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August 2019

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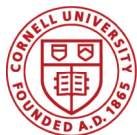
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Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

CVM > News >

Veterinary pathologist with outstanding research career wins college's most prestigious alumni honor

🐾 Tuesday, August 13, 2019 - 11:58am

For his contributions of high-impact research and dedication to the field, Jerrold Ward, D.V.M. '66, has won the highest alumni honor at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM): The Daniel Elmer Salmon Award for Distinguished Alumni Service.

"Winning the award is of course a great honor," said Ward. "When you look back at what you've done, you hope you've contributed to the field." Ward is the 33rd winner, one of the few veterinary pathologists to earn this distinction.

The Daniel Elmer Salmon Award for Distinguished Alumni Service honors veterinary graduates who have distinguished themselves in service to the profession, their communities or to the college. It was established by the CVM Alumni Association in 1986 and named in honor of Cornell — and the country's — first D.V.M. graduate. Salmon is best remembered for his pioneering work in controlling contagious animal diseases in the early 20th century, and the bacteria salmonella was named in his honor.

"Dr. Ward joins a long list of alumni who have made significant contributions to veterinary medicine and to Cornell," said Jorge Colon '92, D.V.M. '95, a member of this year's Salmon Award Committee.

Charting a unique path

Growing up in the Bronx, Ward was interested in science at a time when most of his peers were entering engineering. His attraction to veterinary medicine has its origin in frequent visits to The Bronx Zoo and Museum of Natural History. Once he joined CVM's veterinary program, he saw that many in his cohort were focused on dogs and cats, whereas he was interested in them from the point of view of the animal kingdom.

"I quickly became interested in infectious disease and pathology, and later in cancer," said Ward, acknowledging Dr. Harvey Olander, former head of necropsy, as one of the key mentors guiding him in that direction.



Jerrold Ward, D.V.M. '66, winner of this year's Salmon Award. All photos provided.



After receiving his D.V.M. from Cornell in 1966, Ward earned a Ph.D. in comparative pathology from the University of California at Davis in 1970 and subsequent board certification in Veterinary Pathology (ACVP). From there, Ward would work at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for 35 years, 31 of which he served in the National Cancer Institute (NCI). He has held leading roles at the NIH, including Chief of Tumor Pathology in the early National Toxicology Program, Chief of the Veterinary and Tumor Pathology Section at the NCI between 1992 and 2004, and Chief of the Infectious Disease Pathogenesis Section at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases between 2004 and 2008. After retiring from the NIH, Ward has continued his work as a veterinary pathologist at the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology in Singapore, and continues to be a consultant in the fields of veterinary and toxicologic pathology. He was named a Distinguished Member of the ACVP in 2009.



Ward during the summer of this third year, working in Copenhagen, Denmark, on bovine leukosis (leukemia).

“He is particularly renowned for his contributions to laboratory animal pathology of infectious diseases and cancer,” said Dr. Alexander Nikitin, professor of pathology in the Department of Biomedical Sciences. “His contributions have significantly increased the standing of Cornell University in the comparative mouse pathology field and provided a critical impetus for involvement of many Cornell residents in studies of disease pathogenesis in mouse models.”

Among Ward’s highest-impact contributions to veterinary medicine have been finding new diseases and their causes in lab animals and cats. As a pathology resident and graduate student at U.C. Davis, his Ph.D. demonstrated that a virus was the cause of feline infectious peritonitis. He led the effort to discover a new bacterium, *Helicobacter hepaticus*, a pathogen associated with chronic hepatitis and hepatocellular neoplasia in laboratory mice, including the patent for a PCR diagnostic test and was awarded the NIH Director’s Award for the discovery. Moreover, he was involved in human immunodeficiency virus and simian immunodeficiency virus pathology research in the late 1980s, which guided the field’s course of study and discovery in those areas.



Ward during anatomy class.

Additionally, Ward was and still is associate editor of the society journals *Veterinary Pathology* and *Toxicologic Pathology*, and has served as a member of the executive committee of the Society of Toxicologic Pathology, co-chairing its Scientific Program Committee.

Investing in the future of the field

Never losing touch with his alma mater, Ward has periodically provided lectures and seminars, and follows the progress of graduates. For the last 10 years, he has regularly contributed to pathology seminars for anatomic pathology residents as well as to Nikitin’s course on mouse and stem cell pathology. He has also given lectures to residents in the laboratory animal medicine program and to the broader Cornell research community.

“Dr. Ward has been highly generous in sharing his expertise with other pathologists and researchers across the globe,” said Nikitin. He also enjoys interacting with graduate students, postdocs and scientists to help support medical research with his pathology expertise.

In recognition of Ward’s activity in training the next generation in veterinary medicine, CVM named him an adjunct professor in the Department of Biomedical Sciences in 2007.



Witness to history

Ward has seen dramatic changes to the profession since his time at Cornell in the '60s. "We've all seen history developing as we've lived our lives," he said, noting that the college specifically has changed in terms of gender ratios in veterinary classes, teaching styles, expansion of research and collaboration opportunities.

"The internet really opened up the possibility for more collaborative work," said Ward. "Every day I'm emailing colleagues and friends for work-related materials. You find the right people and interact with them — and then you can do research and teaching in a better way because you feel your world isn't only where you work, but the entire earth. And that is really spectacular."

When Ward took his boards, there were approximately 80 other board-certified veterinary pathologists in the United States; now there are over two thousand. The field has greatly expanded and is increasing in its impact, especially in the One Health arena. Ward says he takes pride in the direction veterinary medicine is going: "Veterinary pathology is not a career — it's an adventure."



Ward in the '60s on a dairy farm.

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Calling all alumni: Cornell students need you

Quarterly news for alumni of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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Dr. Elaine Claffey joins Cornell Ruffian Equine Specialists team

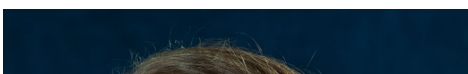
🐾 Monday, July 22, 2019 - 10:09am



Cornell Ruffian Equine Specialists is the only full service equine hospital on Long Island.

Elaine Claffey is the newest member of the Cornell Ruffian Equine Specialist (CRES) team. Recently certified as a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons (Large Animal), the graduate of the Virginia Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M. 2014) will be involved in all aspects of care at the clinic, from elective and emergency surgery to sports and regenerative medicine and lameness work.

“Coming from the equine hospital in Ithaca, I knew I’d be joining a fantastic team of specialists here at CRES,” said Claffey, who spent a year interning at the Vermont Large Animal Clinic before completing a residency in large animal surgery and continuing on as a clinical instructor at Cornell. “This clinic has such a unique place in the Long Island community, and I’m excited to be a part of that.”





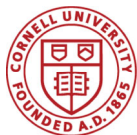
Dr. Elaine Claffey

Horses have been in Claffey's life as far back as she can remember. She spent her childhood on a dairy farm in southwestern Virginia that has been in her family since 1795. "I grew up riding and was always interested in the veterinary care it takes to maintain athletic horses," she said. After trying out a variety of equestrian sports, she eventually settled on – and excelled in – eventing, the "equestrian triathlon" that includes dressage, cross-country, and show jumping. She competed professionally prior to and throughout veterinary school, and currently has one riding horse, a five-year-old Thoroughbred that will be joining her on Long Island soon. "I'm a pretty one-track person," Claffey admitted. "If I'm not at the clinic, I'd like to be riding. I really just like being around the animals."

Naturally, her close relationship with horses informs how she approaches her work. "It definitely gives me a valuable outlook when working as an equine veterinarian," Claffey said. "It's easy for me to put myself in place of my clients when they are stressed or worried about their horses, because I'm the same way about mine. It also often helps me sort out subtle lamenesses or performance problems because I have that perspective as a rider."

This unique set of skills is certainly valued by her new colleagues. "Dr. Claffey brings enthusiasm, dedication and incredible work ethic to Ruffian," said Norm Ducharme, chief medical officer at CRES. "She is one of the finest and brightest surgical resident graduating from the Cornell program, and in addition to her competence she has personal qualities that will help support the core value of our clinic: she is kind and compassionate. We are fortunate to have her."

-By Olivia Hall



Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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Master of Public Health Program celebrates its inaugural cohort's graduation

🐾 Friday, May 31, 2019 - 3:53pm



"It is rare in the history of a 154-year-old institution that people ever get to be the first at anything, but all of you have done just that," said Lorin D. Warnick, D.V.M., Ph.D. '94, the Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine. "You are true pioneers." All photos by Rachel Philipson/Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine.

Cornell saw a new addition to its commencement weekend activities with the graduation of the inaugural cohort of the Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) Program. Eleven students from five countries received their hoods in a ceremony marking the occasion at the College of Veterinary Medicine May 25.

"It is rare in the history of a 154-year-old institution that people ever get to be the first at anything, but all of you have done just that," said Lorin D. Warnick, D.V.M., Ph.D. '94, the Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine. "You are true pioneers."

Housed in the Graduate School and administered through the college, the M.P.H. program [launched in fall 2017](#).

"Public health is taught in disciplines throughout Cornell's campus, but we never offered professional public health

training that tied it together before this program,” said Dr. Alexander Travis, program director and associate dean for international programs and public health.

The program is among the first of its kind to be formed under new public health competency guidelines, and incorporates two fields of study for students to choose from: infectious disease epidemiology or food systems and health. Underpinning the whole program are the core concepts of sustainability, equity and engagement.

“These two concentration areas are signature strengths of Cornell,” said Travis. “What really sets our program apart are our involvement of small teams of students in real life problems with partners outside of academia, and our consideration of the massive environmental challenges facing our planet today. These affect every dimension of our lives, especially our health and wellbeing. If we don’t start to make sustainability a core part of public health, future generations will suffer for it. We have to think about sustainability as an equity issue across generations.”

Several students earned awards, which were presented to them during the hooding ceremony:

Valedictorian

- Hirokazu Togo, M.P.H. '19

Excellence in Public Health Impact

- Infectious Disease Epidemiology: Lakshman Balaji, M.P.H. '19
- Food Systems and Health: Qijin Wang, M.P.H. '19

Excellence in Public Health Leadership

- Caitlin Baumhart, M.P.H. '19
- Ana Barsallo Cochez, M.P.H. '19

Individual Best Exemplifying Sustainability, Equity and Engagement (peer-selected)

- Andreina Thielen Martin, M.P.H. '19

Some of the graduates plan to stay in the Ithaca area to either pursue additional degrees or work in the community with organizations like Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE). Others will venture across the United States, like Steven Shelley, M.P.H. '19, who will work with the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention as an epidemiologist, and Darryl Ware, M.P.H. '19, who will start a fellowship with Kaiser Permanente in California. Others will return to their home countries to put their knowledge into practice, like cohort valedictorian Togo. Originally from Japan, Togo will return to his job as a senior environmental health officer in Japan’s prefectural government.



Housed in the Graduate School and administered through the college, the M.P.H. program [launched in fall 2017](#).



The graduating M.P.H. cohort has already made an impact in New York with projects that approach public health issues like food accessibility and vector-borne disease in Tompkins County.

Making their mark in New York

The graduating M.P.H. cohort has already made an impact in New York with projects that approach public health issues like food accessibility and vector-borne disease in Tompkins County. Each student has partnered with organizations like CCE, Healthy Food for All, the Cayuga Center for Healthy Living and various school districts. For example, Togo and Martin partnered with the Ithaca City School District to find ways to mitigate barriers that prevent students from participating in free breakfast programs.

“We are training the next generation of public health leaders,” said Travis, who is committed to keeping the cohort sizes small so that the program can continue its engaged approach working with community partners. Next steps for the program include pursuit of formal accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health.

“We are training the next generation of public health leaders”

- Dr. Alexander Travis, program director

“Although our Master of Public Health program is brand new, Cornell has played a leading role in advancing public health since its own founding,” said Warnick. “Today, though, we focus on your role as pioneers: you, the founding class, and this milestone of your graduation.”

In addition to the M.P.H. graduates, the college also celebrated the commencement of 96 veterinary students. Five students earned their Ph.D. in the graduate field of biomedical and biological sciences, which includes some who will remain to finish a combined D.V.M. degree or work in a postdoctoral position. More graduates are on the horizon, with four students who will complete the Master in Professional Studies – Veterinary Parasitology program by the end of summer 2019.

By Melanie Greaver Cordova

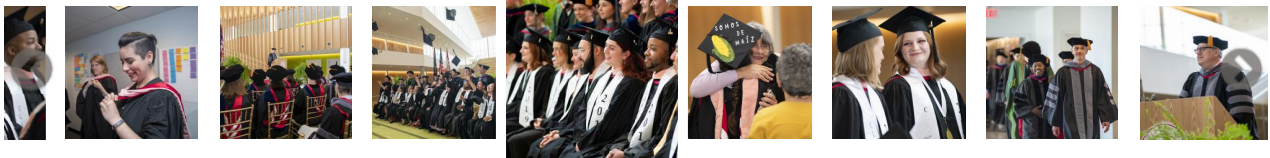
Friday, May 31, 2019 - 4:06pm

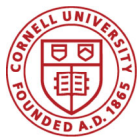
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The graduating M.P. health issues like fo





Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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Class of 2019 celebrates hooding ceremony

🐾 Wednesday, May 29, 2019 - 11:40am



Members of the Class of 2019 pose together after their hooding ceremony at Bailey Hall.

After countless hours of lectures, late nights studying and immersive learning on the farm or in the clinic, the Cornell veterinary class of 2019 was recognized through the college's hooding ceremony on Saturday, May 25 at Bailey Hall.

The graduating class comprises 96 students and a diversity of future career goals. The majority of the class, 61 percent, plan to go into private practice, while 32 percent will further their training with internships. All the new veterinarians will stay in the United States, with roughly one-third remaining in New York state.



Lorin D. Warnick, D.V.M., Ph.D. '94, the Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine, spoke with admiration for the group of graduates, as well as the college's residents and interns, on completing their training. "I hope each of you has a sense of satisfaction with what you have achieved," he said. "I'm sure your



Dean Warnick addresses the D.V.M. Class of 2019

friends and family in the audience are proud of you — as are all of us at the college.”

Warnick also thanked the graduates’ families and friends. “If your experience was anything like mine, your parents and siblings indulged an unusual number of animals and great variety of species in your homes,” said Warnick. “They have also no doubt heard more graphic descriptions of anatomy, pathology and symptoms of infectious disease than they ever wanted; and much of that was probably at the dinner table. For those not in the profession, please excuse us — we simply can’t sit down to a meal together without these topics coming up.”

Warnick noted how the Class of 2019 were agents of change, mentioning how they helped shape the college’s wellness program and sustainability initiatives. “It is fitting that you have been in the college during a time of change; you now are joining a profession that is also rapidly evolving,” said Warnick. “As the business of veterinary medicine is changing ... we face a challenge in keeping service to animals and clients at the core of the profession. But this also provides an opportunity; the quality veterinary health care depends on a foundation of excellent clinical skills, but to be most effective it must be surrounded by great communication, organization, and practice management.” Warnick closed his speech by thanking the graduates and house officers.

Dr. Robert Weiner, president of the New York State Veterinary Medical Society, led the graduating class in taking the Veterinarian’s Oath. Katherine Edmondson, M.S. ’85, Ph.D.

’89, assistant dean for students and instruction, announced the names and future plans of each graduate, followed by Warnick hooding each student. Mark Olcott, D.V.M. ’95, president of the alumni association executive board, congratulated them upon their hooding.

Following hooding, Dr. Erin Epperly, assistant clinical professor of diagnostic imaging, recipient of the 2019 Zoetis Distinguished Teaching Award, gave the charge to the Class of 2019. Epperly told stories of her own experiences as a new veterinarian, reminding the graduates that they will face both failures and successes in their career, and that veterinary medicine can be unpredictable. “But one of the best parts about veterinary medicine is that the successes far outnumber the failures,” she said. “I am completely confident about the doctors sitting on the stage before you. I am so proud of you all as people, and as vets.”



Graduates from the Class of 2019 listen to speakers during their hooding ceremony.

Dr. Carolyn McDaniel, senior lecturer and foundation course leader for Block VII, presented on behalf of the Faculty Student Awards Committee three awards:

- The Horace K. White Prize, awarded to the graduate with the highest academic record during their entire veterinary training, went to Allison Tuchrello, D.V.M. ’19
- The Malcolm E. Miller Award, awarded to a graduating student that demonstrates perseverance and scholastic diligence, went to Bridget Bickers, D.V.M. ’19
- The Leonard Pearson Prize, awarded to a student most successfully demonstrating potential for professional and/or academic leadership in veterinary medicine, went to Gilad Fefer, D.V.M. ’19

The event closed with a performance from the college’s own acapella group, Ultrasound, which finished with the entire audience joining in to sing Cornell University’s alma mater, “Far above Cayuga’s waters.”





Shannon O'Keefe, D.V.M. '19, receives her ceremonial hood from Dean Lorin Warnick.

The graduating class is a diverse one, with many different backgrounds and interests. Students come from hometowns just a few miles from campus, or across the globe — as is the case for MJ Sun, D.V.M. '19. She is originally from China, where her father watched the livestream of the event at 2am in the morning. Graduate Shannon O'Keefe, D.V.M. '19, was a professional singer in New York City prior to CVM who used her art as a counterbalance during the challenges of veterinary school. “Having an outlet during all that studying was essential for my survival in vet school, and performing was something I could control,

something I could feel good about,” O'Keefe said. “It helped remind me that there were other things in life than studying.”

Shelby Wauson, D.V.M. '19, had been researcher in behavioral neuroscience before deciding veterinary medicine was a better fit for her. Cornell turned out to be transformative for Wauson in many ways. “I've become more focused on doing those things that I truly love, in the profession and beyond,” she said. Wauson also became a mother during her time as a student. “Having [my son] Winter has allowed me to gain perspective that I needed,” she said. “Balancing work and family is rarely easy, especially for women, but I feel I have a head start now.” Wauson will start as an associate veterinarian for a nonprofit small animal clinic in Houston this summer.

O'Keefe, who plans to work at an emergency and critical care internship in Maryland after graduation, says her time at Cornell was one of challenge and reward. “As we approach graduation I am continually overwhelmed by how much I've learned and how much has changed in the way I think about medicine,” she said. “It isn't easy, and it isn't always fun, but it is absolutely worth it.”

-By Lauren Cahoon Roberts

-Photography by Rachel Philipson

Wednesday, May 29, 2019 - 12:29pm

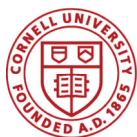
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The Cornell veterinary class of 2019 at their hooding ceremony. All photos by Rachel Philipson/Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine. The 2019 veterinary





Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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Historic milestones for both alumni and CVM celebrated at this year's Reunion

🐾 Monday, June 10, 2019 - 2:15pm



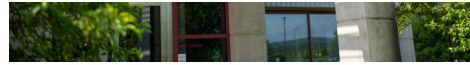
Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) alumni, their families and friends gathered for a sun-drenched Reunion weekend in Ithaca, New York June 6-8.

This year, the college invited alumni to celebrate its historic 125th anniversary with the opening of a time capsule from 1994 and a game of college Jeopardy, which tested their knowledge of CVM history and trivia. The three-day event featured many such moments of pomp, circumstance and fun.

Cornell President Martha Pollack kicked the weekend off with her opening remarks at the college. “It’s great to have so many of you here at Cornell, celebrating your reunion as graduates of one of the best colleges of veterinary medicine in the world,” said Pollack, who noted CVM’s impact on education, research and public service.



“As a side note, I do think that having the College of Veterinary Medicine here has a big impact on how animal-friendly all of Cornell is,” Pollack added. “In Michigan, when people heard I had four cats, I used to get a lot of funny looks. When I came here and told people I had four cats, they asked, ‘And how many dogs?’”



Lorin D. Warnick, D.V.M., Ph.D. '94, the Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine, also greeted guests at the welcome event. “I am pleased to see so many of you have returned to Cornell for a weekend of comradery and celebration — some of you for the first time in many years,” he said.



In addition to tours of the new Small Animal Community Practice and the yearly Festival of the Animals — complete with Minnie the miniature horse, Guiding Eyes for the Blind dogs and animals from the Cornell Companions program — college alumni and community members gathered in Takoda’s Run atrium for the official unveiling of Provost Michael Kotlikoff’s portrait. Kotlikoff served as dean of CVM from 2007-2015. The portrait hangs in Takoda’s Run, one of the major spots of construction and renovation during the college’s class expansion project.

“It’s fitting that this portrait will be displayed in our new facility, because it is really Mike’s leadership that brought in the funding, all the teamwork that needed to be done to build this transformative space for the college,” Warnick said.

In keeping with tradition, the CVM reunion celebrated two alumni giving awards, the Dean’s Cup and the 25 Club Cup, which recognize classes who have achieved milestones in reunion giving.

The 25 Club Cup award goes to classes out of school for up to 25 years, which achieve 25 percent or higher in giving participation during a reunion year. The classes of 1994 and 1999 won this honor with 34 percent and 38 percent participation, respectively.



The Dean’s Cup goes to the class out of school for up to 50 years, with the highest percent of the class making a gift. This year, the



Dean's Cup went to the class of 1969 with 61 percent participation. Additionally this class had the highest giving of all the reunion classes, totaling nearly \$137,000.

Said Warnick, "The place may look different, but the college's passion and dedication for human and animal health and wellbeing is still strong."

-By Lauren Cahoon Roberts

Friday, June 14, 2019 - 12:18pm

Image



Scenes from CVM Reunion 2019

Scenes from CVM R





Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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In the business of veterinary medicine: How Jorge Colón '92, D.V.M. '95, makes the profession work for him

🐾 Tuesday, August 13, 2019 - 3:17pm



Jorge Colón '92, D.V.M. '95 stands with his wife Maggie and daughter Sofia next to the Triple-Crown-winning thoroughbred, Justify.

Jorge Colón '92, D.V.M. '95, grew up with business in his blood. His family in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, owned a firm that produced business and governmental paper forms, as well as the paper and machinery to create them. Colón saw his father, mother and brother working in the office managing clients, budgets and bottom lines, and that family culture rubbed off on him. "I like a spreadsheet," he says. "Business has always been a part of my life. Had I not been a veterinarian I probably would have been accountant." Today, Colón has successfully intertwined these two major interests into a successful career and a lifestyle that allows for plenty of quality time with his family. "I take my greatest pride in being a husband and dad — family is my priority in life," Colón says.

Rising to the challenge

As a young person, Colón had an interest in science, but his trips during high school with a veterinarian friend to the local the local racetrack sealed his destiny as an equine veterinarian. “I didn’t know much about horses at the time, but it just mesmerized me,” says Colón of watching the long-legged thoroughbreds thunder by on the track.

Colón attended Cornell University as an undergraduate, and knew he wanted to go straight on to Cornell Veterinary College to become an equine clinician. Moving to Ithaca, New York, from the island of Puerto Rico came with some culture shock for the teenaged Colón, however. “I grew up on an island where everyone is the same as you are, and the ocean surrounds you — and came to my freshman dorm where I met people who had never touched water that wasn’t in their shower or the pool,” Colón explains. “I almost couldn’t comprehend that.”

The extreme change was ultimately good for Colón. His experience at Cornell — both as an undergraduate and veterinary student, challenged him to excel. “It’s not that I didn’t have drive, but I needed someone to encourage me to go even further,” Colón explains. “Cornell did that for me. It pushed me and gave me opportunities.”

Sharpening skills

After graduating from CVM, Colón, moved to Lexington, Kentucky — the heart of racehorse country — to pursue an internship at a major equine hospital.

Today, Colón runs his own private equine ambulatory practice, specializing in reproduction, neonatology and radiology — and competes for business with major equine hospitals with 50-100 veterinarians on staff. “The environment is extremely competitive,” says Colón. “These larger hospitals can offer things I can’t — economies of scale, for example. But I don’t have to bill the way they bill, and they have expenses to take care of that I don’t.”

This nimbleness has been part of Colón’s key to success. That, and his dedication to business education, which Colón pursued after a number of non-stop years in his private practice. “I was working every day no matter what the weather was, and I realized that I was tired of living like that, I needed to do something other than just working with mares and foals,” he said. “I knew I needed to have more than one skill — and I already had understanding of business skills.”



In 2015, Colón completed an online MBA program with a Finance Certificate at Colorado State University College of Business, all the while continuing his equine practice and being a father and husband.

He’s bolstered this training with a Leadership Essentials Certificate through eCornell, become a facilitator of Lean inventory management through the Veterinary Management Institute, and written a textbook on the matter — “Essential business concepts for veterinary professionals.” He also acts as a private veterinary business consultant, helping clients learn skills such as lean management, practice valuation and financial analysis.

Swimming with sharks

Jorge Colón '92, D.V.M. '95, with his daughters Sofia (left) and Sydney (right)

Colón effectively shifted his career from being an equine veterinarian to something more complex and ultimately, more rewarding. “I stopped thinking of myself as a veterinarian, and began to think of myself as being in the business of providing veterinary medicine,” says Colón. “Once you make that shift, the whole concept of thinking about your business will change.”

He applies this mentality not just to his own finances, but also to those of his clients. “One of the number one reasons horse owners elect not to have care is because of the cost,” says Colón. “But I change that for them. I always tell my clients that I like to be conservative in my treatments so we can be aggressive when we need to be. If we do it the right way from the beginning, going to the vet is not a mortgage every time you go.”

This approach has built him a successful practice of loyal clients, despite the fierce competition in heart of thoroughbred breeding country. “I’m a little fish in these big shark-infested waters and one of the ways I get to keep swimming is by taking care of my clients’ needs and wants first,” Colón says. “If you provide high quality service, they will want to come back.”

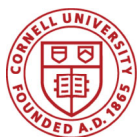
Cornell connections

Colón credits Cornell with much of his success, and finds multiple ways to give back and stay involved with his alma mater. “I am who I am because of Cornell,” he says. “It’s amazing the doors that Cornell opens, the way people treat me once they know that’s where I graduated.” Colón serves on the college’s Alumni Association Executive Board and has spoken to CVM’s Veterinary Business Management Association student group (CVBMA). He is also an avid supporter of the college’s newly-launched Center for Veterinary Business and Entrepreneurship (CVBE). “When I learned about the college’s plan for this center, I was ecstatic,” he says. “It was the exact representation of my idea of what needed to happen at Cornell.”

For years, Colón had championed the belief that financial literacy is a fundamental part of veterinary medicine education. “You don’t have to love numbers, but you do need to understand them,” he says, noting how this acumen filters down into every aspect of a business owner’s life. “If one doesn’t have a financially healthy practice, then it will be very difficult to have a financially healthy personal life, or a quality family life.”

With the launch of the CVBE, Colón hopes to see its educational benefits improve the happiness and success of fellow veterinarians. “My hope is that this can benefit not just individual practitioners, but also their communities,” Colón says. “If you’re financially healthy, perhaps that eventually turns to wealth, and you can then utilize your abilities to further philanthropic causes. The ultimate goal is not just what can you do yourself. It’s what can you do for everyone around you, and to make the world a better place.”

-By Lauren Cahoon Roberts



Elia Colón-Mallah '88, D.V.M. '92, teaches next generation of veterinary technicians

🐾 Friday, August 9, 2019 - 12:51pm



Elia Colón-Mallah '88, D.V.M. '92, teaches veterinary technicians hands-on skills at Suffolk County Community College. Photo provided.

Elia Colón-Mallah '88, D.V.M. '92, was working for a veterinary practice on Long Island and encouraging the technicians to perfect their clinical procedures when she decided she wanted to mentor them in a more formal way.

The owner of the practice mentioned that Suffolk County Community College was hiring adjunct instructors to teach in the veterinary technician program. Within a few months, Colón-Mallah found herself teaching a veterinary cardiology and radiology course to first-year students at the college.

It was just three years after graduating from the College of Veterinary Medicine, and Colón-Mallah remembers being terrified to speak in front of a class full of students. Yet she was able to control her fears by drawing on the skills she

developed at Cornell, from the public speaking she learned in an undergraduate class to acting with the Creative Paws theatre group as a veterinary student.

“At first I managed my fear as if I were acting,” she says. “But then I thought, at the end of the day, it’s knowledge of the subject matter and preparation with a cohesive learning plan that really help you become the best teacher you can be.”

As she was promoted from instructor to full-time professor, Colón-Mallah realized that students in the veterinary science technology program needed hands-on training earlier in the program. So in 2013, she launched what turned out to be a four-year effort to rewrite the curriculum and proposed adding two new small animal nursing courses. The new curriculum, which will begin this fall, will permit students to progress from basic to more advanced nursing skills over a total of three semesters.

As a teacher, Colón-Mallah sees her role as offering students a realistic view of the work they will do as veterinary technicians. “I see so many students working two or three jobs trying to become veterinary technicians,” she says. “Some students don’t really know what they’re getting into, and that’s where I come in.”

Veterinary technicians are an integral part of clinical practices, Colón-Mallah says, but she notes that they have a high practice attrition rate because of dissatisfaction with their role in their practice, low salaries, compassion fatigue and burnout.

“Optimal utilization of veterinary technicians can improve the quality of the practice and improve patient outcomes, while reducing veterinary technician attrition from the profession,” she says.

Colón-Mallah has been active as a Cornell alumna, serving as a member of the Cornell University Council and the College of Veterinary Medicine Alumni Council. In 2006, she received the Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Outstanding Young Alum Award.

She views teaching as a way to use her education to help others who want to enter the profession. “I’m doing my very best to give back what I got,” she says. “While it’s important to achieve one’s goals, it’s equally important to turn around and help someone else find their way.”

By Sherrie Negrea



Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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NYS Veterinary Conference

Cornell is honored to be a co-host of the annual New York State Veterinary Conference, held in the fall of each year in Ithaca, NY, at the cutting-edge facilities of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. Veterinary medicine professionals gather to teach, network, and learn at this premiere educational gathering.

2019 New York State Veterinary Conference

October 4-6, 2019

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine
Ithaca, New York

ENGAGE • APPLY • EXCEL

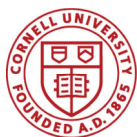
The 2019 New York State Veterinary Conference is a three-day continuing education opportunity that provides attendees with high-impact professional development, offering up to 24 RACE CE credits per person. This year's conference includes innovative formats such as interactive case studies, hands-on labs, and panel discussions, on top of the more traditional lectures to help attendees practice applying what they have learned.

Co-sponsored by the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine and the New York State Veterinary Medical Society, the conference features a diversity of species tracks, with something for everyone – from early career veterinarians to seasoned practitioners and licensed veterinary technicians.

Join us for networking events to meet current students and colleagues from every background and at every stage in their career. Located in the heart of the Finger Lakes, the conference combines the professional rigor of Ivy League continuing education with the world-class natural beauty and culture of Ithaca, NY.

To learn more and register, [please visit our website](#).





Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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Other College Conferences

ASPCA Cornell Maddie's Shelter Medicine Conference

July 12-14, 2019

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine
Ithaca, New York

Now in its 16th year, this conference provides high-quality education for veterinary, animal shelter, and spay/neuter professionals to improve the quality of care for animals. Presentations are given by speakers who are highly regarded in their respective fields in four major tracks: DVM, LVT, management and staff & volunteers.

The main conference program (including keynote address) has been approved for 25.25 hours of continuing education credit in jurisdictions that recognize RACE approval, with 13.25 hours available to an individual attendee. The pre-conference workshop has been approved for 5.75 hours of continuing education credit in jurisdictions that recognize RACE approval. All courses have been pre-approved for Certified Animal Welfare Administrator continuing education credits by The Association for Animal Welfare Advancement.

- [View the full conference schedule](#)
Includes the pre-conference workshop. Workshop names, speakers and times are subject to change.
- [Reserve accommodations](#)
Rooms are discounted and limited so reserve soon. Lodging is not included in the cost of the conference.
- [Contact us to become a conference sponsor](#)

[Register now](#)

For information about what went on at the 2018 conference, please view the 2018 ASPCA Cornell Maddie's Shelter Medicine [Program](#)

The conference provides highly relevant information to help shelter animals and the professionals who work with them. Presentations are given over the course of 2 ½ days by speakers in four tracks: DVM, LVT, Management, and Staff & Volunteers. The conference usually begins Friday evening, with a keynote presentation and welcome reception and ends Sunday.

31st Fred Scott Feline Symposium

July 26-28, 2019

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine
Ithaca, New York

We hope you'll be joining us in Ithaca, NY for this three-day, feline-centric CE event designed for cat only and companion animal practices both. Granting 16 CE credits, this symposium will also offer the opportunity to mingle with friends and colleagues at the Taste of the FLX Welcome Reception and at the Saturday Night Dinner, complete with live music. The 2019 Fred Scott Feline Symposium promises to be a tour-de-force in continuing education for those in attendance! This year's program will provide a unique balance of scientific updates, clinically relevant education, and innovative sessions designed to engage and educate attendees.

We are very fortunate to have Dr. Niels Pedersen provide us with an update on feline infectious peritonitis (FIP) and other feline infectious diseases, presented in conjunction with a talk by Dr. Gary Whittaker that will review his laboratory's groundbreaking work on the molecular biology of FIP as it pertains to disease mechanism and diagnosis.

In keeping with the theme of abdominal pathology that may be observed in cats with FIP, Dr. Julie Allen will present an interactive session on the clinicopathologic evaluation of effusions. Dr. Galina Hayes will continue with the abdominal theme by providing us with her insights on abdominal surgery in cats, and Dr. Erin Epperly will present case studies of feline abdominal ultrasound/imaging.

Following up on her inaugural pathology presentation that was extremely well received at last year's Symposium, Dr. Teresa Southard will present an interactive "Show and Tell" session of interesting feline gross pathology cases seen here at the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Finally, our program will be rounded out with informative and engaging sessions, including Dr. William Miller presenting interesting cases in feline dermatology and Dr. Amy Morgan providing requisite continuing education on the handling of controlled substances.

To learn more and register, please visit [our website](#).

Magnetic Resonance Imaging: its clinical application to advanced lameness

August 15, 2019

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine
Ithaca, New York

The Cornell University Hospital for Animals is committed to helping veterinarians and technicians in the region meet their continuing education needs. The evening CE events target the veterinary team with both veterinarians and licensed veterinary technicians invited. This program meets NY State requirements for CE credit with one credit per 50 minute talk. To keep the cost reasonable, financial support is being provided by the Cornell University Hospital for Animals. The fee for veterinarians is \$25.00; technicians is \$20.00.

Magnetic resonance imaging can be an especially useful diagnostic elucidating soft tissue and bone injury in the horse. This lecture will cover basic principles of MRI and its clinical application to referring veterinarians. Anatomy will be reviewed with relevance to types of scans (stir vs. proton dense, etc.). Common injuries will be exemplified in both the foot and the fetlock and where more common imaging modalities fall short. When to pursue MRI will be a focus of this lecture. A few cases will be discussed outlining the lameness exam, imaging, MRI findings, and the treatment/outcome.

Presented by Lauren, K. Luedke, DVM

To learn more and register, [please visit our website](#).

2019 Cornell Farrier Conference

November 2-3, 2019

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine
Ithaca, New York

Please join us for the 2019 Cornell Farrier Conference at the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, in Ithaca, NY. We have another great lineup this year as well as our usual barbeque, trade show, hearty breakfast, and ice cream social. There will also be a special polo demo and game for Farriers' Night at the Oaxley Arena. The program includes many everyday shoeing problems and fixes. We are looking forward to seeing everyone, to renew old friendships, and to learn new ideas.

Please visit this page again this summer for a link to the registration website.