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**School of  
Veterinary Medicine**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Message from the Dean | June 2020

## Welcome to Summer

I know it's odd to say, but summer has finally arrived. We successfully navigated through the [virtual graduation and investiture ceremony](#) for the Class of 2020 and have begun the clinical virtual training of the Class of 2021. We are working with the UW-Madison campus to bring our fourth-year students back into in-person training in the hospital during the first week of July.



We have also begun discussions and planning for teaching this fall. Although the exact logistics of how we will deliver instruction are unclear, we do know that we need to be prepared and develop successful pathways for each of our students. This likely will include some combination of in-person and virtual instruction depending on how the COVID-19 pandemic plays out in Wisconsin this summer.

I know this is an intensely challenging time for many of you. Please remember to reach out to loved ones, family members or to us here at the SVM if you need assistance or help. Of the many difficult components of this outbreak, it is the continuing uncertainty about the future and what it will bring that is the most challenging for many.

Adding to the stress and sadness of this time is the tragic and inexcusable death of George Floyd and other acts of violence and discrimination against people of color. Protests across the nation and here in Madison in recent days demonstrate the anger felt over years of unequal treatment. As Associate Dean Maki and I said in our message to the school last Thursday, we are proud of the school's efforts to further advance diversity, equity and inclusion, but we know we have more to do. We ask that you join us in this mission by exploring personal ways to understand and address racism; please see my May 28 message for resources. As Chancellor Rebecca Blank said in a message yesterday, "Each of us -- particularly those of us who do not face the daily challenge of living amid inequity and injustice -- must contribute to and lead the change that is needed." I'd encourage you to read [Chancellor Blank's full statement](#) (which includes additional campus resources), as well as that of UW-Madison Police Department Chief [Kristen Roman](#), and please stay safe.

I will continue to let you know what the school's plans are related to COVID-19, as they are known, and will provide as much information as I am able as decision-making

occurs in our teaching, clinical care or research efforts. Along those lines, please save the date for our next virtual SVM town hall meeting on June 9 at noon. This follows our first town hall in May covering updates and questions around COVID-19's impact on school and hospital operations.

I want to take the opportunity to thank Tim and Nancy Speaker for their generous gift to establish the Tim and Nancy Speaker Chair in Canine Health, which aims to recognize, recruit and retain outstanding faculty whose research includes a specific focus on improving canine health and well-being. A reminder that applications for this new chair are being accepted through June 15 (details can be found in an email that I sent school-wide on May 14). The award includes an estimated total grant of approximately \$225,000 to be paid in yearly increments over five years, from July 2020 to June 2025.

I wish each of you all the best in this challenging time and hope you stay safe and well .

## UW Veterinary Care Updates from the Director



Suffice it to say, COVID-19 has disrupted our world. I want to thank everyone in the hospital for their patience and perseverance as we adjust to changes in how we receive and care for patients, gradually bring in more cases, keep ourselves and each other safe, teach clinical rotations virtually while also determining how to get students back on-site, navigate the Work-Share program and furloughs, and adapt to many other unknowns. It's a lot, I know. We are a talented, creative, enthusiastic team, and we are meeting this challenge. (Need a reminder of our grit and determination? See [this Washington Post article](#) about UW Veterinary Care's role in solving a human and feline medical mystery.)

Welcome to our new phone staff employee **Mikayala Morales** and to **Elizabeth Dohm**, a veterinary technician who has joined the Emergency and Critical Care team. And best wishes to **Lori Pike**, who retires this month after 23 years with UW Veterinary Care. We will miss you and very much appreciate your service.

In addition, congratulations to **Erika Hoffeld** on passing Phase I of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists examination and **Omer Lerma n** for passing Phase I of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists boards

Please keep up the good work. Your efforts are seen and appreciated by both colleagues and clients, as noted in this comment from a recent client of Cardiology:

" The staff were amazing, especially considering the crazy COVID environment. We were impressed with how well the staff communicated amongst themselves and with us considering we couldn't come into the clinic."

- *Carrie, McFarland, Wisconsin*

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

## School News

Welcome to two new staff members in the Office of Academic Affairs. **Molly Harris** joined OAA in May as an administrative and curricular specialist. Molly will provide administrative support to the associate dean for professional programs, Peggy Schmidt (who begins at the SVM July 1), and will also work closely with faculty, instructional staff and students as the school's curricular services representative. In addition, **Natalie Matthews** joins the office today as a university services associate. Natalie will serve as the first point of contact, via email and phone, for prospective students, current students, and many faculty and staff who contact

OAA. She will also fulfill many of the responsibilities previously held by Mary Fahey, who retired in mid-May.

Farewell to **Josh Benish** in Information Technology, whose last day with the school was May 21. During his 15 years at the SVM, Josh provided great support and technical guidance for many of the school's teaching, learning and research initiatives.

## Faculty and Staff News

The 2020 [John Dystel Prize for Multiple Sclerosis Research](#) has been awarded to Professor **Ian Duncan** for his groundbreaking research on myelin (the protective nerve coating that is damaged in MS). The Dystel Prize is given jointly by the National MS Society and the American Academy of Neurology.

Professor **Hannah Carey** has been recognized with a [Postdoc Mentoring Award](#), presented annually by the UW-Madison Postdoctoral Association to honor the outstanding mentorship of postdoctoral trainees on campus.

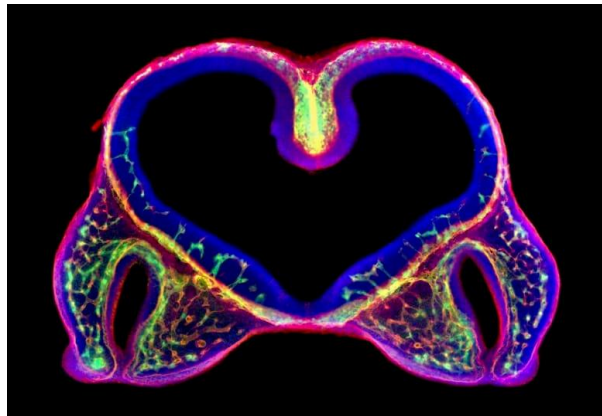
## Research News

In a [study published in the \*New England Journal of Medicine\*](#) led by Professor **Yoshihiro Kawaoka**, scientists in the U.S. and Japan report that in the laboratory, cats can readily become infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and may be able to pass the virus to other cats.

Professors Kawaoka and **Tom Friedrich** were recently awarded [COVID-19 Response grants](#) from the Wisconsin Partnership Program at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health to undertake genetic surveillance of coronavirus spread in Wisconsin to inform outbreak control and to test a novel approach for developing a potential vaccine for COVID-19, respectively.

The American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation has awarded a grant to Professor **Lauren Trepanier** for [research into bladder carcinogen exposures](#) in pet dogs. The work aims to develop canine bladder cancer prevention strategies by exploring the relationship between the disease and exposure to certain environmental chemicals.

**Miranda R. Sun**, a research specialist in the Department of Comparative Biosciences and member of the Lipinski Lab, is a winner in the UW-Madison [2020 Cool Science Image Contest](#) for a microscope image of a brightly colored section of a developing mouse embryo.



The SVM's involvement in the Vaccination Against Canine Cancer study, the largest interventional clinical trial in the history of veterinary medicine, is featured in a new [Big Ten Network LiveBig vignette](#) airing during BTN programming. LiveBIG videos highlight the ambitious vision and sweeping impact of Big Ten universities.

## Upcoming Events

*In light of the continued spread of COVID-19, in-person campus events and meetings are currently canceled. Alternative formats are being explored for several events. For more information, read the university's [announcement](#) and visit the SVM's [online calendar](#).*

**Virtual School of Veterinary Medicine Town Hall Meetings**  
June 9 and July 14

Noon-1 p.m.  
Details to follow by email

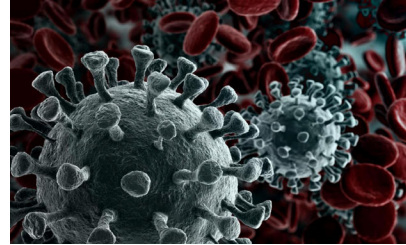
## SVM in the News

Cats With No Symptoms Spread Virus to Other Cats in Lab Test  
*Associated Press*

Safer-At-Home Measures Helped Stem Spread Of  
COVID-19 In Wisconsin, Research Suggests  
*WUWM*

Global Race for COVID-19 Vaccine Includes Madison  
Contenders  
*Wisconsin State Journal*

'People Are Looking for Love': Adoptions of Dogs, Cats  
Skyrocket During Coronavirus Pandemic  
*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*



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

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