VolunteerVet

The University of Tennessee • College of Veterinary Medicine

KNOWLEDGE COMPASSION DISCOVERY | SUMMER 2007

"Music to My Ears – the Song is 'Sweet Sound of Progress'"

That's what Dr. Bob DeNovo, head of the Small Animal Clinical Sciences Department, says when sounds of heavy machinery interrupt meetings at the college. A generous donation from anonymous donors and the sale of bonds provided the approximately $9 million needed for the 32,000 square-foot expansion of the small animal hospital. Work began in February, and in 10 months or so, the small animal hospital will boast additional space for oncology, physical therapy and rehabilitation, and avian and exotics medicine.



Pardon our doggone mess. We're building solutions.

DeNovo says programs continue to grow at the veterinary teaching hospital, as do expectations of its clients, students, staff, and faculty. "We want to do more than keep up with other veterinary colleges. We want to be world-wide leaders. This expansion with purpose-built facilities is a tremendous step forward for an already well-respected program."

Funds are still needed to renovate existing space once the final construction nail has been driven. The college has a head start in funding the renovation of the intensive care unit, thanks to private support and friends of the late Lindsay Young who have contributed money in the name of Mr. Young's beloved dog Aslan.



UTCVM Building Committee
Standing in front row left to right: Drs. Michael McEntee, Juergen Schumacher, Leon Potgieter
Back row left to right: Drs. John New (seated), Frank Andrews

We're Not Finished Yet…

While the expansion of the small animal hospital space is underway, the college is still working to secure funds for the large animal expansion. "We intend to meet everybody's needs as best we can," says Dr. Michael Blackwell, dean of the UT College of Veterinary Medicine (UTCVM). "We will not leave anyone behind, because the college needs all departments, all service areas to continue to be top quality. The college's leadership is dedicated to making the large animal expansion a reality."

In order to remain competitive for clients and students, the college has committed to major facility and equipment improvements for farm animal and equine patients and their owners, and for the continuation of efforts to insure a safe food supply for humans and animals.

The existing building, built in the 1970s, has become incapable of adequately handling the increased caseload and new diagnostics and treatment challenges. All equine services share one diagnostic room, and the college has a limited area to evaluate lameness. The issue of isolation is a major concern throughout the hospital. Dr. Blackwell says living in an age with increasing threats from infectious diseases, both naturally occurring and introduced, heightens the need to address that concern. "Our most pressing need is to have more space to house animals that have infectious diseases, such as Strangles, Potomac Horse Fever, Salmonella and Johne's disease, that we need to keep away from other patients and people."

The planned large animal expansion, budgeted at $9 million, addresses UTCVM's critical needs in the large animal hospital: isolation space, biosecurity, biocontainment, equine performance medicine, infection control and improved reception/client areas. The expansion of the large animal hospital at the teaching hospital is essential for the continued success and growth of the college. It will provide enhanced teaching opportunities for students while better serving clients and the farm animal industry, protecting public health, enhancing medical knowledge, and generating economic benefits to the state and nation.

Vet Tech Intern Program

Hands On

Janet Jones, clinic director at the veterinary teaching hospital, says every teaching hospital has job openings for experienced veterinary technicians. Last summer, UTCVM became the first veterinary college to offer a year-long veterinary technician intern program where participants rotate through each of the clinical services. Jones says, "In general, veterinary technician programs have limited hands-on opportunities. Our Graduate Veterinary Technician Internship offers graduate veterinary technicians a chance in an educational setting to improve and increase their technical skills and knowledge. It's working education experience."



Jamie Stuffle, LVT, (left) is Amanda Metarko's mentor. Stuffle says the program helps the interns make educated decisions about their professional future.

With the increase in specialties in veterinary medicine, the program also helps the interns realize which areas of the profession are more attractive to them. Amanda Metarko and Erica Martin are the first interns in UT's program. Metarko, a veterinary technician from upstate New York, says she has been amazed by all the things she can now do. "If you go into private practice, the work is repetitive. Here, you never know what is going to happen. During my internship I've been exposed to so many things." The internship not only increases the job applicant pool, but also makes the technicians more marketable for higher-paying jobs. For more information about the program, contact Janet Jones at (865) 974-8387 or at jjones19@utk.edu.

Rural Study

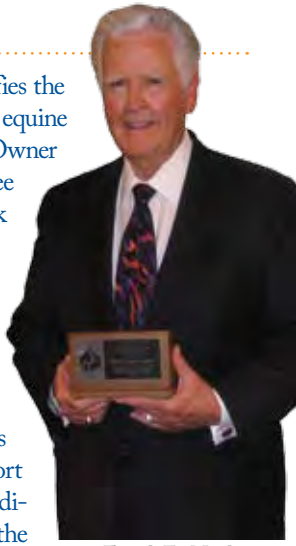
Veterinary medicine today more than ever before is being challenged to meet multiple missions. While most veterinarians are being called upon by the public to provide veterinary medical services, there are also increasing demands in the areas of public health, food safety/security, regulatory medicine, biomedical research, academia, and corporate America. To address concerns raised about the availability of rural veterinarians in the state, the Tennessee General Assembly House Agriculture Committee requested more information. Teams of researchers from the veterinary college and from the Department of Agricultural Economics surveyed state veterinary practitioners and livestock producers, and solicited input from interested parties at public forums held across the state.



UTCVM's management team reviewed the findings from the multi-faceted study and found most Tennessee livestock owners are satisfied with their access to veterinary medical services; counties with inadequate numbers of veterinarians (based on population rates) also have inadequate numbers of other medical professionals and an economic solution is necessary to address the situation; the university is fulfilling its land-grant mission when one considers that the primary sources of information for Tennessee livestock owners are directly or indirectly from the university.

Visit www.agriculture.utk.edu/news/ruralvetstudy/introduction.htm for the collection of studies.

Equine Medicine's Champion



Frank E. Neal

Frank E. Neal exemplifies the very best in advancing equine health and welfare. Owner of the late Tennessee Walking Horse Dark Spirit's Rebel, the 1991 International Grand Champion and 1992 World Grand Champion, Mr. Neal demonstrates his love of horses through his very generous support of several equine medical services offered by the UT College of Veterinary Medicine. Neal provided funding for renovations to the equine surgical suite in memory of Dark Spirit's Rebel, including installation of a surgical viewing window and flat-screen video monitor for students and equine clients to view complex and routine surgeries. Installation of a new Hyberbaric Oxygen Therapy unit is underway in the large animal hospital, thanks to contributions by Neal and others who were very interested in bringing this therapeutic procedure into service to assist in the treatment of trauma, poorly healing wounds, bone infections, central nervous system damage, internal abscesses, loss of blood supply and necrosis, and possibly laminitis, among other conditions. Mr. Neal is President of Frank E. Neal & Company, Inc. in Nashville, where he and Mrs. Neal reside.

Outstanding



Karen McLucas

"A wonderful person with a great heart and sense of humor" is just one of the phrases used in letters nominating Karen McLucas, LVMT, for the College of Veterinary Medicine Outstanding Employee Award.

The award is designed to recognize an employee or employees of the college for exemplary performance in the completion of his or her daily responsibilities in the College. Karen, the medical technician for the neurology service, shows great compassion while providing excellent patient care, exhibits patience with the students and is invaluable in clinical studies.

TNCPE

The University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine has been named a 2006 Commitment Award winner in the annual Excellence in Tennessee recognition program administered by the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE).



Left to right: Drs. Robert Moore, Michael Blackwell, Dennis Geiser, James Brace, John New, and Leon Potgieter

The leadership at the college chose to participate in the rigorous application and evaluation process to become a better organization by improving its effectiveness and the value of the service it provides to citizens throughout the state. The program uses the Criteria for Performance Excellence established by the Baldrige National Quality Program as the evaluation tool. Among the criteria examined are leadership, strategic planning, market focus, measurement, analysis, faculty and staff focus, process management and results.

Recipients of Commitment Awards have demonstrated progress by identifying and putting in place some key process improvements that are directly attributable to a fact-based improvement process.

"I applaud winners of all levels as they progress toward excellence – their efforts demonstrate that the quest for business excellence is alive and well in our state, and that bodes well for our economy and our communities," said Governor Phil Bredesen in a news release issued by the TNCPE. "I encourage more Tennessee organizations to model their efforts."

The college won its first TNCPE Commitment award in 2003.

We Mean Business



Jim Taylor, '08

The national Veterinary Business Management Association (VBMA) has recognized the newly founded VBMA chapter at the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine as its best new chapter.

The Veterinary Business Management Association, a student-driven organization, is dedicated to advancing the profession through increasing business knowledge, creating networking opportunities and empowering students to achieve their personal and professional goals.

Jim Taylor, president of the UT chapter of VBMA and third-year veterinary student, says the chapter was recognized for its speaker selection and quality meetings. "We were able to host excellent speakers at our chapter meetings and promote them well. We also requested feedback from our audience and catered to our members' requests regarding speakers and topics," Taylor says. He adds Hill's Pet Nutrition has been instrumental in making the organization a success. "Without their support, none of this would have been feasible."

Giving Globally

UTCVM is the first college to receive funding from the Global Initiatives in Veterinary Education (GIVE) Program. Organized by the American Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC), the GIVE program is designed to develop long-term, mutually beneficial and meaningful partnerships with foreign veterinary schools in developing countries by involving multiple faculty, staff and students.

The AAVMC and the American Veterinary Medical Association awarded the college $27,000 for its International Multi-Task Cooperative and Exchange Program with the College of Veterinary Medicine at the China Agricultural University (CAU) in Beijing. The program provides training in practical laboratory procedures and an animal nutrition and diet promotion program for CAU faculty and staff. It also offers UTCVM clinical faculty the opportunity to learn techniques for acupuncture/alternative medicine and animal care. Dr. Michael Blackwell, UTCVM dean and Dr. Hwa-Chain Robert Wang, program administrator of International Affairs at UTCVM, visited CAU's veterinary college last fall as part of the effort to promote cooperative educational, research, and cultural exchange programs to study livestock diseases and human diseases. Dr. Wang also worked with his counterparts in China to prioritize the focus of the college's initiatives that will be implemented over the next three years.

Always Serving



Dr. John Henton

The Tennessee Veterinary Medical Association has awarded Dr. John Henton the TVMA Distinguished Service Award. Dr. Henton, professor in the Department of Large Animal Clinical Sciences, and Coordinator of Continuing Education, Outreach and Alumni Activities, has served TVMA in various roles including president, vice president, board member, and program chairman of the organization's 1988 annual meeting.

PET FOOD RECALL

As soon as one of the largest pet food recalls in history occurred, worried pet owners, veterinarians and reporters began calling the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine for information. Since the third week of March, faculty and staff have continued to work to ensure the public has the most accurate and reliable information on which to rely rather than myths and rumors.

From USA Today, the Wall Street Journal, and the Atlanta Journal Constitution, reporters have turned to the experts with the Veterinary Nutrition Service at the college to help decipher the situation.

- Dr. Claudia Kirk was invited to testify before a U.S. Senate sub-committee on the pet food recall and offer her perspective on the issues.
- Dr. Joe Bartges has monitored and facilitated clinical discussions on the Veterinary Information Network, a source of information used by veterinarians across the country.
- Both Drs. Kirk and Bartges were tapped for a news release that appeared in the Journal of American Veterinary Medical Association.
- Dr. Susan Lauten worked with a reporter at the Atlanta Journal Constitution to sift through the issues of homemade diets and helped debunk incorrect information on a radio talk show.
- Dr. Angela Lusby, a veterinary nutrition resident at the college, answered viewers' calls during an hour-long local television newscast.



From left to right: Drs. Angela Lusby, Susan Lauten, Claudia Kirk; Dr. Joe Bartges is seated.

Dr. Michael Blackwell, dean of the veterinary college, says, "Our thoughts are with those who have lost pets, or are caring for sick pets who have eaten the tainted food. As veterinarians, it is our responsibility to ensure the public has the most reliable information upon which to base opinions. It is rewarding to know that not only pet owners, but also people in the veterinary profession, turn to our college's nutrition specialists as a resource during these times of uncertainty."

Visit www.vet.utk.edu for more information about the recall.

Home Cooking

Thousands of recipes for homemade pet foods are available through books and the Internet; however, most are neither complete nor balanced. Feeding an incomplete or unbalanced diet for four to eight weeks is not likely to be a problem for an otherwise healthy pet. Problems may not become apparent until years of feeding unbalanced nutrition. Please visit your veterinarian for more information.

SPAY/NEUTER HOTLINE: 865-974-6464

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