



ALUMNI E-NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

November/December 2023



Bronze sculpture created by SVM alumnus celebrates students' journey through veterinary school

A new piece of public art was installed recently in the courtyard between SVM's current building and the new building to the north. Created by SVM alumnus **John Hallett, DVM '90**, the bronze sculpture entitled "Forward Together" celebrates a student's journey through veterinary school. To capture the essence of that journey, Hallett interviewed students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Channel 3 News was on-site the day the sculpture was installed and interviewed Hallett about his own journey from veterinary school to accomplished artist.

[Watch the story](#)

Special note: The sculpture will be covered for its protection while we complete the courtyard between the current building and the new North building, but we look forward to dedicating the sculpture next year!

School of Veterinary Medicine expansion celebrated



Cutting the ribbon are SVM Dean Mark D. Markel (center left), Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin (center right). With them are Universities of Wisconsin President Jay Rothman (left), state Administration Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld (second from left), and Board of Regents President Karen Walsh. Photo by: Bryce Richter

We were thrilled to share a sneak peek of both the first and second floor spaces with our project partners and supporters during a ribbon-cutting event held November 13th. We look forward to officially opening this state-of-the-art facility in the spring, enhancing the medical care we offer, the instruction we provide to the next generation of veterinarians and biomedical researchers, and the research we conduct that benefits both animal and human health.

[Read More](#)

School News

The latest updates from faculty and staff, and other happenings at the school.

Search for the new SVM Dean

The search committee for the next dean of the SVM has been formed and has begun the process of identifying and selecting candidates. The dean serves as the chief academic and executive officer of the school with responsibility for faculty and staff development, personnel oversight, fundraising, budget planning and management, curriculum, student academic affairs, clinical resources, and facilities development. [Learn more.](#)

Faculty investiture ceremony held November 14

Congratulations to **John Svaren**, professor, Department of Comparative Biosciences, for being appointed as the inaugural recipient of the Boespflug Family Professorship in Myelin Biology; and to **Gillian McLellan**, chair, Department of Surgical Sciences, for being appointed the Tim and Nancy Speaker Chair in Canine Health.

SVM Awarded \$3.7 million to prevent future zoonotic infections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has awarded the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) \$3.7 million in cooperative agreements to develop vaccines designed to prevent or limit the impact of future disease outbreaks that can spread between animals and humans. [Learn more.](#)

SVM study shows mRNA vaccine harnesses T-cell power to combat COVID-19 in lungs

The effectiveness of mRNA vaccines in reducing disease severity and hospitalization from COVID-19 is well established. Now, new research from the SVM advances our understanding of how these vaccines protect the lungs following breakthrough infections from emerging variants of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. [Learn More.](#)

Forrest to receive lifetime achievement award

Lisa Forrest, professor (DSS) and section chief of radiation oncology, will receive the Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award from the American College of Veterinary Radiology (ACVR). The award, which has only been awarded to 7 other individuals, is given to members of the ACVR who have made outstanding contributions in the form of service, teaching, or research. Forrest is the first woman to receive this prestigious honor!

Svaren selected as interim associate vice chancellor for biological sciences

SVM professor **John Svaren** (CBS) was chosen as the interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Biological Sciences. This position provides leadership for biological sciences and interdisciplinary research across the UW—Madison campus. While at the SVM, Svaren's research has focused on understanding how nerve cells work and finding ways to treat disorders that affect them, such as peripheral neuropathies. His lab has made important progress in unraveling the complexities of nerve function and finding potential treatments for diseases like Charcot-Marie-Tooth (CMT). [Learn more.](#)

2023 Alumni Award winners announced

Congratulations to the following individuals for their significant contributions to society, and whose accomplishments, affiliations, and careers have honored the legacy of excellence at the school.

- **William Gilles, DVM '13** - Young Alumni Award (DVM)
- **Kenneth Waller, DVM '07, MS '07** - Distinguished Service Award (Graduate Program)
- **Ruthanne Chun, DVM '91** - Distinguished Service Award (DVM)

Annual SVM Tailgate a big success

More than 100 SVM alumni, faculty and staff attended the annual Alumni tailgate on November 11th. While the game's outcome was not the one we'd hoped for, connecting with former classmates and meeting new alumni is always a big win. [View photos from the event.](#)



Interventional cardiology services to expand this spring



When the School's new North Building opens in spring, the Cardiology service will have its own state-of-the-art interventional cardiology suite, which will not only expand the quantity and quality of catheter-based services they can offer but also increase opportunities for innovative clinical research that will ultimately lead to better patient outcomes.

In the video below, UWVC cardiologists Dr. Sonja Tjostheim and Dr. Heidi Kellihan explain the need for this innovative new lab and how it will benefit patients, students and the future of veterinary medical research.

[Watch Video](#)

SVM in the News

Keith Poulsen, DVM '04, PhD '13, clinical associate professor of large animal internal medicine and director of the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, spoke with the [WKOW television](#) and the [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#) about the mysterious respiratory illness impacting dogs across the country.

David Vail, the Barbara A. Suran Chairperson of Comparative Oncology, was featured in a story on [CBS 58](#) about the Vaccination Against Canine Cancer Study (VACCS). The VACCS trial, a collaboration between the SVM, Colorado State University, and the University of California-Davis, has enrolled more than 800 dogs so far and is the largest clinical trial to date on canine cancer

The **SVM CAVIDS laboratory** has been involved in the development of a monoclonal antibody product to treat canine parvovirus, which was featured recently in [USA Today](#). The CAVIDS team, led by laboratory Director **Laurie Larson**, has completed the laboratory phase of this extensive process, and their efforts have led to a targeted treatment that directly fights the virus, shortening the course of the disease and increasing survivability.

SVM veterinary ophthalmologist **Paul Miller** was interviewed for a story in *Scientific American* titled "[What Colors Do Dogs See](#)," in which he discusses a study published last year in the Journal of Neuroscience that revealed how canines' brains have a direct connection between their olfactory bulb, which processes smell, and their occipital lobe, which processes vision.

Lyric Bartholomay, PhD '04, professor of pathobiological sciences, was a guest last month on New Hampshire Public Radio's podcast, "[Outside/In](#)," during which she answered a variety of listener questions about mosquitos.

Amy Nichelason, clinical assistant professor of primary care, was featured in a story on [Greatpetcare.com](https://www.greatpetcare.com) about ticks and ways to protect pets from tick-borne diseases.

SVM clinical assistant professor of small animal internal medicine **Jessica Pritchard** sat down with [DVM360.com](https://www.dvm360.com) to explain how pets get diabetes and what signs pet owners should be looking for.

SVM ALUMNI CLASS NOTES

As we end 2023, it's important to reflect on our special moments and milestones and to stay connected with friends and colleagues. 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 2024. We want to hear about your recent personal and professional updates such as:

- **Career announcements**
- **Honors and awards**
- **Births of children and grandchildren**
- **Marriage**
- **Other noteworthy accomplishments**

We look forward to reading and sharing your updates. If you have any questions, please contact Kristi Thorson at kristi.thorson@wisc.edu or 608-265-9692.

Please share your updates by **Wednesday, December 20, 2023**.

[Submit updates](#)

Alumni Storytelling Project

We want to hear from you! All SVM alumni are invited to share their stories from veterinary school, career highlights, and words of wisdom and inspiration via the UW SVM Alumni Storytelling Project. Select stories will be featured on the digital screens in the school for all to view and may potentially be shared via the school's publications, website, and social media channels as well.



Upcoming Events

December 1
Wisconsin AAEP Alumni Reception
Union Kitchen & Tap/Gaslamp
San Diego, CA
5:30–7:30 pm



This year we're offering your
favorite designs from the past!



Holiday Cards that Help Advance Animal Health

The annual SVM holiday card fundraiser is here for another year of spreading cheer! Not only will your recipient cherish the unique artwork, but you'll also be contributing to the health of animals, enhancing student education, and promoting veterinary medical educational innovation. This year, we're opening the vault of our favorite designs from years past! Choose from individual cards notifying a gift in your recipient's honor (\$10/card) or a set of 10 "Happy Holidays" cards (\$35/set).

[Order Now](#)



Literary Animals

"Dogs are our link to paradise. They don't know evil or jealousy or discontent. To sit with a dog on a hillside on a glorious afternoon is to be back in Eden, where doing nothing was not boring — it was peace."

– Milan Kundera (Author, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*)

