



MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



May 2023

Graduation Here We Come!

I'm sure our Class of 2023 is looking forward to its upcoming graduation ceremonies in a little less than two weeks. Congratulations to each of you and I hope whatever you pursue in this amazing profession gives you the joy that it has me over the last 40 years. As you'll see below, our [Celebration of Excellence Award event](#) was this past weekend and I want to congratulate the award recipients for all they have done for the School of Veterinary Medicine.



I'm pleased to announce that the new [US News and World Report rankings](#) for schools of veterinary medicine were released last week. This ranking is updated every four years and the UW School of Veterinary Medicine rose from eighth in the U.S. to seventh. I want to thank all of our faculty, staff and students for your contributions to the school and in particular the leadership you provide nationally and internationally. It is through your efforts that we continue to be ranked among the best veterinary medical schools in the country.

Since 2016, the SVM has conducted a climate survey of faculty, staff and students every two years. 2022 was the fourth year administering this survey. This year had the lowest number of individuals completing the survey, and we think this is likely due to the various demands on peoples' responsibilities and time. While this makes it hard to make any specific conclusions from the data, we can talk about some big-picture trends. The low response rate could be the result of a variety of factors. It may reflect how the world has changed in the last two years and the demands on faculty, staff and students that are present. In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, these could include staffing issues, curricular revision and building construction projects. It may also reflect that people are settling into the "new normal" and don't have strong feelings (one way or another) about the climate. And it may also reflect survey fatigue, as the SVM's survey was just one of many employees and students have been offered.

Many categories of engagement and feeling appreciated and valued saw a decline. Three categories with large decreases include: feeling valued as an individual; leaders creating an environment that values what I do; and school leaders being open to feedback. These data stress the importance of continuing our focus on building community and inclusion, as well as prioritizing and ensuring that all individuals feel valued and heard.

The data also report areas with positive gains. Employees are now reporting that they receive feedback on a more regular basis. Respondents also report having witnessed or experienced fewer instances of discrimination. And, when discrimination or bias occurs, members of the SVM now have a better understanding of who/where to go in reporting acts of discrimination, as compared to the climate survey conducted in 2020.

We can celebrate these successes while ensuring we keep focused on doing better each day. Given the low turnout of the climate survey, it is clear that survey fatigue is real and felt by many at the SVM. As we consider the 2024 Climate Survey, we will have to find new ways to reach individuals and gather important information that is reflective of all of us here at the

School of Veterinary Medicine. All voices participating will strengthen our knowledge of everyone's experiences and perspectives, thus making us a stronger learning and working community.

Again, congratulations to our Class of 2023. I wish you all the best in whatever you pursue in this amazing profession.

UW Veterinary Care Updates from the Director

This month, UW Veterinary Care welcomed **Karen Veenhof**, a new veterinary technician assistant who joined the emergency and critical care team.



The following client comment highlights the excellent care delivered by the ophthalmology team.

"UW has been treating Oliver [a cat] for over five years now for his eye condition, and they have always been amazing. The service, care, and compassion they provide are top-notch." - Barbara F.

While this comment highlights one service, it is representative of the work being done across the clinic and the appreciation felt by our clients. Thank you, everyone, for all that you do.

Christopher Snyder, DVM, DAVDC
Director, [UW Veterinary Care](#)
Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs

From the Archives



School of Veterinary Medicine faculty and staff line up for food at the Employee Appreciation Picnic in 2004. This gathering eventually evolved into what is now the All School Picnic, happening on May 11 this year.

School News

On April 29, students, faculty, staff and friends gathered for the 2023 SVM Celebration of Excellence Awards. This event, made possible through the generosity of donors, celebrates the end of the academic year and recognizes the efforts of the exceptional people who work and learn at the UW School of Veterinary Medicine. [View the award recipients.](#)

Nominations for the 2023 [UW School of Veterinary Medicine Alumni Awards](#) are due today, **May 1**. The awards recognize graduates who have made significant contributions to society and whose accomplishments, affiliations, and careers have honored the legacy of excellence at the school. Three award categories allow DVM and graduate degree program alumni to be recognized.

In early April, we welcomed over 60 students from the Dane County 4-H. These students ranged from third to twelfth grade. The students spent half a day at the SVM participating in a variety of hands on activities, including performing wellness exams on stuffed animals, looking at specimens under a microscope and practicing scrubbing in for a surgery.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion News

An update from Richard Barajas, assistant dean for diversity, equity and inclusion

The SVM helped co-sponsor Indigenous Health and Wellness Day at Madison College on April 21. We had a table at the resource fair and talked with middle and high school students. The event is geared toward encouraging students to pursue higher education and connect with Native student groups and support programs at Madison College and UW-Madison.

The Comparative Biomedical Sciences Students' Choice Speaker Committee hosted **Ebony McGee** from Vanderbilt University to discuss her book *Black, Brown, Bruised: How Racialized STEM Education Stifles Innovation*. McGee has decades of experience researching how racialized experiences and racial stereotypes impact students of color along their academic journey and beyond. This talk helped start and continue conversations around the challenges underrepresented and racially minoritized students face in campus, lab and professional environments.

Faculty and Staff News

Emmett Swanton, an anesthesia resident, won first place for his presentation at the Midwest Anesthesia Resident Conference. His presentation on field anesthesia of a dromedary (one-humped) camel helped increase the visibility of veterinary anesthesiology among physician colleagues. **Related:** UW Veterinary Care [collaborates with UW Health](#) to host human medicine anesthesiology residents in our animal hospital several times throughout the year.

Assistant professor **Freya Mowat** was named the 2023 recipient of the Dr. Joe G. Hollyfield New Investigator Award for Macular Degeneration Research by the BrightFocus Foundation. This award recognizes her exceptionally promising and forward-thinking ideas in the field of macular degeneration.

Kazuya Oikawa, a post-doctoral researcher in McLellan lab, won the BrightFocus Foundation's National Glaucoma Research Post-Doctoral Fellowship award.

The school's Advancement Team recently welcomed two new staff members. **Gian Galassi** is the school's Publications and Media Relations Manager (a position previously held by Meghan Lepisto) and **Kelly Bird** is our Creative & Marketing Manager. **Related:** The school has a

variety of digital assets, including logos, branding, and poster templates, and virtual meeting backgrounds. These are also available on the SVM Intranet.

Student News

Congratulations to the following recipients of Zoetis research awards at the 2023 SVM Phi Zeta Research Day in April:

- Award for research excellence by a graduate student: **Serena George**
 - Honorable mentions: **Srikanth Aravamuthan, Haley Uustal, Taylor Weary**
- Award for research excellence by an SVM student: **Andrew Smith** and **Patrick Carroll**
 - Honorable mention: **Keegan Lim**
- Award for research excellence by an intern or resident: **Alaina Houghton-Chamberlain**
 - Honorable mention: **Kaitlyn Jones**

Research News

Marcos Isidoro Ayza, a graduate student in the department of comparative biomedical sciences, is one of the leads on a project investigating an approach to protect wild bats from the fungus that causes white-nose syndrome. The study is funded by a **\$2 million grant** from the National Science Foundation and Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, and they will collaborate with scientists at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey and the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison.

Associate professor **Rob Lipinski** received R01 grant funding for a research project entitled "DNA methylation in orofacial clefting".

Tracy Baker, Michael Cahill, and Jyoti Watters received funding for their R21 project entitled "Is gestational sleep apnea a previously unrecognized cause of maternal immune activation that predisposes male offspring to disease-relevant neural dysfunction?"

A Day in the Life



Second-year DVM student **Caroline Seymour** presents a poster at the SVM's annual Spring Research Day.

Thirty scientists-in-training presented posters at the event, with eight giving five-minute flash talks on their work.

Upcoming Events

May 11

Dean's Get Together: All School Picnic

11:30-1 p.m.

School of Veterinary Medicine

May 12

Doctoral, MFA and Medical Professional Degree Candidate Commencement

5:30 p.m.

Kohl Center

[More](#)

May 13

SVM Investiture Ceremony

7 a.m. breakfast/9 a.m. program

School of Veterinary Medicine

May 13

Bachelor's, Master's and Law Degree Candidate Commencement

12:00 p.m.

Camp Randall Stadium

[More](#)

June 16

Dean's Get Together

4:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

Veterinary Medicine Building

June 24

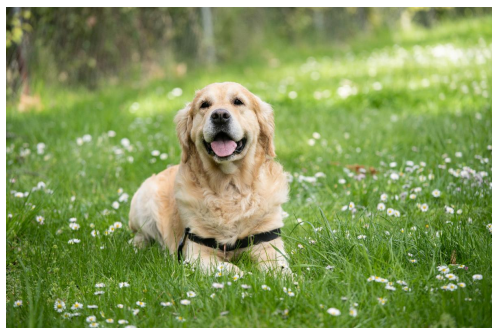
Alumni Reunion

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

Veterinary Medicine Building

[More](#)

SVM in the News



[How Much Does Tumor Removal for Dogs Cost?](#)

Forbes

[Dogs, Lawn Care and Cancer](#)

The Humane Society of the United States

“Dementia is the broad, umbrella term for cognitive decline. In neuropathological studies, cats have shown changes in the brain consistent with Alzheimer's and vascular dementia in humans.”

-Starr Cameron, a SVM clinical associate professor, discusses her research on feline cognitive dysfunction during a TEDx talk in collaboration with the Morris Animal Foundation on April 24.



