



## Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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# "This symbol of compassion, honor, and intellectual prowess": White Coat 2018

 Tuesday, March 20, 2018 - 9:51am



On a frigid and sunny Saturday this March, third-year veterinary students at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine gathered with family, faculty, staff, and friends for the White Coat Ceremony, which marks their transition from preclinical coursework to formal clinical training.

“This is your chance to integrate your hard-earned knowledge and skills and apply them in a clinical setting,” said Dean Lorin D. Warnick Ph.D. ’94 in his welcoming remarks to the crowd. “You are taking another step towards joining the veterinary profession and accepting the associated rights and responsibilities.”

Warnick spoke of his own memories of clinical rotations as a veterinary student at Colorado State University, including the first time he was in charge of closing a surgical incision. “It was going great—until the moment [the faculty clinician] turned back to have a closer look at my progress. I must have dropped the coil of suture in my hand and in a blink of an eye had a complicated snarl. If you’ve ever helped a five-year-old untangle a fishing line, that is

what my suture looked like," Warnick recalled. "He didn't say a thing—I just saw his raised eyebrows over his surgical mask. I recovered, untangled the suture, and finished closing the incision. This was one of many examples of learning while doing under the usually patient oversight of our faculty."

After the dean's introduction, each third-year student went on stage to don his or her white coat with the help of a mentor each student selected for the event. After the entire group was outfitted in their new sartorial symbol of clinical service, Susan Ackermann DVM '86, president of the college's Alumni Association Executive Board, took the stage.

"So this white coat. No doubt you have dreamed about wearing it for many years, possibly since childhood," Ackermann said. "It is your future colleagues that have gifted you with this symbol of compassion and honor and intellectual prowess. Today it is a clean starched garment, much too white and new to ever be mistaken for anything but new apparel. But over time, I promise, the fabric will soften, the press marks will ease, the whiteness will tarnish—all reflecting the maturity and confidence you will gain over time. The weight of the garment will also change, as it truly is the lightest that it shall ever be today, both in the proverbial and real sense."

After her remarks, Ackermann asked the class to stand and raise their right hands and administered the veterinary oath.

To close the event, keynote speaker Mitchell Kornet '76, DVM '79, chairman of the Veterinary College Advisory Council and the Annual Fund, addressed the crowd. "You've worked so hard and the transition from classroom to clinics is a monumental event," he said. "So many people have helped you get to this point. Your parents, siblings, spouses, partners, significant others, and even children are here today. Many of your professors who have worked so hard to train you are here, and everyone is so proud of your accomplishments. But most of all, you should be proud of yourself. You've sacrificed so much to get to this point and I can assure you that it is all worth it."

### **Veterinarian's Oath**

*Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health and welfare, the prevention and relief of animal suffering, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health, and the advancement of medical knowledge.*

*I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics. I accept as a lifelong obligation the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence.*



The 2018 White Coat Ceremony in Bailey Hall

Tuesday, March 20, 2018 - 10:38am

 Image



Reserved seats in Bailey Hall

Third-year veteri...



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