

Dear VMAA at ISU Members and Potential Members,

February 2022

Two weeks ago, I lost one of my best friends at the age of 63. We met in 1978 when we were undergraduate students at Iowa State and were roommates for one year. We stayed in contact over the years and usually went to at least one Kansas City Chiefs football game every season. We had made plans to go to the AFC Championship game at Arrowhead Stadium on January 30th. But instead, I received a call from his wife informing me of his passing. Losing a close friend made me contemplate the importance of staying connected. That is why I believe the VMAA at ISU is so important to our profession and we need to take advantage of the VMAA at ISU to help us stay connected from the time we are in school, throughout our careers, and beyond. Please take time to be an active member of the VMAA at ISU.

I want to take a moment to introduce you to the 2022 VMAA at ISU Board and staff: Dr. Tom Johnson, President; Dr. Paul Armbricht, Past President; Dr. Jenni Stumpf, President-Elect; Dr. Kathleen Mullin, Treasurer; Dr. Jeff Cornick, Director; Dr. Diane Noll, Director; Melissa Garcia Rodriguez, Student Liaison; and Sara Isaacson, Association Director. Welcome, Dr. Noll! I also want to thank Dr. Rachel Allbaugh for her years of service and excellent leadership while on the VMAA at ISU Board. If you have any comments or questions regarding the VMAA at ISU, please feel free to reach out to any members of the board.

We are excited to have Melissa as our new VMAA at ISU Student Liaison. One of the missions of the VMAA at ISU is to foster a relationship with veterinary students. They are the future of our profession. What better way to invite them into our profession with programs that support them while they face the rigors of the veterinary curriculum? Check out Facebook to see what the students are up to!

Prior to the pandemic, the VMAA at ISU supported alumni receptions at select Veterinary Conferences. Unfortunately, meetings were canceled and the VMAA at ISU Board made the difficult decision to cease reception support and look for additional ways to fund programs to help students and seek opportunities with the ISU CVM. Now that the conventions are resuming, we would love to support future receptions. However, due to rising costs, it is beyond the current budget of the VMAA at ISU. What is the solution? We need to increase our yearly membership numbers. All programs from the VMAA at ISU are totally funded by membership dues, which in 2022, are only \$50. We have also seen large increases in our "postage" expense budget line item. Many of our mailings are second and third notice letters for membership renewals. Take time now to put an October or November 2022 reminder in your phone to "Pay VMAA membership"!!!

Sara Isaacson has been busy reviewing the demographics of the VMAA at ISU membership pool. We are gaining a strong student membership base with the Student Alumni Connection (SAC). We have many "repeat members". Once you realize the "good deal" of being a VMAA at ISU member, why stop, right? The group of CVM Alumni that we miss the most are those that have been out of veterinary school for the first decade. How can we connect with the veterinarians that are newly engulfed in their careers while seeking balance in the rest of their lives? How can the VMAA at ISU be a resource for these potential members?

One thing we thought we could do is to host a VMAA at ISU LONGEST MEMBER CONTEST. Is that you? If so, please share with us why you have supported the VMAA at ISU for so many years. Perhaps what you share will resonate with other potential members and be just enough encouragement for them to join. If you think you are the longest standing member of the VMAA at ISU, please contact Sara at ymaaisu@iastate.edu to share your story. With your permission, we will put it on our Facebook page. You could be our best recruiter!

Watch for more VMAA at ISU news on Facebook. We have many activities and opportunities planned for 2022. Get connected and stay involved with the VMAA at ISU. Go Cyclones!

Mark Brinkman, DVM, Communications Chairperson for the VMAA at ISU