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School of
Veterinary Medicine
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Message from the Dean | August 2020

Fall Semester Here We Come

Before you know it, students will return to campus and our fall semester will start. Associate Deans **Peggy Schmidt** and **Lynn Maki** are working with our department chairs, faculty and staff to prepare for both in-person and virtual instruction this coming fall. As you might imagine, there are many moving pieces in this effort, not least of which what happens with COVID-19 infections in Dane County over the next few months.



Our great hope is to provide both in-person and virtual instruction throughout the coming academic year, with increasing percentages of in-person instruction occurring as COVID-19 prevalence declines. This fall semester, first-year students will not have a fall break. For our first three years of classes, we plan to end in-person instruction at Thanksgiving and continue virtual instruction until the semester's end in December. Currently, we plan to begin the spring semester on time, but again all of this depends on COVID-19 infection rates.

I want to thank all of our faculty, staff and students for their tremendous efforts during these unprecedented times. UW Veterinary Care is back up to almost full speed and our research effort is approaching 50 percent in Phase 2 of the campus Research Reboot. We continue to try to limit the density of people in our buildings to lessen the likelihood of a COVID-19 outbreak in the School of Veterinary Medicine.

As I have said previously, while battling COVID-19 the nation -- as well as the university and the profession of veterinary medicine -- continues to confront another pandemic: systemic racism. If you haven't already, I would encourage you to watch and share with your contacts [this important video](#) released earlier this week by the Multicultural Veterinary Medical Association. Titled "A Profession in Crisis: Discrimination in Veterinary Medicine," the video details the discrimination that members of our profession face every day, drawing on the experiences of students and faculty. Together and individually, we must effect change to become a more inclusive and diverse school and profession. I will continue to share updates around our efforts on this front and I continue to welcome your feedback.

I look forward to the arrival of our students at the end of the month and wish everyone all the best this coming fall .

UW Veterinary Care Updates from the Director



Echoing Dean Markel's comments, I want to share my immense gratitude with all of our hospital staff who continue to demonstrate patience and perseverance as we adapt our work amidst the pandemic. Thank you.

From now through the end of September, radiation therapy will not be available at UW Veterinary Care while the hospital replaces its current TomoTherapy radiotherapy delivery system with a new Radiaxct system that incorporates several advancements (to learn more, view the radiation therapy update in the [July Compassionate Care](#)). This important equipment upgrade was made possible in part by gifts to the school's Pets Make a Difference Fund , inspired by the WeatherTech-sponsored Super Bowl commercial featuring UW Veterinary Care patient **Scout MacNeil** and the School of Veterinary Medicine. We plan to resume radiotherapy in October; in the interim, we will assist current clients in identifying alternative locations for treatments and we will continue to see and consult with new oncology clients about treatment options for their pets.

I want to say farewell (in some cases) and thank you to each of our finishing residents: **Brenda Dines**, **Alexandre Ellis**, **Cassandra Jacobs**, **JR Lund**, **Cameron Ratliff**, **Nora Sheehan**, **Casey Smith**, **Nathan Van Asselt** and **Elizabeth Wood (Snyder)**. And welcome to our incoming residents: **Kayla Alessandrino** (Emergency and Critical Care), **Neta Ambar** (Zoological Medicine), **Faolain Barrett** (Small Animal Surgery), **Hannah Clark** and **Ashley Melco** (Small Animal Internal Medicine), **Elizabeth DiPaola** (Neurology), **Gabriela Escalante** (Anesthesia), **Kelly Flynn** (Cardiology), **Kaitlin Jones** and **Alex Radtke** (Diagnostic Imaging), **Holly Martin** (Large Animal Internal Medicine), **Emily Renner** (Dentistry and Oral Surgery), and **Allie Stevens** (Shelter Medicine).

In addition, welcome to **Carrissa Herbrand**, certified veterinary technician in the Morrie Waud Large Animal Hospital; **Corie Leifker**, with our reception/greeter/cashier team; **Ashley Neal**, certified veterinary technician in the ER/CCU; **Laura Staats**, who completed her pharmacy residency program with UW Veterinary Care in July and now joins the hospital full time; and **Phong Yang**, certified veterinary technician with the Special Species service.

We continue to provide exemplary service in trying times thanks to our wonderful hospital team. Take heart in this recent feedback from a client:

" We were able to obtain emergency services right away. The projected cost was clearly explained. Doctor obtained detailed history of Freckles's current issues to aid in diagnosis. After exam, everything was explained extremely well. Very satisfied with our experience. I also very much appreciate the report emailed to me in such a timely manner."

- Mary, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin

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

School News

The summer issue of *On Call* is [now online](#) and will be mailed to recipients soon. This issue of the magazine is heavily focused on COVID-19 response, exploring research advances and

how the school met logistical challenges. You'll also find stories of a friend of the school whose face mask-making venture became a fundraiser for the building expansion, as well as Associate Professor **Dorte Dopfer's** artistic endeavors, [drawing daily illustrations](#) to help navigate the pandemic.



Thank you to all who have participated in feedback sessions as part of the school's development of a new strategic plan, sharing input on draft strategic priorities and initiatives that deserve specific focus within the school moving forward. These feedback sessions will continue with other key stakeholders in the coming weeks.

Congratulations to **Jon McAnulty**, **Nigel Cook**, **Ted Golos** and **Chuck Czuprynski**, who following preference balloting by departmental members will continue to serve as chairs of their respective departments (Surgical Sciences, Medical Sciences, Comparative Biosciences and Pathobiological Sciences).

By the beginning of the fall semester on September 2, UW-Madison [will offer no-cost testing](#) to all students, faculty and staff to support campus reopening, with some testing set to begin in early August. This is in part due to support from **Keith Poulsen DVM'04 PhD'12** and the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. In addition to serving as WVDL director, Poulsen is a clinical professor in the SVM.

The UW-Madison Global Health Institute is [hosting a new webinar series](#), COVID & Equity: What We've Learned; Where We Go From Here, that brings together campus, community and international voices. Upcoming sessions will take place on August 20 and August 27.

There have been several recent updates from campus related to diversity, equity and inclusion:

- In a [detailed statement](#), Chancellor **Rebecca Blank** announced new actions against racism and outlined what will be done "to ensure that our university welcomes and fosters the success of all members of our community."
- Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs **Lori Reesor** announced the [creation of a new department](#) within Student Affairs named the Office of Inclusion Education. The office will centralize and expand diversity, inclusion and social justice education efforts within Student Affairs while simplifying the ways that schools and colleges can engage students in the effort.
- The Division of Diversity, Equity & Educational Achievement hosted a virtual event, Committed to Change: A Call to Action, on July 8, with more than 1,800 people attending. A [video recording of the event](#) is available for viewing.
- On July 23, the Wisconsin Alumni Association hosted a livestream and Q&A with a panel of UW leaders on the topic of building a more inclusive campus. [View the recording](#).

Faculty and Staff News

Professor **Ian Duncan** received the 2020 Sir James Black Medal from the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the society's senior prize in life sciences. The medal was awarded for Duncan's pioneering career that has transformed understanding of remyelination and laid key foundations for treatments of myelin diseases.

Associate Professor **Chad Vezina** has [received a Vilas Faculty Mid-Career Investigator Award](#), recognizing research and teaching excellence. The award provides flexible research funding for three years.

Professor **Thomas Friedrich** has been appointed as a standing member of the Vaccines against Microbial Diseases study section at the National Institutes of Health through 2024.

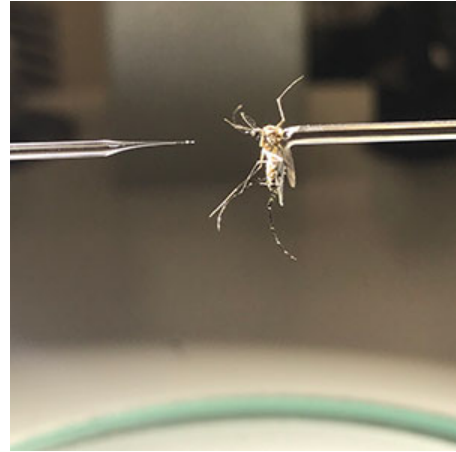
Welcome to **Brandon Vine**, who today joins the Information Technology team to provide front-line support and system administration. Vine's hiring will enable **Wayne Thal** to focus more on the implementation of the new StringSoft electronic health records system and a forthcoming updated laboratory management system. Prior to joining the SVM, Vine worked for the Marshall Public School District, including support of a pandemic response initiative to provide additional outdoor network access points on the school's campus to accommodate new classroom distancing requirements.

Welcome also to **Roderick (Rod) Birrenkott**, who joins the school's facility team on August 3 as a facility repair worker. He will be based in the dock office. Birrenkott previously worked as a product technician at Omnipress.

Research News

In work published in *PLOS Biology*, SVM scientists, including **Mostafa Zamanian** and **Nicolas Wheeler**, provide the first look at the [genetic underpinnings of parasitic filarial nematodes](#)' migration through their hosts. These parasitic worms infect hundreds of millions of people, causing diseases such as river blindness and lymphatic filariasis, which can lead to elephantiasis, a severe swelling of the limbs.

UW-Madison undergraduate students Thrishna Chathurvedula, mentored by Associate Professor **Chad Vezina**, and Jaitri Joshi, mentored by Assistant Professor **Lisa Arendt**, have been selected to receive 2020-21 Wisconsin Hilldale Undergraduate/Faculty Research Fellowships.



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](#).

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

August 3-7

[More](#)

**Use code KQX4693 to waive the registration fee*

Virtual School of Veterinary Medicine Town Hall

August 12

Noon-1 p.m.

Details to follow by email

SVM in the News

[Veterinary Colleges Committed to Anti-Racism, Say Black Lives Matter](#)

JAVMA News

[Profile of a Killer: Unraveling the Deadly New Coronavirus](#)

AP

[Human Activity Contributes to Apparent Increase in Diseases from Animals](#)

Spectrum News 1

[Vector Inspector](#)

Public Health Post



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

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