

School Welcomes 131 New Students with White Coat Ceremony

The class of 2010 crossed the threshold of Gladys Valley Hall, the instructional heart of the newly emerging veterinary campus in the Health Sciences District, to begin a week-long orientation program September 1.

Orientation included a class retreat—to focus on team building and leadership training—and introductions to academics, financial aid, clinical training, research opportunities and student activities. Instruction in the DVM program began September 11.

With the completion of Valley Hall, class size grew this year from 122 to 131 students, the full complement approved by the California Legislature in 1998. School officials welcomed the entering class with the traditional White Coat Ceremony. The coats identify students as members of the veterinary community and signify their transition into the profession.

Dean Bennie Osburn encouraged students to take advantage of the many opportunities that faculty and staff offer for academic and practical enrichment. He promised, “During the next four years, we will do our utmost to share our knowledge and clinical skills and provide you with the best veterinary education possible—it is the most important thing we do.”

Dale Moore, associate dean for student programs, introduced the class members. Jill Aschehoug Gallo, class of 2008 and president of the Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association (SCAVMA), placed a white coat on each.

Ms. Gallo said, “I challenge you to get to know one another. Your classmates will become your closest friends, a second family.” She acknowledged the difficult work ahead but advised, “Have fun. Don’t lose sight of the joy. Remember how excited you were today. You are walking the path you envisioned.”

Jan Illkiw, associate dean for academic programs, emphasizing the responsibilities of the veterinary profession, said, “We are the stewards of ‘all creatures great and small.’” In exchange for a lifelong commitment to competence, integrity, compassion, tolerance and other attributes of the profession, she said, society grants the profession considerable control and autonomy. However, veterinarians are always accountable to the society they serve.

To conclude the ceremony, Dean Osburn led the students in a recitation of the Veterinary Medical Student Oath, a pledge in which students dedicate themselves to their education and “the protection of animal health, the relief of animal suffering, the sustaining of animal resources, the promotion of public health and the advancement of medical knowledge.”

SCAVMA, Hills Pet Nutrition, Inc., and the School of Veterinary Medicine sponsor the White Coat Ceremony and related orientation activities. Merial and IAMS also support selected orientation events.



Dale Ann Moore, DVM, MPVM, PhD, was appointed associate dean last July to lead the Office of Student Programs. Dr. Moore administers pre-veterinary advising, admissions and academic advising programs for the school. She also oversees scholarships, student events and activities, career services and the Master of Preventive Veterinary Medicine degree program.

Dr. Moore joined the faculty in 1998 as a dairy veterinarian and epidemiologist based at the Veterinary Medical Teaching and Research Center in Tulare. She teaches students both in Tulare and Davis, and has conducted research on dairy epidemiology and educational outcomes assessments. Dr. Moore is a member of the USDA’s Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases, and she will remain a collaborator in the National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense, providing educational programs and engaging in research related to homeland security.

Meet the Class of 2010

In keeping with gender ratios in recent years, the class of 2010 includes 103 women and 28 men. The average age of the students at the time of admission was 26—the youngest student was 19 years old, and the oldest, 41.

Most students (125) are California residents. Forty-six of the incoming students graduated from UC Davis, 29 from other UC campuses, 20 from California State Universities, and six from other California colleges. Thirty students attended out-of-state institutions.

Twelve students entered the professional program having already earned master’s or doctoral degrees. Five incoming students have been accepted into the Veterinary Scientist Training Program, which provides academic and financial support to students pursuing concurrent DVM/PhD degrees (see story, page 4).

Students reported the following areas of interest: small animal and avian/exotics (47), equine (25), research and academics/teaching (15), zoo or wildlife (11), mixed, large or food animal (20), small/equine (6), and laboratory animal (6).

Prior to admission, successful applicants completed an average of 3,500 hours of veterinary-related experience. Five of the incoming students gained practical experience and specialized training in a paid five-week externship, the Early Veterinary Student Bovine Experience Program, designed to encourage interest in food animal medicine practice.

The student body includes one African-American/black, 13 Asian, 78 Caucasian, 14 Hispanic/Mexican-American/other Spanish, and three multi-ethnic individuals. Twenty-two students did not report their ethnicity.



The class of 2010 takes the Veterinary Medical Student Oath.