faculty and the Dean’s Office. It has been incredibly helpful to have a network of students seeking and finding new avenues of study and research.”

Jack’s extensive experience in voluntary veterinary work enables him to identify with the students’ enthusiasm for travel and learning. His recent work through Christian Veterinary Missions in Mongolia has inspired similar trips.

“Groups of veterinarians travel there to share medical knowledge. We basically set up an Extension Service teaching model,” Jack said. “In Mongolia, animal herds are a measure of wealth and are the main food sources for families. We instructed herd owners and Mongolian veterinarians on Western veterinary medicine practices to help them improve and maintain herd health.”

The medical information and instruction Jack and other volunteers provide help improve the standard of living because the healthier the herds, the better the food supply.

“Veterinarians can do a lot of good in countries like Mongolia, but so can veterinary students,” Jack said. “Our veterinary students are so well-prepared, and they have more education under their belts than many practicing veterinarians in developing countries. What the students bring to these places is invaluable.”

One such student is Renee Blanco, a third-year CVM student from Florence, South Carolina. She spent 6 weeks volunteering in Mongolia this past summer. The first 3 weeks of her trip were spent at an animal clinic teaching Mongolian veterinarians about small animal care. Blanco used videos and other materials as part of her instruction. She also worked with small animals that were brought into the clinic.

“In Mongolia, there are very few small animals, or companion pets. So, many clinicians have not had much experience with them,” Blanco said. “I went over everything from diseases to dental work.”

The next part of Blanco’s trip was supposed to be dedicated to working with herds of animals in the countryside, but there was an urgent need for volunteers to teach English to young children. Blanco did not hesitate to change her course and help out.

“You have to learn to be flexible in these situations,” she said. “I had never taught English, so it was a good experience. The best part was learning more about Mongolian culture.”

During her time teaching children, Blanco did get some opportunities to observe large animal surgeries.

“It was interesting to see how the veterinarians there did so much with so little,” she said. “Here, we have access to the best instruments and medications, but the Mongolian veterinarians just make it work with what is readily available to them. I learned never to underestimate what is at my disposal and to make the best of what I have.”

By Karen Templeton

LEFT PHOTO: Renee Blanco spent 6 weeks volunteering in Mongolia. RIGHT PHOTO: CVM students and faculty members travel to places like Costa Rica to learn, volunteer, and teach.
STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Stokes Manages Core Flow Cytometry Facility

John Stokes

Attention to detail, love of learning, and a drive to help others: these are three keys to success for John Stokes.

Stokes began working in the department in 2007 and within 3 years had been named director of the Department of Basic Sciences Core Flow Cytometry Facility. As such, his daily routine includes overseeing, operating, and maintaining the flow cytometers housed in the facility.

Stokes also works with investigators as they design their experiments, helping them improve their research plans. In fact, working with investigators is one of Stokes’ favorite parts of the job.

“I especially like working with less experienced investigators,” he said. “I like helping folks who haven’t done this before and troubleshooting with them. It’s the best part of my job...and also the most challenging.”

Stokes said he prefers to stay busy, and in addition to the attention he gives his regular job duties, he has also begun developing a website for the cytometry facility.

“The website will list the facility’s policies and procedures and give information about our flow cytometers so investigators will know what kind of fluorescent labels will work on our machines,” Stokes said.

It’s that kind of willingness to go the extra mile that led to Stokes’ earning the Distinguished Service Award for the CVM in 2009. He was nominated for the award by the investigators he helps, but his supervisors have also noticed his work ethic.

“John is a meticulous individual, and the instruments under his care demand attention to detail and careful maintenance. We have almost no downtime because John is so conscientious,” said Dr. Stephen Pruett, Basic Sciences department head and Stokes’ supervisor.

Stokes earned his master’s degree in infectious diseases from the University of Georgia and his bachelor’s degree in biology from Appalachian State University. He has also taken three training sessions in flow cytometry. According to Pruett, Stokes’ love of learning has paid off.

“His ability to interpret the complex output that results from flow cytometric analysis is outstanding,” Pruett said.

By Amelia Killcreas

CLASS OF 2015

The CVM Class of 2015 was inducted into the professional veterinary curriculum during the Coating Ceremony. Each student was presented an MSU-CVM cowbell by the Mississippi Veterinary Medical Association.
Alternative Career Path Leads to Translational Pathology

Dr. Kelli Boyd, a 1996 graduate of MSU’s College of Veterinary Medicine and the 2011 CVM Alumni Fellow, followed a unique career path and has become an expert in her field.

The Tylertown native lives in Nashville, where she serves as director of Comparative Pathology and Research Histology in Vanderbilt University’s Translational Pathology Shared Resource. She also is associate director of comparative pathology in the university’s Division of Animal Care and associate professor in the Department of Pathology, Microbiology, and Immunology.

Dr. Linda Pote, a professor of parasitology in CVM’s Department of Basic Sciences, nominated her former student for the honor.

“Kelli chose to follow several unusual paths in her training after she completed her DVM degree here at the College of Veterinary Medicine, which has resulted in a successful and exciting career,” Pote said. “Her research with mouse models while at St. Jude and more recently while at Vanderbilt has led her into the burgeoning field of translational pathology, which bridges the gap between animal models and human disease.”

Pote said Boyd has numerous collaborations in both the veterinary and human medicine communities and is quickly becoming an expert in this field.

“She’s not only an excellent example of the success that can occur when veterinary pathologists collaborate with human pathologists in research, but she is also a good example of the alternative career paths that can be followed with a veterinary degree from Mississippi State,” Pote said.

Boyd earned a PhD from the University of Georgia while doing a combined residency/PhD training program in veterinary pathology.

“My graduate work focused on bone metastasis in a rodent model of breast cancer, and the role a new bisphosphonate drug, risedronate, played in the pathogenesis of the tumor’s spread to bone,” Boyd said.

After she completed her training at Georgia, she worked for 8½ years at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis.

“I had a strong interest in cancer and basic research,” Boyd said. “Couple that with my training in veterinary pathology, and the position at St. Jude was a perfect fit for me.”

It was during her early career at St. Jude that she became board certified by the American College of Veterinary Pathologists.

In 2009, she was recruited to Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville to establish a comparative pathology program.

“It has been a whirlwind of activity because I was basically starting from scratch to build a program, but it has been extremely rewarding,” Boyd said.

At Vanderbilt, in collaboration with Dr. Mary Zutter, she was successful in receiving a $1.5 million grant in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds through a supplement to the Vanderbilt Ingram Cancer Center to establish the Translational Pathology Shared Resource. This program represents collaboration between veterinary and medical pathologists, and provides high-level pathology support for Vanderbilt investigators working with animal and human research specimens.

“Our support helps bridge the gap between the bench and the clinics, merging veterinary pathology and human pathology to advance research initiatives,” Boyd said.

In addition to her administrative role in the Translational Pathology Shared Resource, collaborating with scientists working with animal models and teaching make up the remainder of her professional life. She has ongoing collaborations with scientists working in cancer, infectious disease, hypertension, immunology, and obesity.

“My expertise in veterinary pathology provides insights that help make new discoveries for a broad range of projects that impact human health,” Boyd said. “It is an exciting place to be as a veterinarian.”

Since arriving at Vanderbilt, she has had the opportunity to get back into the classroom and teach in the graduate school. This year, she provided externships for two veterinary students interested in veterinary pathology. She also mentored a pre-veterinary student in Vanderbilt’s Aspirnaut program.

“I really love interacting with and mentoring students,” Boyd said. “It’s been especially fun to host veterinary students and share the world of comparative pathology.”

Boyd lives on a small farm outside Nashville. She spends most of her free time outdoors and loves hunting, fishing, and horseback riding. She hasn’t forgotten her MSU roots, and returns on occasion to represent the College and interview potential students.

“Kelli is exemplary of one who has never missed a learning opportunity, is extremely creative, and who has worked hard to collaborate and build collaborative research teams,” Pote said. “Although she is constantly juggling multiple tasks in research and diagnostics, and as a co-director of a new center, she has still found the time to teach and give time to her profession nationally and here at the CVM. I couldn’t think of a better role model for our students and for veterinary professionals.”

By Bonnie Coblentz

PHOTO: Dr. Kelli Boyd shares her experiences in the field of comparative pathology.
2013 VETERINARY MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY CLASS

Our new Veterinary Medical Technology class poses with Champ before embarking on their third-year curriculum at MSU-CVM. The 2012 VMT students are currently enrolled in clinical rotations of their fourth year.

Alumni News and Notes

• Dr. Kermit Harvey (DVM 93) of Flora, Mississippi, has been elected president of the Mississippi Chapter of the National Association of Federal Veterinarians (NAFV). Dr. Harvey has been with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) since July 2009.

• Dr. Wanda West (DVM 88) of Princeton, New Jersey, was elected to the board of directors of the American Society of Laboratory Animal Practitioners in July.

• Dr. Libby Todd (DVM 99) of Birmingham, Alabama, was selected to be a member of the inaugural group participating in the AVMAs Future Leaders Program.

• Dr. Sacha Mace (DVM 00) has joined the Veterinary Specialty Center of the Hudson Valley in Wappingers Falls, New York, where she will provide specialist consultations, endoscopy services, ultrasounds, echocardiograms, and emergency and critical care transfers. She recently attained diplomate status in the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (small animal internal medicine).

• Dr. Tracy Acosta (DVM 96) of Biloxi, Mississippi, was included in a special “Women in Business” feature in South Mississippi Living magazine. The piece focused on Dr. Acosta’s Acosta Veterinary Hospital and Four Paws Bed & Biscuit.

Marriages

• Dr. Angela Briggs (DVM 11) and Dr. Chase Atwood (DVM 10) were married August 27, 2011, in Potomac, Maryland. The two have made Memphis their home while Chase is completing a surgical residency at Memphis Veterinary Specialists.

Births

• Dr. Mark Burleson (DVM 06) and his wife, Mandy, welcomed their second child, Cate Alexander, March 8, 2011. Reed, age 3, is excited to be a big brother. Dr. Burleson is currently the director of veterinary services for Wayne Farms, LLC. He and his family live in Decatur, Alabama.

• Dr. Kellie Smith Wallace (DVM 05) and her husband, Jeremy Wallace, welcomed their second son, Stone Woodson, September 8, 2011. Big brother Warren, age 4, welcomed him with open arms. Dr. Wallace is an associate veterinarian at Animal Health Center in her hometown of Brookhaven, and the family resides in Summit, Mississippi.

Obituaries

• Dr. Kraig Randall Myers, a native of Montana and a member of the MSU-CVM Class of 2000, passed away in Summerville, South Carolina, October 5, 2011. He practiced veterinary medicine in Great Falls, Montana, and later in Charleston, South Carolina. Memorial services were held in Ronan, Montana, October 12, 2011.

• Mrs. Velma Leona Randolph, a benefactor of MSU-CVM and the mother of the late Dr. Tom Randolph Jr., passed away in Gans, Oklahoma, October 11, 2011.

Faculty and Staff News

• Department of Clinical Sciences assistant professor Dr. Todd Archer (DVM 06) attained diplomate status with the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (small animal internal medicine) in August.

• Department of Clinical Sciences assistant professor Dr. John Thomason is now a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (small animal internal medicine).

• Department of Pathobiology/Population Medicine clinical instructor Dr. Craig Easley (DVM 08) is a new diplomate of the American College of Theriogenology.

• Medical records assistant Heather Patterson and her husband, Daniel, of Starkville welcomed daughter Payton Amelia to their family September 20, 2011.

• Melissa Masters (Class of 2013) and Dr. Rich Meiring, CVM assistant dean for Admissions and Student Affairs, attended the American Association of Bovine Practitioners annual meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. Melissa received one of eight AABP Bovine Veterinary Student Recognition Awards available to veterinary students in North America (sponsored by Merck Animal Health), and Dr. Meiring was recognized for his service over the past 6 years as the organization’s parliamentarian.

Student News

• Kimberly Hitt (Class of 2012) won one of two $3,000 scholarships that are supported by a partnership of the American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation and the American Veterinary Medical Foundation.
Dr. Paul Mitchell, Diplomate AVDC, and Sue Berryhill, CVT, of Pfizer Animal Health will be our SPEAKERS.

Topics include intra-oral RADIOLoGY, LOCAL ANESTHESIA, EXTRACTION techniques, and more.

Sessions will include both LECTURES AND LABS, and CEUs will be available.

For more information or to reserve a space, call Brandi at (662) 325-1131, or email vanormer@cvm.msstate.edu.