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**School of  
Veterinary Medicine**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Message from the Dean | July 2020

## A Return to Hands-On Clinical Instruction

This coming week, our Class of 2021 will return to in-person clinical instruction. As you know, our clinical instruction has been conducted virtually since mid-March. I want to particularly thank **Jesse Waters**, **Ruthanne Chun** and **Lynn Maki**, in addition to our faculty and staff, for their efforts in determining how to best return our students to in-person instruction in alignment with [campus guidelines](#).



We also are rapidly preparing for fall instruction, which will be a hybrid of both in-person and virtual experiences. I'm pleased to announce the arrival today of **Peggy Schmidt**, our new associate dean for professional programs, who will lead the school's efforts in pursuing curricular reform to better serve our students and their future. I want to thank **Robb Hardie** for his efforts in this role over the last five years, and in particular, his work in support of our clinical skills training center and spay/neuter program.

I am certain all of us have faced difficult but important conversations around race, justice and the promotion of equity, inclusion and diversity over the past month since the murder of George Floyd. As I've highlighted in previous messages, I am strongly supportive of the Black Lives Matter movement and I and all the deans on the UW-Madison campus, as well as the deans of veterinary medical colleges around the world, are dedicated to doing better and taking action to support a safe and inclusive environment for all. In addition to exploring the [resources shared by the school](#), I'd encourage you to register for an upcoming [free online discussion](#) on July 20 with Ibram X. Kendi, National Book Award winner and bestselling author of "How to Be an Antiracist." And save the date for the UW-Madison [2020 Diversity Forum](#), Oct. 27-28.

In the spirit of creating a welcoming space for everyone, this summer we will digitize all of our class portraits and make them available on the digital screens in the first and second floors of the main SVM building, but will remove the physical portraits from our school's hallways. For similar reasons, we will also move the portraits of Emeritus Deans Buss and Easterday from the main stairwell to the dean's conference room. I am making this decision based on listening to perspectives of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) students and other students. While the SVM continues to work toward creating a community of learners from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds,

we know that the lack of visible diversity in the class portraits and other images at the school further amplifies BIPOC feelings of isolation at the SVM. I know you will join me in affirming that we want the school to be a successful, supportive work and learning environment for all . We will continue to find ways to honor and celebrate our alumni and the school's history, while also making continued progress in advancing a stronger SVM (you can read more about our ongoing initiatives to recruit, retain and support a diverse array of students, faculty and staff in my [Oct. 2019 Dean's Message](#)).

Under the leadership of **Richard Barajas**, who will start as our diversity and inclusion manager on Sept. 1, we will also develop new and better programs and curricula to help educate all of us in this important space. Although not specified yet, I suspect this will include experiences required of our students integrated throughout the curriculum through all four years of our students' instruction. In addition, the school will require that all faculty and staff annually participate in an experience that enhances their understanding of diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism. My hope over the coming years is that the school will be known as one of the most inclusive and diverse schools on campus and serve as a leader nationally in these efforts. I also hope that all marginalized communities will feel a sense of belonging and inclusion in the profession of veterinary medicine, and specifically within the SVM family.

It is my pleasure to announce that the inaugural recipient of the Tim and Nancy Speaker Chair in Canine Health is **Gillian McLellan**. The Speaker Chair was established earlier this spring by **Tim and Nancy Speaker**, great friends of the school, who took advantage of the [most recent Morgridge match](#). This five-year appointment supports a faculty member whose research is focused on canine health and well-being. Recently the selection committee, chaired by **Karen Young**, had the difficult task of reviewing several worthy applicants for the award. Gillian's appointment begins today and extends through June 30, 2025. I want to thank all applicants for their interest.

As I've recently told the School of Veterinary Medicine, due to the financial ramifications of the COVID-19 crisis, the school has made the difficult decision to close our Continuing Education program. I want to thank **Kathy Nelson, Carrie Tobin and Keith Brandstetter** for their support and dedication to this program over the years.

One additional highlight: Over the past year, the school has been awarded over \$28 million of research grant support, the highest award amount we have ever achieved, and 45 percent higher than the previous fiscal year. Congratulations to all of our faculty, staff and students on this tremendous achievement. In that light, I want to re-emphasize that when I speak of our students, I mean our professional veterinary medical students, our graduate students and the undergraduate students who work and learn in the school. We are dedicated to everyone who we teach.

I hope each of you has a safe and enjoyable summer and, again, I want to wish the Class of 2021 good luck as they enter into their in-person clinical experiences .

## **UW Veterinary Care Updates from the Director**



We are more than three months into COVID-19 being part of our world and affecting day-to-day operations. Adapting to a pandemic has been hard, exhausting work, and unfortunately the novel coronavirus will likely remain a threat for many more months ahead. That's the bad news. The good news is we've continued to find ways to deliver outstanding patient care, client communication and teaching while working to keep ourselves and others safe. Thank you to each and every one of our hospital team members for your dedication and determination in serving our clients, patients, students and colleagues.

If you didn't have a chance to see it yesterday, I hosted a virtual tour of UW Veterinary Care as part of the Badger Talks statewide outreach program. You can view the tour, and subsequent Q&A, on the [UW Connects Facebook page](#).

It's that time of year when we bid farewell to our finishing interns (or, in some cases, welcome them into residencies at UWVC). Thank you to **Kristina Anderson, Christina Barrett, Kristi Bowers, Brittney Byer, Hannah Clark, Crystal Matt, Alyssa Palmer, Emily Pellatt, Natalia Pfaff, Alexandra Radtke, Emily Renner, Carli Smith** and **Margot Stuchin**. And welcome to our 2020 class of interns: **Elizabeth Cutchin, Jennifer Heyward, Emily Janik, Brigid Lemburg, Graham Rossi, Natalie Smith, Mary Ann Thaliath, Melody Ward** and **Natalie Worden** (Rotating), **Rachel Hilliard** (Large Animal), **Shakuntala Makhijani** and **Kimberly Perley** (Shelter Medicine), **Rachel McMahon** and **Ann Marie Picone** (Oncology), **Chelsey Tournade** (Zoo Companion Animal Medicine) and **Jamie Welker** (Surgical Intern) .

Welcome also to **Jade Bricco** , certified veterinary technician in the Large Animal Hospital; **Logan McCormick** and **Claire Russell** , vet tech assistants in the Small Animal ER/CCU; **Emily Olson** , who joins the ER/CCU as a vet tech and is currently completing her CVT; and **Kellye Walker** in the Call Center. Welcome also to **Jennifer Gonzales** who joins the Emergency and Critical Care team through July 12 to help expand clinical coverage during the busy summer weeks.

In closing, I want to again express gratitude for your efforts, as echoed by this comment from a recent Oncology client:

" Went in preparing for the worst diagnosis. The visit was during the virus outbreak and we could not have been treated better. Very thorough, patient and compassionate with me. From the people who answer your phones (I was initially in panic mode), to the techs, to Dr. Magee, all were wonderful."

- Elizabeth, Rockford, Illinois

**Ruthanne Chun DVM'91**  
Director, [UW Veterinary Care](#)  
Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs

## School News

**Continuing Education:** Due to the financial impacts and long-term ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UW School of Veterinary Medicine has made the difficult decision to discontinue the continuing education program and has closed the department of veterinary medicine continuing education. Expertise from throughout the school will still be available to the important audiences the school serves in Wisconsin and across the country and world. SVM faculty and staff will continue to partner with the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association and other veterinary medical organizations to deliver continuing education to practitioners and the general public, in addition to the school's continued participation in events such as the Midwest Horse Fair, Wisconsin Dog Fair and World Dairy Expo.

**Fall Semester:** UW-Madison will welcome students back to campus as scheduled for the start of fall classes on Sept. 2. While many classes will be offered in person, some will be virtual. To ensure a " [Smart Restart](#) " amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the university is developing a comprehensive plan for resuming campus activities which include rigorous health and safety steps. Several points specific to SVM operations are still being discussed with campus leaders; additional details will be forthcoming.

## Faculty and Staff News

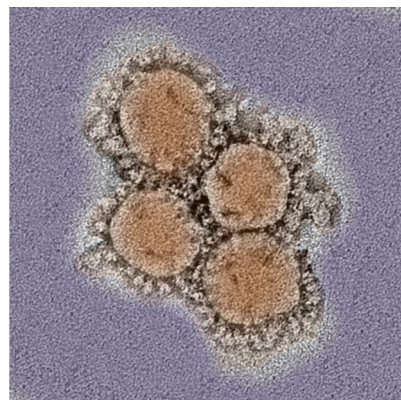
Professor Emeritus **Chris Olsen** delivered online lectures on COVID-19 during the Food Research Institute Annual Meeting and for collaborators at the Emergency Management and Research Institute in Hyderabad, India. The latter talk was titled Roles and Responsibilities of Veterinarians in Tackling Current and Future Pandemics Affecting Global Human and Animal Health. Olsen also continues to serve on the UW System Emergency Operations Center for COVID-19.

## Student News

Welcome to four new Ross and St. George's University students who began their clinical year with the SVM on June 8 and joined the class of 2021: **Maria Barandica**, **Alexus Counce Hooker**, **Sydney Sult** and **Jordan Whitaker**.

## Research News

A new study led by Professor **Yoshihiro Kawaoka**, published June 22 in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, demonstrates that in Syrian hamsters -- an animal model for COVID-19 that shares important features of human disease -- prior infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus provides protection against reinfection, and treatment with convalescent serum limits virus replication in their lungs. The research team also obtained the first images of the internal features of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that aid its ability to replicate, or make copies of itself, in host cells.



Professor **Joan Jorgensen**, scientist and lead author **Anbarasi Kothandapani**, and others published findings June 4 in the journal *PLOS Genetics* that illuminate how genes and hormones interact to [develop male reproductive systems](#), a step toward researching why disorders in these organs have become more common and how we might prevent them. "It's hard to know how something goes wrong if you don't know how it goes right," says Jorgensen.

SVM faculty members **Mostafa Zamanian** and **Jorge Osorio**, and graduate students **Chelsea Crooks** and **Taylor Weary**, are among the recipients of [new research grants and awards](#) from the UW-Madison Global Health Institute.

## Upcoming Events

*In light of the continued spread of COVID-19, in-person campus events and meetings are currently canceled. For more information, read the university's [announcement](#) and visit the SVM's [online calendar](#).*

### Virtual School of Veterinary Medicine Town Hall

July 14

Noon-1 p.m.

*Details to follow by email*

### UW-Madison 2020 Distance Teaching & Learning Conference (virtual)

August 3-7

[More](#)

*\*Use code KQX4693 to waive the registration fee*

## SVM in the News

[How Humanity Has Unleashed a Flood of Zoonotic Diseases](#)

*The New York Times Magazine*

[Leave No Cow Behind at the Feedbunk](#)

*Hoard's Dairyman*

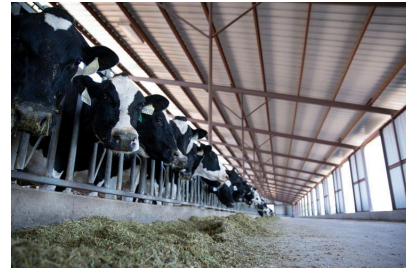
[What If All Viruses Disappeared?](#)

*BBC News*

First-Of-Its-Kind Drive-Thru Veterinary Clinic Planned for Sun Prairie

Wisconsin State Journal

For more media coverage of the SVM, visit the school's [In the News page](#).



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