CREATING A CENTER FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASE RESEARCH
LETTER FROM OUR INTERIM ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR RESEARCH & ADVANCED STUDIES

This issue of La Veterinaire highlights our newly established Louisiana Center for Infectious Disease Research. While the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine (LSU SVM) conducts research in a number of areas, this new center seeks to create a superior program that brings together researchers from many institutions (including LSU) to focus their expertise and knowledge to improve our understanding of infectious disease. This understanding can lead to vaccines and possible eradication of diseases that adversely affect both people and animals.

The LSU SVM Office of Research & Advanced Studies oversees research at the veterinary school and the graduate studies program, which supports 60 to 70 current graduate students enrolled in MS and PhD programs. These graduates go on to pursue more advanced degrees, post-doctoral fellowships or employment with academic or research institutions; some go on to work with private companies or with the government. One of our graduates—Dr. Andy De Rosa—is profiled in this issue.

The research report in this issue discusses vaccines that have been created by faculty at the LSU SVM. These vaccines have the potential to protect cattle from the Bovine Herpes Virus, protect fish from Francisella sp., and protect people from herpesvirus infection. While the first two vaccines are specifically directed to prevent animal disease, they also benefit people by protecting our food supply.

The tortoise featured in this issue’s clinical case exemplifies the challenges of anesthesia in chelonians. The impact of our strong clinical research program on our ability to manage such patients cannot be overemphasized.

With heavy funding from the National Institutes of Health, the LSU SVM expended $7.7 million on research in 2011. The ultimate goal of all research conducted at the LSU SVM is to improve the lives of people and animals. For more information about our research programs, please go to our website at http://www.vetmed.lsu.edu.

James E. Miller, DVM, MPVM, PhD
Louisiana Center for Infectious Disease Research

The LSU SVM is establishing the Louisiana Center for Infectious Disease Research. The Center brings together a nucleus and network of scientists with complementary interests in infectious disease research from area institutions to provide maximal impact in this critically important field of research. Full story, page 2.

Cover Image

A transmission electron microscopic image of herpes simplex virus in Vero cells. Herpes simplex virus is just one infectious disease studied at the LSU SVM.

Back Cover Image

Eighty-two veterinary students were awarded Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degrees from the LSU SVM on May 14, 2012. Since 1977, the LSU SVM has awarded 2,576 DVM degrees and 364 MS/PhD degrees.
The LSU SVM establishes the Louisiana Center for Infectious Disease Research

The emergence and re-emergence of worldwide epidemics of bacterial and viral infections has shown that infectious diseases pose international challenges of unparalleled complexity. Infectious diseases cause approximately 26 percent of all deaths worldwide and two-thirds of all deaths among children younger than 5. Pathogens have emerged in unpredictable patterns as the result of changes in host-pathogen interactions, human demographics and behavior, and many other mechanisms. Malaria and tuberculosis (TB) kill millions of people every year, and the emergence of multi-drug-resistant TB has already created considerable treatment problems.

Despite worldwide efforts and the rapid development of potent antiviral drugs, AIDS has become one of the deadliest pandemics in history. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 25 million men, women and children have died worldwide. In the United States, more than 1 million people are living with HIV infection, and approximately 40,000 new infections occur each year.

Vector-borne diseases continue to contribute to the global infectious disease burden, and nearly half of the world’s population is infected with at least one type of vector-borne pathogen. Lyme and other tick-borne infections continue to cause substantial disease worldwide and an epidemic of Dengue fever was recorded in Asia during the summer of 2007.

Louisiana has a semi-tropical climate that supports the dissemination of many vector-borne disease pathogens.
In addition, according to the U.S. Census data for 2006-2010, 18.1 percent of Louisiana’s citizens live below the poverty line, and Louisiana is one of the portal states where many immigrants enter from Latin America and elsewhere. Global warming has produced significant changes in the world’s climate and tropicalization of the southern U.S. is allowing the northward movement of Dengue fever and other vector-borne diseases. Establishment of the Louisiana Center for Infectious Disease Research (LCIDR) at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) will allow Louisiana and other southern states to develop advanced research capabilities to combat infectious diseases, and especially vector-borne diseases at their point of origin.

Establishment of the Center

In addition to educating future veterinarians and treating animals in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, the LSU SVM is a premier biomedical research facility. The LCIDR is an outgrowth of the ongoing collaboration between LSU and the Tulane Center for Experimental Infectious Disease Research (CEIDR), which is currently funded by both the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Institute of General Medical Sciences Centers for Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE). The LCIDR will operate under the current COBRE organizational structure led by Konstantin “Gus” Kousoulas, PhD, professor of virology and director of the Division of Biotechnology and Molecular Medicine.

The SVM and the Tulane National Primate Research Center (TNPRC) are partners in the COBRE, along with the National Institute of General Medical Sciences Centers (NIGMS) T32 postdoctoral and T35 veterinary student training grants, which are all targeted to train veterinarians in NIH-focused research.

Previous graduates of the COBRE will participate in the COBRE Internal Advisory Committee and serve as mentors to junior scientists in the program.

Mission

The mission of the LCIDR is to conduct collaborative and interdisciplinary research in infectious diseases and host response to infections; train pre-doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows, including veterinary students and clinical

LEFT: Dr. Gus Kousoulas will lead the LCIDR.
RIGHT: From top, Dr. Sanjay Batra, Dr. Muzammel Haque, and Dr. Antonietta Guerrero-Plata are members of the LSU SVM faculty currently associated with the COBRE.
fellows; foster university-wide interest in infectious diseases through seminars and colloquia; and coordinate available infrastructure and core facilities in support of infectious disease research.

LCIDR aims to become a nationally competitive Center of Excellence in the investigation of infectious diseases of humans and animals and a significant contributor to LSU and local and state-wide economic development efforts. The LCIDR will ultimately seek to enlist and involve all competitive LSU faculty working on infectious diseases, as well as infectious disease researchers working within other Louisiana-based institutions.

It is anticipated that LCIDR’s formation will be instrumental in successfully competing for continuation funding of the existing COBRE and retaining and recruiting competitive faculty. It is further anticipated that the LCIDR will ensure that the appropriate infrastructure for research in infectious diseases, including equipment and other resources, is maintained and expanded. Between LSU and the TNPRC, more than 20 faculty studying infectious diseases and related fields who are affiliated with the COBRE as mentors or past or current participants. Collaboration between investigators at geographically separated institutions is facilitated by a broadband access grid that enables researchers to join live seminars anywhere in Louisiana.

Research Focus

LCIDR faculty research focuses on acute viral, bacterial and parasitic pathogens of worldwide significance, including Dengue fever virus, West Nile virus, *Borrelia burgdorferi* (Lyme disease), bacteria-causing pneumonia, parasites that cause filariasis, and other important pathogens. Common themes among all current research efforts are the molecular biology and immunopathogenesis of host-pathogen interactions. LCIDR will expand areas in immunopathogenesis and vector-borne diseases and develop new areas in molecular epidemiology and bioinformatics to complement current efforts. LCIDR faculty efforts to understand the life cycle of many important pathogens of animals and humans will result in effective vaccines and other therapeutics to combat serious infectious disease and provide a sustainable base for local and state-wide economic development.

**SVM Faculty Presently Affiliated with the COBRE**

1) Fang-ting Liang, MS, PhD, associate professor in the Department of Pathobiological Sciences (PBS) and COBRE graduate: Molecular determinants of *Borrelia burgdorferi* invasion and virulence; *B. burgorferi* immune evasion mechanism and immunopathogenesis (NIH-funded).

2) Kevin Macaluso, MS, PhD, associate professor in PBS and COBRE graduate: Molecular determinants of Rickettsia infection of ticks and mosquitoes; innate immune responses to rickettsiae in arthropod vectors and mammals (NIH-funded).

3) Gus Kousoulas, MS, PhD, professor in PBS and COBRE mentor: Molecular genetics and spread of herpes simplex viral infectivity; live-attenuated vaccines against herpes simplex viruses; immunomodulatory vaccines against bovine respiratory coronavirus, West Nile virus and *Chlamydia psittaci*; and molecular biology, angiogenesis and tumorigenesis of Kaposi’s sarcoma associated herpesvirus (NIH-funded).

4) Chris Mores, SM, ScD, associate professor in PBS and current COBRE project investigator: Molecular epidemiology of Dengue viruses and determinants of Dengue virus infectivity and spread (NIH-funded).

5) Antonietta Guerrero-Plata, MSc, PhD, assistant professor in PBS and current COBRE project investigator: Immunopathogenesis of respiratory syncytial virus and pneumoviruses (NIH-funded).

6) Thomas Klei, PhD, LSU Boyd Professor, professor of veterinary microbiology and parasitology in PBS, and COBRE mentor: Immunopathogenesis of filariasis and vaccines against filariasis infections (NIH-funded).

7) Samithamby Jeyaseelan, DVM, PhD, associate professor in PBS and COBRE graduate: Pulmonary inflammation and host defense (NIH-funded).

8) Sanjay Batra, MS, PhD, research assistant professor in PBS and COBRE pilot project investigator: Bacterial pulmonary inflammation and host defense.

9) Muzammel Haque, PhD, research assistant professor in the LSU Department of Veterinary Science (VS) and COBRE pilot project investigator: Role of hypoxia in Kaposi’s sarcoma herpesvirus pathogenicity.
10) Megan MacNaughtan, PhD, assistant professor in the LSU Department of Chemistry and COBRE pilot project investigator: Structure of *C. Chlamydia* receptor ligand interactions.

11) Nobuko Wakamatsu, DVM, PhD, DACVP, associate professor in PBS and provider of COBRE immunopathology support: Molecular pathology of infectious diseases.

12) Vladimir Chouljenko, PhD, research assistant professor in PBS and provider of COBRE molecular biology support: Molecular genetics and pathogenesis of bovine coronavirus and herpesviruses.

**Other SVM Scientists with Active Interests in Infectious Diseases (Affiliate Members of the LCIDR)**

13) Alma Roy, MS, PhD, research assistant professor in PBS: West Nile virus pathogenicity; veterinary diagnostics of infectious disease agents (USDA-funded).

14) David Baker, DVM, MS, PhD, MPA, DACLAM, professor in PBS: Infectious diseases of laboratory animals.

15) John B. Malone, Jr., DVM, MS, PhD, professor in PBS: Clinical parasitology; use of earth-observing satellite imagery and geographic information systems to evaluate and predict suitability of environment for disease agents.

16) James E. Miller, DVM, MPVM, PhD, professor in PBS and interim associate dean for research and advanced studies: Epidemiology, control and genetics of ruminant nematode parasitism; improving ruminant production using an integrated approach to controlling parasites; small ruminant gastrointestinal nematode parasitism (USDA-funded).

17) Frank M. Andrews, DVM, PhD, professor in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences (VCS) and director of the Equine Health Studies Program: Equine diseases;

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**FROM TOP:** Dr. Megan MacNaughtan and Dr. Chris Mores are two current COBRE investigators.

**BOTTOM:** Infectious disease researchers at the LSU SVM have a biweekly work-in-progress meeting via the Access Grid with colleagues at the Tulane National Primate Research Center. These meetings include presentations by all junior faculty and are an important part of the LCIDR.
vaccines and immunological correlates of infectious disease pathogens.

18) Javier G. Nevarez, DVM, PhD (LSU SVM 2001, 2007), DACZM, DECZM, assistant professor in VCS: Exotic animal medicine; West Nile virus.

19) Phil H. Elzer, MS, PhD, professor in PBS and interim head, VS: Immunopathogenesis of Brucella abortus; live-attenuated vaccines against brucella infections (NIH-funded).

20) John Hawke, PhD, professor in PBS: Infectious diseases of aquatic animals; development of diagnostics and vaccines to detect aquatic animal pathogens.


22) Daniel Paulsen, DVM, PhD, professor in PBS: Pathology of respiratory infection of cattle.

TNPRC and Other Faculty Associated with the COBRE

1) Deepak Kaushal, PhD, associate professor at the TNPRC and COBRE graduate: Molecular pathogenesis of tuberculosis.

2) Bapi Pahar, DVM, PhD, research assistant professor at the TNPRC and current COBRE participant: Role of humoral immune responses in control of SIV/HIV infection.

3) Stephania Cormier, PhD, associate professor in the LSU Health Sciences Department of Pharmacology and COBRE graduate: Immune responses to environmental insults including respiratory viral infections.

4) Andrew MacLean, PhD, assistant professor at the TNPRC and COBRE graduate: Interactions between leukocytes and endothelial cells and role of HIV infection on trafficking of monocytes and macrophages across the blood-brain barrier.

5) Cristian Apetrei, MD, PhD, associate professor at the University of Pittsburgh and COBRE graduate: Molecular evolution and immunopathogenesis of SIV/HIV.

6) Andrew Lackner, DVM, PhD, director of the TNPRC and COBRE administrator: Immunopathogenesis of SIV/HIV.

7) Preston Marx, PhD, professor at the TNPRC and COBRE mentor: Molecular biology and pathogenesis of SIV/HIV.

8) Ronald Veazey, DVM, PhD, professor at the TNPRC and COBRE mentor: Antimicrobial strategies for prevention of HIV transmission. Immunopathology of SIV/HIV infections.

9) Monica Embers, PhD, research assistant professor at the TNPRC and COBRE investigator: Lyme Disease pathogenesis in non-human primates.

10) Binhua Ling, MD, PhD, assistant professor at the TNPRC and COBRE investigator: HIV drug therapy and vaccine development.

11) Mahesh Mohan, DVM, PhD, assistant professor at the TNPRC and COBRE investigator: AIDS pathogenesis and enteropathy.

12) Xavier Alvarez, PhD, research associate professor at the TNPRC and COBRE core participant: AIDS neuropathogenesis and immunology.

An Unprecedented Opportunity

The vision for the LCIDR is to establish a leading center in infectious diseases by identifying a critical nucleus and network of scientists with complementary interests in infectious disease research. The LCIDR will enhance and leverage available research resources and promote intra- and inter-institutional collaborative efforts on infectious diseases of far-reaching importance for health and disease. This consortium of infectious disease scientists in South Louisiana will provide an unprecedented opportunity for research and training for all participating units. It is anticipated that research outcomes will be translated into new diagnostics, vaccines and other treatment modalities for ameliorating human and animal infectious diseases.
Research at the LSU SVM

Despite eroding sources of funding and increased competition for funds, the research efforts of faculty members continue to be one of the SVM's strengths. The percentage of grant proposals awarded/submitted and funds awarded/requested by faculty has increased over the last few years, with most support coming from federal sources such as the NIH and USDA. The SVM is consistently ranked fourth among all LSU's academic colleges in annual sponsored research expenditures, with the School's departments of Pathobiological Sciences and Comparative Biomedical Sciences ranked near the top.

The core foundation for the new Louisiana Center for Infectious Disease Research (LCIDR) is currently funded by the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of General Medical Sciences Centers for Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) and the LCIDR’s organizational structure will be based on that of the COBRE. The LSU-Tulane Center for Experimental Infectious Disease Research will be a collaborating partner of the new center. In addition, a new Center for Equine Health is currently under development by SVM Equine Health Studies Program faculty.

The number of industry grants submitted and funded has also increased substantially, with the majority of funding going to faculty in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. These grants are used to study new uses for drugs, clinical procedures and equipment, to expand their application in veterinary practice.

Finally, increased research funding procured by faculty, as well as dedicated SVM funds in support of graduate education and research, have made it possible to maintain 65-70 graduate students, an important component of the School's research efforts.

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**2010-2011 Sources of SVM Research Funding**

Federal 80%

State 12%

Other 5%

Foundation 2%

Industry 1%

**2010-2011 Distribution of SVM Research Funding by Scientific Category**

Infectious Disease 52.24%

Molecular Medicine 23.78%

Equine Research 10%

Research Training 6.94%

Cancer Biology 2.9%

Small Animal Research 2.38%

Other 1.02%

Wildlife Research .26%

Environmental Toxicology .48%
Many steps are required before a vaccine can be introduced for clinical use. Quite apart from the often enormous task of producing and testing a vaccine, new vaccines are typically first patented, then the patent is licensed by a pharmaceutical company, and the vaccine is finally tested to USDA standards prior to eventual marketing and distribution. Researchers at the LSU SVM have recently filed three patents for vaccines through the LSU Office of Intellectual Property that will have a profound impact on our world.

**Bovine Herpes Virus**

Shafiqul Chowdhury, PhD, professor of molecular virology, has developed a recombinant Bovine Herpes Virus Type 1 (BHV-1) vaccine. BHV-1 is the cause of infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR) in cattle, a severe respiratory tract infection that can lead to complications such as abortion in pregnant cows and a substantial reduction in milk and meat production. BHV-1 is also a contributing factor in Bovine Respiratory Disease Complex (shipping fever).

BHV-1, as well as most modified live BHV-1 vaccine strains, establishes a lifelong latent infection in cattle. Periodically throughout the life of the animal, a latent virus sheds (is secreted) in respiratory fluids providing a constant source for new infections and maintaining the virus in cattle populations. IBR causes considerable losses for the cattle industry worldwide, and BRDC is estimated to cost the U.S. cattle industry at least $1 billion annually.

With a project funded by Elanco, Inc., Dr. Chowdhury's laboratory has developed a genetically engineered vaccine for immunization of cattle against BHV-1. The genetically engineered virus lacks the critical amino acid residues of a viral envelope protein important for suppressing the initial immune response following virus infection. In addition, this virus lacks the ability to reactivate from latency. Compared to the currently available vaccines, cattle vaccinated with the engineered vaccine virus will be better protected against the BHV-1 infection. A patent for this new vaccine has been filed by LSU, and a vaccine efficacy study will be performed in the near future pending additional funding from Elanco.

**Francisella sp.**

John Hawke, PhD, professor of veterinary microbiology and parasitology, has developed a vaccine that protects fish against *Francisella sp.*, an emergent bacterial pathogen that causes acute to chronic disease in warm-water-cultured and wild fish species, such as tilapia. *Francisella* has been implicated as the cause of mortality in warm and cold water species of fish in the U.S. (including Hawaii), Taiwan, Costa Rica, Latin America, Norway, Chile and Japan. Fish raised in high-density environments, such as tilapia farms, are more susceptible to outbreaks of the disease. Francisellosis causes high mortality on warm water fish farms. The emerging disease is characterized by granulomas in the liver, spleen and kidney of the fish and affects fish in the temperature range of 22-28° C.
The vaccine is to be applied by immersion to 1-month-old tilapia fingerlings and should afford protection for at least one year. For fish vaccines to be economical, they need to be administered directly into the water rather than injected directly into each fish; the fish take in the vaccine through the gills and skin and it then enters the bloodstream.

Dr. Hawke is seeking to partner with a commercial vaccine company to produce and market the vaccine. The vaccine is a live-attenuated mutant form of the parent strain that has a site-directed mutation in the iglC gene located in the Francisella pathogenicity island of the Francisella chromosome. The live-attenuated mutant that comprises the vaccine strain is capable of infecting and causing a mild form of the disease in young fish but is cleared in a short period of time. The induced immunity is characterized by both a heightened cellular and humoral response. A portion of the research to develop this vaccine was conducted as part of the dissertation of Esteban Soto, PhD (LSU SVM 2010), who is now on faculty at Ross University, Basseterre, St. Kitts.

In 2010, global production of tilapia was estimated to be 3.7 million tons, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Tilapia can be produced in versatile locations, water systems, temperatures and salinities. They grow fast, have a high fillet yield and low feed-conversion ratio, as well as firm, white filets that make tilapia easy to market.

**Herpes Simplex**

Konstantin G. Kousoulas, PhD, professor of virology and director of the Division of Biotechnology and Molecular Medicine, has developed a live-attenuated vaccine that can protect against herpes simplex infections, without the risk of producing more virulent viruses. The vaccine generates protective immunity against herpes simplex infections but cannot enter into neurons and establish latency. Unlike other herpes vaccines, it is anticipated that this vaccine could also be used for therapeutic treatment of recurrent herpes infections in already infected people.

The vaccine is based on research focused on how the virus enters cells and spreads from one cell to another. Following herpes simplex virus exposure, the virus enters neurons and becomes latent; the virus reactivates upon exposure to an external stimulus such as stress, heat and the general status of the immune system. In the vaccine virus, modifications in viral glycoprotein prevents the virus from entering into neurons; however, vaccinated animals become protected against further herpes simplex virus infection.

FROM TOP: Dr. Shafiqul Chowdhury, Dr. John Hawke and Dr. Gus Kousoulas have recently filed for vaccine patents through the LSU Office of Intellectual Property.
In July 2012, “Big Boy,” a 12-year-old Sulcata tortoise, presented to the LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital Bird, Zoo, and Exotic Medicine Service suffering from lethargy and anorexia. Following a diagnostic workup that included a physical examination, fecal parasite examination, complete blood count and plasma chemistry panel, it was determined that Big Boy was suffering from beak overgrowth that prevented easy ingestion of food and intestinal parasites.

Big Boy’s situation presented two challenges. Identification of intestinal parasites in exotic species can be difficult, and there is little information on antiparasitic drug safety and effectiveness. Addressing the beak overgrowth represented a challenge because Big Boy had to be anesthetized so that his beak could be reshaped with a Dremel tool.

Most reptiles are physiologically resilient; they are capable of surviving severe hypoxemia and hypothermia that would rapidly kill other vertebrates. However, anesthesia of large chelonians (turtles and tortoises) requires skilled extrapolation from the usual species the LSU SVM usually sees, as well as an understanding of their special anatomy and physiology.

“The challenges of anesthetizing a tortoise are associated with specific lack of information about drug metabolism for specific species. In general, when dealing with exotic animals, the science of medicine really becomes an art, and experience with the particular species is what counts, since literature is limited,” said Anderson da Cunha, DVM, MS, DACVA, assistant professor of veterinary anesthesiology.

Another curiosity is that drugs given in the muscle of the hind limbs are metabolized and eliminated faster than when
given in the front limbs. Therefore, intramuscular administration of drugs in the hind limbs is avoided. Finally, intravenous administration of drugs is challenging since tortoises have no readily accessible superficial vein. Physiological monitoring remains the most important aspect of the anesthetic procedure to decrease anesthetic-associated mortality.

Dr. da Cunha and Joao Brandao, LMV, zoological medicine resident, managed the sedation and anesthesia of Big Boy. Without available superficial blood vessels, the subcarapacial sinus was used to administer a combination of ketamine, dexmedetomidine and hydromorphone intravenously as preanesthetic medication. After 15 minutes, a face mask was applied to deliver anesthesia with isoflurane and oxygen and once a mild plane of anesthesia was achieved, an endotracheal tube was placed to continue isoflurane delivery. Physiological monitoring included electrocardiogram (ECG) and end-tidal CO₂ with a capnograph.

Big Boy’s beak was rapidly reshaped with a Dremel tool so that he could close his mouth properly. Then, anesthesia was reversed and Big Boy was moving and acting normally again 30 minutes later.

Exotic pets often have special health maintenance requirements “When considering an exotic pet, potential owners should become familiar with both nutritional and husbandry needs (e.g., enclosure size, temperature, humidity, general care), as well as the full-grown size of the animal,” said Thomas Tully, DVM (LSU SVM 1986), MS, DABVP (Avian), professor and service chief of zoological medicine. “Tortoises can grow very large and can live over 100 years.” 🐢
In May 2012, Grant Fontenot (Class of 2013) of Ville Platte, La., received the Dr. K.C. Toups Memorial Scholarship to assist with expenses incurred in pursuing farm animal externship or special topics experiences. This $2,000 scholarship is awarded to an entering Year IV student enrolled in a farm animal or mixed animal concentration who plans to practice in Louisiana. This issue spotlights student Grant Fontenot.

Why do you want to be a veterinarian?

Growing up on a farm I had a great appreciation for all types of agriculture, but animal agriculture is something I particularly enjoy. I also grew to really like medicine and all the opportunities it offers, so veterinary medicine was a great way to put both together.
Why did you choose to apply to LSU for veterinary school?

I attended LSU as an undergraduate, and some of the veterinarians I learned from growing up got their education here.

Has your career choice changed since you applied?

It has not; in fact, it has become even more clear to me that I want to work with large animals.

Do you feel prepared to enter the next phase of your career?

By graduation I will be ready to take on the next chapter in my career. All my experiences at the LSU SVM have given me the knowledge and preparedness to succeed in whatever aspect of veterinary medicine I pursue.

What is your best memory of your time here at LSU SVM so far?

There are many memories to pick from but one of my favorites is the day myself and the class of 2013 received our white coats to move into the hospital. Another will always be the time a few select members of the Class of 2013 made a “fake” anatomy practical exam as an April Fool’s joke on Drs. Daniel Hillmann and Hermann Bragulla.

How many pets do you currently have?

I have two dogs: Scrap, an 8-year-old Catahoula cur, and Copper, a 6-month-old Catahoula. I also have a 16-year-old quarter horse named Buck.

What do you hope to do following graduation?

I plan to work as an associate in a mixed or large animal practice where I can further expand my knowledge base and experience beyond veterinary school. I hope to use this time to enhance my skills and learn what it takes to own and run a successful veterinary practice.

How to Contribute

The K.C. Toups, DVM (LSU SVM 2009) Memorial Scholarship was established by his family, classmates and friends following his untimely and tragic accidental death in January 2010. Contributions to this scholarship can be made by contacting Betty Karlsson at 225-578-9870 or bkarlsson@lsu.edu.

Scholarships & Awards

Thanks to generous gifts from supporters of the LSU SVM, veterinary students have received more than $1.2 million in scholarships and awards since 2005.

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Debt is significant for a majority of our students. Your gifts can help these talented young men and women embark on their veterinary careers without the burden of overwhelming debt. Thank you!
TOP LEFT: The 5K run starts at 8 a.m. on March 3, 2012.

TOP RIGHT: Yaritza Serrano (Class of 2015) shows fine form in the 5K.

LEFT: Kelsey Daroca (Class of 2015) and Leia, her 1-year-old miniature bull terrier, participate in the one mile fun run/walk in style.

BOTTOM: The one mile fun run started at 9 a.m. Over 150 people participated in the Great Rover Road Run.
TOP LEFT: Two hundred and seventeen artists submitted 506 entries for the 25th annual International Exhibition on Animals in Art. Seventy pieces were selected for the show. Here, artist Kathy Reeves poses with her photograph, *Fresh Catch*. Kathy’s photograph received an Honorable Mention award.

TOP RIGHT: “Shiny Pig,” a sculpture by Dede LaRue, received a Judge’s Award.

RIGHT: Renee Michaels visits with Mike VI, LSU’s live tiger mascot, during the LSU SVM’s “Evening with Mike VI,” a special event to thank LSU SVM donors.
TOP LEFT: Caryn Reynolds, DVM, DAVCIM (right), assistant professor of veterinary cardiology, shows the hearts from different animal species to visitors during the LSU SVM’s 2012 Pets & Vets program, an educational program held each summer for children ages 6 and older.

TOP RIGHT: Laura Riggs, DVM, PhD, DACVS (center), assistant professor of equine surgery, uses Buck the horse to explain horse anatomy to Pets & Vets visitors.

BOTTOM: Attending the Spring 2012 Diploma Distribution Ceremony for the LSU SVM’s MS and PhD graduates are (from left): Samithamby Jeyaseelan, DVM, PhD; Gayathri Balamayooran, BVSc, PhD; Stephen Gaunt, DVM (LSU SVM 1977), DACVP; Britton Grasperge, DVM (LSU SVM 2006), PhD, DACVP; Kevin Macaluso, PhD; Mandi Lopez, DVM, PhD, DACVS; Vanessa Pinto, DVM, PhD; James Miller, DVM, MPVM, PhD; Deepmala Agarwal, BVSc, MSc, PhD; Andrew David, DVM, PhD; Konstantin “Gus” Kousoulas, PhD; and Joseph Francis, BVSc, MSc, PhD. Not pictured is Lin “Shirley” Xie, PhD. Graduates are listed in italics; the others are faculty mentors.
TOP LEFT: Members of the Class of 2012 (from left), Brittany Marble, Emily Collins and Lindsey Moore wait in the LSU Union Theater before graduation.

TOP RIGHT: Buck Brumfield (right) shows off his newborn daughter to fellow graduates (from left) Martine Angel, Monica Azzolini and Courtney Brooks before the commencement ceremony.

BELOW: LSU SVM veterinary technician Rouchelle Gage attended the Annual Conference for Veterinarians and Veterinary Technicians in May at the LSU SVM.

ABOVE: Class of 2013 students Cynthia Petrauskas (left) and Jennie Brindler following the Year III Coating Ceremony. White coating, a rite of passage at the LSU SVM that takes place in Year III, is symbolic of a student’s entry into clinical veterinary medicine and represents the responsibility that they bear to the health and welfare of animals.
Sherril Green, DVM (LSU SVM 1985), Rollie Norris, DVM (LSU SVM 1992) and George Robinson, DVM (LSU SVM 1981) are members of the LSU SVM’s Blue Ribbon Task Force dedicated to promoting the LSU SVM and providing leadership for our fundraising campaigns.

Sherril is chair and professor, Department of Comparative Medicine, and director of the Veterinary Service Center at Stanford University School of Medicine in Stanford, Calif.; she received the LSU SVM Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2010.

Rollie, who owns Ark Animal Hospital in New Orleans, La., was one of Mike V’s veterinary student caretakers.

George is manager of divisional operations for National Veterinary Associates in Illinois (the largest privately owned veterinary hospital group in the U.S.).

What made you want to be a veterinarian?

Sherril: Growing up, I was into horses—big time. All I ever wanted to be was a horse doctor.

Rollie: I wanted to be a veterinarian for as long as I can remember. I don’t know what I would be if I hadn’t had LSU; I can’t imagine being in any other field.

George: At some point, I finally decided that was what I wanted to do for my life’s work. I knew it when I was 14 or 15 years old, but it’s something that takes many people a while to figure out. There’s some place along the way that the light finally comes on and says, ‘This is what I want to do.’ Many seem to experience that in veterinary science.
How did the LSU SVM prepare you for your career?

Sherril: I wanted to be an equine veterinarian, but I liked cattle, llamas and birds, too. LSU SVM exposed me to species I never thought much about until my clinical rotations. The school fostered a mindset that you can be any kind of veterinarian you want. There were no clinical specialty tracks then; we all were trained in general veterinary medicine. You had to be versatile and open to all kinds of practices and species because the SVM expected you to!

George: My career today is broader than I ever thought possible. I have served my community and followed a different path than the one I started right out of LSU. I have evolved, as have veterinary science opportunities. I am now in operations and a division leader for a veterinary practice group that represents 182 veterinary hospitals. We are treating the animals and their health needs. It’s a broad spectrum of needs that they have, and it is rewarding to help that animal and give the owner the good news. It’s hard when the outcome is different, but it shows you the cycle of life and we must be able to always help the client find comfort, too.

What does the LSU SVM mean to you?

Sherril: It gave me the opportunity to train as a veterinarian. It’s the best career in the world.

Rollie: It gave me my livelihood. If I hadn’t had LSU, I wouldn’t have anything. For some of us, if there had not been a veterinary school in Louisiana, we might not have been able to attend due to the much higher costs of attending out of state.

George: LSU and the School of Veterinary Medicine prepared me for anything. From being active and a leader in various school groups, to my memorable internship and joining a practice, I felt practice-ready upon graduation. The LSU SVM encouraged continual expansion. I’ve held onto that with various degrees and by staying engaged and curious. I believe all of my experiences made me who I am. I studied public health, leadership, and even human medicine. I think of myself as a change agent. I’ve tried to serve and give back. I truly believe this profession can have it all.

What is a memorable moment from your time as a student at the LSU SVM?

Sherril: During an equine rotation in my fourth year, we had a down horse that wouldn’t eat. Late one night, the students on call ordered pizza and sat in the stall with the horse. The horse started sniffing the pizza and nibbling. The next thing you know, it had the pizza box between its teeth...
1983

Dr. Harold Mike Beard was named 2011 Veterinarian of the Year by the Arkansas Veterinary Medical Association at their Winter Meeting in February 2012. He completed his second successful recertification for the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners, by alternate pathway (canine/feline diplomat). Harold is currently serving as chairman of the 2013 Southwest Veterinary Symposium Continuing Education Program Committee. He is the owner of West Prince Animal Hospital in Conway, Ark.

1983

Dr. Mike Strain, commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture & Forestry, was chosen to serve as president of the Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture (SASDA). The post is a one-year term. SASDA is a regional arm of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) and is comprised of top agriculture officials from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Virgin Islands and West Virginia.

2006

Dr. Alexa Waltz and her husband, Bob, announce the arrival of their second son, Alec Robert, on January 22, 2012. Alec joins, Eli (age 2). Alexa is currently working part-time at the Pet Hospital of North Park in San Diego, Calif., while Bob finishes his orthopedic surgery residency for the U.S. Navy. The Waltz family will move abroad next year.


Alumni...Continued from page 19

and was pulling it closer so it could get to the pepperoni. Maybe it was the salt, or just great pizza, but that horse ate pizza every night for the next few weeks. The students all chipped in to buy it. Eventually, his regular appetite returned. He eventually recovered and went home. I’ll never forget that horse.

Rollie: When I was working in the barn prior to starting school, Dr. Peter Haynes (now dean) would come into the barn and visit. He talked to me about things that were going on in the equine department; he interacted with everybody and treated everyone with respect. This strengthened my desire to get into school. I remember thinking, “I want to be like him one day.” Graduation was huge. There was a moment when it suddenly hit, and there was a kind of sadness in all the celebration. I realized that I was never going to be with that group of people in the same way again. Four years of classes, late night studying, and having fun together, and now we were each going our own way.

Why are you serving on the Blue Ribbon Task Force to help the SVM?

Sherril: The LSU SVM is a great school and a place to be proud of. As an alumna, serving on the Task Force is my way of giving back.

Rollie: Why wouldn’t I want to help and give back? I take great pride in having graduated from the SVM. When I was in school I had three jobs, and it took every penny I had. Scholarships were a huge help, so to be able to help and pass that on gives me a great deal of satisfaction.

George: As I reflect on my life lessons, I have been a fan of passing it on, of giving back and mentoring. I learned from an early age that teamwork is imperative. When asked to serve, I just had to say yes. I will be building on friendships I built in school, and motivating them to give back, too. From the SVM to people medicine to my current position, it’s still about dealing with others. At this stage, I feel grateful that I can give back financially, and with time and support with the Blue Ribbon task force to help raise funds for the SVM. This task force is the vehicle for me to leave my legacy where it all started.

Alumni Tracks & Baby Vets
Andrew DeRosa, MS (LSU SVM 1997), PhD (LSU SVM 2004)
Manager, Clinical Development Projects at Bayer HealthCare LLC
Animal Health Division, Shawnee, Kansas

What made you want to be a research scientist?
I have always been drawn to production agriculture and admired the resiliency and productivity of U.S. farmers and ranchers who form the backbone of this great nation and provide sustenance for the world. I received a broad introduction to this industry and various agricultural career choices in the domestic and agricultural industry while pursuing a bachelor’s degree in Animal Science at LSU. My research interest was ignited during my master’s and PhD programs at the LSU SVM, primarily by the mentoring of Drs. James C. Williams, Thomas Klei, Frederick Enright, David Baker and James Miller.

What is your primary area of research?
My role is more accurately defined as product development than research. I am responsible for the design, implementation and submission of laboratory and field studies to governmental regulatory agencies to generate substantial evidence of efficacy for candidate molecules or compounds that have been identified to the proof of concept stage within the research arm of the R&D corporate structure. My objectives primarily fall within the development arm of R&D. In recent years, my objectives have included the development of veterinary products and label extensions in the product classes of biopharmaceuticals, pharmaceuticals and biologics for food and companion animal species.

How did the LSU SVM prepare you for your career?
The LSU SVM provided an environment that enabled me to build upon the knowledge base of animal husbandry and fundamental veterinary medicine obtained from my Animal Science degree. Instrumental in this process were Drs. Tom Klei, Fredrick Enright, James Williams and David Baker, who are tremendous critical thinkers and expert scientists in their respective fields. More importantly, they were eager to share their knowledge and skills with their students. The LSU SVM taught me how to properly develop a meaningful and valuable hypothesis and subsequently design, implement and accurately interpret the results of an experimental design to prove or disprove that hypothesis. This is a skillset that I use every day in product development. My tenure as a research associate and instructor provided a solid foundation in the understanding and implementation of good clinical practices, a quality standard of research required globally by most regulatory agencies that oversee the development and registration of veterinary products.

What are some of your most memorable moments from LSU?
I met my wife, Sharon Chirgwin, at the LSU SVM and developed my commitment to Christ through the discipleship of Dr. David Baker, John and Dee Alberty and Bill and Dolores Pedneau. I also enjoyed being part of the design and implementation of laboratory and field efficacy and safety studies that supported the registration of the prominent cattle endectocides currently marketed in the U.S. and abroad.
CELEBRATING MIKE VI

On July 23, Mike VI, LSU’s live tiger mascot, turned 7 years old. To celebrate Mike’s birthday, the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine hosted two events: a birthday party on July 21 and a painting party on July 29.

The birthday party at Sally’s Circa 1857 on Government Street in Baton Rouge, included birthday cake, live music and a silent auction. Auction proceeds and a donation of $20 per person benefitted the LSU SVM. This event was sponsored by Yvette Marie’s Café, Assurance Financial, and 3 Chix Realty.

The painting party held at Corks ’N Canvas in Baton Rouge, had 50 guests who painted the eye of the tiger. There were door prizes, birthday treats and wine. We would like to thank all of our friends (new and old), our sponsors and the participant for a full birthday month.

ACUPUNCTURE AT LSU

Student Travels to China

Fourth-year veterinary student Shannon David spent two weeks in China studying veterinary acupuncture, thanks to a grant from Donald and Sue Crow from Shreveport, La. Also participating in the acupuncture course co-sponsored by Southwest University in Chongqing, China, and the Chi Institute of Chinese Medicine in Florida were veterinarians from Washington State University (1), Oklahoma State University (1), the University of Florida (1), Southwest University (3), and veterinary students from the University of Queensland in Australia (1), Washington State University (6) and Oklahoma State University (4). Dr. Larry McCaskill, who received his DVM from LSU in 1981 and practices in Oscar, La., also participated.

Acupuncture is being used more frequently in veterinary medicine. It is used in equine medicine for pain management, muscle reeducation, and colic, especially colic involving dysfunction in gastrointestinal motility. It is also used in horses with anhidrosis (non-sweating), reproductive disorders, arthritis, back pain and nerve paralysis, in addition to many other medical disorders.
Acupuncture is also used in dogs and cats for a wide array of conditions, including musculoskeletal diseases (such as arthritis), nerve disorders, allergies, seizures, cancer, and organ dysfunction. Many owners report improvements in their pet's appetite and energy, as well as a decrease in chronic pain.

The LSU SVM's Veterinary Teaching Hospital currently offers acupuncture therapy for equine patients and farm animals and soon will extend the service to include small animal patients. The Crows' gift will enable clinical faculty, staff and students to receive training in integrative techniques that will benefit both students and the patients in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital.

**Integrative Medicine Speakers**

The gift from the Crows also supports a guest speaker program in integrative medicine at the LSU SVM. The LSU SVM Integrative Medicine Committee has welcomed three speakers in this series.

On June 15, Neal Sivula, DVM, presented “Reiki and Herbal Medicine for Animals.” Dr. Sivula received his DVM from The Ohio State University in 1988 and completed an internship and residency in large animal internal medicine at the University of Minnesota. He earned his PhD in veterinary medicine and epidemiology. His veterinary practice focuses on the practice of medicine that reaffirms the importance of the relationship between practitioner and patient, focuses on the whole pet, is informed by evidence, and makes use of all appropriate therapeutic approaches, healthcare professionals and disciplines to achieve optimal health and healing. Dr. Sivula is certified in animal chiropractic medicine by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association; was the eighth veterinarian nationwide to achieve advanced certification in acupuncture by the American Academy of Veterinary Acupuncture; is a certified Veterinary Food Therapist; and is a Certified Veterinary Chinese Herbalist through the Chi Institute of Chinese Medicine. Dr. Sivula is a former board member of the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association and an active member of the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association. He was elected president of the American Academy of Veterinary Acupuncture for 2010 and is active with the group as a past president.

On July 20, Melissa Parsons-Doherty, DVM, presented “Integrative Veterinary Medicine: What My DVM Education Didn’t Teach Me.” Dr. Parsons-Doherty received her DVM from the Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island, in 2005 and completed a rotating small animal internship at Garden State Veterinary Specialists in Tinton Falls, N.J., in 2006. She then completed an oncology internship at the University of Georgia in 2007 and a medical oncology residency at LSU in June 2010. She is a medical oncologist at Ontario Veterinary College and is a member of the Veterinary Cancer Society, the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association, and the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association, among others.

On May 21, Candace Warner, MD, spoke about “Medical Acupuncture: A Western Perspective.” Dr. Warner is a core member of Pearls and Tiger Paws, a volunteer league that raises awareness for the LSU SVM, highlighting the work and service of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, and providing members opportunities to volunteer, network, market and give back to the animal community. Dr. Warner has served the Baton Rouge community since 1991 and is the only MD practicing acupuncture in this area. She specializes in internal medicine and medical acupuncture, where she treats back, neck and joint pain, migraines, sports injuries, smoking cessation, AD/HD, cancer-related pain or nausea, and many other ailments.

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LEFT: Butch and Margaret Hart and Dean Peter Haynes (right) celebrate Mike VI’s birthday.

RIGHT: Mike the Tiger and WAFB-TV’s Diane Deaton share a dance at Mike VI’s birthday party.

ABOVE: Shannon David on the Great Wall of China.
The LSU SVM Advancement Team is dedicated to the LSU SVM’s mission of saving lives, finding cures, and changing lives every day. Your passion, your time, and your treasure help us to improve the lives of both animals and people every day. If you would like to partner with us, please contact any member of our team.

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Mark Your Calendar

September 26  Phi Zeta Research Emphasis Day
September 28  Fall Family Picnic
September 28-30 SVM Alumni Homecoming Weekend
October 7  Dermatology Workshop
October 18-19 Fall Holiday, Years I, II and III
October 27  Equi-Day
October 31  Dean’s Grand Rounds
November 23  LSU Football vs. Arkansas, Little Rock, Ark.
November 28  Dean’s Grand Rounds
December 7  SVM semester ends
December 14  Diploma Distribution Ceremony for LSU SVM Master’s and PhD degrees

For information on these and other upcoming LSU SVM events, call 225-578-9900 or go to http://www.vetmed.lsu.edu.

Students and alumni tailgate before the Kentucky vs. LSU football game on October 1, 2011, as part of the SVM Alumni Homecoming Weekend. The 2012 alumni weekend will take place September 28-30. Please contact Gretchen Morgan at 225-578-9565 or gmorgan@lsu.edu for information.