

Vision Statement

The College of Veterinary Medicine aspires to be a leader in veterinary and comparative biomedical education, scholarship, and public engagement in the University of Illinois system, in the state, in the nation, and around the world.— SHAPING THE FUTURE:

A COLLECTIVE VISION FOR THE COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE, February 2005

October 14, 2005

Dear College community members,

With the fall semester in full swing, I'd like to continue my tradition of writing to recap recent successes of the College and to thank each of you for your indispensable contributions in moving us toward our vision.

The past year has brought an astounding number of exciting developments that strengthen the College's position of leadership on this campus and far beyond.

A leader in the University of Illinois system...

Acting provost Jesse Delia has called the plan to seek national competitiveness in Translational Biomedical Research "the most important initiative the campus has undertaken in the past 30 years." Our College has led this broad multidisciplinary effort since its inception last fall.

- Our programs in infectious disease, reproductive biology, toxicology and orthopedic biology are at the forefront of interdepartmental collaborations on this campus that "translate" fundamental research discoveries into the treatment or prevention of disease.
- A weekly Translational Biomedical Research seminar series, held Mondays at noon in LAC 100, was begun this semester to encourage information sharing and collaboration.
- Drs. Shelley Tischkau and Joan Jorgensen are spearheading a program for graduate study in this area.

A leader ... in the state...

Our Veterinary Teaching Hospital and Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory continue to provide exemplary service to referring veterinarians and animal owners throughout the state. The College is also developing new avenues for service to the state.

- Dr. Larry Firkins and Professor Emeritus LeRoy Biehl have worked closely with the state's Department of Agriculture to cultivate the Illinois Veterinary Emergency Response Team.
- The Office of Public Engagement is in the planning stages of creating a Master Pet Owner program, modeled after Extension's Master Gardener program.

A leader ... in the nation...

The Veterinary Workforce Expansion Act, introduced in both chambers of Congress earlier this year through the efforts of the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, is aimed at increasing the number of veterinarians serving in public health and biomedical research by expanding the capacity of the nation's veterinary colleges. We are addressing needs outlined in the VWEA.

- With the help of Dr. Jack Herrmann, our joint DVM/master's in public health degree program was approved in February; three students have already enrolled.
- Classrooms were renovated to accommodate our largest incoming class ever, 112 students.
- Our summer research programs have given experience in biomedical research to 27 pre-vet or veterinary students in 3 years. A new NIH grant will fund part of this program for the next 5 years.

A leader ... around the world...

Individual College faculty members and students have always been active internationally in research and education. Recently, conservation medicine has emerged as an area in which the College has considerable depth and great potential for global impact.

- Our longstanding Envirovet, Wildlife Medical Clinic, and Zoological Pathology programs and our new residency program in zoo medicine together make Illinois a powerhouse in conservation medicine.
- A new program led by Drs. Tony Goldberg and Thomas Gillespie—the Kibale EcoHealth Project—is the flagship program within the campus Earth and Society Initiative in Emerging and Infectious Disease and Ecosystem Health. It combines research into the intersection of human and animal disease ecology, education for veterinary and graduate students, and outreach to Ugandan households and east African universities.
- Joan Embery’s visit to the College in August helped put the spotlight on these programs.

A plan to lead

We are moving toward our vision with deliberation. The College facility plan made its debut in May. It complements the goals and strategies outlined in our strategic plan and reflects the input of students, faculty, and staff over the past year. This plan adds a concrete and literal dimension to our vision and ensures that the excellence of our facilities matches the excellence of our people and programs. The enclosed brochure provides details about the facility plan.

While we anticipate that the VWEA legislation will help fund new teaching facilities, we look to private gifts to support renovations and new construction to expand the hospital as well as eight new endowed chairs or professorships and \$10 million in additional support for graduate fellowships, residencies, and veterinary scholarships. Our goal for the upcoming University-wide campaign is more than \$50 million over 10 years.

The past year has brought many changes in leadership: President Joe White and Chancellor Richard Herman at the University and campus levels, department heads Dan Rock and David Williams in our College. The year to come will bring a new director for the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, a new head for the Department of Veterinary Biosciences, and a director for the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, a newly created position.

Leaders across campus are currently engaged in a far-reaching strategic planning process initiated by President White. This month the College is preparing a rapid response for campus, and by January the Urbana campus will present its plan to the president. (For details, see <http://www.oc.uiuc.edu/announcements/strategicplanning.html>.)

For our plans to succeed, the College needs each of you to continue your efforts that make Illinois a leader in the University of Illinois system, in the state, in the nation, and around the world.

With deepest thanks,

Herbert E. Whiteley
Dean