

Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine Celebrates 60 Years

Dr. Lara Maxwell, assistant professor, Physiological Sciences at Oklahoma State's Center for Veterinary Health Sciences and Green Iguana medicine expert, explains the gross anatomy of the Green Iguana, surgical approaches, common clinical procedures, neutering and many more important topics. The Green Iguanas were supplied by a veterinarian at a Florida zoo where they needed to thin the Green Iguana population. Oklahoma State University College of Veterinary Medicine opened its doors to 31 men in March 1948, with the first class of 26 students graduating in May 1951. The college now enrolls 80 new students each year, the majority women.

The college celebrated its 60th anniversary in March, but the anniversary celebration will take place in October in conjunction with its fall veterinary conference. Also in celebration of 60 years, the college will hold year-round events, including the naming of several facilities and a "Round-Up" gala in the fall.

In March, the Duane R. Peterson Anatomy Learning Center was dedicated in memory of Dr. Duane R. Peterson, the first professor to give a lecture at the college in 1948. Students develop cadaver dissection techniques in the laboratory and learn domestic animal anatomy.

"Our veterinary college has really stayed focused over the past 60 years," says Michael Lorenz, DVM, dean of the Center for Veterinary Health Sciences. "We have an excellent reputation for quality primary-care veterinarians."

Jim Cook, DVM, (class of '51) helped put the first monkey into space and King Gibson, DVM, (class of '51) performed the first open-heart surgery on an animal at Angell Memorial Hospital in Boston.

Dr. Lorenz, who graduated in 1969, is the first graduate of the college to return and serve as full-time dean. Lorenz has been dean since 2001.

At a Glance

Location: Stillwater, Okla.

Opening date: 1948

Number of students: 312

Financial aid offered: Yes

Programs offered: DVM, MS, Ph.D., Residency

Website: www.cvm.okstate.edu "By being an alumnus of the school, you understand the values better," he says.

The Center for Veterinary Health Sciences encompasses the College of Veterinary Medicine (1948), the Oklahoma Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (1976) and the Boren Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital (1981).

"I think what's unique here is the education process across multiple animal species focusing on primary care," Lorenz says.

The college offers DVM, Ph.D. and MS degrees in addition to residency. Major areas of emphasis include toxicology, infectious diseases, shipping fever and exercise physiology.

The Equine Breeding and Reproductive Ranch, located just seven miles from the college, is a 640-acre ranch developed to study the reproductive disorders of horses.

"We have one of the premier [equine] programs in the country," Lorenz says. "It has really expanded over the past three to four years."

The college also prides itself on having one of the largest clusters of bio-safety level-three laboratories with seven

labs.

During the first and second years, students are given an opportunity to conduct research projects with a mentor in the 12-week summer research training program. Prior to the fourth year, students begin learning in the veterinary teaching hospital.

Each year, the college honors graduating seniors and other outstanding veterinary students. More than \$258,400 was awarded in scholarships in May 2007.

“It’s extremely important to keep a routine caseload for students to have hands-on experience,” Lorenz says. “Studying at OSU gives students a chance to experience veterinary medicine across the realm of animal species.”

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