

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

College of Veterinary Medicine

Office of the Dean  
3505 Veterinary Medicine Basic Sciences Building  
2001 South Lincoln Avenue



September 19, 2007

Dear members of the College family,

I'm writing to welcome all of you to an exciting academic year and to thank you for your past and future contributions to the success of our College. Thanks to you, we've made significant progress over the past year on the top five priorities we identified through strategic planning.

**The DVM Program**

This is why we exist as a college. Spurred by the AVMA Council on Education accreditation site visit in 2006, our faculty have invested thousands of hours over the past 18 months in reviewing the veterinary curriculum.

- Faculty are seizing this opportunity to devise a program that sets us apart as a leader. The Courses and Curriculum Committee is currently evaluating an innovative proposal that integrates clinical exposure and basic sciences throughout the entire curriculum.
- The Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine has approved for credit 2- or 4-week rotations for fourth-year students at primary care practices. This change addresses the need for additional basic clinical experience for students.

**Translational Biomedical Research**

From senior faculty to new hires, our roster boasts some of the top scholars and innovators in the world. Many of them are leaders in research that translates basic science discoveries into applications for human and animal health.

- New faculty include Will Laegreid, Shuhong Luo, and Dongwan Yoo in pathobiology; Suzanne Berry, Levent Dirikolu, Jason Herrick, and Jeffrey Sable in veterinary biosciences; Avery Bennett, Natalie Coffey, Olivier Dossin, Wanda Gordon-Evans, Maureen McMichael, Mark Mitchell, and James Naughton, in veterinary clinical medicine; and Laura Kohrt and Kathleen Colgrove in the veterinary diagnostic laboratory.
- Dr. Susan Ball-Kell leads the diagnostic lab's Laboratory Animal Pathology Program, providing comparative pathology services to biomedical researchers here and in Chicago.
- All three departments have instituted vibrant seminars series. The college's TBR Seminar Series leads the way. I encourage you to sample the fall lineup, which features international speakers on stem cell biology, wildlife/conservation medicine, and infectious disease.

**Chicago Center for Veterinary Medicine**

Thanks to faculty leadership, our vision of establishing a presence in Chicago will soon be a reality. The new center will initially offer small animal primary care services, engaging students in the clinical and management aspects of the practice. Ultimately we expect this venture to augment our specialty caseload and help us attract faculty, recruit students from underrepresented groups, collaborate with biomedical researchers in Chicago, and connect with new donors.

- A location has been selected: 2242 West Harrison in the Illinois Medical District south of the Loop. It includes 6,400 sq ft of space we'll lease from the University of Illinois at Chicago.
- We are in the process of designing and building out the space, purchasing equipment, and hiring personnel to get this up and running within the year.

## **Building Community**

To address our goal of ensuring that our facilities are consistent with our vision of leadership, we are in the process of raising funds for a building to be located between the hospital and basic sciences building. The building will house new surgical, imaging, and oncology facilities and literally and symbolically unite the College's educational, research, and service activities. A gift from alumnus Dr. Allan Graham as well as a bequest from Margaret Secondino are earmarked for the new building.

- Facilities milestones in the past year include acquiring the state's only equine-capable MRI machine, expanding wireless access throughout the College, and making plans to equip our Race Street farm to handle biosecurity level II research.
- The Dr. Walter E. Zuschlag/ISVMA Veterinary Heritage Collection and Information Commons will provide study space for students in a room infused with Illinois veterinary history. Please plan to attend the dedication on October 5 at 3 p.m.

## **Center for One Medicine/Conservation Medicine**

This broad initiative encompasses research and training focused on public health as well as research, education, and service in the areas of zoo medicine and environmental health.

- The January colloquium on the "Illinois Center for One Medicine" led to the development of a white paper detailing plans for the new center. An elective course for veterinary and other graduate students on emerging diseases and public policy is in the works.
- Sixteen veterinary students are now enrolled in a joint DVM/MPH degree.
- Our programmatic strength in conservation and zoo medicine spans all departments; new faculty members Drs. Avery Bennett, Jason Herrick, Mark Mitchell, and Kathleen Colgrove add to that strength.
- A formal 4<sup>th</sup> year rotation track for zoo medicine was recently approved.

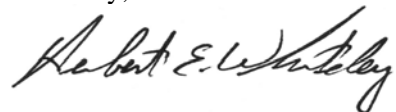
The successes highlighted above only hint at the daily exertions, the late nights and weekends, the "above and beyond" that so many of you give to your work and studies. Our collective efforts are moving the College steadily closer to our vision of national and international leadership in biomedical and veterinary education, research, and public engagement.

Individual achievements contribute to our overall success. Two of our students currently serve on the executive committee of the Student AVMA; they are Emi Eaton, president-elect, and Rachel Shaff, secretary. Among recent faculty successes, Dr. Jodi Flaws was awarded a \$3 million grant from the National Institute on Aging, Dr. Wanda Haschek-Hock was honored by the Society of Toxicologic Pathology in June, and Dr. Sandy Manfra Marretta will be honored by the Champaign County Humane Society next month.

We all have an investment in seeing our College succeed. We are more than halfway to our goal of \$35 million in the university-wide Brilliant Futures campaign. In the coming year, we will make a targeted appeal to our faculty, staff and retirees for financial contributions. It speaks volumes to alumni and other potential donors when they see that our own faculty, staff and retirees are willing to show their commitment to the College.

Thank you for being part of our College family. Here's to a rewarding fall semester!

Sincerely,



Herb Whiteley  
Dean

P.S. I hope to see many of you at Friday's Oskee Bow Wow fund-raiser. In October there are several Fall Conference events (golf outing, tent party, and more) to which you are invited. See our Web site for registration details.