

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Hospitals](#)
- [Diagnostic Center](#)
- [Giving](#)



To stay in the know

November 2013

- [ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS](#)
- [COLLEGE NEWS](#)
- [ALUMNI NEWS](#)
- [DEVELOPMENT NEWS](#)
- [STUDENT NEWS](#)
- [EVENTS](#)
- [ARCHIVES](#)

[New Members Join Alumni Association Executive Board](#) > [eVETS connect](#) > From the Office of Alumni Affairs: Introducing the newest members of the Alumni Association Executive Board

From the Office of Alumni Affairs: Introducing the newest members of the Alumni Association Executive Board

Thank you for casting your vote in our elections for the Alumni Association Executive Board. Your votes have been counted, and we want to introduce you to your new members.

Susan Ackermann graduated with her quadruple majors from Muhlenberg College in 1981 and her veterinary degree from Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine in 1986. Following veterinary school, she worked at Monmouth Animal Hospital, a small animal and exotics practice, until 1988. From 1989 to 1994, Dr. Ackermann worked as a feline practice associate at the Allentown Clinic for Cats. In 1994, she became the owner of the Cat Doctor, an exclusive feline practice in Hellertown, PA. She is co-owner and a member of the Board of Directors of the Valley Central Veterinary Emergency Hospital



in Whitehall, PA. In addition, Dr. Ackermann is a member of the AVMA and the American Association of Feline Practitioners. At the state and local level, she served as the Continuing Education Committee Chair for the Lehigh Valley Veterinary Medical Association (LVVMA) from 2001 to 2004, Advisory Board Member of the Lehigh Carbon Community College/Northampton Community College (LCCC/NCC) Veterinary Technician Training program, and currently serves as Trustee District VIII on the PVMA Board of Trustees. In her spare time, she enjoys serving as president of the non-profit organization Hellertown Enhancement Project, leader of the Second Sunday Music in Dimmick Park summer concert program, instructor for the Da Vinci Science Center summer camp, mentor for the Minsi Trails Boy Scout Career Exploration Program, chair of the Women in Medicine Career program for the Northeast Pennsylvania Girl Scouts Council, Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine Class of 1986 Reunion Chair, and performing as a Soprano I with the Pennsylvania Sinfonia's Camerata Singers.



Dr. Schlafer is a professor of Comparative Obstetric and Gynecologic Pathology at Cornell University where he has been a member of the faculty for 32 years. He is a Diplomate of the ACVP, ACVM, and ACT and in addition to his role in teaching and research, he serves as a senior diagnostic pathologist in the Section of Anatomic Pathology in the Animal Health Diagnostic Center at Cornell where he has held leadership roles and from which he has finally graduated into partial retirement. Dr. Schlafer received his bachelor's degree in 1971, his veterinary degree in 1974, and a master's degree in 1975 – all from Cornell University. In addition, he holds a doctorate in Experimental Pathology from the University of Georgia, which he earned in 1982. His dissertation research was done at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center. He has taken sabbatical leaves at the University of Oxford in England, at the veterinary school in Padua, Italy, and at the San Diego Zoo. Dr. Schlafer has authored or co-authored more than 110 peer-reviewed papers and book chapters, 122 abstracts and presented more than 130 invited papers,

seminars, or symposia. Don's primary interests outside of his academic position, for which he now has more time, include time on the farm with his wife, Judy, making maple syrup, playing fiddle music, and blacksmithing.

Dr. Mark Olcott is originally from upstate NY and obtained his bachelor's degree in Biology from the State University of New York at Geneseo. He then received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Cornell University in 1995. For the first few years after veterinary school he worked in a local performance horse practice, but since then has worked solely with small animals. For several years Mark was a partner in a multi-doctor small animal practice before leaving to start his own mobile ultrasonography business. More recently, he has worked as an emergency veterinarian at a local referral hospital and has recently returned to his roots in general practice. He was recently named by his peers as one of the Top Veterinarians in Northern Virginia, is a published author, and holds two patents. Since obtaining his MBA from the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business, his goal has been to bring modern information technology into the mainstream of veterinary medicine. A recovering Ironman triathlete, he enjoys the outdoors and spending time on the family



ranch in southern Oklahoma. He lives in Urbana, MD, with his beautiful wife, Molly, three children, two cats, two dogs, and a rabbit.

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Hospitals](#)
- [Diagnostic Center](#)
- [Giving](#)



To stay in the know

November 2013

- [ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS](#)
- [COLLEGE NEWS](#)
- [ALUMNI NEWS](#)
- [DEVELOPMENT NEWS](#)
- [STUDENT NEWS](#)
- [EVENTS](#)
- [ARCHIVES](#)

[New Members Join Alumni Association Executive Board](#) > [eVETS connect](#) > [From the Office of Alumni Affairs: Introducing the newest members of the Alumni Association Executive Board](#) > Intestines

Discovery of how organs form explains fatal birth defects and informs cancer research

Symmetry in vertebrates only goes skin deep—many internal organs grow differently left to right. Cornell researchers have discovered a temporary molecular traffic system that starts embryo's organs growing in the proper direction and without which devastating diseases and defects form. Their paper, featured on the cover of the September 30 issue of *Developmental Cell*, inspired an accompanying peer commentary and sheds light on the function of a little-known protein with a big role in organ formation.



The study describes the series of molecular signals that instruct the intestines to loop counterclockwise, ensuring that they can fit untangled into the abdomen. Emerging from research on the midgut in chicken embryos, the findings suggest how other vertebrates may form other asymmetric organs, including the heart, and reveal previously unknown behavior from a gene important in cancer research.

“What we’ve learned about how organs take shape reveals what may contribute to fatal birth defects and other diseases that arise when organs form at random, opening new paths for diagnosis and prevention,” said principal

investigator Dr. Natasza Kurpios, developmental biologist at Cornell’s College of Veterinary Medicine. “It may also have broad implications for cancer research.”

Embryos with randomly positioned organs do not survive. Called heterotaxia, this condition’s roots trace to mutations in the gene *Pitx2*, which is only found in the left side of the body. After determining how *Pitx2* builds organs, Kurpios’ lab found that during a critical construction day early in intestinal growth, before the looping begins, *Pitx2* directs production of a protein called *Daam2* only on the left side of a harness-like tissue that holds the developing intestine in place.

The lock-like *Daam2* then interacts with signaling by the key-like *Wnt* protein, arriving in a flood from the attached intestine. Together these players set up a temporary traffic-control system for intestinal cells. With *Daam2* present only on the left, the effects of *Wnt* are felt only on this side. These effects are dramatic: In all species from humans to fruit flies, *Wnt* is crucial to cell proliferation, migration and multiple other cell behaviors, including tissue polarity.

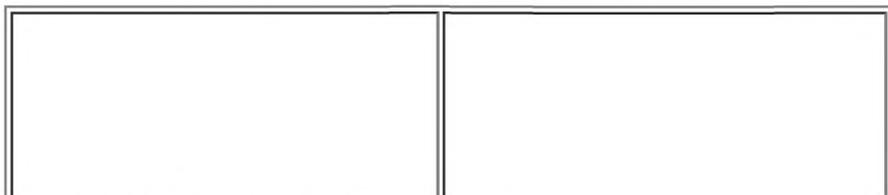
“*Wnt* is critical for telling individual cells in an organ which way is up”, said Kurpios.

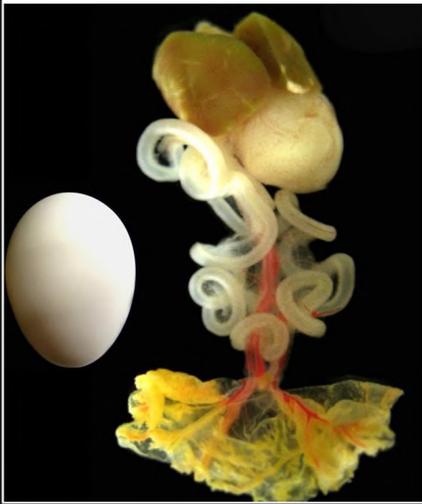
Ian Welsh, a graduate student in Kurpios’ lab and first author of the paper, found evidence that *Daam2* was activated around the same time, suggesting a new role for *Wnt* in organ asymmetry. Once activated by *Wnt*, *Daam2* directed and reorganized the growing number of intestinal cells to pack more tightly on the left side of the gut tube. This set the structure for the growing gut to start looping leftward.

These events occurred only for a day and entirely on the left side of the intestine. On the right side, Kurpios’ lab found inhibitors that disabled *Wnt*. The brief partnership between *Wnt* and *Pitx2* occurred in gestation day 4 in chickens and day 10 in mice. They cooperated at exactly the right place at exactly the right time to start the intestines growing in the correct direction, and then never interacted again.

“This study will help clarify the molecular mechanisms of midgut malrotations [that] lead to devastating gut disorders,” said Drs. Olga Klezovitch and Valeri Vasioukhin of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in the study’s accompanying commentary.

“Despite its broad importance, the ways *Wnt* controls cell behavior are still being worked out”, said Kurpios. “The discovery of *Wnt*’s partnership with *Pitx2* and *Daam2* may therefore also inform ongoing studies exploring *Wnt*’s role in a variety of cancers.”





GI Tract of chicken embryo just prior to hatching (Day 18)



The developing vertebrate gut tube forms loops.

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Hospitals](#)
- [Diagnostic Center](#)
- [Giving](#)



To stay in the know

November 2013

- [ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS](#)
- [COLLEGE NEWS](#)
- [ALUMNI NEWS](#)
- [DEVELOPMENT NEWS](#)
- [STUDENT NEWS](#)
- [EVENTS](#)
- [ARCHIVES](#)

[New Members Join Alumni Association Executive Board](#) > [eVETS connect](#) > [From the Office of Alumni Affairs: Introducing the newest members of the Alumni Association Executive Board](#) > [Intestines](#) > [New Faculty](#)

Seven new faculty join the College

Please join us in welcoming seven new faculty to the College of Veterinary Medicine!



Gerlinde van de Walle: Assistant Professor of Viral Pathogenesis, Baker Institute for Animal Health and Department of Microbiology and Immunology

Academic focus: Our laboratory studies the pathogenesis of alphaherpesviruses. We also work on the isolation and characterization of adult stem cells in different companion animals.

Previous positions:

Assistant professor in Stem Cell Biology, Ghent University, Belgium, 2010-2012.

Postdoctoral fellow at the Department of Virology, Parasitology & Immunology, Ghent University, Belgium, 2008-2011.

Postdoctoral associate at the Department of Microbiology & Immunology, Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine, 2006-2008.

Postdoctoral researcher at the Laboratory for Thrombosis Research, University of Leuven, Belgium, 2003-2005

Academic background:

DVM (1999) in small companion animals, Ghent University, Belgium

PhD (2003) in veterinary virology, Ghent University, Belgium

Last book read: *The Land of Painted Caves*, 6th novel of the *Earth's Children* series by Jean M. Auel

Hobbies and interests: Enjoying nature and cooking, especially verrines and foams

Start date: January 1, 2013

Ryane Englar BS '04, DVM '08, Instructor, Community Practice Service, Department of Clinical Sciences; AND Cornell University Feline Health Center Consultant

Academic focus: Simulating small animal general practice to give students exposure to and experience working through client interactions and physical examinations; develop lists of differential diagnoses; and create a plan tailored to the individual patient. Teaching within the realm of the Community Practice Service has granted me the opportunity to give back to the students who are the true heart of the profession, in coaching them through some of their 'firsts,' cheering them onward and upward as they experience that first taste of victory, and sharing in their hopes, dreams, fears, and tears shed along the way.

Previous positions:

Associate Veterinarian, Towne & Country Veterinary Hospital, Corning, NY, October 2009 – August 31, 2013

Associate veterinarian, Falls Road Animal Hospital, Baltimore, MD, June 2008 – September 2009

Academic background:

B.S., animal science, Cornell (2004) DVM (2008)

Pursuing ABVP specialty board certification in Canine and Feline Practice

Last book read: *Divergent* by Veronica Roth

Hobbies and interests: Playing the piano, painting, frequenting Starbucks for caramel lattes with extra caramel, soaking in the sun

Start date: September 1, 2013

Katie Kelly: Assistant Professor, Department of Biomedical Sciences

College: Veterinary Medicine

Academic focus: I will be investigating the effect of inflammatory mediators on cardiac function and developing cardio-protective strategies to preserve cardiac function with chronic disease. I also hope to contribute to the cardiac and cardiovascular pathology expertise of the Anatomic Pathology Section.

Previous positions:

Postdoctoral Fellow, Johns Hopkins 2012-2013

Field Veterinarian, Maryland Department of Agriculture, 2005-2007

Associate Veterinarian, Fullerton Animal Hospital, Baltimore, 2003-2006

Academic background:

B.S., biology, Towson University Biology (1999)

D.V.M., North Carolina State University Veterinary Medicine (2003)

Residency in comparative pathology, Johns Hopkins University (2011), DACVP

Ph.D., pathobiology, Johns Hopkins University (2012)

Last book read: *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* by Cheryl Strayed

Hobbies and interests: Cooking, eating, and hiking with my mutt Arthur

Start date: August 15, 2013

Sergiy Libert: Assistant Professor of Cell and Molecular Biology, Department of Biomedical Sciences

Academic focus: I am interested in molecular biology of aging. Advanced age is the biggest risk factor for numerous diseases and disorders, and I believe that an understanding of the basic molecular processes that accompany aging will allow the development of interventions capable of ameliorating age-associated diseases and extending the healthy portion of human lifespans.

Previous positions:

Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Biology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2007-2013

Academic background:

Ph.D., cell and molecular biology, Baylor College of Medicine, Davis (2007)
 M.S., physics, Clarkson University, (2003)
 B.S., physics, Kiev-Mohyla Academy, (2001)

Last book read: *Cat's Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut

Hobbies and interests: Swimming and motorcycles

Bethany Cummings: Assistant Professor, Department of Biomedical Sciences

Academic focus: My laboratory studies the etiology and treatment of obesity, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. In particular, my laboratory is currently focused on identifying the mechanisms by which bariatric surgeries, such as Roux en Y Gastric Bypass, cause type 2 diabetes resolution by developing and studying rodent models of bariatric surgery. Identification of the major mechanisms underlying surgically-induced improvements of glucose metabolism may allow for the development of novel therapies for managing obesity and treating type-2 diabetes.

Previous positions:

Assistant Adjunct Professor, University of California, Davis, Department of Molecular Biosciences, March 2013 – August 2013

Assistant Project Biochemist, University of California, Davis; Department of Molecular Biosciences, August 2011 - February 2013

Academic background:

D.V.M. University of California, Davis, (2011)
 Ph.D., physiology, University of California, Davis (2009)
 B.S., biology, Brandeis University, (2005)
 B.A., economics, Brandeis University, (2005)

Hobbies and interests: Enjoying the Finger Lakes, searching for great coffee

Andrew Miller: Anne Groot Sesquicentennial Fellow, Assistant Professor of Pathology, Department of Biomedical Sciences, Section of Anatomic Pathology

College: Veterinary Medicine

Academic focus: My laboratory is focused primarily on studying the mechanisms underlying neurologic disease in companion animals utilizing both spontaneously arising disease models and experimental models in a variety of laboratory animal species.

Previous positions:

Assistant Professor of Pathology, Harvard Medical School, New England Primate Research Center, 2013

Instructor of Pathology, Harvard Medical School, New England Primate Research Center, 2010-2013
 Research Associate, Harvard Medical School, New England Primate Research Center, 2008-2010

Academic background:

ACVP (American College of Veterinary Pathologists) Board Certified, (2008)

D.V.M., Cornell University, (2005)

B.S. Cum Laude with Distinction in Research, Animal science, Cornell University, (2001)

Last book read: Life Everlasting: The Animal Way of Death, by Bernd Heinrich

Hobbies and interests: Hiking, gardening, antique furniture restoration, birdwatching, and biking

Start date: October 1, 2013

Joshua Chappie, Assistant Professor and Nancy and Peter Meinig Family Investigator in the Life Sciences, Department of Molecular Medicine

Academic focus: My lab uses a combination of structural biology, biochemistry, and cell biology to dissect how bacterial proteins targeting modified DNA function as defense systems against bacterial-specific viruses. Understanding these defense systems will help in the development of new therapeutic strategies for treating highly virulent strains of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

Previous positions:

Postdoctoral Fellow, Dyda Lab, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), National Institutes of Health (NIH), 2009-2013

Academic background:

B.S./M.S., Biochemistry, Brandeis University (2003)

PhD, Biophysics, The Scripps Research Institute (2009)

Last book read: Doughnut by Tom Holt

Hobbies and interests: Cooking, playing and listening to music, and watching cartoons.

Start date: October 2, 2013

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Hospitals](#)
- [Diagnostic Center](#)
- [Giving](#)



To stay in the know

November 2013

- [ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS](#)
- [COLLEGE NEWS](#)
- [ALUMNI NEWS](#)
- [DEVELOPMENT NEWS](#)
- [STUDENT NEWS](#)
- [EVENTS](#)
- [ARCHIVES](#)

[New Members Join Alumni Association Executive Board](#) > [eVETS connect](#) > [From the Office of Alumni Affairs: Introducing the newest members of the Alumni Association Executive Board](#) > [Intestines](#) > [New Faculty](#) > Holter

New customized vests hold heart monitors on pets

An innovation at Cornell University Hospital for Animals (CUHA) has solved a problem plaguing pet owners whose animals had to wear cumbersome heart monitors. The solution comes in the form of a bright orange vest that is cheaper, lighter, and easier to clean than any previous methods of keeping the monitor devices in place.

Pets suffering from fainting or collapsing problems are sometimes outfitted with a Holter monitor for 24 hours. This device, which is also used on humans, uses electrodes placed on the skin around the chest to track the heartbeat. Veterinarians can then look at its recordings to identify heartbeat abnormalities and match them with a pet activity diary the owners keep during the monitoring period

to help determine what sparks the problem and its possible cause. But this device must be attached to the dog or cat in a way that prevents it from falling off or being chewed.

“The Holter monitor is very useful for diagnosis, but nobody likes to have it on,” said Shari Hemsley, licensed veterinary technician in CUHA’s cardiology group. “Humans attach the electrodes and wear the main machine on a belt. On an animal you have to shave their fur to get electrode contact and either wrap the wires and main machine with different bandaging material or keep it under a vest.”

Until recently, the available vests used for this purpose had big Velcro patches that got dirty and were hard to clean. When the company that made them faded out of business, CUHA needed a new supplier. Hemsley checked with technicians from other veterinary schools to see what they were using, but they all had the same problem: their vests were very expensive and hard to keep clean.

After some sleuthing, Hemsley found a company that makes lightweight Lycra vests for dogs that are bright neon orange so their animal wearers can be seen by cars and owners in the dark. Hemsley bought several sizes and brought them to a seamstress, who customized them with red pockets and buttons to hold the main body of the monitors in place.

“It’s snugly, easier to manage, and the clients really like it,” said Hemsley.

CUHA now offers the improved vests to its own patients and in kits for referring veterinarians that include a monitor, vest, and instructions for using the device at their practice before sending the kit back.



- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Hospitals](#)
- [Diagnostic Center](#)
- [Giving](#)



To stay in the know

November 2013

- [ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS](#)
- [COLLEGE NEWS](#)
- [ALUMNI NEWS](#)
- [DEVELOPMENT NEWS](#)
- [STUDENT NEWS](#)
- [EVENTS](#)
- [ARCHIVES](#)

[eVETS connect](#) > [From the Office of Alumni Affairs: Introducing the newest members of the Alumni Association Executive Board](#) > [Intestines](#) > [New Faculty](#) > [Holter](#) > Clinical Trial

NOTE: This study has been completed and we are not currently seeking candidates.

Register cats for a free hyperthyroidism study at Cornell

Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine invites your cats to participate in a free hyperthyroidism study at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine as part of a collaborative project that will further our understanding of treatment options for hyperthyroidism in feline. To pre-register, please call 607-253-3060 and ask to speak Angela Struble or email your interest to ams29@cornell.edu. All costs incurred at Cornell University will be covered by the study, which is sponsored by Hills.



To participate in the study, your cat must be an indoor-only cat that has increased levels of the thyroid hormone, but is otherwise in good health, as confirmed by your cat's veterinarian. The screening, which is ongoing will require six visits, two of which will be overnight visits to the Cornell University Hospital for Animals. Initial and one year visits will include cardiology exams (also complimentary) and scintigraphy test to pinpoint the location and size of the nodules. Accommodations for cats from regional homes, that would find it difficult to travel to the Cornell University Hospital for Animals, may be made in partnership with regional veterinarians.

“Currently, there are several treatments for cats with hyperthyroidism, all with various pros and cons,” said Dr. Joseph Wakshlag, assistant professor of nutrition at the College of Veterinary Medicine. “This study will help us determine if there is an additional, viable option—using a specially formulated prescription cat food to control thyroid hormone levels—that may make sense for some patients. Early results in some hard to control cats are promising and may be an option for some cats that are too old or have indications where radioactive iodine treatments is not an option.”

For more information or to pre-register for this screening, email ams29@cornell.edu.

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Hospitals](#)
- [Diagnostic Center](#)
- [Giving](#)



To stay in the know

November 2013

- [ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS](#)
- [COLLEGE NEWS](#)
- [ALUMNI NEWS](#)
- [DEVELOPMENT NEWS](#)
- [STUDENT NEWS](#)
- [EVENTS](#)
- [ARCHIVES](#)

[From the Office of Alumni Affairs: Introducing the newest members of the Alumni Association Executive Board](#) > [Intestines](#) > [New Faculty](#) > [Holter](#) > [Clinical Trial](#) > Textbooks

Two faculty authors publish leading works

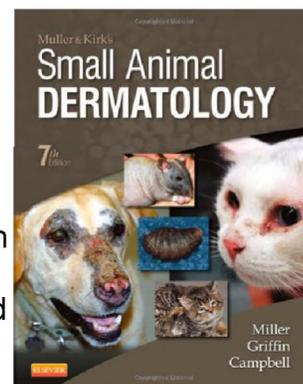
Top Textbook on Pet Skin

When students of Cornell dermatologist Dr. William Miller say he wrote the book on small animal dermatology, they aren't exaggerating. As Medical Director at Cornell University's Companion Animal Hospital, Miller shares his expertise to benefit students, patients, and owners alike. Now, as first author of the newly released edition of his field's seminal text, he has expanded his impact to reach students and professionals around the world.

Covering diagnosis and treatment for hundreds of skin conditions and parasites, *Muller and Kirk's Small Animal Dermatology, 7th Edition* is considered the leading dermatology reference covering

dogs, cats, and small exotic pets. It covers clinical signs, etiology, and pathogenesis of dermatologic conditions including fungal, parasitic, metabolic, nutritional, environmental, immunogenic, and psychogenic problems.

“This textbook will help students and clinicians distinguish between normal and abnormal skin characteristics and variations, make accurate diagnoses, and prescribe effective therapies,” said Miller. “I enjoyed working on a book with such a rich Cornell history behind it, and one that many people in the field will use to gain knowledge and guide decisions that help small animals avoid, manage, and recover from a spectrum of skin diseases.”



The book's namesakes include a former Cornell hospital director, the late Dr. Robert Kirk DVM '46, who co-wrote its first edition in the late 1960s. One of Kirk's students, Dr. Danny W. Scott, who is a current professor of medicine at Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine, led several subsequent editions, sharing authorship with Miller in the fifth and sixth. In the seventh the baton was fully passed to Miller.

This new edition includes full updates of all 21 chapters and new sections on holistic treatment of dermatologic diseases and problem-based differential diagnoses illustrated in helpful flow charts. The book's updated classifications of diseases include explanations for why those diseases that changed categories have been reclassified.

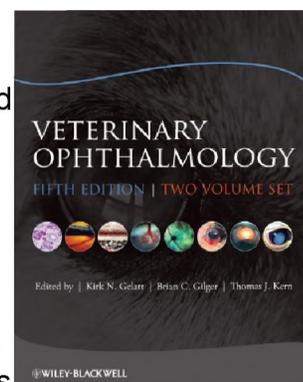
The basics of structure and function in dermatology show in several updated summary tables, and a new table summarizes adverse drug reactions all in one place. More than 1,300 high-quality clinical, microscopic, and histopathologic images color the text.

Veterinary experts Drs. Craig Griffin '97 from San Diego University and Karen Campbell from University of Illinois also co-authored the book.

Faculty lends expert eyes to editing leading ophthalmology text

Casting an eye over the biggest textbook in veterinary ophthalmology grows more daunting with each edition. Seeing the book's contents swell since its first edition in 1980, Cornell veterinary ophthalmologist Dr. Thomas Kern has stepped in as a co-editor of its latest edition to help manage its growing wealth of knowledge.

Veterinary Ophthalmology, Fifth Edition is a fully updated version of the gold-standard reference for animal eye diseases and treatments released in May 2013. As one of the book's internationally renowned contributing authors, Kern has written the chapter on exotic animal ophthalmology for several editions. The book's formerly solo editor, Dr. Kirk N Gelatt, requested his and Dr. Brian Gilger's (from North Carolina State University) help in editing the latest version, which has grown to nearly 2,200 pages, spanning two thick books.



“This book is considered the world bible of veterinary ophthalmology,” said Kern. “It has everything on the subject, all exhaustively referenced. It's the go-to book for residents and clinicians. The board certification exam in this field draws heavily from it.”

Veterinary Ophthalmology is a comprehensive resource for authoritative information on the subject worldwide, serving as a key reference for anyone interested in veterinary or comparative ophthalmology. Its main audience includes veterinary ophthalmology specialists and residents, though

the condensed version, *Essentials of Veterinary Ophthalmology*, remains a staple text in veterinary schools and the offices of primary care clinicians.

The book comprises four sections: basic vision science, foundations of clinical ophthalmology, canine ophthalmology, and special ophthalmology. Kern edited the special section, which covers cats, horses, food animals, camelids, lab animals, rabbits, exotics, ocular manifestations of systemic diseases, and neuro-ophthalmology. Kern also updated and expanded his chapter on exotic animals, inviting a new co-author who specializes in aquatic animals to enrich it with novel information on marine mammals and penguins. Fellow College ophthalmology professor Dr. Eric Ledbetter co-authored the chapter on Diseases and Surgery of the Canine Cornea.

New chapters cover ophthalmic genetics and DNA tests, microsurgery, photography, camelid, and rabbit ophthalmology. A companion website offers images from the book as downloads and links to the references. The package retails at \$400.

"I'm very flattered to be asked to help edit this text," said Kern. "It has had such a profound impact on our specialty and is sold in several languages all around the world. Cornell's Flower-Sprecher Veterinary Library has been generous in making this expensive text available to the Cornell community to benefit those we serve."

The College's Flower-Sprecher Library has purchased two copies for the Cornell University Hospital for Animals: one for the Ophthalmology Service and one for the Community Practice Service. A third copy is available in the Cornell library system and any Cornell affiliate can access an electronic copy through the library to see the full text and color pictures.

[Skip to main content](#)



Cornell University

[Search Cornell](#)

Magazine name

VOL. VI NO. 1, FALL 2013

- [Home](#)
 - [Table of Contents](#)
 - [Cover Story](#)
 - [Archive](#)
 - [About](#)
 -
 - [Search](#)

 - [PDF Version](#)
 - [Flash Version](#)
-

DEANS Q&A



Q&A with Cornell's deans: On intellectual property, faculty renewal and the future of health care

by Emily Sanders Hopkins and Joe Wilensky

In this, Ezra's third installment in an ongoing series of conversations with the academic deans of Cornell's colleges and schools, we delve into medicine and biomedical research at Weill Cornell Medical College and the College of Veterinary Medicine; rapid change at the School of Hotel Administration; and technological advances supporting high-level research at Cornell University Library.

How does a relatively small hotel school have such a big impact on the global hospitality industry? What are the benefits and risks of a medical college's partnerships with private industry? How is the role of university librarian today different than it was a generation ago? What's the single biggest threat to animal health?

Here are some thoughtful and surprising answers, from the men and women at Cornell's helm.

Anne Kenney



University Librarian Anne Kenney, right, chats with Ben Ortiz, assistant curator of the Hip Hop Collection, in Kroch Library.

As head of a major academic entity at Cornell, you're part of the academic deans' group, but "dean" isn't in your title. Should it be?

We're part of the Association of Research Libraries, a group of the 125 or so leading research and university libraries in North America, and roughly 40 percent of their librarians have "dean" in their titles, 10-12 percent have "vice president" or "vice provost" and the remainder have "university librarian" or some version of that. At Cornell it has always been "university librarian," and I think there is some tradition to having that stay. I do feel that I am squarely on the academic side of the university, not the administrative, and as one of the senior academic leaders, it seems appropriate to sit with the deans. While the library doesn't have faculty and students per se, we serve all of the faculty and all of the students. And our mission is to support their academic success, to stimulate their intellectual curiosity and to produce new knowledge.

What's the biggest obstacle to the library's success right now?



Kenney addresses a Reunion crowd at Milstein Hall in June 2012, introducing Jay Walker '77. [See larger image](#)

Like many other libraries and other parts of the university, we have been affected by the economic downturn. My major challenge at this point is to rebuild strong support for building collections. We have had flat collections budgets over the last four to five years, while the cost of securing material has risen above inflation, particularly with electronic resources. Faculty have expressed concerns about our ability to support Ph.D.-level research. Recently, fully a third of the faculty signed a petition to support building the collections. The Campaign for Collections, which is a \$15 million effort, will be co-chaired by Jay and Eileen Walker. It will help Cornell remain competitive among the very best research libraries in the world. We will be kicking that off in the fall.

You have been a leader in developing standards for digitization of library materials and have seen huge changes in how students and faculty use libraries.

The pace of technological change has been doubling every couple of years, and I don't see that cycle slowing any time soon. It affects everything we do. The library is not an information technology organization; it's an information organization – but so much of that information is affected by technology. I think we will see within the next decade the dramatic shift of most content being online. Ebooks are set to outpace the production of all print, particularly in the area of scholarship; journals have almost totally gone electronic.

All of that online content will be challenged by intellectual property issues and what rights convey in the use of digital materials. Much of that is being played out in court cases right now. I am a strong believer that rights for libraries to provide information for educational and scholarly purposes must be protected in the digital domain, as they have been in the physical world.

What role does the library play in faculty recruitment?

Collections, and access to collections, is really key. And as new faculty come in, we are working to show them the kinds of materials that we have available for their research and teaching. For example, the development of a Ph.D. program for Africana studies has meant that I have spent more time trying to build special collections that will be supportive of that level of research. So there are the hip-hop collections that have come in, but we also just acquired the photographic morgue of the Amsterdam News, the oldest Harlem black newspaper, containing 300,000 images from the 1920s on. With new faculty, we also do orientations; we work extensively with faculty in the classroom, working on digital literacy and information competency.

What else is a crucial priority for the library's future?

If I had been named the university librarian in 1990 I would have known what to do: Just keep doing what had been done for a long time and not mess it up. Today, however, as we think about the needs of the academy and the role of a land-grant institution, how do we best serve Cornell? It is necessary for a great university to have a great library, as [first Cornell president] A.D. White said, but it's insufficient in the 21st century. So to serve Cornell, we need to think locally but act globally.

It is critical not to just build the very best library Cornell can have, but to make the library part of a broader network of information services and expertise. Our partnerships with Columbia University and universities in Asia come into that. Within the university, Senior Vice Provost for Research Bob Buhrman and I co-sponsor the research data management service group, and we have a partnership with the College of Arts and Sciences and Cornell University Press to support new forms of publishing scholarly monographs.

It's ironic that the library of the future will be both more virtual, in that we'll push out content and services, but also more personal, in that we will work directly with faculty and students to provide higher-level expertise, particularly at the edges of disciplines, where experts in one discipline become novices in other fields.

Who are you when you walk out the door of your office, or in the door at home?

I'm an avid hiker; I have summited Kilimanjaro and have been hiking in the Himalayas, in New Zealand and in Patagonia, and up and down the East Coast. Machu Picchu is next on my list. I garden, and I'm a very humble piano player; I'm very passionate about reading, and listening to, books.

The university librarian

Anne R. Kenney, the Carl A. Kroch University Librarian

At Cornell since 1987

University Librarian since April 2008 (interim from February 2007 to April 2008)

Area of expertise: digital imaging, digital preservation, public services, users' information seeking behavior, collaborative models

Cornell University Library

Population: 120 academic and 276 nonacademic staff support the research, teaching and learning needs of 2,868 faculty and 22,400 students (figures include New York City and Geneva campuses)

Areas of future emphasis: providing comprehensive access to the world's scholarship through building collections and collaboration; furthering digital information resource capacity; developing a dynamic virtual presence; developing services and resources for the Cornell NYC Tech campus; and fostering an innovative and collaborative staff culture

Endowment: \$96.5 million (as of April 2013)

Cornell Now campaign goal/amount raised so far: \$25 million / \$15.3 million (as of June 2013)

Michael Kotlikoff



Dean Michael Kotlikoff in his lab with research associates Bo Shui, left, and Frank Lee, center.

What are you most proud of so far?

We've started a number of exciting projects at the college. We have a very exciting capital project to adaptively reuse much of our 1957 space. We've started a large new referral hospital, Cornell University Veterinary Specialists (CUVS), in Stamford, Conn. We are working with City University in Hong Kong to create the first AVMA-accredited college in Asia. But, I think the thing that I'm most proud about so far in my deanship is the development of an outstanding leadership team in the college that includes outstanding department chairs, faculty leaders, and associate and assistant deans, and is aimed at transparency and developing collegewide consensus among faculty in making what are often difficult choices. I think that we've really come a long way in establishing a strong leadership core that will last at the college for a long time after I'm gone.

What is the main reason you opened CUVS?

It serves a number of functions for the college, long term. First of all, it does diversify our revenue in a way in which we don't rely in the long term on the state so exclusively. We're the one [statutory] college in Cornell that's not an undergraduate school, and we rely on the state more than any other college because the percentage of our revenue that comes from tuition is much, much lower than the other schools.

Plus, there's the fact that we're seeing changes in the profession that really call for some engagement of academic institutions in clinical practice. ... Many specialty referral hospitals have grown up in the New York metro area that are terrific hospitals. They are highly efficient, but they don't participate in teaching and aren't doing the discovery that is important to keep the profession healthy. So we wanted to balance that and went to an area where there were not a lot of referral options, and we created something that is a kind of hybrid academic private-practice unit, which is financially very nimble and very strong. We are projecting about \$9 million in total revenue from CUVS this year, which I think is fantastic for a start-up in its third year of operation, since the practice only succeeds if the referring veterinarians in the area view it as valuable. Finally, this practice is very important for philanthropy, as the college depends enormously on the support of grateful clients.

What is something that most people outside don't know about the college?

Probably the breadth. It's unique on the Ithaca campus in that we run three major units that interface directly with the public: our teaching hospital for animals, our diagnostic lab and our Stamford clinic. Together these represent in aggregate more than \$40 million in revenue that is associated with direct interactions with clients. This is something that is quite different from the other schools on campus. And, we have an enormous research infrastructure annually attracting about \$30 million in federal grants.



Kotlikoff with recent graduate Kevin Render '13. [See larger image](#)

What's the biggest problem in animal health today?

The lack of research funding that's available for investigating spontaneous diseases in animals. Over my scientific lifetime, [National Institutes of Health] funding has progressively centered more and more around human clinical research, and this is a very narrow-minded approach to understanding medicine and the biological basis of disease.

Many diseases – more than 60 percent of the infectious diseases that humans get – arise in animals; their natural hosts are animals; they should be studied in their natural hosts. As global population increases, we have more and more stress on environments, on wild animal populations, on food animal production. All of those areas have enormous impact on human health – they're just not quite as proximate an effect as the funding agencies are set up to deal with.

I've always felt that animal health, human health, environmental health really are different views of the same problem.

What avenues of inquiry are big now at your college or ripe for further investment?

The use of the dog as a genetic model for complex genetic diseases. Our human genomes are very similar – we probably have tens of thousands of differences between each of us humans, and so it's very difficult to isolate the thousands of differences in those genes that are linked to specific disorders. That's really where the dog comes in. Because dogs have a very similar genetic makeup, we can link those genes in a way that's much clearer, because the rest of the genome is so much more similar. Some very thoughtful and farsighted faculty more than a decade ago at Cornell developed a canine DNA and bio bank that banks material and DNA for specific diseases. So, you can imagine a dog with, for example, hip dysplasia and dogs that don't get hip dysplasia from the same breed, you can start to understand the specific genetic variations that really result in that hip dysplasia. Not only does that allow you to influence the health and well-being of dog populations, it also informs osteoarthritis in people.

A major opportunity here is with cancer. If a Great Dane lives long enough it will get osteosarcoma, a devastating disease that we see in rapidly growing bones of kids. This is a complex genetic vulnerability related to the size of the dog's long bones, which we are poised to be able to understand. This is one of those areas that provides a real impact on the health of animals, but also has an outstanding impact on gene discovery in people.

What's the most surprising thing you've heard lately from a student?

My wife, Carolyn, and I recently went to a dance consortium that is organized by students who are dancers, which was just superb. The time that they take outside of the classroom, the energy and commitment to produce something like that, within our own space (it was in the James Law Auditorium) is really phenomenal. And it isn't just dance. We have a choral group. We have a drama group. We have students doing musicals. Virtually every evening as you walk through the hallways here, you'll see some students rehearsing, singing, playing the piano, dancing, and that part is really surprising to me. It didn't exist when I was in veterinary school. It's something that's really a component of this college that is precious.

The dean

Michael Kotlikoff, the Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine

At Cornell since 2000

Dean since 2007

Area of expertise: Processes underlying cardiovascular development, function and dysfunction; study of regenerative capacity of the heart

The College of Veterinary Medicine

Population: 210 faculty members, 360 professional students, 120 graduate students

Areas of future growth: infectious disease research, genomics, medical genetics, stem cell biology, cancer research, expanded clinical networks, and international collaborations in animal health, public health and food safety

Endowment: \$186 million (as of June 2013)

Cornell Now campaign goal: \$75 million; raised so far: \$36.1 million (as of July 2013)

Laurie Glimcher



Dr. Laurie H. Glimcher, dean of Weill Cornell Medical College, right, chats with first-year medical students about what inspired them to become doctors. Photo: René Perez.

What are you most proud of in your first year and a half as Weill Cornell Medical College's dean and Cornell's provost for medical affairs?

I'm delighted to have recruited Lewis Cantley, Ph.D. '75, to head our new cancer center. He's one of the greatest cancer researchers in the world; earlier this year he won the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences. One of the reasons he came here from Harvard was because of the culture and the knowledge that we work as a team – surgeons, oncologists, pathologists and scientists all work together in translational research and medicine. I'm also happy to have established an office for faculty development and diversity, and spearheaded establishment of a child care facility. Finally, I like to think that I have established a transparent, open relationship with our wonderful faculty.

How do you balance these two roles?

I really consider that we're one university, one Cornell, and so I take my position as the university's provost for medical affairs very seriously. I established a good working relationship with the provost at Cornell, Kent Fuchs; I attend all board of trustees meetings and have very much enjoyed getting to know the trustees of Cornell University.

I think that David Skorton is an absolutely outstanding president – I am confident that he will go down in history as one of the greatest presidents of an American university.

What excites you about Cornell NYC Tech and its relationship with Weill Cornell?

The first recruit to that campus, Deborah Estrin, has a joint appointment at Weill Cornell Medical College and is actively collaborating with members of our Department of Public Health and other faculty. Her work on using smartphone technology to improve delivery of health care is stunning. I think there are going to be lots of productive interactions between our faculty and faculty on the Cornell NYC Tech campus.



Glimcher at GHESKIO in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, the site of one of Weill Cornell's key global health programs. Credit: Weill Cornell Medical College. [See larger image](#)

What is Weill Cornell's role in the rapidly changing health care industry? How are those changes affecting students, researchers and clinicians?

We want to be a voice in talking about – and even more important, helping to solve – the enormous problems of health care reform, health care policy, health care delivery and health care costs. One of my goals is to strengthen and expand our presence in that arena.

I encourage entrepreneurship and believe that the most efficient and effective way of translating our discoveries from the bench to the bedside can occur in partnership with the private sector. And so I have hired a director of our new office of industry-sponsored research alliances; we're already well on the way to establishing such alliances. Such partnerships are critical for the benefit of our patients more than anything else. And they also obviously allow us to continue our research at a time of pronounced fiscal restraints in funding by the federal and state governments.

What are the greatest potential rewards -- and risks -- of these industry partnerships?

The rewards: Actually delivering new therapeutics for patients, because that can be most effectively done by those partnerships. The risks, clearly, are conflict of interest and transparency. I like to use the quote (can't remember who it is from though) that sunlight is the best disinfectant. We need to be rigorous and thorough in disclosing any potential conflicts of interest. And we cannot compromise academic freedom – our freedom to publish our research.

Tell me about precision medicine and what we can do with it today.

The lowest-hanging fruit is in the application of precision medicine to cancer. That's where progress has already been made and the proof of principle obtained. We already have drugs that are targeted therapeutics, drugs like Gleevec [leukemia] and Xalkori [lung cancer]. A lot more can be done. Big data has to be collected on patients' tumors and used to mine the field for already available drugs, and then create new drugs based on each individual's unique genetic profile and the mutations that drive each patient's tumor. After cancer ... it's limitless. ... Ultimately, I see precision medicine as not only being used to treat patients, but even more importantly, being used to prevent disease.

What do you predict will be the most profound difference at Weill Cornell 10 or 20 years from now?

We don't know what the future research environment is going to look like. I'm an optimist, but we can't continue along this path of reducing government research funding because we will fall far behind other countries,

including China. We will no longer be the country that produces the most innovative, transformative discoveries in biomedical research, discoveries that lead to cures for human diseases.

We are in the midst of a major revision to our medical school curriculum, and I'm spearheading that myself. There are going to be fairly substantial changes in the way we teach and engage our students and how we equip them to deal with a very rapidly changing health care world. We want our students to be the leaders of the next generation. ... We had over 7,000 applications this year for only 100 slots, so we really get a wonderful crop of students with lots of diversity – 20 percent of our class is underrepresented minorities.

The dean

Laurie Glimcher, M.D., Cornell's provost for medical affairs and the Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean of Weill Cornell Medical College, New York City

At Weill Cornell since January 2012

Provost/dean since January 2012

Areas of expertise: Immunology, rheumatology, translational medicine, partnerships with the private sector, management oversight, corporate governance and finance

Weill Cornell Medical College

Population: 5,522 faculty members, 1,028 medical and graduate students (as of Oct. 1, 2012)

Major areas of future emphasis: Translational bench-to-bedside research to benefit patients; treatments and therapies for some of the most formidable health challenges, including cancer, metabolic disease and neurodegenerative diseases; precision medicine and molecular imaging; and recruiting the best and brightest physicians and scientists to help lead Weill Cornell's research, educational and clinical missions.

Endowment: \$1.1 billion (includes \$980 million endowment and \$117 million in outside endowments/funds held by others, as of June 2013)

Cornell Now campaign goals: Weill Cornell reached its \$1.3 billion "Discoveries that Make a Difference" campaign goal in April 2013; its campaign is part of Cornell University's comprehensive capital campaign.

Michael Johnson



Dean Michael Johnson at a board meeting of the School of Hotel Administration's Center for Hospitality Research.

What is one thing people outside of your school don't know about the School of Hotel Administration?

That we're the best-grounded business program on the planet. I say that in all seriousness. We're different.

I tell the students: "We want about 70-75 percent of you to go into hospitality. If it's any less than that, then we've lost our grounding and lost what makes us unique; if it's more than that, we haven't given you a general enough education that you can take into any industry in any part of the world." I want them to go both into the hospitality industry and beyond, from Mumbai to Dubai, from Google to Wall Street. They should be able to go anywhere with this degree, and they do.

General management schools don't necessarily give students a grounded education. What I mean by that is, students learn every aspect of business from a particular dynamic context, which is hospitality. So whether you're learning HR management strategy, marketing, finance, accounting or operations, it's all grounded in the hospitality industry.

There are great management programs out there that will teach you how to work for someone else, how to have great team skills, communication skills, critical thinking skills, but they don't literally teach you how to run a business. Our students learn how to run a business. That's what makes them excellent entrepreneurs.

What accomplishment are you most proud of, in your time as dean?



Johnson speaks at the dedication of the new Marriott Student Learning Center in October 2012. [See larger image](#)

I think to be an excellent dean, you have to do three primary things: You have to continue to create educational and vocational experiences for your students; you have to continue to hire an excellent faculty; and you have to fund the future.

On the student side, we have systematically found areas where they have an interest, whether it's in entrepreneurship or sustainability. Increasingly, we're looking at interdisciplinary topics such as labor relations in hospitality, which we're developing with the ILR School and the Law School.

One thing we try to accomplish very systematically is to grow the base of educational experiences and classes, and expand what that leads to in terms of job opportunities for students. We had the Center for Hospitality Research, and subsequently we developed the Pillsbury Institute for Hospitality Entrepreneurship. We then developed the Center for Real Estate and Finance, which coincided with the development of the undergraduate minor in real estate. We have about 350 students from every undergraduate school and college at Cornell in that program, so we provide that service to the whole university.

The second obligation was to renew the faculty ... if there's one thing that a dean leaves behind, it's the faculty he or she has hired and developed. A dean may be here for 10 years, but faculty are here for 30 or more. The faculty I've hired is one of the things I'm most proud of, as they are the school's future.

And the third thing is to fund the future. We've raised \$100 million over the last seven years for our students, faculty, programs and facilities. And there isn't a hospitality school anywhere in the world that's raised that kind of money to support its students, faculty and facilities.

What is your school's biggest barrier to success?

Our size. Hospitality is a huge industry. So it's clearly a challenge for us to continue to have the impact that we've had as a small school in upstate New York serving a global industry. At the same time, it's helped us stay focused on developing leaders for the industry.

Is there any danger of SHA falling from its position of the number one hospitality school?

Actually, we have increased the distance between ourselves and other hospitality programs in recent years. We have the highest-caliber students. We have a categorically higher-caliber faculty. We hire our faculty from top general management programs because they have an interest in applying what they do to our industry, so it's a

great place for them to do their research and teaching. Our facilities are second to none. For hospitality, there is no place like Cornell.

Do you have a favorite moment from your seven years running the Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series?

I think my favorite moment is when J.W. "Bill" Marriott Jr. came a couple of years ago to give a lecture. Bill was probably 78 or 79 at the time. He is sharp as a tack. He's still very involved in the day-to-day operations of Marriott. This guy is so iconic to our students. When he came back to give the talk, you would have thought there was a rock star in the house. I believe even he was blown away by the attention he received from the students. And then, at the end of his talk, we announced the Marriott Foundation's \$3 million gift, which was the foundation funding for the Marriott Student Learning Center. The applause was unbelievable. He got a standing ovation. That was one of my favorite moments.

What's the most interesting thing you've heard from a colleague or student lately?

One of our graduating seniors this [past] year, Rebecca Stuart, came to me last summer between her junior and senior years. She did an internship for US Airways, doing financial modeling for their HR department. She was modeling the long-term consequences of certain HR policies. Whereas the airline industry 15-20 years ago may not have been the best place to pursue a career, there are airlines today – Delta and US Airways among them – that are very well run, are profitable and are good places for students to work. She said, "I used absolutely every course I've taken at this school in that job." It was a nice reinforcement that the education we deliver is incredibly useful; it's incredibly practical; it prepares students very well for a wide range of pursuits.

The dean

Michael Johnson, dean of the School of Hotel Administration and E.M. Statler Professor

At Cornell, and dean, since 2006

Research expertise area: Services marketing; quality management; customer satisfaction and loyalty management; and consumer psychology.

The School of Hotel Administration

Population: 62 full-time faculty members, 908 undergraduates, 104 graduate students

Areas of growth: global hospitality, entrepreneurship, labor relations, sustainability, medical care facility hospitality.

Endowment: \$131 million (as of July 2013)

Cornell Now campaign goal and amount raised so far: \$55 million/\$41.6 million (as of July 2013)

[Back to top](#)

search this site

Tools

- [Email to a friend](#)
- [Share with Facebook](#)

- [Share with MySpace](#)
-

©2013 [Cornell University](#)

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Hospitals](#)
- [Diagnostic Center](#)
- [Giving](#)



To stay in the know

April 2014

- [ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS](#)
- [COLLEGE NEWS](#)
- [ALUMNI NEWS](#)
- [DEVELOPMENT NEWS](#)
- [STUDENT NEWS](#)
- [EVENTS](#)
- [ARCHIVES](#)

[Intestines](#) > [New Faculty](#) > [Holter](#) > [Clinical Trial](#) > [Textbooks](#) > Young Alum

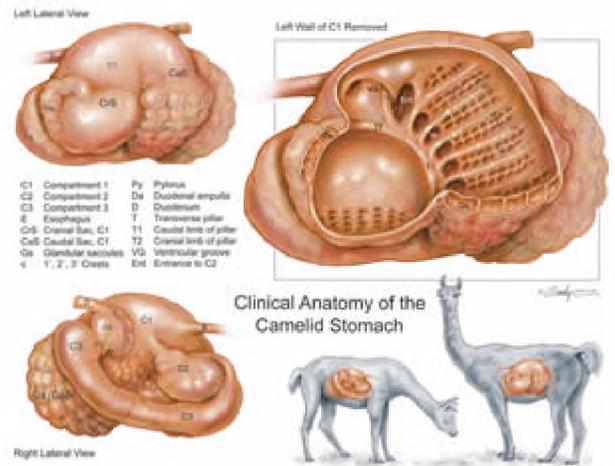
Alum pioneers the field of veterinary medical illustration

Many budding artists push their passions aside when it's time to build a career. But Dr. Lauren Sawchyn '09 managed to merge her interests in veterinary medicine and art, pursuing a dual career as both a veterinarian and a board-certified medical illustrator, practicing medicine while running her own illustration business, Sawchyn Medical Illustration (www.sawchynmi.com), in the greater Boston area.

A native of southwestern Conn., Sawchyn grew up immersed in veterinary medicine and inspired to pursue the field by her mother, a certified veterinary technician who worked her way up to manage an entire practice.

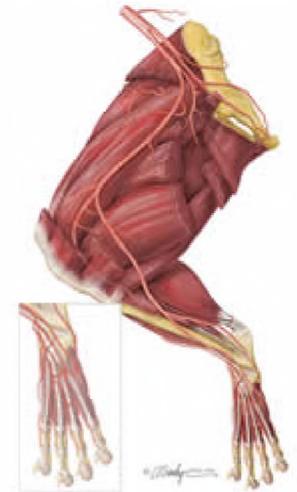
“When I was seven, my mother gave me a copy of the Hill's Atlas of Veterinary Clinical Anatomy,” said Sawchyn. “I was fascinated by the artwork and the animal diseases represented. Years later, after becoming a medical illustrator myself, I met some of the illustrators who created the Hill's Atlas that had so inspired me.”

Sawchyn did her undergraduate studies in zoology and studio arts at the University of Maine, spending long hours in the studios followed by more hours in science labs. When a veterinarian she worked for gave her a first edition Miller's Anatomy of the Dog, she became enamored with anatomy and pathology. Finally, taking a class on the history of veterinary medicine exposed her to veterinary medical illustrations that captivated her aspirations.



“These old detailed pictures were amazing and still communicated the story hundreds of years after they were made,” said Sawchyn. “I knew I wanted to be a veterinarian, but after seeing those pictures I realized I wanted to merge that interest with art in my career. So before veterinary school, I decided to pursue a medical illustration degree.”

Sawchyn attended Georgia Regents University to obtain an M.S. in medical illustration. Most of the program focused on human medicine, so Sawchyn took human-focused courses such as anatomy and pathology along with medical students. Unique among her peers in her focus in veterinary medicine, she forged her own path toward this specialty by creating her own veterinary projects as well as shadowing a lab animal veterinarian at the college.



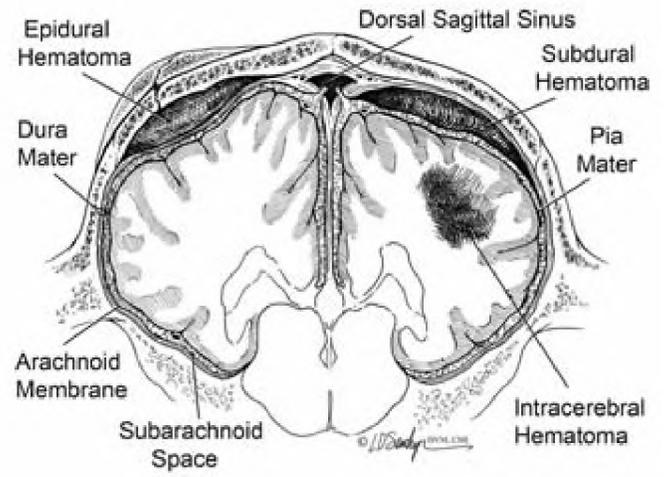
After her masters, her knowledge deepened considerably when she began studying veterinary medicine at Cornell. She worked with several professors on illustration projects, including doing carnivore illustrations for Paul Maza's carnivore anatomy class, for which she became a TA and used her illustrations to help teach. In 2009, the year she graduated from Cornell, she became board-certified in medical illustration, a rigorous process requiring oral, written, and portfolio exams.

Sawchyn practiced veterinary medicine full time in the practice her mother manages in Conn. for the last several years. She recently moved to Mass., where she is transitioning to practicing part-time as she builds her business, which provides medical illustration and fine art services for biomedical fields, specializing in veterinary medicine.

She is the first veterinarian to serve on the Board for Certification of Medical Illustrators and is also a professional member of the American Veterinary Medical Association, Association of Medical Illustrators, the Guild of Natural Science Illustrators, and the American Association of Veterinary Anatomists.

“It's been a fascinating ride combining these fields,” said Sawchyn. “I'm not the only veterinarian who draws, but I'm one of only a few who have graduate training at this level. It's important to realize that not all artists are the same, and not all 'medical' artists who claim to be really are. Any one can draw a pretty picture – a medical illustrator knows how to research to make it accurate and understandable. They are 'multi-lingual' problem solvers. There are about 2,000 medical illustrators in the world, a fraction of whom are board-certified. I'm working with students interested in the vet specialty who are coming up the ranks. I've given lectures at illustrators' conferences, and have started working with

other veterinary associations to build partnerships with the illustration field. My ultimate goal is to be a bridge between the two worlds.”



- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Hospitals](#)
- [Diagnostic Center](#)
- [Giving](#)



To stay in the know

November 2013

- [ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS](#)
- [COLLEGE NEWS](#)
- [ALUMNI NEWS](#)
- [DEVELOPMENT NEWS](#)
- [STUDENT NEWS](#)
- [EVENTS](#)
- [ARCHIVES](#)

[New Faculty](#) > [Holter](#) > [Clinical Trial](#) > [Textbooks](#) > [Young Alum](#) > Swanson Scholarship

Scholarship takes flight with first recipient



Marina Vaerst '16 has her professional eyes set skyward. With aspirations to become an avian veterinarian, she looks for all opportunities to learn as much as she can about the care and behavior of birds and other exotic species.

“Birds are so fascinating,” said Vaerst, who is the first recipient of the Janet L. Swanson Professional Scholarship. “Their biology is different and the types of medical treatments that are necessary are very different from those used with more common species.”

Vaerst also has her sights set on a successful career, noting that there are fewer veterinarians specializing in this area, which she said, may potentially create a niche market ripe with professional opportunities.

Janet Swanson would agree. The proud owner of an African grey parrot, a double yellow-headed Amazon parrot, and a green wing macaw, Swanson travels an hour each way for her birds' twice yearly veterinary wellness visits. She's been with her current veterinarian for a few years, adding that she tried two others first.

"The world needs more good avian veterinarians," said Swanson, who initially endowed the scholarship in 2012 and is pleased that its first recipient is fully committed to serving birds. "They have microscopic organs and require special procedures. If the veterinarians are not careful and properly trained, they can do physical damage and easily miss a medical issue. In addition, these birds are often prey for other species, which means they have become excellent at hiding disease. Like all species, the weakest, which could be from disease, is the first to be attacked, so they work hard to hide illnesses."

Cornell's curriculum offers training across the spectrum of species, with many opportunities for students like Vaerst to learn about birds—inside and outside the classroom. Vaerst, for instance, traveled with Dr. George Kollias to Belize in 2012. While there, she worked with a variety of wildlife, including birds, practicing skills that ranged from collecting blood samples to clipping nails.

"I began my veterinary career with a full understanding of the cost involved, so being named the Swanson scholar is a welcome and unexpected gift," said Vaerst, who has been saving money for years and spent a year working as a veterinary technician to both gain experience and build a nest egg to help finance her education. "I will graduate with debt; I know that. But because of this scholarship, it will be more manageable. I'm grateful that people are willing to help with the cost of education and thankful that Mrs. Swanson has chosen to help students who want to treat birds."

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Admissions](#)
- [Academics](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Outreach](#)
- [Hospitals](#)
- [Diagnostic Center](#)
- [Giving](#)



Continuing Education and Events

- [Pedal for Pets 2015](#)
- [Brochure pdf](#)
- [Routes](#)
- [Patient Assistance Fund](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)
- [Support a Rider](#)
- [Register online today!](#)

Thank you to our sponsors!



Tompkins Trust Company

GPSAF



[Holter](#) > [Clinical Trial](#) > [Textbooks](#) > [Young Alum](#) > [Swanson Scholarship](#) > Pedal for Pets



[PrevNext](#)

2016 Pedal for Pets

Ride with us ...

Saturday, October 15, 2016

Registration: 9AM (B Parking Lot)

Ride starts: 10AM (B Parking Lot)

Early bird registration open through October 1, 2016!

Every year, thousands of clients choose to bring their animals to the Cornell University Hospital for Animals (CUHA). Our faculty, students, and staff strive to provide quality medical care and education for our clients and their animal companions.

In the changing economic times, many of CUHA's clients have found it difficult to afford quality medical care for their animal companions, both large and small. These clients are forced to forgo necessary diagnostic procedures and life saving treatments for their animals. To assist clients and patients in need, CUHA has created the Patient Assistance Fund. The Patient Assistance Fund benefits our clients with economic need to help cover medical and surgical costs for their animal companions. We, the Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association (SCAVMA), have chosen to support the Patient Assistance Fund at CUHA with this year's Pedal for Pets bike-a-thon.

**Register
Online
Today!**

We invite you to join us! You can join our bikers on a 11-, 30- or 50-mile bike ride throughout Ithaca and the neighboring communities, sponsor a rider, donate a prize at the finish line for our riders, or help us to sponsor the event. All proceeds will benefit the Patient Assistance Fund. Please help us to make the veterinary care at CUHA more accessible to all.

If you are unable to participate in the event but would like to make a contribution to the Patient Assistance Fund, please visit our Crowdrise fundraising page: <https://www.crowdrise.com/7th-annual-pedal-for-pets-bike-a-thon-cornell-cvm/>

Sincerely,

The Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

