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## VolunteerVet, Winter 2008

College of Veterinary Medicine

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# VolunteerVet

The University of Tennessee • College of Veterinary Medicine  
KNOWLEDGE COMPASSION DISCOVERY | WINTER 2008

## A New Phase

This college enjoys a national reputation for its culture—people who respect, challenge, trust, and encourage one another. I am a better person because of my experiences here.

I joined academia because of the public health challenges our nation faces. When I retired as Assistant Surgeon General and Chief of Staff of the Office of the Surgeon General to join the college over seven years ago, I was alarmed that veterinary medicine, like much of the nation, was asleep about many of the issues affecting public health and our security.

Fortunately, the CVM is comprised of people who aren't afraid to take on challenges and create solutions. In 2004, we collaborated with the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences to establish a veterinary concentration in an existing Master of Public Health program. Approximately two dozen students and veterinarians have enrolled in the program since its inception.

We have mounted a national response to threats of terrorism to agriculture and the food supply. In 2006, the college created the Center for Agriculture and Food Security and Preparedness. The center serves as a focal point for several key initiatives that will help protect the nation's food supply.

Public health also involves mental health. I believe our Veterinary Social Work program, founded in 2002, will transform the way veterinary medicine is practiced



Dr. Michael Blackwell

and will help this profession become what it can be as we seek to more clearly understand the human-animal bond. Veterinary social workers help with the human needs that arise in the course of veterinary practice.

Through our Companion Animal Initiative of Tennessee (CAIT), we have created a statewide focus on the surplus of homeless dogs and cats; this year we offered our first shelter medicine elective to expose our students to the realities of shelter medicine and

the problems faced by sick, abandoned, homeless, and mistreated animals.

The small animal hospital is expanding by 32-thousand gross square feet to meet the increasing demands of the state and region. Even the people who scoop poop have a sense of empowerment. The people here face the challenges, figure out how to get things done, and believe they can get them done. That's an unstoppable organization.

As this college continues its forward momentum, it remains focused on training tomorrow's veterinarians for public health. Why? That's the reason veterinary medicine exists.

## VETERINARY COLLEGE CELEBRATES ITS FIRST HILL'S FELLOW IN CLINICAL NUTRITION

The UT College of Veterinary Medicine and Hill's Pet Nutrition celebrate the pet food company's sponsorship of the college's Veterinary Nutritional Support Service as the college recognizes the company as a Partner in Education.

The sponsorship provides the college's first Hill's Fellow in Clinical Nutrition, adding another dimension to a nationally recognized program. Currently, UTCVM offers one of only two standardized training programs in the country recognized by the American College of Veterinary Nutrition.

"We are grateful to Hill's Pet Nutrition for its substantial and

ongoing commitment to the college and to the discipline of veterinary nutrition. As our partner in education, Hill's continues to provide vital resources needed to help educate our students, interns, and residents in the classroom as well as the clinic. Additionally, Hill's supports the UTCVM

*continued on p.2*



Hill's representatives make presentation during event celebrating UTCVM's first Hill's Fellow

# Arthritic Archie



Archie has one of the worst cases of arthritis Dr. Darryl Millis, a UTCVM orthopedic surgeon, has ever seen in cats. A recent study showed that up to 90 percent of geriatric cats have radiographic changes of arthritis in the spine and joints. While many cat owners may think that slowing down is a part of their cat's aging process, pain could be keeping their pets from being as mobile as they once were.

The only way to diagnose arthritis is by clinical signs and X-rays. Signs of arthritis

include decreased activity such as playing less; not going up and down stairs; or not climbing, running, scratching, or playing with toys as often. Some arthritic cats move stiffly, sleep more, are overweight, and have a finicky appetite.

Currently there are no drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to manage arthritis in cats. UTCVM is participating in a placebo-controlled clinical study for FDA approval of a new medication to manage osteoarthritis in cats. Archie was the first cat enrolled in the study. For more information about the study, please contact Dr. April Durant or Dr. Jason Headrick at (865) 974-8387.



## Veterinary Social Work

### First of its Kind

This spring, veterinary social workers from around the world will meet at the UTCVM for the inaugural Veterinary Social Work Summit. The event, designed to strengthen this new sub-specialty of social work practice, will cover animal-assisted interventions, grief and bereavement, compassion fatigue, and the link between human and animal violence. Sponsored by the UT Colleges of Veterinary Medicine and Social Work, the summit will be held April 17 and 18. Visit [www.vet.utk.edu](http://www.vet.utk.edu) for more information.

### Pet Loss Support Group

Veterinary Social Work offers a Pet Loss Support Group for those coping with the death of a pet. The free meetings are held the first and third Tuesdays, February through April, on the agricultural campus. For more information call 865-755-8839 or visit [www.vet.utk.edu](http://www.vet.utk.edu).



Megan McMurray

UTCVM welcomes Megan McMurray as Assistant Director of Alumni Relations and Development. McMurray is a UT Animal Science alumnus and has worked in several sales capacities with Fort Dodge Animal Health and Heska Corporation, serving veterinary practices across middle and western Tennessee and six western states prior to returning to her hometown of Knoxville.

## Interim Dean Named

Dr. Joseph DiPietro, UT vice president for agriculture, has named Dr. Leon Potgieter interim dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine. Potgieter assumed the role January



Dr. Leon Potgieter

1. A national search is underway for a permanent dean. Last fall, Dr. Michael Blackwell announced his plan to retire this March. He went on leave effective the first of the year.

## Veterinary Students Receive Honor Society Awards

Several students from the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine have been honored by the UT Chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta, the Honor Society of Agriculture. Receiving the Outstanding Student Merit Award were Rebecca Costello, Emily Pearman, Joseph Rowe, Jody Thomas, Laura White, Kelly Jean Rogers, and Nicole Geyer. Several veterinary students were initiated into the honor society: Julie E. Bishop, Travis W. Luna, Melissa Mustillo, Kelly Jean Rogers, Marisa Etta Shulman, Kristi D. Sowers, and Rebecca Lee Tolbert.

## Not Enough Superlatives....

"The consummate employee" and "not enough superlatives in the dictionary to describe her work ethic, productivity, honesty, and integrity" are just two phrases used in letters nominating Emily Dyke, an Accounting Specialist III in the Department of Pathobiology, for the CVM Outstanding Employee Award.



Emily Dyke

The College of Veterinary Medicine's Outstanding Employee Award recognizes exemplary performance, dedication, commitment, and compassion of a college employee twice yearly.

## Veterinary Professor Receives Award



Dr. Fred Hopkins, a University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine professor and Extension Veterinarian with the Department of Animal Science, has received the Excellence in Extension Award from the Gamma Sigma Delta. The agriculture honor society presents the award to an extension staff member who has made an outstanding contribution, either directly or indirectly related, to agriculture and related disciplines. Hopkins has been at UT since 1978.

### HILL'S FELLOW *continued from p.1*

nutritional needs of our canine and feline patients,” said Dr. Claudia A. Kirk, Small Animal Clinical Sciences acting department head. “Nutrition is a critical component in the management of disease as well as the ongoing wellness. It would not be possible for us to have a strong residency program in Veterinary Clinical Nutrition without this partnership and the Hill’s Fellowship.”

Dr. Beth Hamper, a nutrition resident in small animal medicine, has been named the Hill’s Fellow. While working as a registered nurse, she obtained her degree in animal science and worked as a zoo keeper. Wanting to combine her interest in animals and medicine, Hamper pursued veterinary medicine and graduated in 2003. “I’m thrilled Hill’s sponsorship has allowed me this opportunity to continue my education,” Hamper said. “Nutrition was always my favorite part of veterinary school. Even after graduation, I found myself drawn to it as I kept looking at the nutritional aspects of cases.” Hamper is also performing graduate course work in human nutrition, biochemistry, and statistics.

The Director of Academic Affairs at Hill’s, Hein Meyer, D.V.M., Ph.D., DECVIM-CA, said the company is committed to the advancement of veterinary education and providing students with the tools needed to grow and develop. “Dr. Hamper is a dynamic individual who possesses strong clinical and teaching experience on nutritional advice and communication,” said Meyer. “Her selection of Hill’s Fellow in Clinical Nutrition gives students at the University of Tennessee the edge to becoming the nutrition experts of tomorrow.”

In addition to the Hill’s Fellow, the company also provides support for a student pet food program which generates funds for student organizations, funds for awards and academic lectures, as well as pet food for a community service project organized by veterinary students.



*Dr. Beth Hamper*



*Dr. Michael Blackwell*

Dr. Michael Blackwell received the Heart of Social Work Award. This annual award honors someone who contributes significantly to the College of Social Work and makes a difference in the life of the college.

The College of Social Work recognized Dr. John New, head of the Department of Comparative Medicine, for his support of Veterinary Social Work and education of social work students.



*Dr. John New*



*Dr. Linden Craig*



*Sharon Patton*

Dr. Linden Craig, associate professor in the Department of Pathobiology, and Dr. Sharon Patton, professor in the Department of Comparative Medicine, have received Wharton Professorship Awards. Charles and Julie Wharton, long-time supporters of the college and the UTIA, established the awards to acknowledge exceptional CVM faculty who perform at a high level in teaching, research, and outreach. Every year, the recipients each receive \$10,000.

Dr. Linda Frank, Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences professor, has received the 2007 Lindsay Young Teaching Award. Funded by late Knoxville attorney, Lindsay Young, the award recognizes excellence in veterinary teaching.



*Dr. Linda Frank*

# ONE DAY

Every spring, the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine students organize an Open House for the community. To make Open House better than ever, students are returning to its original format, a one-day event.

Open House remains a wonderful educational opportunity. We hope you will encourage families to participate in this annual event.

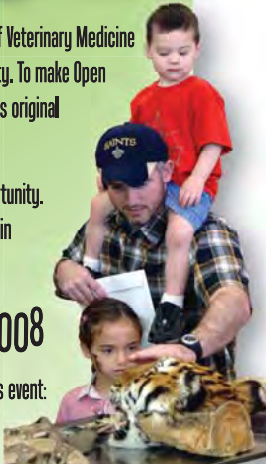
**SATURDAY ~ APRIL 12, 2008**

Please check the website for updates on this year's event:

[HTTP://WWW.VET.UTK.EDU/OPENHOUSE](http://www.vet.utk.edu/openhouse)

or phone (865) 974-7377. Thank you for supporting the college.

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## On Firm Ground

Less than a year after breaking ground, the expansion of the small animal hospital should be complete. According to Dr. Bob DeNovo, Associate Dean for Administration and Clinical Programs, the construction should be complete by the end of January.

"Installation of the linear accelerator for oncology and the therapeutic swimming pool for canine rehabilitation is currently underway," said DeNovo, adding he anticipates moving services the following month. "While some disruption to everyday schedules is inherent in almost every construction project, we will do everything possible to keep the transition as smooth as possible for our clients."

Work is still underway to secure funds to renovate the intensive care unit and to expand the large animal hospital.



**SPAY DAY** Rabbits aren't the only ones who multiply like rabbits. That's why the college's Companion Animal Initiative of Tennessee (CAIT) is working with communities to reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats in the state. Spay Day USA 2008 is February 26. Last year, almost three-fourths of the dogs and cats in shelters were euthanized in Tennessee alone. CAIT reminds you to talk to your veterinarian about spaying or neutering your pets. Call our spay/neuter hotline or visit [www.vet.utk.edu/cait](http://www.vet.utk.edu/cait) for more information.

**SPAY/NEUTER HOTLINE: 865-974-6464**

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