From March 19-24, 2018, the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM)—in partnership with the International Renal Interest Society—hosted IRIS Renal Week. This six-day seminar offered up to 40 hours of continuing education credits to veterinary professionals. The event was held in two parts: two days of Hemodialysis Boot Camp and four days of the Renal Week sessions.

In only its second biennial role as the official host of IRIS Renal Week and the Hemodialysis Boot Camp, the SVM was the site of palpable excitement and enthusiastic learning about what is new, visionary, and upcoming in veterinary and comparative nephrology and extracorporeal therapies. These two international programs represent the largest and most advanced symposia devoted exclusively to veterinary nephrology.

The Hemodialysis Boot Camp took place over the first two days of the week. The introductory “crash course” on renal medicine offered nine lectures and six laboratory sessions. Lecture subjects included “Principles and Indications for Extracorporeal Therapies,” “Elements of Dialysis Prescription,” “Basics of Anticoagulation,” and “Introduction to Therapeutic Apheresis.” Laboratory topics covered “Interactive Hemodialysis Prescription,” “Demonstration of Vascular Access,” and “Demonstration and Principles of Continuous Therapies.”

The Renal Week sessions concluded the week with four days of lectures and laboratories, beginning with a retrospective look back at the history of veterinary nephrology and extracorporeal therapies. The 30 lectures offered prospective insights into glomerular disease and systemic hypertension, and also included topics such as “Novel Urinary Biomarkers in AKI,” and “Drug Dosing in Kidney Disease.” The outstanding keynote speakers linked human and veterinary nephrology, forecasting a One Health approach to treating kidney disease.

Innovative demonstrations of extracorporeal therapies with introduction of new extracorporeal direction in hemoperfusion and therapeutic apheresis made up the 11 laboratories offered. Topics covered “Advanced Hemodialysis Monitoring Techniques and Demonstration of Fluid Volume,” “Delivery of Slow Hemodialysis Treatments on an Intermittent Hemodialysis Platform,” and “Pathology Interpretation of the Kidney Biopsy.”

“By all accounts, the 2018 IRIS Renal Week and Hemodialysis Boot Camp were the best in its 14-year history,” said Dr. Larry Cowgill, director of the UC Veterinary Medical Center – San Diego (UCVMC-SD) and a pioneer in veterinary renal medicine. “The overarching theme for Renal Week was a glimpse at the roots and prospective look forward to the future of veterinary nephrology.”

Attendance for both Hemodialysis Boot Camp and the Renal Week sessions were at near capacity onsite, and the events were also heavily attended via webinar.

The more than 120 onsite participants were treated to a gala dinner on campus and a dinner at a local winery near Davis. UC Davis offers hemodialysis, therapeutic plasma exchange, and other treatments for life-threatening acute kidney failure and management of long-term renal conditions. This service is available at the Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital in Davis and at the UCVMC-SD in Southern California.

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