



MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



December 2023

Welcome to Winter

It's been an exciting time at the UW School of Veterinary Medicine. As you'll see below, on November 13th, we held a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for our new North Building that was an amazing success and highlighted much of what our new facilities will do to enhance our teaching, clinical service and discovery. The following day, I had the opportunity to highlight two of our faculty members, John Svaren and Gillian McLellan, who were invested at the school's faculty meeting. John is the inaugural recipient of the Boespflug Family Professorship in Myelin Biology and Gillian McClellan has been appointed to the Tim and Nancy Speaker Chair in Canine Health. Congratulations both!!



We also had the distinct pleasure on November 27th to welcome Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin to the school, where she had the opportunity to tour many of our facilities, including our clinical skills training center and a variety of areas within UW Veterinary Care and in the Hanson laboratory building. I want to personally thank the Chancellor for taking the time out of her day to spend it with our faculty, staff, and students.

As you all know, December not only welcomes the holiday season, but soon our students will be studying for their final examinations with winter break coming in a few weeks. I want to wish all of you good luck and success as the fall semester approaches its end. Have a fantastic winter break and we look forward to your return in January.

To all of our faculty, staff and students, I want to wish you a Happy Holiday and New Year!

Mark D. Markel
Dean, UW School of Veterinary Medicine
Vilas Distinguished Achievement Professor

Chancellor Mnookin visits SVM and UWVC



UW Chancellor Jennifer Mnookin visited the school and UWVC earlier this week, during which she met with students, faculty, and staff to learn more about our work training the next generation of veterinarians and researchers, providing exceptional care at UW Veterinary Care, and advancing research that benefits both animals and humans.

UW Veterinary Care Updates from the Director

Please join me in welcoming the following new employees who joined our team in September:

- **Kelsey Myers**, CVT, joined the small animal surgery ward as a new veterinary nurse. Kelsey brings over 9 years of vet tech experience to her new role with UWVC.
- **Sara Branton**, CVT, VTS, transitioned into a new role as the anesthesia lead nurse. Sara has been with UWVC for over 9 years. This position will provide logistical assistance to the anesthesia service, and Sara's role will be to optimize organization, communication, and collaboration to keep the anesthesia service running smoothly and efficiently.
- **Sandy Eklof**, CVT, VTS, transitioned into a new role this week as a special species veterinary nurse. Sandy brings 11 years of UWVC critical care, anesthesia, and float experiences with her to this role.
- **Brooke Sonnenberg**, CVT, joined the ECC as a new veterinary nurse. Brooke comes to UWVC from the Primate Center and has been practicing CVT for over 4 years.



I'm also proud to share the following client comment, which highlights the excellent care and customer service delivered by all members of our team. From the reception staff to the students, nurses, clinicians and everyone behind the scenes, we all play an important role in delivering compassionate care to our patients.

"This place is incredible. They saved my pup's life. I am so glad we made it on time. The care and compassion was astounding. Living up in the North woods, it is difficult to find the medical care that we needed for Teddy. Although it was a long drive, there is no other place I would have wanted to take him. Thank you to all the emergency staff, doctors and students. I can find

enough words to describe my appreciation. Dr. Gillian Davies and her associates are caring and amazing."

Thank you for all that you do!

Christopher Snyder, DVM, DAVDC
Director, **UW Veterinary Care**
Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs

SVM expansion celebrated with ribbon-cutting event



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. 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

School News

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

Svaren, McLellan recognized at faculty investiture ceremony

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.](#)

Novo Nordisk awards grant for research on muscle health

Troy Hornberger (Comparative Biosciences) received a grant from Novo Nordisk (the Greenhouse Co-Creation Award), focused on improving muscle health. His team will investigate how the cellular response differs between resistance and endurance training and determine how to put the growth-promoting effects of resistance exercise into a bottle.

Zhao named Rising Star

Fei Zhao (comparative Biosciences) was recognized as the 2024 Rising Star in Reproductive Biology by the Society for the Study of Reproduction

2023 Alumni Award winners announced

The following SVM alumni were recognized at the annual tailgate last month for their significant contributions to society, and for honoring the SVM's legacy of excellence through their accomplishments, affiliations, and careers.

- **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)

Teaching and Learning News

An update from Peggy Schmidt, associate dean for professional programs

Progressing toward the implementation date of Fall 2025, curriculum revision has made tremendous strides. Using lessons learned from McLean Gunderson, Paul Merkatoris, and Tracy Baker's work on the Movement and Support module, all other development teams are refining and sequencing topics under the learning outcomes that emerged from the Nimble Working Group. Each module development team, under the direction of designated co-leads, is creating a module draft including active learning activities, content, labs, and assessments. Through a standardized and flexible process, each team will present their draft to the Nimble Working Group and content experts for feedback.

As part of the feedback and communication process, monthly town hall meetings will summarize updates from module development teams. Module development teams plan to have drafts of the revised curriculum for the 2025-26 calendar year ready for full faculty viewing by April 1, 2024.

Last month faculty voted in support of two proposals from the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) related to the modified pass-fail grading system to be implemented with the revised curriculum. The first proposal created standard grade percentage ranges for grades of S (Satisfactory), M (Marginal), and U (Unsatisfactory) to be used across all courses. The second proposal defined changes to the Academic Policy regarding student outcomes related to receiving a grade of M within a single semester and cumulatively across semesters. Future proposals from EPC will define parameters for remediation and how academic excellence is recognized and reported.

New Faculty Focus

Suzana Salcedo

Associate Professor, Immunology of Infectious Diseases,
Department of Pathobiological Sciences,

Hometown: Porto, Portugal

Hobbies/other interests

Hiking out of the 5G range. Spending time with family-



friends, laughing, and sharing stories. Traveling to explore places I have never been before and learn about other cultures.

Educational/professional background: B.A. Microbiology at the Biotechnology School -UCP (Porto, Portugal); M.Sc. and Ph.D. at Imperial College London (UK); INSERM researcher at the Immunology Institute CIML, Aix-Marseille University (France); INSERM Research Director at Molecular Microbiology and Structural Biology Institute, University of Lyon (France).

What is your field of research, and how did you get into it?

Growing up, I was fascinated with the microscopic world around us. I became interested in how bacteria colonize humans, animals, and the environment, survive extreme conditions, and sometimes cause disease. Once I started looking down the microscope to see how bacteria infect cells, there was no turning back.

What attracted you to UW-Madison?

My research is focused on studying bacterial pathogens and how they trick the immune system to cause disease. The bacteria I am studying are important human and veterinary pathogens. So, I felt that the School of Veterinary Medicine at UW-Madison was an ideal environment for me to continue these research projects.

What was your first visit to campus like?

After a long trip from France and 48 hours of non-stop discussions, presentations, delicious food, and formal interviews, I felt exhilarated, full of ideas, and could not get rid of the smile on my face. I knew instantly this would be an excellent place for me.

The pandemic forced us all to reconsider many things we took for granted. Is there something you've learned that has helped you through these challenging times, personally or professionally?

I was very ill right at the beginning of the pandemic when I first caught COVID and had to step back from work for a while to recover. I was very fortunate to have a fantastic team of students, postdocs and research assistants who kept me connected to the science while independently running the lab. I realized how important the positive, kind, and collaborative environment we had created over the years was for us to overcome those challenging times. I also learned that it was very difficult to homeschool my kids on French grammar during lockdown!

Do you feel your work relates in any way to the Wisconsin Idea?

Yes, absolutely. Studying infectious diseases to help find new ways to combat them will directly benefit our communities and will help protect livestock, companion animals, and wildlife and stop the spread of antibiotic resistance.

What's something interesting about your area of expertise you can share that will make us sound smarter at parties?

Many bacterial pathogens have dedicated "nano syringe-like" secretion systems to inject proteins into target cells. These proteins can be deadly when fired into competing bacteria or, when injected into human or animal cells, divert defense mechanisms and help to cause disease.



Keith Poulsen, clinical associate professor of large animal internal medicine and director of the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, discussed the new respiratory illness impacting dogs across the country with a variety news outlets, including [WKOW News](#), [Milwaukee Journal Sentinel](#), [Spectrum News One](#) and Wisconsin Public Radio

Maria Verbrugge, clinical instructor of primary care, and **Amy Nichelason**, clinical assistant professor of primary care, were guests on Wisconsin Public Radio's [Larry Meiller Show](#) to discuss the new respiratory illness in dogs, tips to keep pets warm in the winter, and ways in which we can make sure our cats and dogs are getting the right amount of sleep.

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.

Jessica Pritchard, clinical assistant professor of small animal internal medicine, sat down with [DVM360.com](#) to explain how pets get diabetes and what signs pet owners should be looking for.

Upcoming Events

December 15
Dean's Get Together
11am - 1pm
Room 2255

