



# ALUMNI E-NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

January/February 2023



## Cutting-Edge Genetic Research

From developing a [genetic screening test for cruciate ligament rupture](#) in dogs to identifying the [genetic mutations associated with laryngeal paralysis](#), the Comparative Genetics and Orthopaedic Research Laboratory at the UW School of Veterinary Medicine is advancing efforts to improve veterinary medical care for patients and help breeders reduce disease prevalence in offspring. This research not only benefits veterinary species; it also sheds light on similar genetic disorders in people. Laboratory co-directors **Peter Muir** and **Susannah Sample MS'07, DVM'09, PhD'11** mentor several Comparative Biomedical Sciences students in their lab, and recent alumnae **Lauren Baker MS '14, DVM'16, PhD'19** and **Emily Binversie MS'16, DVM'18, PhD'21** contributed greatly to the lab's work during their graduate studies.

[Read  
More](#)

## School News

*The latest updates on research, faculty and staff, and other happenings at the school.*



This winter, the active learning classroom in the school's Renk Learning Center was named in honor of **Linda Sullivan DVM'87**, who [passed away in February 2022](#), in recognition of her profound impact on the School of Veterinary Medicine, UW-Madison, the Madison community, and her philanthropic generosity to the SVM. This naming is an opportunity to celebrate [her many contributions and the impact she had](#), and will continue to have, on the school.

In two recent announcements, UW–Madison was designated an [Innovation and Economic Prosperity University](#) by the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities and [ranked eighth in national research rankings](#) in the National Science Foundation's 2021 fiscal year Higher Education Research and Development data, reporting more than \$1.38 billion in annual expenditures across all fields. **Related:** The UW School of Veterinary Medicine received a [record \\$34.4 million in grants and extramural awards](#) in the last fiscal year.

**Richard Barajas**, assistant dean for diversity, equity and inclusion at the UW School of Veterinary Medicine, was elected chair of the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion \(DEI\) Committee](#). He will also provide a module for the American Veterinary Medical Association's new [Journey for Teams initiative](#), a series of interactive modules that allows teams to explore, discuss and better understand DEI topics.

Clinical assistant professor **Elizabeth Alvarez** was named the recipient of the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges' [2023 Distinguished Veterinary Teacher Award](#). This award is presented to an educator whose sustained record of teaching excellence and ability, dedication, character and leadership has contributed significantly to the advancement of the profession. It will be presented at AAVMC's 2023 Catalyze conference in March.

### Recent research news:

- **Kayla Le**, clinical assistant professor in the Department of Surgical Sciences, published an article [in Equine Disease Quarterly](#) describing how the number and types of standing surgical procedures that can be safely completed on the horse continue to grow.
- Assistant professor **Erin Lashnits** and collaborators recently [published research in the journal Parasites & Vectors](#) revealing exactly what disease-causing bacteria cat fleas carry. The study's goal was to understand better what flea-borne pathogens are present in individual fleas and their implications on cats and people.
- **Adrianna Sage**, clinical assistant professor of anesthesia, is the lead author of a study [published in the journal Veterinary Record](#) providing a retrospective investigation of decreasing body temperature trends during anesthesia in dogs.
- UW School of Veterinary Medicine and UW-Madison faculty and staff, together with **Tom Bach DVM'94** of Lakeview Veterinary Clinic, [published an educational research report](#) in the Journal of Veterinary Medical Education comparing community practitioner and clinical educator expectations of veterinary graduates.

---

## Alumni Updates

*The latest news about your classmates and items of special interest to alumni.*

### Call for Alumni Class Notes

Please [share your stories and achievements](#) from the past year for the UW School of Veterinary Medicine's annual SVM Alumni Class Notes publication. The next issue will be mailed in spring 2023. We'd love to hear

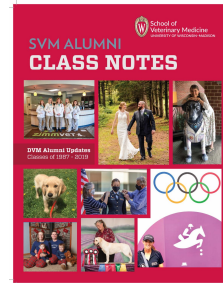
about your recent personal and professional updates and ask that you [please submit your news](#) by February 10.

### In Memoriam

The UW School of Veterinary Medicine regrets to announce the loss of two alumnae.

**Tamara Mae Cherney MS'96** [died peacefully](#) on January 15, 2023. A long-time resident and practicing veterinarian in the greater Madison, Wisconsin area, "Dr. Tammy" touched the lives of countless animals and their owners. Her loving care of the animals and genuine affection for their owners, together with her mischievous, witty and fun-loving approach to life made her beloved by her colleagues and clients alike.

**Jennifer Berg Closson DVM'97** [passed away](#) on November 10, 2022, surrounded by loved ones. After graduating from the UW School of Veterinary Medicine, she practiced her trade in Manhattan, New York, eventually [founding her own practice](#), Tribeca Veterinary Wellness. Veterinary medicine was not just a job for Jennifer. It was her passion and she excelled at it with a mission to not only care for her patients but also to teach owners how to appreciate and care for their beloved pets.



## YOUR PERSPECTIVE

**“The outbreaks are like wildfires. These are little super-spreader events. They are virtually impossible to predict or prevent in the wild. ... For the sake of all bird species, we're hopeful the coming months will bring better news.”**

*-Barry Hartup DVM'93, veterinarian and director of conservation medicine with the International Crane Foundation and clinical instructor of zoological medicine at the UW School of Veterinary Medicine, [speaks with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) about the circulating H5N1 strain of highly pathogenic avian influenza and its potential effects on endangered species such as whooping cranes.*

## Upcoming Events

June 24

### Alumni Reunion

Veterinary Medicine Building  
11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

All alumni and families are welcome as we celebrate graduates from the classes of 1988 • 1993 • 1998 • 2003 • 2008 • 2013 • 2018

[More](#)

Ongoing Clinical Trials



## Dogs With Chronic Kidney Disease

UW Veterinary Care is seeking dogs with chronic kidney disease for a study to evaluate blood and urine doxycycline concentrations. This study will provide insight into whether the antibiotic doxycycline could be used to treat urinary tract infections in dogs with chronic kidney disease and other diseases. Participation will include a day-long, 12-hour visit to UW Veterinary Care. Dogs will receive one dose of doxycycline and then have blood drawn and urine collected. The study will cover the cost of bloodwork and urinalysis.

[More Studies](#)



## DID YOU KNOW

Although general cat flavor preferences are known – for example, cats tend to enjoy fish, liver and meat flavors in food and treats – a recent study by UW School of Veterinary Medicine clinicians was the first to [examine the acceptance of differently compounded flavors for cat medications](#). The study yielded several interesting findings; for example, cats disliked sweet flavors and cat owners struggled to accurately guess which compounding flavor their cat would like. Although no individual flavor stuck out as a winner, cats favored oil-based flavorings (specifically, chicken and fish, but not statistically significant) over water-based flavorings. The study provides a stepping stone for improving cats' compliance with medicine and guides what veterinarians should prescribe.

