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2002 Rush Shippen Huidekoper Society Dinner

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The 2002 Rush Shippen Huidekoper Society Dinner, which recognized Penn Veterinary Medicine’s most generous donors and friends during the 2001-02 fiscal year, was held on November 2 at the Independence Seaport Museum at Penn’s Landing in Philadelphia. It was a wonderful evening as the School’s alumni, grateful clients, and other friends came together to celebrate Penn Veterinary Medicine.

The dinner also brought together Opportunity Scholarship student recipients and their donors/mentors. Established in 1998, the Opportunity Scholarship Program fosters scholarship support and mentoring opportunities by pairing a donor, who commits to giving $2,500 per year for four years—a total of $10,000—to a single student, who is selected based on strong academic qualifications and financial need. More than 30 students attended this year’s dinner, and Nathan D. Harvey, V’03, spoke movingly on behalf of them when he thanked the donors/mentors for their generous support of the students’ veterinary educations.

According to Nate, having grown up in New Hampshire near his grandfather’s dairy farm, he has always had the dream of attending veterinary school and returning to New England to practice dairy medicine. He looks forward to taking what he has learned at Penn about progressive production medicine, and applying it in the context of the important lessons and values that he learned working on his family’s farm. Nate emphasized that he could not have achieved these goals without the tremendous generosity of the School’s alumni, and he expressed particular gratitude toward Benson B. Martin, Jr., V’80, associate professor of equine sports medicine at New Bolton Center, his Opportunity Scholarship donor and mentor. Nate concluded his remarks with his plan to give back to students following in his footsteps by funding an Opportunity Scholarship himself.

The dinner’s special guest, University President Judith Rodin, C’66, was unable to attend in person, however she recorded a message on video that was shown at the dinner (see page 18 for her remarks). “On Any Given Day,” a new 15-minute video that follows a day in the life of New Bolton Center, was also shown at the dinner. The video helps to mark New Bolton Center’s 50th anniversary, and showcases the high-level of research, teaching, and clinical service that occurs everyday on campus.

Named after the first dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine, the Rush Shippen Huidekoper Society recognizes those donors who contribute $1,000 or above to the School in the fiscal year. The generosity of the School’s alumni and friends advances the School’s mission to better the health and welfare of animals and humans. For information to support Penn Veterinary Medicine, visit the Alumni & Friends web site at <http://alumni.vet.upenn.edu> or contact Joshua E. Liss at (215) 898-1481 or via e-mail at <lissj@vet.upenn.edu>.


Mary McMahon Stewart, PT’66, Robert W. Stewart, Sr., V’68, Amy Hinze, V’03, and Raymond Patsch.
Remarks by Judith Rodin at the 2002 Rush Shippen Huidekoper Society Dinner

Good evening. While I am unfortunately unable to join you in person this evening at the Independence Seaport Museum, thanks to modern technology, I can share some of my own thoughts with you as we celebrate Penn Veterinary Medicine and its record of wonderful excellence.

By every measurable standard in teaching, research, and care, Penn’s School of Veterinary Medicine is among the best in the world. Admittedly, some of my own standards are somewhat subjective and based on my personal experiences and observations. Our family’s beloved dog, Butterfinger, received outstanding care at VHUP. For that alone, Penn Veterinary Medicine will always hold a special place in my heart.

I also had the pleasure of touring the Scott Sports Medicine Building at New Bolton Center, an amazing facility that gives Penn the inside post position in equine sports medicine, service, teaching and research.

And I know from the time I have spent with Dean Alan Kelly and our outstanding faculty and students that the road to major discoveries and breakthroughs in clinical research and care will pass through the Veterinary School at Penn.

But I am also aware that it takes the time and talent and resources of our alumni and volunteers and grateful clients to keep the Veterinary School and its two campuses moving in the right direction.

I am happy to report that this past year was one of the best ever for fundraising. The Veterinary School ranked fifth among the 18 schools and centers at Penn for new gifts and commitments, which surpassed $13.6 million. I was especially pleased that the new Teaching and Research Building received the lion’s share of the School’s gift support last year.

With $7.5 million to count on, University Trustees have given the official go-ahead for the building, and I know that Dean Kelly and his team are hard at work on finding the right architect to move this project forward.

By 2006 our Veterinary School facility will have it all. It will provide state-of-the-art classrooms and group study areas for our students. It will house the finest laboratories for faculty to study infectious disease, cancer, medical genetics, and germ cell biology. Rising at least five stories over University Avenue, this new building will establish a dramatic presence for the Veterinary School.

However, a great university is more than state-of-the-art buildings and much more than the sum of its outstanding research centers and professional and graduate schools.

What makes Penn great is how these different parts work together to boost our intellectual firepower. A dynamic and collaborative spirit permeates our whole campus. For example a faculty member from the Veterinary School is always just a short walk away from partnering with colleagues from the Medical School, the Wistar Institute, and Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

We have veterinary students who earn dual degrees at Wharton or pursue doctorates at one of the more than 500 laboratories located throughout the campus. These opportunities for synergy set Penn and the School of Veterinary Medicine well apart from our peers.

But these synergies are not restricted to Dean Kelly, the faculty, or our remarkable students. You are a critical part of our synergistic swagger. Your philanthropic support strengthens the School’s ability to fight disease while saving lives and improving the health of all animals, large and small, including Homo sapiens.

Whether you funded scholarships, physical plant improvements, faculty research, or unrestricted support to meet current and pressing needs, you have kept the Veterinary School on its upward trajectory.

On behalf of the University of Pennsylvania, I thank you for all that you do to sustain and promote the best School of Veterinary Medicine in the world.