



MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



June 2021

Delivering Outstanding Animal Care: Our Third Strategic Priority

Now that the Class of 2021 has graduated and left the nest, and the Class of 2022 has begun their clinical rotations, I'm reinitiating the presentation of our strategic plan and priorities.

Strategic priority three for 2021-25 is delivering outstanding animal care. We have six stated goal areas under this priority. They include:



1. Improve access to care
2. Further develop a positive and equitable environment within the hospital for clinicians, students, staff and clients (animal owner and rDVM)
3. Promote mental health and wellness within UW Veterinary Care
4. Expand and improve hospital infrastructure, including state-of-the-art diagnostics and therapeutics
5. Optimize both client and staff/student experience (including rDVMs)
6. Enhance outreach to improve animal care in the state of Wisconsin and beyond

As you may suspect, these goals include an array of initiatives to help focus our energies in each of these areas, which can be found [here](#).

In further support of goal areas two and three, the school has created a wellbeing task force, chaired by Associate Dean Lynn Maki. Over the next six months, this task force will develop the charge and composition of a wellbeing committee focused on efforts to enhance the wellbeing of our faculty, staff and students.

Last year, the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) [hired Makenzie Peterson](#) to develop national and international strategies to enhance wellbeing within veterinary medical schools and colleges and the profession. It is our goal to build on these strategies to improve the mental wellbeing, work-life and learning environment for all who work and learn at the UW School of Veterinary Medicine and within UW Veterinary Care.

Yesterday was Ruthanne Chun's final day as the associate dean for clinical affairs and director of UW Veterinary Care. I want to thank her for her decade-long leadership of our hospital. Ruthanne has transformed the working and learning environment within UW Veterinary Care and I very much look forward to her continued leadership within the school in the coming years. We have just learned that in recognition of her incredible talent, dedication and invaluable contributions across campus and statewide, Ruthanne was selected as the 2021 recipient of the [LaMarr Billups Community–University Engagement Award](#). Congratulations, Ruthanne!

In additional award news, we've just learned that members of the school's Office for Advancement have earned the 2021 American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges (AAVMC) Communications Excellence Award. This award recognizes the important

role communication programs play in advancing academic veterinary medicine and the profession. Ashley Voss and Meghan Lepisto were recognized for their role in helping to coordinate and publicize WeatherTech's 2020 Super Bowl commercial featuring the School of Veterinary Medicine and the beloved golden retriever Scout. As you'll likely recall, Scout's story was shared by thousands of media outlets across the nation and world, viewed and shared by millions on social media, and inspired gifts from around the globe toward the SVM's cancer research – dramatically elevating the school and the entire veterinary medicine field.

As we progress through the summer, I'd encourage each of you to take time with your family and loved ones to re-energize after this challenging past 15 months as we prepare for the return to mostly in-person operations in the school beginning in the fall. Have a great summer.

UW Veterinary Care Updates from the Director



As I hand off the reins today to Chris Snyder in the associate dean and hospital director role, it has been an honor and pleasure to work with each of you in this capacity. What a journey! Thank you immensely for your partnership and support.

Welcome to new UW Veterinary Care employees **Brooke Berlin**, a technician with the Large Animal Hospital; **Nicole Kilkullen**, a technologist with the Diagnostic Imaging service; and **Kristin Richards**, a certified veterinary technician with the Special Species and Primary Care Services. And congratulations to **Emily Vander Zanden**, who stepped into a new role as microbiology lead in Clinical Pathology.

Thank you to **Rebecca Stepien**, who today steps away from the Small Animal Chief of Services role following many years of service. Congratulations to **Julie Walker**, who will become Small Animal Chief of Services on August 1. I will serve on an interim basis in this role until August.

Congratulations to **Megan Climans**, a second-year anatomic pathology resident, who passed Phase I of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists Examination.

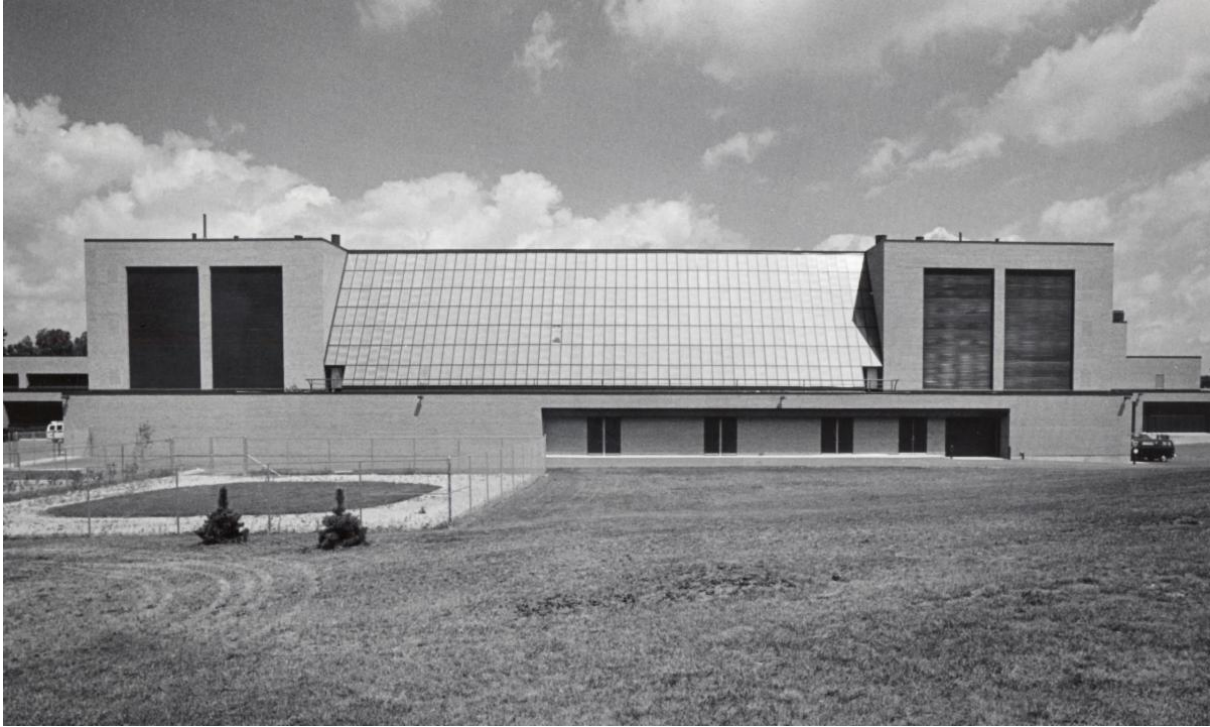
This summer five veterinary technician interns have joined us in the hospital as part of a partnership with Madison College. These interns will observe and practice everyday clinical skills, and participate in hands-on labs, through July 9.

Through good times and bad, we each do incredible work, as the client comment below alludes to. Thank you again for the opportunity to serve with you.

"I came to you to say goodbye to Vita as her cancer was aggressively attacking her lungs. Dr. Granick made the worst day of my life as bearable as possible via his compassionate care of my girl — and me. I didn't want to let her go ever but knew in my heart it was time to end her suffering. Dr. Granick gave me all of the information and incredible support to do it when I was ready. I don't think I would have ever been 100% ready, but I'm glad he was there to guide us through her final moments. I'm also honored that he and his team will be able to learn from her health history and hopefully help other pets and their families." -Tracy, Milwaukee

Ruthanne Chun DVM'91
Clinical Professor, Oncology

From the Archives



Did you know that a bank of solar panels once stretched across the school's south side? The panels became non-functional and beyond repair in recent years. Today, where the solar panels once stood, students and instructors now enjoy the sun through floor-to-ceiling windows in the [Renk Learning Center](#), transforming underutilized space into a student-focused hub. Credit: University of Wisconsin-Madison Archives

School News

Campus COVID-19 news:

- As campus transitions into summer, the university is modifying COVID-19 protocols. Guidelines have been updated for students, faculty and staff planning to access the UW–Madison campus. Effective June 2, campus policies for events, face coverings and outdoor physical distancing are also being updated. [Here are the most recent changes](#). Additional details, including FAQs, are available at [covidresponse.wisc.edu](https://www.covidresponse.wisc.edu).
- COVID-19 vaccine is [readily available on campus](#). UHS is also now able to offer vaccines to the broader community.

SVM building expansion updates:

- CD Smith has been selected as the general contractor for the School of Veterinary Medicine building expansion and renovation. The current plan is for Lot 62 to close on or around June 16 and be relinquished to CD Smith on June 17.
- The school will host a groundbreaking ceremony in Lot 62 on June 18, from 1-2 p.m., with both an in-person event for invited guests and online streaming.
- The Willow Creek bridge construction has begun with a scheduled completion date of July 1. The bridge will be temporary and replaced with a permanent bridge when the new building is complete. Both the temporary and permanent bridges will have a pedestrian component.

Teaching and Learning News

An update from Peggy Schmidt, associate dean for professional programs

The 2020-2021 academic year has come to a close. Thank you to the faculty, staff and students for their incredible adaptability, creativity and dedication through this challenging year.

Looking towards the fall semester, many faculty and instructional staff are making plans to incorporate innovative teaching and assessment strategies from the past year of hybrid education. Student feedback from various surveys and course evaluations has been crucial in identifying successful strategies that should be carried forward in our current curriculum and beyond into the curriculum revision.

The curriculum revision process continues to move forward on schedule for a fall 2023 implementation. Proposed curricular models are being finalized by the task force. Proposals will be shared with the SVM community in the coming weeks. There will be multiple opportunities and venues for discussion and feedback on the models as a continuation of the participatory design process.

Faculty and Staff News

Congratulations to **Suresh Marulasiddappa**, who will become the school's new associate dean for research and graduate training effective September 1. Thank you to Dale Bjorling for his decade of service in this role and his outstanding work to support the school in its research and graduate training mission.

Congratulations as well to **Marie Pinkerton**, promoted to clinical professor in the Department of Pathobiological Sciences.



A photo by Assistant Professor **Jayshree Samanta** of her pumpkin carving titled [coronavirus on fire](#) was featured in the latest *Corpus Callosum* online arts journal.

Alhaji Njai, who holds an honorary associate appointment in the Department of Pathobiological Sciences, was featured in a [recent Forbes article](#) about his efforts to study Ebola in Sierra Leone and educate the next generation of STEM scientists.

Student News

DVM students **Morgan Falk**, **Alexis Payette** and **Alexis Urrea**, all members of the Class of 2023, have each [received scholarships](#) through the Merck Animal Health Veterinary Student Scholarship Program – a \$5,000 scholarship to support their educational endeavors.

Derek Jantzen DVMx'24 was awarded a [fellowship by the Foundation for Food & Agriculture Research](#) to support his Summer Scholars project titled Combining High-Throughput Phenotyping and Genomic Information of Calves to Improve Productive Life in Dairy Cattle.

Research News

Several School of Veterinary Medicine researchers were awarded [2021 UW-Madison Global Health Institute grants and awards](#):

- Seed grant and virtual visiting scholar award -- Combatting antimicrobial resistance: A complex systems approach; **Jessica Hite**, Department of Pathobiological Sciences (PI), with **Döerte Döpfer**, **Johanna Elfenbein** and others.
- Graduate student research award -- One health and building bridges: An emerging disease at Tacugama Chimpanzee Sanctuary, Sierra Leone; **Leah Owens**, PhD/DVM candidate, with **Tony Goldberg**

Atharva Ankush, an undergraduate student in the lab of Assistant Professor **Jayshree Samanta**, received a Summer Honors senior thesis award from the College of Letters & Science.

A Day in the Life



Doctor of veterinary medicine graduates **Marie Bucko, Stephanie Rinehart, Megan Barry and Sarah Fischer** wave inflated medical gloves at the graduate and professional degree [Commencement ceremony](#) at Camp Randall Stadium on May 8. Photo: Jeff Miller

Upcoming Events

With increased COVID-19 testing, fewer positive cases, and continued vaccinations, UW-Madison has made changes to its [campus events policy](#).

June 18

SVM Groundbreaking Ceremony

1-2 p.m.

Video link to be provided prior to event.

SVM in the News

[Team of Specialists Saves Young Bonobo at Milwaukee County Zoo](#)
WDJT-TV

[Five Reasons Why You Don't Need to Panic About Coronavirus Variants](#)
MIT Technology Review

[Many Midwestern Communities Suffer From Veterinary Clinic Shortages](#)
Wisconsin State Farmer

[UW Program Sees Increase in Clients](#)



“The reality of those rural communities is the veterinarians actually need to be really good mixed animal veterinarians, and not just food animal, because to sustain their practice, they need to be seeing the cats, the dogs, the horses ... as well as the farm animals.”

-Nigel Cook, chair of the Department of Medical Sciences, speaking to Wisconsin State Farmer about Midwestern states [experiencing shortages of veterinary professionals](#) in their rural communities.

