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

Message from the Dean | April 2020

Adapting to COVID-19

I know it's April 1 and supposed to be April Fool's Day, but as all of us know COVID-19 is not a joke and is dramatically impacting lives around the world. Since mid-March, we have been [teaching our students remotely](#), whether it's with their didactic instruction, laboratory courses or the clinical teaching we perform in our hospital. We temporarily closed UW Veterinary Care a few weeks ago when a School of Veterinary Medicine employee was diagnosed with novel coronavirus infection (COVID-19). Following thorough cleaning and in coordination with UW-Madison leadership and Madison and Dane County Public Health, we have reopened UW Veterinary Care to both large and small animal emergencies and other critical, ongoing care needs. The hospital's [website](#) and [Facebook page](#) contain the latest status information.



As has been communicated to our students, we have unfortunately had to cancel all of our spring celebratory events. We are actively working on replacing some of these events through a remote platform. For the Class of 2020, we are also exploring how to best replace their investiture ceremony in the coming months or year, hopefully with an in-person event in addition to the remote celebration that will be broadcast during their graduation day. Stay tuned for further developments.

COVID-19 has forced all of our faculty, staff and students to adjust their lives. Governor Evers has made Wisconsin a "[Safer at Home](#)" state, except for essential work and health-related activities. As highlighted above, our hospital remains open to emergency and critical, ongoing care as supported by the governor's mandate. All of our employees who can work remotely have been supported to do so. Many of our employees are struggling with the closure of K-12 schools or childcare centers and having to manage their children's care and education while also trying to work at home or, if required, work in the school or hospital on essential activities. (One of these essential activities includes research led by several SVM scientists to [understand and thwart the virus](#)).

I want to emphasize that the School of Veterinary Medicine's leadership and the whole UW-Madison campus are dedicated to supporting all of our faculty, staff and students. There are a wide array of issues facing each of us and I encourage you to reach out to

your supervisors, department chairs or associate deans to highlight issues you're facing, so we can attempt to arrive at a solution. Likewise, the university is aware of an increase in [bias incidents](#) on or near campus and online that have targeted people of Asian descent. Racist behaviors or stereotyping of any kind are not tolerated at UW-Madison or the SVM. If such incidences do occur, we want to know so we can take appropriate action and offer support. University leaders are working with partners across campus to address incidents of bias and hate in real time, including reaching out to affected communities, and recently hosted two virtual town halls to support our Asian and Asian American students, faculty and staff. As details continue to be shared about UW's response to COVID-19, the website covid19.wisc.edu is the most up-to-date resource on all related matters.

On another sad note, Scout MacNeil, the 7-year-old Golden Retriever who starred in a Super Bowl ad highlighting the School of Veterinary Medicine, [passed away](#) this past month. Our hearts reach out to David MacNeil and his family during this difficult time (if you would like to share your condolences in our [group sympathy card](#) for the MacNeil family, please do so before April 6). I want to again publicly thank David, his family and WeatherTech for their support of the School of Veterinary Medicine, our oncology program, and all that we do to benefit both animal and human health.



Please take care of yourself in these challenging times. If you have the opportunity, get out of the house, go for a walk, or do whatever it takes to support your and your family's mental health as we struggle through this unprecedented situation. Counselors with the school's [Personal and Wellness Support Services](#) remain available to support students virtually during this time and the university offers several free mental health resources online, including [SilverCloud](#) for anxiety and stress management; the [Center for Healthy Minds](#) for resilience and mindfulness training; and [LifeMatters](#) for employees seeking assistance with life, work, family and well-being.

None of us know how long these stressful times will last, but I am hopeful in the weeks and months ahead we will gradually come out of this crisis and get back to some degree of normality. We remain focused on continuing to provide outstanding education to our professional veterinary medical and graduate students to support their success and leadership in all that they do. Again, be safe and I wish everyone and your families all the best.

UW Veterinary Care Updates from the Director



I want to thank everyone for their patience during this uncertain time and share my gratitude with all who have been working to ensure that we have enough faculty and staff in the hospital to provide care to our patients and keep us running. The hospital is currently open to life-threatening emergencies in both the small animal and large animal hospitals, current patients who require ongoing treatments, and medically necessary appointments for current patients.

In other hospital news, I'd like to welcome **Paige Schroeder**, CVT, to the Large Animal Hospital, and congratulate **Emma Doubleday**, CVT, who has started a new role with UW Veterinary Care as blood donor coordinator. Emma has been with our small animal ER/CCU since 2015 and begins this role as **Tammi Walsh**, previous blood donor coordinator, moves into a technician supervisor position.

As we look forward to a time when both our hospital and world can return to business as usual, or whatever a new normal might look like, I'd like to share a reminder of the immense appreciation our clients have for the care that all of you provide:

" There is absolutely NOTHING that your veterinary hospital could have done better! From the first phone call I made there to all the of care and/or surgery that was provided to my pet, we had the VERY BEST EXPERIENCE! We truly felt that the entire experience from start to finish there was over-the-top EXCELLENT! We were constantly provided with information, our questions were very thoroughly answered and we were given constant updates for our pet when she was staying there."

- Lisa, Batavia, Illinois

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

School News

The spring issue of *On Call* is [now online](#) and being mailed, featuring the story and legacy of Scout MacNeil and WeatherTech's 2020 Super Bowl commercial, which inspired thousands from across the world to support the school's clinical cancer research; our students' involvement in Journey Together Service Dogs Inc., providing training on canine health topics to inmates at Oshkosh Correctional Institution who raise and train service dogs for people with post-traumatic stress disorder; and much more.

As part of the [Partners in Giving](#) 2020 campaign, the School of Veterinary Medicine received an award for first place for percent increase in contributions for units or agencies with 451-900 employees. Thank you to all who participated.

Wisconsin Companion Animal Resources, Education, and Social Services (WisCARES), an outreach partnership of the UW-Madison schools of veterinary medicine, pharmacy, and social work, has [continued its growth](#) since relocating to a larger facility in spring 2018 and received a recent two-year, \$600,000 grant from PetSmart Charities.

Faculty and Staff News

Tony Goldberg in February traveled to Rwanda on the invitation of the Rwanda Development Board (an agency of the Rwandan government). He and Jonathan Sleeman, director of the U.S. Geological Survey National Wildlife Health Center, conducted a country-wide needs assessment for a new program in wildlife health, with potential for future collaborations and partnerships. "It was quite a trip, filled with many high-level meetings and visits to Rwanda's amazing national parks and the substantial investments Rwanda is making in wildlife health and conservation," Goldberg says.



Research News

Professor **Ted Golos** was senior author on a [paper published in *Scientific Reports*](#) in collaboration with lead author Marina Emborg, a UW-Madison professor of medical physics. The researchers used a version of the gene-editing technology CRISPR to introduce Parkinson's disease's most common genetic mutation into marmoset monkey stem cells and successfully tamp down cellular chemistry that often goes awry in Parkinson's patients. The edited cells are a step toward studying the degenerative neurological disorder in a primate model, which has proven elusive, and for testing therapies.

Professor **Peter Muir** attended as a speaker a [collaborative workshop](#) hosted by the Jockey Club Estates, Newmarket to discuss standing CT imaging and development of stress fractures in Thoroughbred racehorses, and step closer to defining guidelines for identification of pre-fracture pathology in the racehorse fetlock.

Upcoming Events

In an effort to protect the health and safety of university and community members in light of the continued spread of COVID-19 worldwide, all in-person campus events and meetings are canceled through May 15. Alternative formats are being explored for several events. For more information, read the university's [March 23 announcement](#) on events and visit the SVM's [online calendar](#).

SVM in the News

[UW Researchers Tackle Big Questions as Coronavirus Threat Grows](#)

The Cap Times

[Can Pets Contract Or Transmit COVID-19? A Virologist Answers Your Household Pet Questions](#)

Wisconsin Public Radio

[Scout, Super Bowl Star Featured in UW Vet School Commercial, Dies](#)

Wisconsin State Journal

[Madison Veterinary Clinic Serves People Experiencing Homelessness and Financial Hardships](#)

Spectrum News



Credit: Ng Han Guan/AP Photo

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

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