Dr. Julie Dechant Now Board-Certified Surgeon and Critical Care Specialist

Dr. Julie Dechant, Associate Professor of Clinical Equine Surgical Emergency & Critical Care and faculty Surgeon in the Large Animal Intensive Care Unit, recently passed her board exams in large animal emergency and critical care. Already certified by the American College of Veterinary Surgeons (ACVS), she will now be one of the few equine/large animal veterinarians in the world to be dual certified by the American College of Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care (ACVECCS) and ACVS. Dr. Dechant becomes the second Large Animal Clinic faculty member to become ACVECC certified. Dr. Gary Magdesian, who served as Dr. Dechant’s mentor, is board certified by ACVECC, the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine and the American College of Veterinary Pharmacology.

Founded in 1965, the ACVS is the American Veterinary Medical Association-recognized specialty board that sets the standards for advanced professionalism and competence in veterinary surgery. The ACVECC upholds the same stringent standards for emergency and critical care.

Congratulations, Dr. Dechant!

Never a Dull Moment in the ICU

The action never stops in the VMTH Small Animal Intensive Care Unit. Under the leadership of faculty Service Chief, Dr. Kate Hopper, and staff Manager, Harold Davis, the Emergency & Critical Care Service are constantly on the move. Their days are never the same. The ever-changing environment keeps this crew on their toes.

While the subjects always change in the ICU, there is one constant – the teaching aspect of the facility never wanes. The communication between faculty and the house officers/students is continual. Even the simplest moment of care, like re-positioning a patient in the bed, is consulted with others to ensure the best possible care. Nothing is taken for granted in teaching the next generation of veterinarians.

As she draws blood from a new patient, Dr. Robin McIntyre is able to use this as a teaching moment for two students. Dr. Matt Mellema uses a spare minute to quiz two students on a case he is reviewing.

Everyone’s love of their work is apparent. Maybe that’s the case because there isn’t a person in the ICU who considers it a “job.” This enjoyment translates into all aspects of their day. A perfect example is the cleanliness of the ICU – Animal Tech Tami Driver never considers this a chore. Lab Assistant Debby Davis and RVTs Karen Galbreath and Charissa Parsons make sure the ICU is always in tip-top shape and running smoothly.

Our ICU patients are truly in the best hands possible.
The World of Veterinary Degrees

It only takes a few conversations around the VMTH to realize that we are a culturally diverse group. We hail from all across the globe. With those different home countries come different types of veterinary degrees, and differing lengths of time required to practice veterinary medicine.

In North America, where there are only 28 veterinary schools in the U.S. and 5 in Canada, the degree earned is called a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM). Only the University of Pennsylvania classifies theirs as a Veterinary Medical Doctorate (VMD). This degree typically involves completion of a Bachelor’s degree (generally four years) before starting another four years of veterinary studies. However, there is a “fast track” option of entering veterinary school after only two years of undergraduate studies.

In the United Kingdom—where there are only seven institutions that offer veterinary medicine studies—and other former British colonies, like Australia or India, the degrees earned are called Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc), Surgery (BVS) or Medicine & Surgery (BVMS or BVM&S). These degrees usually take five years to complete. One of the UK’s seven institutions—Cambridge Veterinary School—has added another year to its veterinary credential, bringing their total to six years of studies.

Yet another example of a different veterinary degree is in Ireland, where there is only one institution of higher learning that offers a degree in veterinary medicine. Students at University College Dublin earn a Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine (MVB) in five years.

The American Veterinary Medical Association recognizes all of these degrees as a credential to practice veterinary medicine in the U.S., assuming completion of National and State Board exams or their equivalent. While practicing at the VMTH, our overseas graduates are included under our “umbrella” licensing agreement with the State Veterinary Medical Board.

Harold Davis Wins Distinguished Service Award

The Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care Society (VECCS) has named VMTH staff member Harold Davis, RVT, VTS, as the 2012 recipient of the Ira M. Zaslow Distinguished Service Award. This recognition is the VECCS’s highest award, and is given to an individual demonstrating extraordinary commitment and exceptional contributions to both the specialty of Emergency & Critical Care and to the VECCS.

VECCS states that Harold’s commitment, dedication, vision and service to the organization are legendary and unsurpassed. Harold joined the VECCS in 1982, and has served on their board since 1996. He was President of that board from 2008-2010, being the only technician to ever hold that office.

Harold was the Co-Founder of the Academy of Veterinary Emergency & Critical Care Technicians and a Charter Member of the Academy of Veterinary Technician Anesthetists. He has received several other awards throughout his illustrious career, and is the co-author of Monitoring of the Critical Care Patient, a critical care nursing book published in 2012.

Harold, who has worked at the VMTH since 1982, is currently the staff Manager of the Emergency & Critical Care Service, and has been a driving force in continuing education for veterinary technicians nationally and internationally.

Congratulations, Harold!
Welcome to the November issue of VMTH View. We've received some great ideas from you for future stories. Please keep them coming.

In this issue, you have read about the achievements of Harold Davis and Dr. Julie Dechant. Congratulations to both of them on these well-deserved accomplishments. Being recognized by national scholarly organizations attests to the hard work and long hours they’ve devoted to improving patient care in the VMTH while advancing their careers.

Perhaps you have been aware of Kabang’s presence around the VMTH as of late. Kabang is a dog from the Philippines who has come to UC Davis to have her facial injuries repaired. Unfortunately, Kabang also presented with heartworm and a tumor which will need to be treated before her surgery. In light of these new developments, she will be with us for quite some time, possibly well into the spring. Kabang has brought worldwide attention to the VMTH and the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, having been featured in more than 400 media outlets, including USA Today, New York Daily News, Huffington Post, Fox News, London Telegraph and Sky News Australia. I’d like to extend my thanks to Rob Warren and the SVM communications team for coordinating these media efforts, and minimizing disruptions for Drs. Arzi and Verstraete and the entire Dentistry & Oral Surgery Service team, allowing them to focus their efforts on the patient. I assure you, it was no small feat.

I continue to receive many emails every month pointing out the great work all of you are doing. Sometimes it’s a quick thank you, and other times it’s a lengthy letter detailing the thoughtful and caring nature of our veterinarians, technicians, students and client services staff. I even get praises for staff who have no direct contact with patients. One person I’d like to mention in particular is Elizabeth Bishop. Elizabeth handles our billing and collections – a task that certainly has its challenges. Elizabeth recently received an email stating, “I just wanted to thank you again for your sensitivity and compassion.” I would venture to bet there aren’t too many “bill collectors” who get that type of response from their clients. Thank you, Elizabeth.

Best wishes for the upcoming holiday season. Get some well-deserved rest, and enjoy your time with family and friends.

Regards,

Dr. W. David Wilson, BVMS, MS
Director, William R. Pritchard VMTH

Did You Know?

…that the VMTH handles about 800 canine blood transfusions a year?

…that a group of cats is referred to as a clowder?

…that an average of 86 small animals and 22 large animals are treated at the VMTH at any one time?
Thanks and Praise from Grateful Clients

“I continue to bring my pets here because I am constantly impressed with the level of service, dedication and expertise.”
- Brian Lamborn, Orinda

“Thank you, Elizabeth Bishop, for your help. I hope you know that we really appreciate everything you do to help us.”
- Mala Brown

“Once again, I am so happy and thankful that things worked out for Kobe and wanted to let you know how amazing the staff and doctors were at your hospital.”
- Diana Mendez

Who’s That in the Hall?

Faculty
Dr. Tamara Pierce, DVM
Assistant Clinical Professor and Clinical Veterinarian, Small Animal Community Practice
Hometown – Napa, California
DVM, Tufts University
Hobbies: Gardening and keeping up with her nine pets
DYK…Dr. Pierce parachuted out of a plane on her 40th birthday?

Staff
Missy Marks
Animal Health Technician II, Small Animal Nursing
• Hometown – Livermore, California
• BS (Avian Sciences), UC Davis
• Hobbies: painting, crochet, baking
• DYK…Missy used to do parrot rescue with 4H and now owns five cockatiels?

House Officer
Dr. Amy Fulton, DVM
3rd Year Resident, Dentistry & Oral Surgery Service
• Hometown – Phoenixville, Pennsylvania
• DVM, Cornell University
• Hobbies: singing and gardening
• DYK…Dr. Fulton has played piano since age 5?

Student
Austin Kerns
4th Year
• Hometown – Sacramento, California
• BS (Neurobiology, Physiology & Behavior), UC Davis
• Hobbies: running, reading, cooking, playing guitar
• DYK…Austin can catch a hummingbird with his bare hands?

Connect with us

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Large Animal Clinic
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