La Veterinaire
LETTER FROM OUR DEAN

The past year has been an exciting one for the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine. While we mourned the loss of Mike VI, along with all LSU Tiger fans, we welcomed Mike VII. Dr. David Baker, LSU’s attending veterinarian and a professor in Pathobiological Sciences at the LSU SVM, selected a beautiful and engaging 11-month-old tiger, formerly named Harvey, to be LSU’s newest live mascot. We are proud to provide his daily and veterinary care and celebrate his arrival into a newly renovated habitat.

We also welcomed new members of the LSU SVM family including several new faculty with both clinical and research interests, as well as the Class of 2021. The new class is the most diverse class in the history of the school and comprises 90 women and men selected from 695 applicants.

Our faculty, staff, students and friends continue to improve our communities through education, research and service. This was especially evident in August 2016 when floods devastated south Louisiana. Our faculty, staff and students rescued and cared for animals affected by the flood, and friends of the school donated more than $150,000 to offset the costs of rescue and veterinary care for these animals.

Our research faculty and staff work every day to enhance the lives of people and animals by investigating those diseases and injuries that affect us both. While this issue of La Veterinaire features the work of three of our researchers, there are dozens more all working diligently to improve the health of our communities.

Our alumni serve as our ambassadors around the country and the world, and we are proud of their accomplishments, several of which are highlighted in this issue. Our alumni are always welcome to come back to visit the LSU SVM, and we hope to see many of them at our annual Fall Fest, where we highlight classes for their milestone reunions (2017 marks the 40th anniversary of the Class of 1977!).

Our continued success relies more and more on the generosity of private citizens who believe in our mission to teach, heal, discover and protect. Thank you to all who have given so much to the LSU SVM’s projects and people. We could not move forward without you.

Sincerely,

Joel D. Baines, VMD, PhD
Dean
Dr. Kenneth F. Burns Chair in Veterinary Medicine
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Thunderstorms in Louisiana during August are a common occurrence, but no one was prepared for the days of seemingly endless rain showers that flooded south Louisiana and left thousands of people and animals stranded or homeless. People and animals were rescued and needed shelter and medical care.

The LSU School of Veterinary Medicine (LSU SVM) and the Louisiana State Animal Response Team (LSART) worked together to rescue and care for animals affected by the historic flooding. The LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital cared for 106 animals; of those, 50 were large animals, and 56 were small animals, including dogs, cats and exotics.

The LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital received generous monetary donations and support, making it possible for so many to be treated and receive care. The LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital received approximately $154,000 in donations, with $140,000 spent on care for affected animals.

William Ryan, fourth-year veterinary student, was on his anesthesia rotation when he volunteered to be a part of the animal rescues taking place across south Louisiana. He recalls the first day as chaotic, with veterinarians running back and forth, preparing for the emergency cases the hospital was expecting. Students, like William, were allowed to volunteer their time to the rescue efforts.

William traveled to Denham Springs, where some of the worst of the flooding occurred, and then traveled by boat to locations with stranded animals. On one rescue trip, which involved walking through chest-deep water, William, other students and veterinarians brought supplies, including hay, water, medicine and other necessities, to three horses and a donkey that were stranded. Once the rescue team arrived, they immediately began physical exams and provided preventative care to ensure the animals were well enough to travel back to the LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital for further examination and treatment.

“It was a terrible disaster to say the least. There is nothing else to describe it. But it was endearing to see glimpses of light through random acts of kindness and people supporting each other during this seriously devastating time,” said William. “As a student learning veterinary medicine, it really makes a difference when you are given the opportunity to get out there, use what you are learning to help others and truly make a difference in people’s lives.”

Laura Riggs, DVM, PhD, DACVS, associate professor of Equine Surgery at the LSU SVM, was working in the hospital when they began getting reports of flooding. “When we heard areas were starting to flood and people were evacuating, we knew our services would be needed,” said Dr. Riggs. “Horses and other large animals are the most difficult to logistically rescue, partly because of their size and weight. You can use a boat to rescue a dog but rescuing a horse requires more training.”
Dr. Riggs spent 15 hours a day, for seven days straight, rescuing animals and providing medical attention to the injured. At many times rescuers faced obstacles that required them to reassess rescue strategies. There were times when the water was too high to walk through, and the water was covering barbwire fences, preventing rescuers from swimming over with the animals. In heavier flooded areas it became more about assessment and treatment rather than removal. To provide care on-site, rescuers and veterinarians needed plenty of water, food, medication, supplements and more, all of which were provided by generous donors.

“It was a surreal opportunity to be able to treat these horses based on the experiences we’ve previously had with other natural disasters,” said Dr. Riggs. “With each of these disasters we learn a little bit more, and that helps us strategize better for future disasters.”

Every year the LSU SVM and LSART host a training event for veterinarians, animal control officers and veterinary students to learn about large animal and single animal rescue techniques. In addition, participants are taught best practices for animal handling, important equipment to have, and how to facilitate rescues in various situations, including flood waters, mud, trenches, levees and more.

“This flood experience was completely alien to me. It was so shocking to see water completely standing over houses and other buildings. Stagnant water creates serious problems that we don’t see very often in the country, and you can’t pick up a textbook and read how to treat animals,” said Dr. Riggs. “The disaster preparedness training at the LSU SVM is probably the most active and advanced in the country.”

~ William Ryan, veterinary student

Thank you for flood relief

$150,000 was raised to aid animals following the floods that affected south Louisiana in August 2016.
Cancer is a disease that touches millions of people and animals each year. According to the American Cancer Society, approximately 11,028,000 people are living with cancer in the United States. Over 1,000,000 new diagnoses are made each year. 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women will be diagnosed with cancer in the United States. According to the National Cancer Institute, of the 65 million dogs and 32 million cats in the United States, roughly 6 million new cancer diagnoses are made in dogs and a similar number made in cats each year.

The Cancer Treatment Unit (CTU) is designed to diagnose and treat veterinary cancer patients with the most advanced and cutting-edge technology available. The oncology service works from a team approach, so a patient requiring chemotherapy and radiation therapy has the benefit of being evaluated by specialists in each of these fields, who then design a treatment protocol tailored to the patient’s individual needs.

The Future

In 2016 the Cancer Treatment Unit began a new expansion by starting construction on a larger vault in order to house new equipment that will offer the most advanced form of radiation treatment. This expansion is expected to be completed in the summer of 2017.

“We are getting a Varian 21EX linear accelerator with on board imaging (OBI), including a cone beam CT (computed tomography),” said Jayme Looper, DVM (LSU SVM 1997), DACVR. “This allows us to perform conformal treatments, including stereotactic radiation therapy, with greater precision and allows some treatments to be administered in only 1-5 doses instead of 15-20 doses. We have not previously offered stereotactic radiation therapy here at LSU.”

The new linear accelerator and construction of the new vault to house it are the result of both state and private funds.
About Radiation Oncology

Radiation oncology is used to kill cancer cells locally. A linear accelerator delivers a high-energy beam of radiation to the tumor, and the LSU SVM is one of the only veterinary schools in the country that uses a multileaf collimator to perform intensity modulated radiation therapy (IMRT), which allows the radiation beam to tightly conform to the tumor contour, sparing normal tissues in the radiation area as a result of new capabilities. In 2017, we will be able to offer more advanced and more types of cancer treatment.

About Medical Oncology (Chemotherapy)

There are many different types of chemotherapy agents for use in veterinary cancer patients. The protocol chosen depends on the cancer type, as well as how advanced the cancer is when evaluated by the oncologists. Most veterinary patients tolerate chemotherapy much better than their human counterparts, and advances in the control of chemotherapy-induced side effects have greatly decreased the incidence of common toxicities like nausea and vomiting. Most owners of pets undergoing chemotherapy for cancer will describe their pet’s quality of life as excellent (normal) during therapy.

Faculty and Staff

The Cancer Treatment Unit is staffed by Bonnie Boudreaux, DVM, MS, DACVIM (Oncology), associate professor in Veterinary Clinical Sciences (joined LSU SVM in 2009); Jayme S. Looper, DVM (LSU SVM 1997), DACVR (Radiation Oncology), associate professor in VCS (joined LSU SVM in 2016); Andrea Dedeaux, DVM (LSU SVM 2011), DACVIM, instructor and medical oncology resident since 2015; Lauren Fout, MVB, radiation oncology resident; Maegan Watson, DVM (LSU SVM 2015), oncology intern since 2017; Shay Bordelon, radiation oncology nurse since 2004; Shawn Geraci, medical oncology technician since 2015; Katie Montgomery, oncology nurse since 2016; and Tammy Moreau, medical oncology nurse since 1997.

Mike VI

In 2016, the faculty and staff of the LSU SVM’s Cancer Treatment Unit helped diagnose and treat Mike VI, LSU’s live tiger mascot, when he was diagnosed with spindle cell sarcoma. Mike VI was treated at Mary Bird Perkins - Our Lady of the Lake Cancer Center because the best treatment option for him at the time was stereotactic radiotherapy, which the LSU SVM will be able to offer later in 2017.
Tammy Dugas, PhD (LSU 1996), professor in the Department of Comparative Biomedical Sciences at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine, wants to give cardiovascular disease a fatal heart attack. Her work focuses on drug-eluting stents and drug-coated balloons used to combat one of the deadliest diseases in the United States.

Cardiovascular disease, also commonly known as heart disease, occurs when plaque builds up within artery walls, which makes it harder for blood to flow through tissues in the body. When this happens, the risk of a heart attack or stroke increases.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) states, approximately 630,000 people die each year from cardiovascular disease, and it is the leading cause of death for both men and women. The different types of cardiovascular disease include coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, cardiac arrest, congestive heart failure, peripheral artery disease and congenital heart disease, among others.

Coronary heart disease is the most common heart disease and killed more than 366,000 people in 2015. While there is no singular cure for cardiovascular disease, there are numerous forms of treatment, including lifestyle changes, drug therapies, cardiac rehabilitation and medical and surgical procedures. For example, coronary angioplasty is a
procedure used to widen blocked or narrow coronary arteries by inserting and inflating a tiny balloon where the blockage is located. This will allow blood to flow through to the heart and decrease risk of heart attack, stroke or other heart-related ailment. This is often combined with the permanent placement of a small mesh tube called a stent.

This is where Dr. Dugas and her research come into play. A significant part of her work focuses on a drug-eluting stent (DES) that was created to release a drug slowly for over a period of one month after surgery to control the rapid growth of smooth muscle cells, which are cellular components of the normal blood vessel wall that provides structural cohesion and regulates the diameter by contracting and relaxing dynamically in response to vasoactive stimuli. The stent provides mechanical support to blood vessels after an angioplasty procedure occurs. Because drug-eluting stents provide the controlled release of compounds that interfere with restenosis (the narrowing of blood vessels), DES has been regarded as the solution to the problems associated with using stents without a coating or covering.

However, to solve the problem of vessel re-narrowing, commercial stents release chemotherapy agents that are toxic. Dr. Dugas's laboratory is thus developing a novel DES that uses cardio-protective compounds that are found in red wine. Her laboratory has shown that combinations of these compounds promote vessel healing, while at the same time, prevent blood clotting and inflammation associated with DES implantation to address a critical, unmet medical need.

Because her work in DES has been so successful, using the same drug combination, Dr. Dugas and her colleagues are now working to develop a drug-coated balloon for peripheral artery disease. Drug-coated balloons are particularly useful for treatment of peripheral artery disease, a disease that causes blockage to the vessels that supply blood to the kidneys, stomach, arms and legs. Peripheral artery disease affects approximately 8 to 12 million Americans with less than 20 percent diagnosed by a physician. Drug-coated balloons are a relatively new product, and are being developed to help
Interventional cardiologists treat arteries that are difficult to target with traditional angioplasty and stent treatments. By delivering red wine antioxidants during conventional angioplasty, it may be possible to limit the vessel re-narrowing caused by the vascular overstretch injury response during the angioplasty procedure.

Through this research, Dr. Dugas has compiled an impressive collection of grants and awards. Dr. Dugas also recently completed a $223,701 grant from the NIH Small Business Technology Transfer program for her work with drug-eluting stents. Following that award, Dr. Dugas and Cristina Sabliov, MS, MS, PhD, Richard R. and Betty Fenton Alumni Professor in the Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering at LSU, recently received a $200,495 grant from the Louisiana Board of Regents Industrial Ties Research Subprogram to fund development of the balloon.

Dr. Dugas is originally from southwest Louisiana and received her PhD in chemistry from LSU in 1996. She completed a two-year post-doctoral fellowship at Drexel University and then a second post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. Her first faculty position was at the LSU Health Science Center Shreveport. Dr. Dugas joined the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine in 2014. Dr. Dugas is very active in the Society of Toxicology and served as president of the Cardiovascular Toxicology Specialty Section for 2016-2017. A fun fact about Dr. Dugas is that she comes from generations of Cajun musicians. She says she is the only person in her immediate family that is not a Cajun musician, but she did play the mellophone in the LSU Tiger Band.

Mandi Lopez, DVM, PhD, DACVS

Mandi Lopez, DVM, PhD, DACVS, is a professor in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences, as well as director of the Laboratory of Equine and Comparative Orthopedic Research. Dr. Lopez’s research has three components: device design and development, stem cells and motion analysis; the focus of all this research is to assess the efficacy of therapeutic intervention for pain relief.

Dr. Lopez was honored for her work in device design and development in 2016 when she was made a fellow in the National Academy of Inventors for her inventions and for encouraging ingenuity and innovation in others. She has multiple patents for biomedical devices, including her most recent invention, the GraftGrab. “That is the device that I’ve been working on for many years,” said Dr. Lopez. “It is now patented—both nationally and internationally—and can attach soft tissue to bone. It’s extremely versatile and can be used in any surgery that includes fastening the soft tissue to bone through a tunnel.”

The GraftGrab is a small clip that surgeons can attach to anterior cruciate ligament or canine cruciate ligament grafts. A challenge in these procedures is making sure grafts have the right tension. Currently, surgeons have few options to adjust graft tension and readjusting is difficult and can increase surgery length. The GraftGrab allows doctors to easily control and adjust graft tension for the best possible results.
I’ve worked very hard over the last year to finalize the prototypes for the GraftGrab and the Grab10 and have brought them to the point where they are what we call ‘reduced to practice,’ so they are ready to go,” said Dr. Lopez. She went through hundreds of prototypes to get the right one.

The GraftGrab can be created out of plastic, any absorbable material or metal. It is incredibly versatile and can be used on virtually any size animal or person. It can be used in ACL reconstruction, dental procedures, and shoulder and spinal reconstructions.

In addition to device design and development, Dr. Lopez also is involved in stem cell research, with a focus on identifying cells for specific tissue formation. Her team has been very successful in creating viable bone grafts and viable cells to regrow hoof and creating viable pancreatic cells to restore function in cats. “Our goal is to identify populations of stem cells and learn to direct or manipulate them to make tissue that can be replanted in the body,” said Dr. Lopez. “We want to control the cells. To just have cells is one thing, but we want to be able to control and direct the cells so that they do what we expect. We do that outside of the body by identifying specific cells, and then work in the laboratory to stimulate them to become specific tissues or cells so we know how they will behave when we put them back into the body.”

Dr. Lopez’s motion analysis research includes motion studies in dogs, horses and people. “With dogs and horses, we’re looking at different ways to reduce pain associated with osteoarthritis,” said Dr. Lopez. In humans, Dr. Lopez is collaborating with the LSU Health Sciences Center (LSU HSC) to look at how current technology causes injuries to the wrist. Another collaborative study with the LSU HSC is looking at similarities between canine and human degenerative hip disease, which is a big health problem in both species.

In addition to the LSU HSC, Dr. Lopez is collaborating with researchers at Columbia University, Tulane University, Washington University in St. Louis, Washington State University, University of California, Davis, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Illinois, Johns Hopkins University, as well as industry collaborations across the U.S.

Dr. Lopez is from the Pacific Northwest. She received her bachelor’s degree from Humboldt State University in Arcata, California and attended veterinary school at the University of California, Davis. She completed a food animal internship at Kansas State University prior to going to the University of Wisconsin, where she completed a residency in large animal surgery and obtained MS and PhD degrees. She then did a post-doctoral fellowship in applied biomechanics. Her areas of interest are within comparative orthopedic research and surgery. Dr. Lopez is board certified by the American College of Veterinary Surgeons. Dr. Lopez has several patents for biomedical devices and has expertise in both applied and basic research.
Juan Martinez, PhD
Professor
Department of Pathobiological Sciences
BS, University of Illinois, 1995
PhD, Washington University, 2001
Post-doctoral fellow, Institut Pasteur, Paris, France
Joined the LSU SVM faculty on November 1, 2012

Juan Martinez, PhD

Juan Martinez, PhD, Professor, University of Illinois alum, researcher of tick pathogens, baker of flourless cakes and cheerleader to students, is more than just the man who studies Rickettsia and bakes delicious desserts. He is a scientist, leader, mentor and team player who is making a difference at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine and in the world with his contributions to researching Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever disease.

Before becoming a Professor in the department of Pathobiological Sciences and recipient of the 2017 Zoetis Award for Veterinary Research Excellence, Dr. Martinez was just a boy from a predominantly-Hispanic neighborhood in Chicago known as La Villita, or Little Village. When Dr. Martinez was a young boy, he wanted to be a mathematician. Although he recalls wanting to be “a math guy,” one afternoon in high school he received a call from a recruiter at the University of Illinois. “We need more intelligent and qualified Hispanic scientists,” explained the recruiter and then informed Dr. Martinez that if he came to the University of Illinois and studied microbiology, he would receive a scholarship. Dr. Martinez accepted.

After graduating from the University of Illinois, Dr. Martinez attended Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri where he completed his PhD. During his time at Washington University, Dr. Martinez learned of post-doctoral opportunities in Europe and was very interested in the possibility of living there. He received a fellowship from the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) to complete his post-doctoral training in France. While there, Dr. Martinez not only worked on his research, but he took baking courses from a French baker and pastry chef, where he learned how to make decadent desserts. This skill (along with just being a nice guy) would eventually make him very popular among the LSU SVM Dean’s Suite administrators. After completing his post-doctoral fellowship, Dr. Martinez returned to his hometown of Chicago and began work as a researcher and Assistant Professor for the University of Chicago, Department of Microbiology.

But enough about Dr. Martinez’s mouth-watering desserts. Dr. Juan Martinez is his name, and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever Disease is his game.

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever is a rare infectious disease transmitted by the bite of a tick infected with Rickettsia bacteria. People infected can have symptoms of fever, headache and rash. It can be deadly if not treated early with the right antibiotics.

Dr. Martinez’s work focuses on Spotted Fever Group (SFG) Rickettsia. This type of bacteria is transmitted to a mammal when an arthropod vector takes a blood meal. This disease can be harmful for humans and animals, especially companion animals like dogs.

Essentially, when bacteria, such as Rickettsia, infects a person, the immune system will recognize this infection as foreign and mount an attack against it. Because of this, the body will generate additional antibodies, which is a blood protein produced in response to and counteracting a specific foreign substance. For bacteria, the ability to survive in blood is not a normal attribute, but there is something about this bacteria that allows it to survive in blood. But what exactly?

Dr. Martinez has focused much of his career on attempting to find out what makes this process so bad; how can a bite disseminated into the body cause disease? Dr. Martinez explains that these bacteria have to get inside a cell because they cannot replicate...
themselves outside of a cell. The big challenge is to understand how this translates into disease. He further explains that just because the bacteria gets inside a cell and replicates, does not mean it will cause disease. So what is the factor that does? These questions are among the many Dr. Martinez and his team want to know.

Dr. Martinez hypothesizes that since the immune system recognizes specific proteins made by the bacteria and makes antibodies against them, researchers could vaccinate animals with proteins that raise immune responses to protect a human or animal from disease. Furthermore, he wants to build on this technology and target not only people who are at risk, but also animals where these infections are prevalent. Animals that are infected can indirectly transmit this disease to humans. For example, if the tick is feeding on an infected animal, the tick can subsequently feed on a person and potentially transmit the infection to humans. The more researchers know about the molecular details, the easier it is for them to develop targeted therapies to block the infectious process.

Throughout his career, Dr. Martinez has received many grants and awards to fund his research. These grants include an R01 grant from the National Institute of Health (NIH) he received while at the University of Chicago but was renewed at the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine. The grant is for $1.25 million until 2020. He has also received an NIH R21 grant for $400,000, a collaborative R01 grant with Kevin Macaluso, PhD, MS, Mary Louise Martin Professor in the Department of Pathobiological Sciences, and is the Protein Core Director for a Phase III NIH COBRE grant. Overall, his program has brought approximately 2 million dollars in research funds to the LSU SVM. Obviously he cannot do this work alone and has relied on researcher associates Abbigail Fish, PhD student, Daniel Garza, research associate and Sean Riley, PhD, assistant professor (research), all in the PBS department, to successfully carry out these projects.

Dr. Martinez says one of his favorite things about working at the LSU SVM is being a supporter and cheerleader for his research associates and students. He loves seeing the “ah-ha” moment when his students come to their own conclusions about their research without his prompts. He says knowing that he has taught them well is the most rewarding part of his job. A fun fact about Dr. Martinez is that he played rugby at the University of Illinois and speaks three languages fluently, which include Spanish, English and French.
Mike VI was diagnosed with spindle cell sarcoma in May 2016 and was treated in June. Unfortunately, the cancer spread, and he was humanely euthanized on October 11, 2016. LSU then began renovating the tiger habitat; those renovations were completed in August 2017, and on August 21, the first day of classes at LSU, students weren’t the only ones getting a start at the university. That morning, Dr. David Baker, LSU’s Attending Veterinarian, along with student caretakers, opened the door of the tiger habitat and officially welcomed Mike VII to campus.

LSU had previously announced that the rescue tiger, “Harvey,” arrived on campus on Aug. 15 and was being housed in the night house of the tiger habitat. The 11-month-old male tiger was being quarantined in the night house so that he could be observed by LSU veterinarians to ensure that he was healthy and a good fit for LSU.

The tiger acclimated well to his new surroundings and was deemed ready to become Mike VII. As Mike VII, his daily schedule is that he is out into his yard by 8 a.m. each day and brought back in his night house by 8 p.m. each night.
Mike VII, who has both Siberian and Bengal characteristics, was donated to LSU from a sanctuary in Okeechobee, Fla., called “Wild at Heart Wildlife Center.” Mikes IV, V and VI were also donated to LSU from rescue facilities. LSU has not purchased a tiger since Mike III in 1958 and does not support the for-profit breeding of tigers. By providing a home for a tiger that needs one, LSU hopes to raise awareness about the problem of irresponsible breeding and the plight of tigers kept illegally and/or inappropriately in captivity in the U.S.

The tiger habitat and LSU's animal care plan are licensed by the USDA. The facility, tiger and animal care programs are inspected annually to ensure that they comply with the Federal Animal Welfare Act and other USDA policies and guidelines.

This and other information on LSU’s tigers can be found online at www.lsu.edu/mikethetiger. You can follow Mike on Facebook (www.facebook.com/mikethetiger), Twitter (@mikethetiger) and Instagram (@mikethetiger_lsu).
Meet Our New Faculty

Harmeet Aulakh, BVSc & AH, MVSc, is an instructor of internal medicine in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. She joined the faculty on July 1, 2017. Dr. Aulakh received her BVSc & AH in 2003 and her MVSc in 2005, both from the Punjab Agricultural University.

Rose E. Baker, BVMS, cVMA, MS, is an assistant professor of equine medicine in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. She joined the faculty on September 21, 2017. She received her BA from Johns Hopkins University in 2005. She received her BVMS from the University of Glasgow in 2012 and her cVMA from the CuraCore Integrative Medicine & Education Center in 2014. Dr. Baker received her MS from Oregon State University in 2017. She completed an equine medicine and surgery internship at North Carolina State University in 2013 and then completed a large animal clinical fellowship in 2014 followed by a large animal medicine residency in 2017, both at Oregon State University. Dr. Baker's teaching interests are in emergency and critical care, equine neurological disorders and helping students develop proficiency in clinical and communication skills. Her research interests are in equine critical care (specifically monitoring techniques to improve assessments of patient response to treatment) and equine gastroenteric diseases.

Heidi E. Banse, DVM, PhD, DACVIM, is an assistant professor of equine medicine in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. She joined the faculty on August 17, 2017. Dr. Banse received her BS in 2004 and her DVM in 2007, both from Washington State University. She completed a large animal internship at the University of Georgia in 2008 and an equine medicine residency at Oklahoma State University in 2011. She received her PhD from Oklahoma State University in 2013. She then spent four years on faculty at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada. Dr. Banse is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (Large Animal). Her teaching interests are in equine endocrinology and pharmacology and her research focus is in equine gastric disease and equine endocrinology.

Roger Avery Bennett, Jr., DVM, MS, DACVS, is a professor of companion animal surgery in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. He joined the faculty on January 1, 2017. Dr. Bennett received his BS from Western Michigan University in 1973, his DVM from Michigan State University in 1983 and his MS from Colorado State University in 1987. Dr. Bennett is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons. Dr. Bennett completed his internship at Texas A&M University and his residency at Colorado State University. He was chief of surgery at the Animal Medical Center in New York, N.Y., and at Lauderdale Veterinary Specialists in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. He was also head veterinarian for the San Francisco Zoological Gardens and taught zoo and wildlife medicine at the University of Florida, in addition to owning his own practice.

Elizabeth Coffman, DVM, MS, DACT, is an instructor of theriogenology in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. She joined the faculty on December 1, 2016. Dr. Coffman received her BS in 2005 and her DVM in 2009, both from the University of Tennessee. She completed a residency in comparative theriogenology and received her MS from the Ohio State University in 2013. Dr. Coffman is a Diplomate of the American College of Theriogenologists.
Chiara De Caro Carella, DVM, MS, is an assistant professor of veterinary anesthesiology in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. She joined the faculty on July 26, 2016. She received her DVM from the Università degli Studi di Messina (Italy) in 2008 and her MS from Oregon State University in 2016; she completed her residency at OSU in 2016 as well. Dr. De Caro Carella’s teaching interests are in teaching acid-base physiology and diagnostic approaches, and her research focus is in hemodynamic monitoring under anesthesia, and anesthetic techniques in swine to improve their overall welfare.

Andrea Dedeaux, DVM (LSU SVM 2011), DACVIM, is an instructor of medical oncology in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. She joined the faculty on July 15, 2017. Dr. Dedeaux received her BS from Loyola University in 2005 and her DVM from the LSU SVM in 2011. She completed a small animal internal medicine residency in 2015 and will complete a medical oncology residency in 2018, both at the LSU SVM. She is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (Small Animal Internal Medicine).

Lorrie Hale, DVM, CVA, CVTP, is an instructor of integrative medicine and rehabilitation in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. She joined the faculty on June 1, 2016. Dr. Hale received two BS degrees (one in 1991 and the second in 1993) and her DVM in 1996, all from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. In 2014, she received her CVA (Certified Veterinary Acupuncturist) from the Chi Institute of Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine, and, in 2017, received her CVTP (Certified Veterinary Tui-na Practitioner), also from the Chi Institute. She is currently working on a Master’s degree in Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine from the Chi Institute and hopes to complete it by 2020. Dr. Hale’s teaching interests are in clinical skills training, acupuncture and other traditional Chinese veterinary medicine modalities, especially as they relate to exotics. Her research interests are in Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine, herbal medicine and alligators.

Cullen Domaracki, DVM, is an assistant professor of community practice in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. He joined the faculty on July 17, 2017. Dr. Domaracki received his BS from the University of Florida in 2010 and his DVM from North Carolina State University in 2014. Following graduation, he worked in a small animal general practice in the Raleigh, N.C., area, followed by practicing emergency medicine at the Animal Emergency and Specialty Center in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Alexandra Noël, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Department of Comparative Biomedical Sciences. She joined the faculty on March 1, 2017. Dr. Noël received her BS in 2003, her MSc in 2007 and her PhD in 2013, all from the Université de Montréal, Faculté de Médecine. The focus of her research is production and characterization of aerosols, composed of cigarette smoke, electronic cigarette vapor, engineered nanoparticles, ultrafine or fine particles, as well as inhalation and developmental toxicology. In addition, she is the 2017 - 2019 councilor of the Society of Toxicology South-Central Regional Chapter, and Dr. Noël was the chair of the Gordon Research Seminar (GRS) on Lung Development Injury & Repair that was held in August 2017 in New London, N.H.

Olalekan M. Ogundele, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Department of Comparative Biomedical Sciences. He joined the faculty on July 1, 2017. Dr. Ogundele received his BSc in 2005, his MS in 2009 and his PhD in 2012, all from the
University of Ilorin, Nigeria. His research focuses on the synaptic mechanism of developmental neuropsychiatric disorders that are characterized by an abnormal socio-cognitive function.

**Sonika Patial, PhD**, is an assistant professor in the Department of Comparative Biomedical Sciences. She joined the faculty on April 1, 2017. Dr. Patial received her BVSc from the DGCN College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, CSK HP Agricultural University in 2003. She received her MS from the Indian Veterinary Research Institute in July 2005 and her PhD from Michigan State University in May 2010. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in March, 2016 and a residency in Veterinary Anatomic Pathology in March, 2017 before joining LSU as an assistant professor. Dr. Patial’s research interests are in innate immunity, inflammation and toxicologic pathology.

**M. Ryan Smith, DVM** (LSU SVM 2009), DACVECC, is an assistant professor of emergency and critical care in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. He joined the faculty on September 1, 2017. Dr. Smith received his BS in 2006 from LSU and his DVM in 2009 from the LSU SVM. He completed an internship with Affiliated Veterinary Specialists in Orlando, Fla., in 2010, and he completed a residency with Veterinary Specialty Services in St. Louis, Mo., in 2015. Dr. Smith is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care (Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care). His teaching interests are aimed at disease pathophysiology, transfusion medicine and simplifying the approach to emergency patients to “make it seem less scary.” His research interests are in anaphylaxis biomarkers and treatment, traumatic coagulopathy and traumatic inflammatory response.

**Virginie Wurlod, Dr.med. vet., MS, DACVECC, DECVECC, RCVS**, is an assistant professor of emergency and critical care in the Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences. She joined the faculty on November 2, 2016. Dr. Wurlod received her Dr.med.vet. in 2008 from the University of Bern (Switzerland) and her MS from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2015. She is a Diplomate of both the American College of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care and the European College of Veterinary Emergency and Critical Care; she is also a member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

**Charles Lee**, PhD, was promoted to associate professor with tenure in Comparative Biomedical Sciences. He joined the faculty in 2011.

**Juan Martinez**, PhD, was promoted to professor in Pathobiological Sciences. He joined the faculty in 2012.

**Javier Nevarez**, DVM (LSU SVM 2001), PhD (LSU SVM 2007), DACZM, DECZM, was promoted to professor in Veterinary Clinical Sciences. He joined the faculty in 2003.
LSU SVM selected highlights through the years

1970s

1978 – Dr. Thomas Klei was awarded a research grant by the World Health Organization for his work in tropical diseases.

1980s

1981 – Dr. Martin Hugh-Jones implements internationally-funded surveillance program concerning zoonotic diseases in the Caribbean Epidemiology Research Center areas (CAREC), part of the World Health Organization.

1982 – Dean Everett D. Besch was appointed to the National Advisory Council on Health Professions Education of the Health Resources Administration.

1982 – LSU SVM establishes its annual Open House to introduce visitors to the SVM and veterinary medicine. More than 8,000 people attended Open House in 2014.

1983 – A five-member delegation from China visits the LSU SVM following the signing of a joint agreement involving agriculture projects between the U.S. and the People’s Republic of China.

1985 – With the donation of the Heck Farm breeding and horse training facilities, the LSU SVM established its equine veterinary research program.

1987 – LSU SVM establishes annual international exhibition on Animals in Art.

1987 – LSU SVM takes over the testing of horses for drugs for the Louisiana State Racing Commission.

1987 – LSU SVM establishes the Analytical Systems Laboratory to develop techniques to evaluate the quality of the environment by detecting herbicides and pesticides in animal tissues and to detect drugs in the food supply.

1988 – LSU SVM establishes Aquatic Toxicology Laboratory to enhance aquaculture research.

1989 – Betty Torbert, research associate, is honored for having a horse parasite, Cylicostephanus torbertae, named after her. She discovered it while doing a survey of parasites that exist in the Gulf Coast area.
Our Students

CLASS OF 2018
809 applications received
86 students accepted (64 from Louisiana, 10 from Arkansas and 12 from other states)
22.9 average age (range 20 to 35)
66 female students
20 male students
3.76 average overall required course GPA

CLASS OF 2019
809 applications received
86 students accepted (62 from Louisiana, 9 from Arkansas and 15 from other states)
23.3 average age (range 20 to 37)
70 female students
16 male students
3.80 average overall required course GPA

We Teach
<table>
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<tr>
<th>CLASS OF 2020</th>
<th>CLASS OF 2021</th>
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<tr>
<td>732 applications received</td>
<td>695 applications received</td>
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<tr>
<td>91 students accepted (67 from Louisiana, 9 from Arkansas and 15 from other states)</td>
<td>90 students accepted (62 from Louisiana, 9 from Arkansas and 19 from other states)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.2 average age (range 20 to 37)</td>
<td>24 average age (range 20 to over 50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77 female students</td>
<td>78 female students</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 male students</td>
<td>12 male students</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.84 average overall required course GPA</td>
<td>3.79 average overall required course GPA</td>
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Our Graduates

DEGREES BESTOWED IN LSU SVM HISTORY
DVM 2,989
MS 183
PhD 244

DVM GRADUATES
FEMALE 1,704
MALE 1,285

DVM GRADUATION RATE
91 PERCENT

AVERAGE STARTING SALARIES AND AVERAGE DEBT FOR DVM GRADUATES BY CLASS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>2016</td>
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**GRADUATES BY PRACTICE TYPE**

![Graph showing graduates by practice type from 2003 to 2016.](image-url)
Mark Haines, DVM (LSU SVM 1979), MS, MPH, DACVPM, is now the only DVM/JD in the state of Hawaii. He graduated from the Richardson School of Law at the University of Hawaii in May 2017.

Susan Eades, DVM (LSU SVM 1982), PhD, DACVIM, is now professor and head of the Large Animal Clinical Sciences Department at the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Scott Powers, PhD (LSU SVM 1985), UAA Endowed Professor and Distinguished Professor in the Department of Applied Physiology and Kinesiology at the University of Florida, has recently received the 2017 Honor Award from the American Physiological Society, as well as the University of Florida’s Teacher-Scholar of the Year for 2016 - 2017.

Rebecca McConnico, DVM (LSU SVM 1987), PhD, DACVIM, is now professor and veterinarian in the Department of Agriculture Sciences and Forestry at Louisiana Tech.

Shawn Zimmerman, DVM, is currently completing a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine, where she and fellow researchers were recently awarded a $3.2 million grant by the National Institute of Health (NIH) to develop a vaccine platform that will optimize vaccine development and administration. This grant is for five years.
1990s

1990 – Biosafety Level 3 Containment Laboratory opens at the LSU SVM.

1991 – LSU SVM establishes “Best Friend Gone” project, a grief support service open to the public.

1991 – Dr. J.K. Daniloff, assistant professor, patents nerve-mending device to promote recovery of muscle function.

1991 – LSU SVM researchers patent vaccine to combat bovine anaplasmosis.


1992 – Dr. David Husxoll, associate dean for research and advanced studies, selected as a member of the United Nations Special Commission Inspection Team sent to Iraq. Dr. Huxsoll is a former commander of the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases and a recipient of the U.S. Army’s Distinguished Service Medal.

1992 – LSU SVM establishes the Gene Probes and Expressions System Laboratory (GeneLab) to provide genetic engineering services.

1992 – LSU SVM performs the fourth horse pacemaker implant in the country.

1992 – Dr. Miguel Valdes is selected as one of 25 veterinarians throughout the world to care for over 400 equine athletes at the summer Olympics.

1993 – Dr. Martin Hugh-Jones, professor, is part of an American and Russian team of scientists that solved the mystery of a deadly outbreak of anthrax in 1979 in Sverdlovsk, Siberia.

1996 – Dr. Richard Cambre (LSU SVM 1978) named head of the Department of Animal Health at the National Zoological Park, part of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C.

1998 – Dr. Alexander Dunlap (LSU SVM 1989) serves as alternate payload specialist and ground veterinarian for the STS-90 Neurolab space shuttle mission flown.
What made you want to be a veterinarian?

As a young child, my family would spend most weekends at my grandparent’s farm in Springfield. I was drawn to all of the animals there, and remember seeing a calf injured. I wanted to be able to help that calf, and I knew then that I wanted to be a veterinarian.

How did the LSU SVM prepare you for your career?

Because of the training I received at LSU, I felt comfortable going into practice after graduation knowing that it was a lifelong career of learning based on that strong foundation. My preceptorship with Dr. Gary Beard led to my first veterinary position and my career in veterinary dentistry.

What was the LSU SVM like when you attended?

We began classes in Audubon Hall and started in the “new building” in our third year. Our classes were very close-knit, and we knew all of our professors and students in other classes. Our professors were approachable, and took an interest in each of us as individuals. We had a lot of fun as well.

What does the LSU SVM mean to you?

The SVM represents the foundation of my career. The training I received allowed me to learn and grow and achieve more than I ever imagined. It all started here.

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

While there were lots of memorable cases and classes, I will never forget our class coming together to produce the “Friday Night Live” with the Not Ready for State Board Players. It was a combination of talent show, comedy sketches and faculty roast that was a fun way to let off steam.

Where have you worked since graduating?

I started out in practice in Northern Virginia in Fairfax and Woodbridge, and then returned to Louisiana and practiced with Dr. Neal Faciane for three years. In 1987 we moved to the Sacramento area, where I purchased Cordova Veterinary Hospital.

Any honors or awards?

I have served as Treasurer of the Northern Virginia Veterinary Medical Association and on the Board of Directors of the D.C. Academy of Veterinary Medicine. I was President of the Sacramento Valley Veterinary Medical Association (SVVMA), and Treasurer of the SVVMA Charitable Foundation. In 2003 I was awarded a Don Low Practitioner Fellowship at UC Davis.

You recently sold your practice and then made a donation to the LSU SVM that is the largest gift from an alumna in our history. What was the motivation for this gift?

I hear people every day speak of having a dream of becoming a veterinarian. I was able to realize that dream, and I owe all of that to LSU. When the opportunity came, my husband and I wanted to try to repay some of that debt.

In my career, there have been tremendous advances in technology, diagnostics, anesthesia, pain management and treatment of disease. However, the single most common disease of small animal patients is dental disease. Students do not always receive adequate training in modern methods of diagnosing and treating dental disease. Because of my experience providing advanced dental services to patients throughout the Sacramento area, I see the need for proper training in dental procedures, and the benefit of advanced dental treatments. Helping to establish a dentistry service in the new hospital facility will give our students a chance to see these cases first hand and provide the care that these patients deserve. I’m hoping that it will spur others who have benefitted from the LSU SVM as I have to donate to the building fund and support the ongoing efforts to keep LSU a great veterinary school.

Melissa Gates, DVM

- Received her DVM from LSU in 1980
- Hometown is Thibodaux, Louisiana
- Currently resides in Fair Oaks, California
Michael McCracken, PhD

**What is your title and place of employment?**

I’m a post-doctoral associate (part of the National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council Research Associateship Program) at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. I work in the pre-clinical group of the Viral Diseases Branch.

**What made you pursue a career in scientific research?**

My fondness for biology actually stems from two biology courses (AP Bio & Molecular and Cellular Biology) that I took in high school (Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts in Natchitoches), taught by the stellar Dr. Allison Landry, herself an LSU graduate. I worked in a research laboratory under Dr. Robert Gambrell, then professor with the LSU College of the Coast and the Environment, during my undergrad, but my final inspiration to enter graduate school and pursue research came from taking the Immunology course at LSU, taught by Dr. Hollie Hale-Donze. It was in this class that I decided I wanted to pursue infectious disease research.
Please describe your primary research.

My primary research is on mosquito-transmitted flaviviruses, particularly dengue virus. At WRAIR, I utilize mouse and non-human primate models to explore how different vector and host factors (i.e., mosquito saliva proteins, sugar molecules on viral envelope proteins, vertebrate skin immune responses) impact transmission and infection, and how we might exploit these responses to develop improved vaccines.

How did the LSU SVM prepare you for your current career?

The PBS department’s focus on zoonotic diseases and the inherent interdisciplinary nature of the department and the SVM as a whole I think provides a unique perspective into the interactions between systems and the potential adaptability of research techniques across fields. Also, I was given excellent opportunities to make connections within and beyond my field, and it was these connections and collaborations that led to my current position.

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

The memory that immediately comes to mind was my first time-course experiment, which essentially had me pulling an all-nighter in the lab. Another grad student and I ended up filling the downtime between time points with games and quick outings; would should have been incredible tedium ended up being a great time.

Honors and awards.

Michael received the School of Veterinary Medicine Distinguished Dissertation Award in 2015 for his dissertation entitled “Influence of Aedes aegypti Saliva on the Vertebrate Host Response to Dengue Virus. Following graduation, Michael was awarded a post-doctoral fellowship at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research.
The LSU School of Veterinary Medicine is pleased to announce the 2016 Distinguished Alumnus of the Year, John Dunn, DVM (LSU SVM 1997), PhD (LSU SVM 2003). Dr. Dunn was recognized at the Louisiana Veterinary Medical Association (LVMA) Alumni and Friends Reception hosted as part of the LVMA’s Winter Meeting in Baton Rouge, La., on January 21, 2017.

Dr. Dunn received his BS in 1991, his DVM in 1997 and his PhD in 2003, all from LSU. After receiving his DVM, Dr. Dunn worked for three years as an associate veterinarian at an animal clinic in Zachary, La. In 2000 he returned to the LSU SVM to pursue his PhD and worked as a research assistant in the Department of Pathobiological Sciences (PBS).

“Veterinary medicine is a really diverse profession, said Dr. Dunn. “I chose veterinary medicine because of my interest in biology, animal and population health. After spending several years as a clinician in a mixed practice, I came back to the LSU SVM to focus on zoonotic disease and population health. Interestingly, while I was in clinical practice and attending a BRAVMA meeting, I ran into [then] Dean Mike Groves at the meeting, and he asked me about my interest in coming back to do work in population health and veterinary public health. Through the encouragement and support of Dean Groves and Dr. Tom Klei, I was able to begin my PhD program working on pre-harvest food safety and E. coli O157. My PhD work began in the Epidemiology and Community Health department under Dr. Alex Thompson.”

“Both programs, DVM and PhD, gave me great academic training. The faculty and staff prepared me as a clinician and as a veterinary public health practitioner.”
Dr. Dunn currently holds a number of important positions in epidemiology and public health, more specifically in the area of food-borne diseases. For the state of Tennessee, Dr. Dunn serves as Deputy State Epidemiologist, State Public Health Veterinarian and Director in Communicable and Environmental Disease Services overseeing Foodborne, Vectorborne and Zoonotic Diseases. He is also an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Comparative Medicine at the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine and an Assistant Clinical Professor of Preventative Medicine at the Vanderbilt University of School of Medicine. Since 2011, he has served as an LSU instructor for the National Center for Biomedical Research and Training, teaching a team approach to foodborne disease investigation.

“I was surprised, humbled, and honored to receive the Distinguished Alumnus Award,” said Dr. Dunn. “Dr. Tom Klei and Dr. Michael Groves, who nominated me, were very influential and supportive mentors during my DVM and PhD programs. I can’t thank them enough for encouraging me in my career. Both programs, DVM and PhD, gave me great academic training. The faculty and staff prepared me as a clinician and as a veterinary public health practitioner. The LSU SVM prepared me for my next steps including a fellowship at the CDC which led me to a career working at the federal and state levels in public health and epidemiology. There are a lot of memorable experiences at the LSU SVM, but I remember classmates and the people who helped me complete my PhD the most. Some of those friendships remain today. I particularly enjoyed field service work during veterinary school with Dr. Steve Nicholson. We also did some work at a prison swine unit with the added benefit of cooking half a pig on the pit.”

In June 2014, Dr. Dunn received the Leveraging Collaboration Award from the Food & Drug Administration as part of the FDA and State Emergency Assessment/Response Team for outstanding performance protecting public health through rapid response and follow up of emergencies. He is also the past winner of the CDC James V. Steele Veterinary Public Health Award.

Dr. Dunn was accompanied to the alumni reception by his two daughters, Ruth and Jessie, who are both undergraduate students at LSU.

*No award was given in 1993-2002 or in 2014.*

The Distinguished Alumnus Award is a means to recognize alumni of the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine for outstanding professional and personal achievements. Any veterinarian who received the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Louisiana State University is eligible for the award. Candidates will be recognized for their accomplishments in veterinary medicine and/or contributions to the community through public service.
Phyllis and Byron Eyre

"Many people ask my husband Byron and I what is most important to us and every time the word that comes first is family," said Phyllis Eyre. "Our family is not the average people-laden group but is comprised of the various four-legged babies that we have adopted throughout our 25 years of marriage. Those companion animals were and are our family. Their care has been our primary focus while each one has been in our lives. We knew that we would have lots of love as well as the heartaches that come when it is their time to go, but what we didn’t know was the extended people, family, those babies would bring to us or the importance the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine would play in our family."

For thirteen years, the Eyres have been coming through the doors of LSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital to find care, comfort, love and friendship for their fur babies. Their association with the LSU VTH actually began in Little Rock, Ark., where their veterinarians were LSU School of Veterinary Medicine alumni. “After years of living in Little Rock, we moved to San Antonio, Texas, and again found connections with LSU SVM alumni, who were the care givers for our fur family,” said Phyllis. Eight years later, when the Eyres moved to Baton Rouge close to the LSU SVM, they started bringing their pets to the LSU VTH. “We found a home for us and a veterinary home for our fur children,” said Phyllis.

Added Phyllis, “LSU has provided us with a way to be good stewards of the fur babies in our care by keeping up with the latest in practices for veterinarian medicine. Faculty, friends, staff, students and clinicians have walked us through each stage of our babies’ lives. They have rejoiced with us when we were able to heal a baby or provided quality of life for them as they went into their end stages of an illness. This family also has provided emotional and mental support for Byron and I while we were making the hard decisions that come with being good stewards who want quality of life for their babies.

“These experiences with the LSU SVM and all of its associates have filled our hearts so much that Byron and I have decided to leave an estate gift to the LSU SVM, which will allow others to experience this same level of care and love in the future. We have had wonderful experiences with community practice, the specialty services, shelter medicine and integrative medicine as well as others.”

By planning ahead of time with the help of the LSU SVM development team, the Eyres have been able to guide where their gift will best be used. This allows the school and hospital to also plan the best way to budget this gift. “We are so thrilled to be a continuing part of the LSU SVM’s future and allow others to have similar access to the care and support they and their babies may need.”
Connie and Herman Soong

“Ever since I was a little girl, I have loved animals,” said Connie Frank-Soong. “Now more than ever, our pets are considered part of the family. I have personally experienced the difference that animals, particularly, dogs, make in our lives. They offer their unconditional love. My dogs have helped me through some difficult times in my life. Because animals are voiceless, I encourage people to become better advocates for them. People should fully embrace the responsibility of having a pet. The LSU SVM has always given my dogs the highest level of care and love. So, it is only natural for me to give my gratitude to them. What better way to give back than to support LSU SVM.”

“Clayton Forbes [director of development] gave us a tour of the veterinary school and introduced us to the full scope of veterinary services provided by LSU SVM. We were very impressed with the comprehensive care of the animals. We also met Tracy Evans [senior director of development], who also helped further our understanding of the mission of LSU SVM. Having met many dedicated LSU staff members, excellent veterinarians and even Dean Baines himself, we were impressed by all of their commitment to LSU SVM. We knew that we wanted to participate in the LSU SVM’s goals.”

Connie and her husband, Herman, have two beautiful female Chihuahuas. Sophie is 13-year-old and is a chocolate and tan Chihuahua, and Bailey is a 12-year-old, blonde-colored Chihuahua. Herman and Connie bought Sophie from a breeder, and Connie bought Bailey as a Christmas gift for Herman from that same breeder. Both Sophie and Bailey have been part of the family since they were 8 weeks old. Because Connie’s dogs are a part of her family, she wants to leave a lasting personal legacy of her devotion to animals.

Connie has made a planned gift to the LSU SVM. Planned gifts are those gifts that are made in the future, usually in a person’s will or with a living trust. “Over the years, Bailey has presented us with very challenging illnesses from a stroke in 2013 to kidney stones in 2014, and Sophie has a history of seizures as well as ongoing stomach issues,” said Connie. “During our desperate times to provide the utmost care for them, we were embraced by the LSU SVM. There were very challenging issues in their treatment, and we were so thankful that the LSU SVM had the expertise to heal them. Our hope is that through education, research and developments in clinical services, all animals can receive the quality care and benefits to their health that LSU SVM provided to us for our fur babies.”

Connie graduated from LSU with a BS in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing in 1983. Sophie and Bailey are both patients at the LSU SVM’s Veterinary Teaching Hospital.

“We look forward to the LSU SVM providing continued care of our pets,” said Connie. “We find comfort knowing that we can trust them to always provide the highest quality of care to address all of our pets’ needs. We know we have met lifelong friends and feel that the LSU SVM is part of our family too.”

For information about planned giving, please contact the LSU SVM at 225-578-9489.
Good news! At the end of the 2017 second special session of the Louisiana State Legislature, the new Companion Animal Clinic project was approved for priority 5 funds in the capital outlay bill for $5 million. These state funds will be combined with the $4M in private dollars we have raised along with $1M from the Vet School to complete this project. Our sincere thanks to the following for their support in accomplishing this important step: Jason Droddy, Richard Lipsey, Jimmy Maurin, F. King Alexander, Richard Koubek, Bunnie Cannon, and Tracy Evans and our development team in collaboration with Emmet Stephenson. Separately, the LSU team will be working diligently on the next step, which is ensuring that the state funds the project. We have selected the architects, and the building design phase has begun.

The LSU Stephenson Pet Clinic will house outpatient services, such as dermatology, ophthalmology, integrative medicine and community practice. Construction on the current Veterinary Medicine Building was completed in 1978. As you can imagine, we have greatly increased the number of people, labs and services within it. Construction of the new clinic will free up much-needed space in the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, which will allow us to grow and improve services to our patients. We will continue our fundraising efforts for this project to create as large a footprint as possible. As we continue to grow and improve, we know that none of this would be possible without you.

The LSU SVM works every day to improve the lives of animals and people through education, research and service. We are dedicated to providing the best education for our students, the most sophisticated labs and equipment for our researchers and the most advanced and compassionate care for our patients. Thank you again for your support of our people, programs and patients.

We Heal
The Development Team is dedicated to building relationships and seeking private funds to help the LSU SVM continue its mission of teaching, healing and discovery. Please contact any member of our team if you’d like to learn how your gift can improve the lives of people and animals.

Make a gift to help the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine!
www.lsufoundation.org/givetovetmed
Fast Facts

• The LSU SVM is one of only 30 veterinary schools in the United States.

• The LSU SVM is the only veterinary school in Louisiana.

• The LSU SVM’s Veterinary Hospital sees more than 21,000 cases each year and is open 24/7, 365 days a year.

• The LSU SVM is a premier biomedical research facility with researchers investigating both human and animal diseases and injuries.

• The LSU SVM’s Wildlife Hospital provides free care for more than 1,800 wildlife cases each year at no cost to the Good Samaritans who bring them to us.

• The LSU SVM was the 19th veterinary school established in the U.S. and accepted its first class in 1977. Since then we have granted more than 2,000 DVM degrees.

• The LSU SVM also offers MS and PhD degrees in three academic departments: Comparative Biomedical Sciences, Pathobiological Sciences and Veterinary Clinical Sciences.

• The LSU SVM provides advanced training for veterinarians who work as interns and residents in our Veterinary Hospital.

• The LSU SVM provides veterinary and daily care for Mike VII, LSU’s live tiger mascot.