



# ALUMNI E-NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

March/April 2023



## Meet the Class of 2026

Veterinary medical schools across the country have been seeing an uptick in interest, reflected in record numbers of applicants for each admissions cycle. The UW School of Veterinary Medicine saw its highest number of applications for the Class of 2026, and again for the Class of 2027. Here, we queried our newest students and share some of their perspectives on what drew them to veterinary medicine and the highs and lows of their first year of veterinary school.

[Read More](#)

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## School News

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



The University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine's chapter of Veterinarians as One Inclusive Community for Empowerment (VOICE) [was awarded the organization's National Programming Excellence Award](#) for the 2022-23 school year. This honor recognizes the chapter's strong record of event planning and program creation, including hosting SVM community-wide socials and a "Let's Talk" series, featuring open discussions on various DEI topics.

The school will be moving to a modified pass/fail grading system when the revised curriculum is implemented in the fall of 2024. The main rationale for this shift is to ease student anxiety over grades and encourage a healthy educational environment. Other veterinary schools that have shifted to a pass/fail grading system have reported no dramatic drop in student performance or in their ability to get competitive residencies and internships. Class rankings will be calculated based on a weighted average of student final scores in courses.

**Scout**, a golden retriever familiar to the UW School of Veterinary Medicine community, made a cameo in this year's WeatherTech Super Bowl commercial. Though Scout has passed away, his legacy continues. Since Scout's cancer treatment journey was first shared globally in WeatherTech's 2020 Super Bowl commercial, more than one million dollars have been raised towards UW School of Veterinary Medicine [efforts to better diagnose, treat and prevent cancer](#).



At the end of 2022, several SVM faculty members led a [first-of-its-kind training program](#) for veterinarians with the Emergency Management and Research Institute (EMRI) in Hyderabad, India. Two EMRI veterinarians visited the school last week to better understand veterinary medical education and practice in the US.

### Recent research news:

- **Masatoshi Suzuki**, a professor in the Department of Comparative Biosciences, is collaborating with the Good Food Institute to use cow and pig stem cells to [cultivate artificial meat](#). Though this work has a long way to go before it reaches grocery stores, the goal is to address food instability and help the environment.
- **Allison Ludwig**, a dual degree DVM/PhD trainee with the school's Comparative Biomedical Sciences program, is co-first-author of a [recent study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#). The work demonstrates that retinal cells grown from stem cells can reach out and connect with neighbors, completing a "handshake" that may show the cells are ready for trials in humans with degenerative eye disorders.

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## Alumni Updates

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



Milwaukee County Zoo [recently appointed Christy Rettenmund DVM'08](#) (pictured left) as their senior staff veterinarian. She will oversee the Animal Health Center staff, provide veterinary oversight for the zoo's population of over 2,100 animals, mentor UW DVM students during their externships and oversee a veterinary residence program.

School of Veterinary Medicine diploma frames are [available to purchase](#) through artist Robin Lauersdorf. If your diploma is from before 2004, please note this with your order, as this will affect the size of the frame required. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the SVM.

**Claire LeFevre DVM'17** was named a recipient of the [American Association of Swine](#)

[Veterinarians Foundation's Hogg Scholarship](#). LeFevre is pursuing a master of veterinary science degree from the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine to better serve the needs of her clients and farm teams.

**Ruthanne Chun DVM'91** was recognized as a [2022-23 recipient of the UW-Madison Outstanding Women of Color Award](#), honoring her significant contributions to social justice, advocacy and community service. Learn more about Chun's continual work at the school and in the veterinary medical community in [this recent story](#).

Wisconsin participates in the [Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program](#), aimed at addressing the large animal veterinarian shortage in the state. The Wisconsin state veterinarian, **Darlene Konkle DVM'93, MS'97**, is [hopeful](#) the program will help draw veterinarians to the areas that need them most. Individuals who qualify for the program can be reimbursed up to \$25,000 each year for three years.



## YOUR PERSPECTIVE

“It's so interesting because all of the knowledge that we've gained from COVID-19 is so easily transferable. If your dog is showing any signs of clinical disease, they shouldn't go to the party and you should get in touch with your vet.”

*-**Sandra Newbury DVM'03**, director of the UW Shelter Medicine Program and associate clinical professor speaks with [Channel 3000](#) about the H3N2 strain of canine influenza, which spread through animal shelters in certain regions of the United States earlier this year.*

## Upcoming Events

June 24

### Alumni Reunion

Veterinary Medicine Building

11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

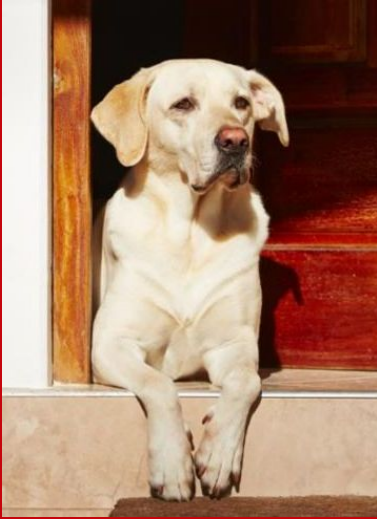
All alumni and families are welcome as we celebrate graduates from the classes of 1988 • 1993 • 1998 • 2003 • 2008 • 2013 • 2018

[More](#)

## Ongoing Clinical Trials

### Dogs With Atrial Fibrillation

UW Veterinary Care is [recruiting dogs with atrial](#)



fibrillation (resulting in rapid heart rate) to participate in a clinical study to evaluate two common anti-arrhythmia drugs, diltiazem and amiodarone. Participation involves three recheck appointments throughout the study. At each recheck appointment, we will perform a physical examination, assess your dog's blood pressure and collect a small amount of blood for bloodwork. You will also be asked to fill out a quality-of-life questionnaire at each appointment. Your dog will go home wearing a Holter monitor, which collects information about the heart rhythm over 24 hours. Three Holter tests and some of the blood testing will be paid for if you choose to participate.

[More Studies](#)



## DID YOU KNOW

More than 35 School of Veterinary Medicine alumni currently work at the school, with expertise ranging from virology to clinical pathology to development and more. Additionally, numerous faculty members have completed residencies and internships here.

