The Center for Vector-borne Diseases (CVEC) is revitalized and moving forward with new leadership and a new vision:

*Through national and international recognition for excellence in research and education on all aspects of vector-borne diseases, the Center for Vector-borne Diseases (CVEC) seeks to accelerate the implementation of public health policies that transform the lives of people and animals in California and around the world.*

**NEW LEADERSHIP**

Dr. Janet Foley, DVM, PhD  
Professor, Department of Medicine and Epidemiology  
School of Veterinary Medicine

Dr. Shirley Luckhart, PhD  
Professor, Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology  
School of Medicine

As Interim Co-Directors, Drs. Foley and Luckhart are coordinating activities of faculty, staff, and students to enhance scientific and educational advancement on campus in the area of vector biology and vector-borne diseases. They are promoting multidisciplinary and collaborative exchange programs across campus in training and research to understand, prevent, and manage vector-borne diseases of plants, animals, and humans.

**NEW VISION**

The team, working with the CVEC Executive Committee, is developing CVEC as a center of excellence in research, education, and policy vision and implementation for vector-borne diseases. The center will foster national and international collaborations through research and program grants to strengthen both basic and translational research and provide impactful support for the development of vector-borne disease policy locally, nationally, and internationally.

**RESEARCH STRENGTHS**

CVEC faculty and students are active in a broad spectrum of areas which have been organized into the following interconnected themes, illustrating the current and emerging strengths of the center:

- Vector-borne Disease Surveillance
- Ecology and Evolution
- Host-Pathogen Interactions
- Computational Biology
- Public Health Policy
- Disease in conservation
- Mange epidemics in wild birds and mammals
- Malaria parasite transmission and co-infection biology
- Host immunity and ecology in tick-borne diseases
- Genomics and molecular cell biology of plant-pathogen-insect interactions
- *Bartonella* infections in domestic and wild animals around the world
MULTI-DISCIPLINARY FACULTY EXPERTISE

More than 30 core and affiliate faculty are CVEC members. Membership is open to any research faculty associated with UC Davis and all are welcome to join the team. Campus partners already include faculty in the School of Medicine (SOM), School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM), College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES), and the College of Biological Sciences (CBS).

OUTSTANDING GRADUATE STUDENTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

CVEC faculty mentor graduate students and teach in multiple undergraduate departments and majors, including the Global Disease Biology major. CVEC is also the home for the Designated Emphasis in the Biology of Vector-borne Diseases, which is open to any PhD student in good standing in one of the affiliated graduate programs in Microbiology, Integrative Pathobiology, Ecology, Entomology, Epidemiology, and Immunology. Graduate students will learn best practices in research, and engage in active research investigations related to vector-borne diseases.

GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Kasen Riemersma grew up with an interest in science and biology thanks to the pages of National Geographic magazine. He received a B.S. in Biology from the University of Minnesota and a DVM from the University of Wisconsin—Madison. While in veterinary school, Riemersma’s interest turned to infectious diseases, specifically those that are vector-borne. He completed an externship at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Colorado—an experience that led him to the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine in September 2014 as a PhD student in Lark Coffey's laboratory. He is now studying chikungunya virus, a mosquito-borne pathogen commonly found in East Africa and Southeast Asia, but recently causing explosive outbreaks in the Caribbean and 11 locally-transmitted cases in Florida. While the disease isn’t typically fatal, the majority of people infected have clinical signs of fever, and disabling joint and muscle pain for one to two weeks, which leads to huge economic impacts in the communities where the virus is prevalent. In some cases, the joint pain persists for months to years. “My goal is to help inform future vaccine development and antiviral therapy,” Riemersma said.

Visit the new CVEC web site: www.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/cvec/index.cfm

Janet Foley, Co-Director  
1320 Tupper Hall  
jefoley@ucdavis.edu  
530-754-9740

Shirley Luckhart, Co-Director  
3437 Tupper Hall  
sluckhart@ucdavis.edu  
530-754-6963