



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

College of Veterinary Medicine

Driven to Discover<sup>SM</sup>

## Collegiate Highlights

### Discovering new knowledge

- **Gift of \$3 million endows Tata Chair in Orthopedic Surgery** – Professor Michael Conzemius was recently named to the chair established by a \$3 million gift from Ratan Tata, head of the Tata Group, a worldwide business conglomerate based in India. The funds will be used to expand research and teaching in veterinary orthopedic surgery at the College of Veterinary Medicine and improve veterinary care for companion animals in India.
- **Major research funded** – Research grants of approximately \$500,000 or more were awarded to Dr. Sagar Goyal for a study of the measurement of particle sizes associated with airborne viruses; Dr. Richard Isaacson for a study of potential public health and food safety impacts associated with use of antibiotic growth promoters; Shaun Kennedy for National Biosurveillance Integration System needs assessment, system review, and tool development; Drs. Jody Lulich and Carl Osborne for clinical studies to evaluate the effectiveness of diet to manage urinary tract diseases in cats; Drs. Krishona Martinson, Molly McCue, Jim Mickelson, and Stephanie Valberg for an integrated research and extension program for equine metabolic syndrome and shivers; Dr. Tom Molitor for training in neurobehavior/neuroimmune addiction research; and Dr. Kent Reed for a study of the turkey MHC chromosome: sequence, haplotype structure, and gene expression.
- **Collaborative cancer program established** – The College of Veterinary Medicine established the Animal Cancer Care and Research (ACCR) program in conjunction with the University of Minnesota's Masonic Cancer Center, one of 41 National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers. ACCR researchers are working to define breed- and disease-specific "Achilles' heels" in dogs. Their findings could then be translated into more effective and less toxic cancer treatments for humans as well as dogs. The director of the new program is Dr. Jaime Modiano, who holds the Alvin S. and June Perlman Endowed Chair in Animal Oncology.
- **Canine brain tumor clinical trials program launched** – An experimental treatment for brain cancer that was successfully used on a dog named Batman became available to other dogs with brain tumors. Drs. Elizabeth Pluhar and John Ohlfest have funding to treat 50 dogs in clinical trials, but are seeking additional support to enroll more than 100 dogs in the program.
- **Points of Pride Research Day honors researchers and research programs** – The College hosted its annual Points of Pride Research Day on March 25, 2009. Dr. Peixuan Guo, who received his Ph.D. in microbiology and genetics from the University of Minnesota in 1987, received the Distinguished Research Alumnus Award. The 2009 Pfizer Research Excellence Award recipient was Dr. Mathur Kannan, professor in the Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences Department. The 2009 Distinguished Research Partner was the Minnesota Turkey Research and Promotion Council. In addition to seminars and awards, the event included a poster competition, where graduate students, summer scholars, postdoctorate scholars, and residents presented their research.

### Testing, diagnosing, and preventing disease

- **Funds authorized to support Minnesota Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (VDL)** – The Minnesota Legislature authorized funds for the VDL to support disease surveillance and maintain VDL accreditation. Representatives of the Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association, many commodity groups, and other organizations testified on behalf of the legislation and helped advocate for the much-needed funding.

### Preparing the next generation of veterinarians and veterinary researchers

- **AVMA Council on Education votes to continue full accreditation** – During its spring 2009 meeting, the AVMA Council on Education voted to continue full accreditation for the College. The council commended the College for completing several improvements to the physical facility; the purchase of an equine ambulatory practice to increase the numbers of first-opinion equine cases and referral cases; adding an additional faculty and resident position within production animal medicine; and the pursuit of a long-term strategic plan, which includes collaborative efforts with additional colleges at the University of Minnesota.
- **Veterinary loan forgiveness legislation passed** – At multiple legislative hearings, Dean Trevor Ames, Dr. Jim Collins, director of the Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, Dr. Laura Molgaard, associate dean of academic and student affairs, veterinary student Amber Hazel, and other supporters of the College testified on behalf of funding for a veterinary loan forgiveness program. In May, legislation was passed to provide \$225,000 in veterinary loan forgiveness funding for graduates who agree to practice large-animal medicine in underserved areas of Minnesota. Representatives of the Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association, many commodity groups, and other organizations testified on behalf of the legislation and helped advocate for the much-needed program.

- **Scholarships presented at annual awards ceremony** – At the annual spring awards ceremony, the College presented more than \$200,000 in scholarships, recognized the generous support of donors, and celebrated the accomplishments of students and faculty.
- **Degrees awarded at annual commencement ceremony** – At the College’s 58th annual commencement ceremony on May 2, 2009, 96 students received D.V.M., M.P.H., M.S., or Ph.D. degrees. The commencement speaker was Dr. W. Ron DeHaven, executive vice president of the American Veterinary Medical Association.
- **Over 1,000 applications received for fall admission** – The College’s admissions committee received 1,083 applications for the 90 seats in the freshman class. Fourteen Animal Science students were invited to apply for admission to the VetFAST program, an early admission program for students interested in food-animal veterinary medicine.
- **Peggy Root Kustritz named assistant dean of education, appointed to Council on Education** – Dr. Peggy Root Kustritz was appointed to the AVMA Council on Education, the accrediting body for the AVMA, in July 2008. She was named the College’s assistant dean of education in May 2009.
- **Mark Rutherford appointed associate dean of graduate programs** – Dr. Mark Rutherford was named associate dean of graduate programs in July 2008.

### Serving the community

- **USAID cooperative agreement** - Experts from the College of Veterinary Medicine, along with the School of Public Health, School of Nursing, Medical School, College of Education and Human Development, and College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences will soon be on the front lines working to help developing countries better respond to emerging animal diseases that pose a threat to human health. The University of Minnesota is part of a multidisciplinary team that will implement a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) cooperative agreement with funding up to \$185 million.
- **New veterinary continuing education program director hired** – Alicia M. Johnson joined the College as director of continuing education, replacing Jan Swanson, who retired in June 2009. The College’s continuing education program reaches thousands of veterinarians from around the world each year through a variety of professional conferences, workshops, symposiums, and lectures. Major programs include the annual Allen D. Lemman Swine Conference, Minnesota Dairy Health Conference, Companion Animal Spring Conference, Mather Lecture Series, Equine Fall Conference, Minnesota Equine Dental Symposium, and Molecular Biotechnology Workshop.

### Distinguished achievements

- **First sequence of the horse genome published in Science** - Professors Jim Mickelson and Stephanie Valberg are among the authors of “Genome Sequence, Comparative Analysis, and Population Genetics of the Domestic Horse,” published in the November 6 issue of the journal Science. The paper is the first published report of the horse genome sequence.
- **Montserrat Torremorell named Al Lemman Chair in Swine Medicine** – Dr. Montserrat Torremorell, an international expert in swine health, joined the College in May 2009. Dr. Torremorell has an extensive background in swine health, research, and production systems, including health improvement strategies, disease eradication and biosecurity programs, and health genomics. She received her D.V.M. from the Autonomous University of Barcelona in Spain and her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine.
- **Robert Washabau named 2009 recipient of WSAVA WALTHAM International Award for Scientific Achievement** – Dr. Robert Washabau, chair of the Veterinary Clinical Sciences department, was named the 2009 recipient of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) WALTHAM International Award for Scientific Achievement. This award recognizes outstanding contributions by a veterinarian who has had a significant impact on the advancement of knowledge concerning the cause, detection, cure, and control of disorders of companion animals.
- **Carl Osborne receives WSAVA Healthcare Award** – Dr. Carl Osborne, professor in the Veterinary Clinical Sciences Department, was the 2008 recipient of the WSAVA Healthcare Award at the 33rd Annual World Small Animal Veterinary Association Congress in Dublin, Ireland, in August 2008.
- **Ralph Farnsworth receives MVMA award** – Retired Veterinary Population Medicine professor Ralph Farnsworth received the 2009 Outstanding Faculty of the College of Veterinary Medicine Award at the Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association convention on February 7, 2009. The award is given to a faculty member who provides outstanding service to Minnesota veterinarians, gives his or her time and talent to the veterinary profession, makes a difference to the profession, and is a dedicated contributor to organized veterinary medicine.
- **Mathur Kannan appointed to three-year term with NIH study section** – Dr. Mathur Kannan, professor, Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences, was appointed for a three-year term to the Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, Lung Cellular, Molecular, and Immunology Study Section. Members are selected based upon their demonstrated competence and achievement in scientific discipline as evidenced by the quality of their research, publications in scientific journals, and other significant scientific contributions.
- **Rob Porter receives President’s Award** – Dr. Rob Porter received the Minnesota Turkey Growers Association President’s Award for his outstanding contribution to the Turkey Cellulitis (clostridial dermatitis) Gold Medal Research Panel.