



## Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

[Home](#) > [News](#) >

# Receiving manager brings communication to new heights

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As manager of the AHDC Receiving Department, Dr. Korana Stipetic makes sure samples get where they need to go. A member of the AHDC's Veterinary Support Services team, she oversees a team of 14 people, ensuring hundreds of samples per day are delivered and processed appropriately. The AHDC receives anywhere from 800 to 1200 submissions daily containing samples from veterinarians across the United States and around the world that must be opened and sorted for testing.

Stipetic and her team ensure the samples received are appropriate for the requested testing procedure and that the accompanying information is complete and accurate. They are also responsible for data entry for submissions to ensure they make it to the right lab to be processed. Beyond logistics, Stipetic communicates with veterinarians about tests they've already submitted or will submit in the future, and answers questions about results.



"I like providing customer service," said Stipetic. "I believe that's what we are here for and I like representing the AHDC in a kind and helpful manner and helping the clients and their animals. I enjoy working with the Receiving team; I have amazing coworkers who work as a team and cooperate well. This job is a perfect match because it merges the two most important things in my life. The first is my profession as a veterinarian. The second is helping people improve themselves, their working environment, and their lives in general by looking at the things we're doing and how they affect us and others."

Stipetic has managed the Receiving department since July 2013. Previously, she taught basic veterinary curriculum in Zagreb, Croatia, and came to Cornell as a visiting fellow to work as a consultant with Quality Milk Production Services (QMPS). She then worked as an extension associate with the Department of Population Medicine, conducting research and managing the research laboratory. As an instructor with the Department of Biomedical Sciences, she taught basic veterinary curriculum and performed clinical responsibilities.

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"The Receiving department is a core of the AHDC and our responsibility is great," said Stipetic. "As a veterinarian, I can provide both veterinary and managerial support. Many situations that arise in Receiving require veterinary supervision. Having a veterinarian here present helps improve communication between AHDC sections and also with outside institutions. I enjoy improving our communication and teamwork in the Receiving department so that our workload is supported by a well-functioning group. That remains my

primary goal- improving communication and looking for ways we can better provide service to our clients and to be a good team leader. It's a very stressful environment, so good teamwork and communication and clear instruction is crucial."

In the past year Stipetic has helped to increase communication and collaboration between Receiving and other departments in the AHDC. In the morning, when Receiving is the busiest, techs sometimes come down from some of the labs to help Receiving open packages. In the afternoon, when laboratory workload tends to be higher, Receiving will return the favor, sending people to help in the laboratories.

Starting in December 2013, Stipetic led her team through a LEAN process to identify ways to improve workflow and make the process simpler, easier to follow, less stressful, faster, and less costly. The Receiving department set up several teams as a result of their LEAN evaluation, saved time and more than a case of paper each week by eliminating unnecessary paperwork and changing the sample pick-up process.

"Communication within the AHDC and with clients submitting samples has improved, and so has workplace climate," said Stipetic. "We'll continue meeting once a month with other AHDC sections to help break down walls between different lab sections and AHDC departments and work as a cohesive facility. I appreciate the Receiving team, who gave me opportunity to lead this process, believed in me and helped me in overhauling our workflow. None of the implemented changes would have happened without the amazing support from all the other AHDC sections. I am very grateful for their continuous support. I'm also grateful for the administration; without their support we couldn't have moved forward. They've been with us every step of the way."

The Receiving department continues to measure the effects of the LEAN process. In a year's time they will be able to compare efficiency and accuracy with reportable statistics from before and after the LEAN process changes to support their success.